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SEMESTER - I

POLITICAL THEORY

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MEANING AND APPROACHES

Structure

1.0 Objectives

The aim of this unit is to familiarize you with the meaning, significance and approaches of political theory. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain what political theory is and how it can be used to observe, understand, explain and prescribe things about the political space that all of us inhabit.
- Explicate Normative and Empirical Approaches to political theory
- Understand the Liberal, Marxist and Feminist Approaches to Political Theory

1.1 Introduction: What is Political Theory?

A glance around our immediate environment tells us that there are so many things happening around us that can be called to occupy what is explained as public/ political space. For instance you may hear about protests against the violation of individual rights, abusive use of power by governments, negligent administrative institutions or gender based violence. These issues take place in the political or public space which is nothing but a constant conflictual interaction for sharing of resources/ access to power/demands for entitlements. These issues involve role to be played by formal institutions of the state such as Legislature , Executive or Judiciary and non-formal actors such as civil society or voluntary organizations. It also encompasses people who not only get impacted by the decision making powers of these institutions

but also have the power to impact them. There is an implicit quest to seek answers to what constitutes political and what is a good political life or political order? It is invariably a search for an ideal or imagined society. These discussions for political vision are enveloped by search for a better social order. Thus political theory is fundamentally and intricately related with political philosophy, political ideology and political science. According to George Sabine in a broad sense political theory discusses anything that is relevant to politics. In his opinion political theory in a narrow sense is disciplined investigation of political problems. On the other hand, David Held defines political theory as a network of concepts and generalizations about political life involving ideas, assumptions and statements about the nature, purpose and key features of government, state, society and about political capabilities of human beings. Rajeev Bhargava draws our attention to big questions of human life and proposes that political theory aids us in answering these foundational questions without which human life is impossible and meaningless. These big questions are: a) What is there/ going on in the world? b) Why are things going on in the world? c) Will something that is currently going on continue to go on in the future? d) Is that which is there/going on good or bad, right or wrong? e) What am I to do? What is to be done? f) Who am I? Who are we? Political theory helps us in giving order, coherence and meaning to what is termed as political. It is analytical, expository as well as explanatory.

The growth and evolution of political theory can be broadly divided into three phases. The classical phase, modern phase and the third phase is contemporary political theory. The element of science differentiates classical political theory from modern political theory. Philosophy dominates classical political theory and reason is characteristic feature of modern political theory. Classical political theory is associated with the works of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. These thinkers were concerned with philosophical questions to establish a rational basis for beliefs. They adopted an ethical perspective to the political life and their thinking was rooted in a moral outlook. Classical political theory also focused on comparative studies to build comprehensive understanding of what is political and laid emphasis on order, balance, equilibrium, stability and harmony. Modern political theory on the other hand, is associated with myriad approaches such as institutional, structural, behavioral, post-behavioral and empirical approaches. It lays emphasis on scientific methods, rationality, and objectivity and is also process oriented. It emerged in fifteenth century and coincided with the beginning of the phase of enlightenment. The renaissance and reformation in Europe greatly contributed to the development of enlightenment thought. The works of Rousseau, Mill and Marx are foundational to the development of modern political theory. Belief in progress, unwavering faith in reason and rejection of authority over knowledge are primary tenets of modern political theory. Contemporary political theory tried to strike a balance between normative dimension of classical political theory and

scientific dimension of modern political theory. According to John Rawls contemporary political theory can seek truth alongside the scientific empirical methods. In Nozicks' opinion contemporary political theory can solve many political problems by combining classical ends with empirical means. In the following section we shall explicate in detail the two broad approaches to political theory i.e. Normative and Empirical political theory.

1.2 Normative political theory and empirical political theory :

As discussed in the previous section political theory is concerned with both that is political philosophy and political science. Broadly these two aspects are associated with normative and empirical approach to political theory. Normative political theory emerged in ancient Greece and is found majorly in the writings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. According to C. Kukathas, it is necessary to appreciate that there are two aspects to political theory. It involves the analysis of what is politically feasible on the one hand and of what is desirable on the other. Isaiah Berlin maintains that normative political theory is concerned with the discovery and application of moral notions in the sphere of political relations. In a narrow sense it is concerned with the foundational moral questions that affect what constitutes the political. On the other hand broadly it covers all type of political theorizing which is prescriptive or recommendatory in nature. In a nutshell normative political theorizing is about everything concerned with what ought to/should be as against what is? It is interested in abstract moral reasoning and comprehensive discussion of institutions and policies. It attempts to build moral precepts and also investigate the implications of these moral precepts in real world. Fundamentally the character of political philosophy and political science is normative as it seeks to answer a basic question what is a good/ideal political order? Thus normative political theory is advocacy –oriented. Utilitarianism, Liberalism and Communitarianism are the major strands associated with normative political theory.

With the emergence of logical positivism normative political theory received a major blow. This new kind of theorization focused on facts, verification and rationality and dismissed the significance of values and prescriptive vocabulary of normative political theory. Scholars such as Charles Taylor, Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss and Michael Oakshoot have actively spoken against this empirical rise in political theorizing and maintained that values are the substance of political systems and structures for they lend meaning to them. Therefore political theory is both prescriptive as well as descriptive. The norms and values act as standards of behavior, regularities or point of reference and guide our course of action as well as it can aid us in judgements of what is desirable and undesirable. Thus normative political theory has justificatory and evaluative functions.

Normative political theory was debunked as statements of preferences and opinions in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century. This paved way for the emergence of empirical political theory. It highlighted the role of observation, verification, objectivity, experimentation scientific and rational methods and value-free approach to political theorization. Empirical political theory focused on quantitative techniques in analysis, denunciation of normative framework, dismissal of history of ideas, appreciated micro study, promoted specialization instead of generalizations and pressed for a value-neutral approach. This new lens to view what is political came to be known as empirical approach or positivism. Various other sub-approaches emerged out of the same and one such approach is called Logical positivism. It became a prominent way of political theorization in the twentieth century which was also inspired by the early writings of Ludwig Wittegenstein. Wittegenstein rubbished normative ideas like liberty/justice, ethics, aesthetics and religion as non-sense primarily because they cannot be materially or sensually experienced. According to him theorization should restrict itself to factual and descriptive language of natural sciences. Logical positivism, therefore is interested in telling objective truths about the world and is not interested in proposing any ideal/utopian paradigm. Auguste Comte is considered as the father of positivism. He insisted on extension of scientific methods to philosophy and social sciences. Positivists firmly maintain that the world is governed by certain immutable laws and they can be derived through empirical observation without the burden of normative theorization. Logical positivism inspired the behavioral revolution in 1950's in the United States of America. The behavioral approach focused observation and description of political behavior and governmental processes. Empirical political theory in its various manifestations highlighted scientific world conception generated through observation and explanation. Nonetheless this empirical or positivist approach received criticism for it is difficult to claim that science is insulated from social life or even to say that it can be value-free. Post-positivism emerged to challenge the limitations of positivism and represented methodological pluralism. It does not replace positivism and its methods but it strives to produce awareness about the complexity, historical contingency and fragility of the practices that we invent to discover the truth about ourselves or political phenomenon. Thomas Kunh in his 'The structure of Scientific Revolutions' made a pioneering contribution in bringing out the limitations and failures of the positivist theory. Since the publication of John Rawls 'Theory of Justice', normative political theory has seen a revival and contemporary political theory aims to strike a balance between the normative and empirical lens to view, explain, describe or prescribe the political.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) **What is political theory ? Explain the normative and empirical approaches to political theory.**

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1.3 Liberal Approach

The liberal approach to political theory attributes primary importance to liberty as a political value. It's commitment to freedom and toleration has helped liberalism as an ideology, as a way of life and as a political system to not only thrive but also to take shape and change according to the changing times. Liberal political approach pins faith in the fact that all humans are in a state of perfect freedom without asking any leave for their actions. Mill argued that burden of proof to curtail liberty hence remains with those who wish to constrain man's liberty. A logical consequence of such a stand in liberal political theory is that any external/political authority needs to justified for it may act as a deterrence to individual freedom. Philosophers associated with social contract tradition such as Hobbes, Locke , Rousseau and Kant are viewed as liberal theorist though their actual prescriptions are sometimes conspicuously illiberal. Hobbes can be considered as one of the earliest theorist to talk about liberty as he was the first to ask what are the grounds of obligation of citizens to a political sovereign. In a nutshell liberal political theory is a protest against hierarchical and privileged authority and monarchy. The entire history of England, Western European America for last three hundred years has been closely associated with evolution of liberal thought. It emerged and flourished in the climate of enlightenment, renaissance and reformation in Europe. Liberal political theory demands individual liberty in each and every field of human life ranging from social, economic, cultural to political. It strives to expand man's freedom by increasing his area of choice and decision. Harold Laski therefore maintained that every state is known by the rights it maintains.

Liberal political theory can be broadly divided in to three evolutionary phases. The first phase is of classical liberalism. Classical liberalism is mainly associated with negative conception of liberty as absence of restrictions. It questions the restrictions on individual freedom and extent of political authority. Milton Friedman terms this as absence of coercion of man by the state, society or his fellowman. With the rise of modernity emerged a protest against absolute authority and emphasized the need of

individual autonomy. It resulted in demands for secularism, free market, individual freedom and consent based governments. Liberal Political theory considers any increase in the powers of the state or any such agency as a danger to individual freedom. State must merely act as an instrument to safeguard the liberty of all individuals. Such an explosion on individual liberty paved way for representative politics, agency of law and minimalist state. However such a minimalistic conception of state was sought to be revised in the later part of the nineteenth century. This was known as new liberalism which highlighted the positive conception of liberty and maintained that state has a definite role to play to promote and protect the individual liberty. Here the focus was not on absence of restrictions but constructive role of the state to enable individual to enjoy his liberty. This new liberalism paved way for the creation of a welfare state, interventionist policies for redistribution of wealth and desire for an egalitarian society. In the post Washington consensus period particularly classical liberal political theory has returned which deplores the welfare state and valorizes the role of market. It speaks of a minimal state which is to be concerned with only enforcing the rules of the game. Individual right to property is considered as fundamental hence the role of state is required to be the least. This latest wave is known as New Right Philosophy or Neo-Liberalism which promotes a market oriented state and despises any restrictions of individual liberty. Critiques such as Michael Sandel have lamented that such neo-liberal return has contributed to growth of market economy and gradually it is transforming our society into a market society where everything is up for sale.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Explain the main features of the liberal approach to political theory.

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1.4 Marxist Approach

The Marxist approach to political theory has left an indelible influence to the way we theorise some of the foundational and perplexing questions concerning the 'political'. Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels are primarily credited with the development of this approach. It emerged in the second half of the twentieth century particularly in the wittings of Karl Marx (Capital- 1867, Economic and philosophical manuscript – 1844). Marxist approach criticized the German idealism, opposed capitalist mode of

production and suggested a strong role to be played by the proletariat class for social change. Marxist approach attempted to propose scientific socialism as opposed to utopian socialism of Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, Luois Blanc, Saint Simon and Proudhon. This approach used dialectic materialism as a tool of analysis and prescribed a scientific remedy for the socio-economic evils produced as a result of capitalism. Marxist approach to politics developed some significant theoretical tools such as class struggle, contradictions within the capitalist system and role of the working class which have become foundational today. The working class revolution is a major tool to uproot the bourgeois class and establish the rule of the proletarian class. This kind of new society and system will gradually evolve into what Marx dreams as a communist society where each one will receive not according to his capacity but according to his needs. This kind of a society, according to Marx will be a state less, class less, property less and exploitation less society.

Marxist approach to political theory has contributed a very important tool namely theory of alienation to grasp the dangers of capitalism. George Luckas also developed it later further in his work. Marx identifies four levels of alienation. In a capitalist system, a) man is alienated from his own product and his work, b) Man is alienated from nature, c) Man is alienated from other men and d) Man is alienated from himself. Marxist approach to the political critiques this alienation and suggests removing conditions of dehumanization, estrangement and alienation. Thus it is today hailed as a project of human emancipation from exploitation of man in all it's avatar.

In Marxist approach the institution of state is pictured as an agency of the capitalist class, as an instrument in the hands of the rich/propertied class and essentially is also seen as a coercive institution. Since state is necessarily a class institution which is constructed to suppress the dissent of the property less class, it must wither away as per the prescription of the Marxist theory. To make this happen the long drawn class struggle between the have (property owing class) and the have nots (property less class) need to be followed by a swift , short and bloody revolution. This will establish the rule of the proletariat (true majority) over the exploitative bourgeoisie class (minority). The dictatorship of the proletariat for a brief period is necessary to resist a counter revolution by the bourgeoisie. According to Marxist approach this dictatorship of the working class will be gradually replaced by a communist society which is expected to be premised on the principle of co-operation and not competition. In such a society the productive forces belong to the community as whole and it will be an egalitarian society devoid of any contradictions and exploitation. Such a society is the last stage in the dialectic process of social change hence is a perfect system.

Marxist approach to political theory has been critiqued for not recognizing the value of human agency. It dismissed the potential of human agency to change the world by ascribing social change to dialectic historical materialism. It also has failed to grasp the complexities of the class struggle by over simplifying the class division into merely two classes. As per the predictions of Marx middle class would gradually disappear which in actuality has strengthened under the neo-capitalist world. The conditions of the working class have not deteriorated and capitalism has not been replaced in reality. The worker's revolution also took place in backward Russia against the predictions of Marx. The coercive institution called state never withered away rather it became equally repressive under the reigns of so called working class party in Russia (see Stalin's period in Russia). Many neo-Marxist theorist have attempted to address these shortcomings of Marxist political theory by revising the Marxist tools of analysis. For instance George Lukacs attacked the idea of historical materialism and emphasized the creative role of the human consciousness in history making. He also rejected Lenin's thesis of role of the communist party as the vanguard of the proletariat. French neo-Marxist Luois Pierre Althusser also eschews classical Marxism and proposes the concept of relative autonomy of the superstructure. Antonio Gramsci developed the notion of hegemony to as means of analysis of the advanced capitalist societies. His uniqueness lies in his proposition that state does not necessarily rule through force/coercion rather it continues to rule by way of indoctrination, manufacturing of the consensus and ideological leadership. The idea of hegemony redefines the notion of power in modern societies. He also emphasizes the role of organic intellectuals in any society which have the power to construct counter hegemony thus pinning faith in human agency. Despite multiple limitations found in the classical Marxism it remains a powerful socio-political analytical tool which renders voice to the voiceless and is a powerful philosophy in the hands of poor and oppressed. Without Marxist approach it is impossible to theories the socio-political issues today for it is a profoundly humanist approach.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Elucidate the Marxist approach to political theory.

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1.5 Feminist Approach

Feminist approach to political theory offers a fundamentally unique lens to revisit traditional way of political theorization which overlooks the feminist and gender based concerns. It envisions not only to explicate the political through a feminist lens but also to embrace the Marxist vision to change the way political is conceptualised. In the most simple terms it strives to achieve equality of both the sexes in all the realms of human life. The bourgiose democratic revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth century promised equality but excluded the women for a very long time. In this context women emerged as a distinct interest group asking for the same. The post industrial revolution period witnessed growing presence of the women in public life which aided in the articulation of the woman question. It also emphasized the fact that women never received the fruits of the enlightenment. Feminist political theory explicates the poor representation of concerns of women in history and exposes the fact that it also is incapable to address them. Gender, patriarchy and oppression are some of the core theoretical concepts associated with feminist political theorization.

The feminist approach to political theory roughly began with the first wave of feminism in the western world, particularly English speaking world. It emphasized on improvement of political, educational and economic conditions of primarily the middle class white women. It spoke in favour of equal political rights along with the right to vote. Harriet Taylor in Enfranchisement of women (1851) and Mill in Subjection of women (1869) defended social, economic, political and sexual liberty. Marry Wollstonecraft fiercely criticized and questioned the socialization process which tried to domesticate women and thus turned them into a feathered race (caged in domestic life). She maintained that virtue of good wife or mother cannot be imposed on women but it should be freely chosen by them. This requires same education and same rights for both the sexes. Feminist political theory in this period also demanded economic independence to ensure their dignity and equality in public life. However this type of approach to political theorization erroneously tried to achieve masculisation of women and did not really attempt to change the exisiting structures of institutions which actually were limiting the freedom of women. Economic independence couldn't really achieve independent status for women in society. On the contrary domestic work such as child crae, care of sick and elderly got devalued as they were mostly unpaid and considered to require less mental work or less skills. In a nutshell, what was more important was that men needed to be brought in the private domain to make the march of women in public domain successful.

The second wave of feminist political theory contributed feminist consciousness by uncovering prevailing sexist attitudes and obstacles in the society. One of the most

important theoretical contribution of this phase of feminist theorization was separation between the biological identity of women from their socially constructed identity. The work of Gayle Rubin and others proved that sex was given but gender was a social construct. The idea of gender privileges men and divides the sexes. This sex-gender binary helped to uncover centuries of oppression and also aided to find strategie to fight it universally. When Simone de Beauvoir declared, " One is not born, but becomes a women", in her acclaimed work the Second Sex, it gave merit to the category of women as a universal subject as well as an agent of feminist politics. The sexual division of labour was problematised by the second generation of feminists. They argued against it to uproot it from the society. Contemporary feminist like Chinnamada Adichie also reiterates the same theme in her famous lines, "Knowledge of cooking doesn't come pre-installed in my vagina." The feminist theorization of the political in 1960's which is known sometimes as radical feminism made a path-breaking contribution to theory by focusing on the most oppressive social structure called patriarchy. It believed that equal rights and equal laws are not enough to stop women's oppression as the issues and interests that concern them are heterogeneous on account of racial, cultural, religious and ethnic differences. Women's oppression is a universal phenomenon and therefore makes a demand for ' personal is political'. It asks to challenge the public-private divide and acknowledges the public as the bastion of the male power. Thus it critiques patriarchy as a system of male dominance and inequality. Some radical feminist also maintained that patriarchy makes women sexual slaves and disables their control over their own bodies Other feminists tried to recover the lost dignity for feminine qualities which were denigrated by the patriarchal structures. Such feminists argued that biological differences must not be downplayed; rather they must be revered and considered valuable. Feminists like Andrea Dworkin, Susan Griffinth and Vandana Shiva highlight the feminine world view which emerges due to women's unique reproductive biology and their experiences associated with it. A feminine world view is more sensitive and respectful of the environment and hence more attuned with the ecology. On the other hand there are few who believe that a strictly bi-polar model of feminity and masculinity is a modern and western construct. It does not give any space for a variety of sexual and gender identities that can exist in between. Ashish Nandy maintains that pre-colonial Indian culture accorded greater value to the feminity. Post-modern feminism argued that the sex-gender distinction over emphasizes the biological body. Post-modern feminist Judith Butler maintains that gender does not follow sex rather gender precedes sex. Sex is constructed by human performance. The category of women does not exist before we think about it. Gender is constructed through norms and constraints that regulate what will be recognized as male body and female body. Thus it questions the language structure of two-sexed model which renders many other fluid sex-gender identities invisible. The invisible are criminalized, marginalized and normalized to fit into the existing model. It questions hetro-sexuality as given and also challenges all institutionalized practices such as marriage and family. Post-Modern feminism also tries to locate gender in the grid of other identities such

as caste, class, race and religion and thus brings inter-sectionality to problematise gender. Women as a subject cannot be a universal idea for they may want to identify themselves as Black woman, Muslim woman etc. This opens up a whole vista of other mobilizations that are require to articulate myriad issues and challenges women face in the contemporary world. Feminist political theory through its different evolutionary phases has helped us to view the world though a woman's perspective.

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Discuss the contemporary contestations within the feminist approach to political theory.

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1.6 Let Us Sum Up

In this module we discussed the meaning, nature and important approaches to political theory. Political theory is essential to describe, discuss and prescribe what takes place and what takes shape in what we call the political. The normative approach to political theory emphasizes what ought to be where as empirical political theory focuses on what is. The liberal approach to political theory valorizes individual over society and considers minimum constraints on individual freedom as fundamental. Marxist approach discusses the idea of class struggle and exposes the exploitation of the working class within a capitalist system. It also offers a toolkit of revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie class and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat to be followed by a communist society. Feminist approach to political contributed a unique lense of woman's questions, gender, patriarchy and their oppression not only to conceptualise the political but also to change the same.

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2

DEMOCRACY

(Representative Democracy, Participatory Democracy, Deliberative Democracy)

Structure

2.0 Objectives

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2.1 Introduction

Democracy is the most prosperous and effectual form of political organization in contemporary period. There is a general agreement that democratic institutions are the most reliable symbol of political development. It is due to this reason that, it is difficult to find anyone who disagrees with democracy these days. Politicians from the extreme left to the extreme right insist that the politics which they support is democratic in character, so it is no wonder that the term is so confusing. Although fundamentalists may reject the notion of democracy, nobody else will oppose it. Whether the ruler is a military dictator, a nationalist demagogue or a liberal, they will always treat their form of governance as democratic in nature.

2.2 Meaning and definition of Democracy

The term democracy is firmly rooted in Ancient Greece. Democracy is derived from the ancient Greek word *kratos,* and *demos*. Literary *kratos* means power and *demos* stands for 'the many' or 'the people'. Democracy therefore means 'rule by the demos', or rule by the people. In contrast to its modern usage, democracy perceived during ancient period was a negative or pejorative term, denoting not rule by all, including poor and also uneducated masses. Democracy was therefore thought to be the enemy of liberty and wisdom. While writers such as Aristotle were prepared to recognize the virtues of popular participation, they nevertheless feared that unrestrained democracy would degenerate into a form of 'mob rule'. Indeed, such pejorative implications continued to be attached to democracy even today.

- There have been several varieties of democratic government over the centuries. Perhaps the most fundamental distinction is between democratic systems, like those in ancient Greece that are based upon direct popular participation in government and those that operate through some kind of representative mechanism. This highlights two contrasting models of democracy: direct democracy and representative democracy. Moreover, the modern understanding of democracy is dominated by the form of electoral democracy that has developed in the industrialized West, often called liberal democracy. Despite its undoubted success, liberal democracy is only one of the preferred models of democracy in the present world.

- Democracy cannot be described only as a form of government but it is also an order of society. In addition to being a form of government and a type of state, democracy is considered as a way of life in which the spirit of quality and fraternity prevails. Such a society does not necessarily imply a democratic state or a democratic government. In addition to this democracy is also viewed as as a moral principle. It means that in democracy every individual has a moral value. It enshrines the truth that government does not exist for its own sake, but for the enrichment of personality of an individual. In a nutshell no government has a right to be called a democracy if it does not bring out the best in man.

- Thus, to some, democracy 'is a form of government'; to others, it is 'a way of social life'. The essence of democracy as a form of government lies in its nature of franchise, the character of the electoral system and the relation between the government and the people existing in a particular nation. Democracy as a way of life has a different connotation; as for example to the communist, it means economic equality amongst citizens, to a humanist, it implies the

absence of disparities in rights on the basis of caste, creed or birth. Thus, democracy comes out to be a complex term and the only way to come out of this complexity owning to its diversity is to analyze each of the meanings attached to it and to trace its development and growth according to time, situation and mental progressive innovations for human betterment.

2.3 Definition of Democracy

I. Democracy as a form of government

Democracy is defined as an important form of government. Democracy as an important form of government implies two aspects i) who share power in government and ii) how are those who govern and legislate, acquire their office?. In this way democracy conceives that people, either directly or through their representatives, shares power in government. It also means that the representatives actually exercise their power on behalf of the people.

Following are the definitions of democracy which treats democracy as an important form of government.

J.R.Lowell- democracy is only an experiment in government.

Lincoln- democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Dicey-Democracy is that form of government in which the governing body is a comparatively large fraction of the entire nation.

Lord Bryce - The word Democracy denotes that form of government in which the ruling power of a State is legally vested, not in any particular class or classes, but in the members of the community as a whole.

II. Democracy as order of society

Democracy is also defined as an order of the society. This means a democratic society is one in which the spirit of equality and fraternity prevails. Such a society does not necessarily imply a democratic state or a democratic government. Democracy is an order of society wherein the spirit of equality and fraternity prevails. A democracy may exist in different sections of the society despite its absence when it comes to the State or government. In the traditional Indian societies, the system of Kinship prevailed wherein the essential elements of democracy like unity, fraternity, etc. may exist within the kinship group, that may represent a society, but not between different kinship groups taken as a part of the State.

III. Democracy as a moral principle

Democracy embodies a moral principle too. It means that each man has a value. Further, it elucidates the fact that government does not exist for its own sake, but for the enrichment of individual personality. No government has a right to be called a democracy if it does not bring out the best in man. Democracy shall serve its

essential feature of bringing out the best in man for the government to be called as a democratic government. Democracy attempts to reconcile the apparently contradictory principle of liberty, equality and fraternity, in order to attain the highest good for all. Democracy in practice is the hypothesis that all men are equal which is used in order to discover who the best are. Democracy should assure practical self-realization for attaining common benefits for all.

Types of Democracy

2.4 Representative Democracy

Representative Democracy is considered as the most popular form of democratic governance. Representative theory of democracy has a greater ascendancy in several parts of the world, because most countries of the world have accepted this model as the basic and defining form of their government. It is due to strong institutional arrangements that representative democracy is distinguished from other forms of political system. Representative democracy always stands against the unlimited and unrestrained type of political system.

Representative democracy has a predilection for popular participation and indirect and limited form of government. It is indirect and limited form of democracy, because citizens get an opportunity to indirectly participate in government system and influence the policy formulation process. It is limited because the government uses its power in restrained and responsible manner. There is no possibility of unnecessary government's intervention in private life of citizens Its legitimate form is indirect because the commoners do not assume power by itself, but they elect their own representatives who secure power by means of popular vote and rule on people's behalf.

Basic Features of Representative Democracy

- **Indirect Representation: -** In representative democracy the government is run by representatives of the common people, It is described as a system of government in which all qualified citizens vote for representatives who work to pass laws for them. Commoners form their own groups on the basis of popular consent which is further professionalized into political parties. These parties after deep deliberation select their own candidates for general elections. At the time of electoral manifess campaigning the political parties publicly announce the basic programmes and policies that would be initiated after coming to power. People either support these parties and their programmes or oppose them, depending upon their personal affiliation and ideological compatibility.

- **Crucial role of political parties: -** In representative democratic system role of political parties is always crucial and decisive in nature. Almost all representatives of people contest elections to garner popular support and stake claim to political power. Political parties actually are organised in a very systematic way which enables the activists to rally political support and secure power. Those who remain away from the party politics tend to contest elections as independent candidates, if they do not wish to join any political party. It therefore can be said that the role of political parties is vital in a democratic system. The members of political parties keep the people informed about important issues by holding public meetings, for either supporting or opposing the policies of the government. Thus, the political parties help the people in knowing what they should expect and in turn mould the public opinion.

- **Spirit of Representative democracy goes against direct democracy:** - Representative democracy is formally structured on the principle of elected people representing a specific group of people, and therefore it stands opposed to the system of direct democracy. In modern democratic states, people's representatives are voted by common people and they in turn are accountable to the electorates. Different modes of electing the representatives are eshrined in the constitution rules on electoral systems of each country. Generally an aspiring candidate contests election, representing a particular constituency. A constituency means a specific geographical area which is created for election purpose. The representatives form an independent ruling body entrusted with the responsibility formulating the rules and regulations as well as the legislation for the people's interest, with enough authority. The reasonable restrictions imposed by the authority are aimed to take resolute initiative in the face of changing circumstances. how represensentative democracy goes against direct democracy needs to explained here far.

2.5 Basic postulates of Representative Democracy

1. There are free, fair and regular elections and transfer of power takes place in instantaneous manner. Elections are held on the basis of universal adult suffrage.
2. There is existence of opposition parties also. The diverse opinion is generally entertained, which strengthens the democratic fabric of the country. The existence of multiple ranges of political parties present a competitive electoral choice for the voters.
3. The subsistent presence of legislation which is subsequently protected by the independent judiciary further accentuates the values of democracy.

4. Ample freedom of dissent and right to freedom to speech and expression is ensured in this needs to be rewarded democracy.
5. Freedom to record independent opinion about political events and political decisions

Following are the **advantages** of Representative Democracy:

- *Genuine representative character and nourishment of civic culture:* the representative government ensures a true representative form of governance and enhances a possible growth of civic culture. A civic culture or civic political culture is a political culture characterized by "acceptance of the authority of the state" and "a belief in participation in civic duties". The term was first used in Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's book, 'The Civic Culture'. In a representative democracy, the people elect officials to create and vote on laws, policies, and other matters of government on their behalf.

- *Right to dissent:* Dissent is essential in a democracy. If a country has to grow in a holistic manner where not only the economic rights but also the civil rights of the citizen are to be protected, dissent and disagreement have to be permitted, and in fact, should be encouraged. It is only if there is discussion, disagreement and dialogue that we can arrive at better ways to run the country. Dissent and democracy in reality are frequently considered synonymous in a liberal-democratic social order. It is through open debate and discussion that the diversity of perceptions in a democracy gets exposed. Only through continuous interactions on critical issues does the real truth emerge.

- *Informed citizenry*: In democracy the informed citizenry is a basic requirement. Collective opinion in democracy plays an important role to keep the government in check. If the people are aware of the current significant debate of the day, then there is less possibility of usurpation of public offices and corrupt practices.

2.6 Participatory Democracy

Participatory democracy attempts to create opportunities for all members of a population to make expressive contributions to decision-making, and seeks to increase the range of people who have access to such opportunities. Since so much information must be gathered for the overall decision-making process to succeed, technology may provide important forces leading to the type of empowerment needed

for participatory models, especially those technological tools that enable community narratives and correspond to the accretion of knowledge.

Participatory democracy is that type of democratic model that accentuates the participation of common citizens in the functioning and operation of political systems. Participatory democracy tends to promote the involvement of citizen's participation rather than their representation. Participatory democracy attempts to generate more opportunities for all members of society. It strives hard to make meaningful contributions to masses in the process of decision-making, and aims to broaden the range of people's participation.

1) *Insistence on people's participation*: The theory of *participatory democracy* is quite different from the theory of representative democracy. It puts great importance on maximising the participation of citizens in the public decisions that affect their lives.

   Active engagement in politics is regarded as beneficial both for the citizen as an individual and for the system as a whole. Because active participation of citizens is expected, they do not participate only periodically in elections, but participation is continuous. Citizens formulate and defend their own interests through various civic organizations, such as interests groups, political parties, civic associations, NGOs and grassroots citizens' lobbies. Participation transforms individuals into public citizens: political interest, preferences and abilities for judging public issues that emerge in the process of public deliberation.

2) *Principle of Popular inclusion*: - participatory democracy promotes an active functioning of the public sphere. The model of public sphere[1] promoted by participatory theory is based on popular inclusion wherein the citizens are expected to be active participants in the public sphere. The media is considered as an ideal representative model where it represents divergent interests of society members. It is through the medium of public discussion and debate that aspirations of common people are made public. Media is considered as an apogee of popular inclusion and contemplated as a paramount agent in encouraging empowerment of citizens and communities. In this way, popular inclusion results in strengthening politically competent and knowledgeable public sphere.

3) *Combination of direct and representative democracy:* - Participatory

[1] The term public sphere means a public space or an area in social life where people can come together share their views and freely discuss as well as identify common socio-economic and political problems. The term was originally coined by German philosopher Jurgen Habermas

democracy is that model of democracy which gives impetus to the process of collective decisions. The process of collective decision making is a unique combination of direct and representative democracy. Collective decisions empower the citizens to formulate opinions and pronouncements on policy proposals and politicians assume the role of policy implementation.

4) *Equal sharing of power:* One of the key facets of participatory democracy is that it emphatically promotes equal power sharing principle thereby preventing any possibility of conflicts and violence. The adherents of participatory democracy propose that the power be equally shared among all citizens, so that everyone will get opportunity to participate equally in collective affairs. The idea of participatory democracy invigorates an aggregate debate about power, democratic principles, democratic procedures and institutions. In a nutshell it attempts to maneuver skillful moves to achieve the most equal distribution of power in society.

5) *Self-determination and autonomy:* Participatory democracy empowers the people to assert their self-determination and reinforce the quest for autonomy. The exponents of this theory argue that only participatory democracy allows people to be masters of their own lives i.e. to be fully self-determining or autonomous. Participatory democracy endeavours to achieve such self-determination at both the individual level and the level of groups or collectives. In addition to this participatory democracy can be seen as a way of allowing commoners to ensure that collective decisions will only safeguard individual freedom. As active members of groups, ranging from households, private clubs, various workplaces, trade unions, and neighbourhoods, people generally have an interest in living according to their collective will. Participatory democracy enables people to enjoy their life according to their collective will.

6) *Nourishment of Community life:* - Participatory democracy boosts community life and augments good social relationships in a number of ways. For example, participatory democracy seeks to strengthen identification with the community because people feel that they are accepted and that their voice is being heard. Reasonable involvement in democratic practices like decision-making process, forces people to listen to others and take their interests into account. Thus we can say that participatory democracy also promotes public spirit.

7) *Free competition for political power* – In participatory democracy there is free competition for securing political power. Multiple political parties compete with each other in elections to secure political power. Through participatory democracy people get an opportunity to consider various alternative policies, programmes and personalities to exercise their choice.

2.7 Deliberative democracy

Deliberative democracy is the most important form of democracy in which there is greater insistence on discussion, debate, deliberation and exchange of viewpoints. Thus it is best example of engaged form of people's participation. The most important aspect of this democracy is the involvement of citizens reasonable participation in the decision making process. Popular and public participation can be described as the deliberative process by which conscientious citizens, civil society groups, and government actors are involved in actual legislative procedure and they are responsible for policy-making. In a nutshell, it is assumed that in this form of democracy crucial legislative actions and important political decision are made on the basis of fair and rational debate and deliberation among the citizens. Joseph M. Bessette is considered as the pioneering figure so far as popularity of the concept of deliberative democracy is concerned. He actually coined the term "deliberative democracy" in his 1980 work "Deliberative Democracy: The Majority Principle in Republican Government".

Definition of deliberative democracy- *" Deliberation is an approach to decision-making that involves an informed public, thinking critically together and discussing options from multiple points of view. It encourages enlarged perspectives, opinions, and understandings and can result in better decisions and policies."* ***(http://www.deliberative-democracy.net/)***

Importantance of deliberation

In deliberation, or discussion the common people and active citizens exchange their views through a medium of arguments and consider different claims that are designed to secure the public good. The final outcome of these deliberations and discussion results in arriving on an agreement about what procedure, action, or policy will be best suited for the public good. In a nutshell deliberation is a necessary precondition for the legitimacy of democratic political decisions.

The most important aspect of this democracy is its insistence and belief in rationality of citizens. It believes that rather than representation the citizens themselves should arrive at political decisions through reason and the collection of competing arguments and viewpoints. In other words, citizens' preferences should be shaped by deliberation in advance of decision making, rather than by self-interest. With respect to individual and collective citizen decision making, deliberative democracy shifts the emphasis from the outcome of the decision to the quality of the process. Basic features of deliberative democracy are as follows.

a) Sovereignty of the people:-Popular sovereignty or the sovereignty of the people is the doctrine that prescribes that, legitimacy of the state is created by the will or consent of its people. It rests on the belief that people are the source of political power. Popular sovereignty expresses a concept and does not necessarily reflect or describe a political reality. In deliberative democracy the people are considered as sovereign in nature. This democracy is premised on the acceptance of the notion of popular sovereignty and its institutionalisation in the form of citizens' rights. In deliberative democratic system it is assumed that, within a specified territory people's sovereignty is derived from their collective voice and it is the basis upon which democratic decision making takes place. Peoples control over the decision making process is secured through variety of institutions.

b) It recognizes conflict of interest: - Deliberative democracy gives importance and sincerely recognizes the principle of tolerance and conflict of interest between the participants in major debates. If there is general debate and open discussion on securing one's own interest then this democracy will upheld this conflictual debate. The basic objective of this practice is to accommodate the marginalized, isolated and the ignored groups in the decision making process. It prefers to extensively tolerate the dissent, grounds for dissent, and future possibilities of consequences of actions

c) Government based upon consent of the people: - In political theory the notion of consent of the governed, refers to the idea that a government's legitimacy and moral right to use state power is only justified and lawful when consented to by the people or society over which that political power is exercised. Deliberative democracy implies the consent of the governed which rests implicitly on the recognition of the effective political equality of the individuals. Rational consent can be obtained by persuasion for which an atmosphere of free discussion is essential.

d) Protection of minority rights: - Rule of majority is the basic maxim of democratic form of governance. The postulate of majority rule may jeopardise the rights of minorities. The promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to the political and social stability of States in which they live. Deliberative democracy therefore requires minority rights equally as it does majority rule. Indeed, as democracy is understood today, the minority's rights must be protected no matter how alienated a minority is from the majority society. The adherents of deliberative democracy have started developing scholarly arguments in favour of special rights and safeguards of minorities to enable them to preserve their distinct identities based on religion, language, culture etc.

e) Multiculturalism: - Multiculturalism is generally understood as a school of thought that supports the cultural and religious rights of minority communities. It **upholds the viewpoint** that cultures, races, and ethnicities, particularly those of minority groups, deserves special acknowledgement within a dominant political culture. One of the most important safeguards of democracies is demanding greater public recognition of distinctive identities of minorities. Democracy rests on the greater freedom and opportunity to retain and develop distinctive cultural practices of minority. Such practice may be called as multiculturalism which is the strongest precepts of democracy.

f) Due process of law. Due process is a system of legal proceedings wherein legal rights of individuals are protected. The core of procedural due process is the idea that government action that deprives the individual of life, liberty or property must accord with the rule of law. Such action must be non-arbitrary; hence, individuals must be given notice of the reasons for an impending deprivation of life, liberty or property and they must be given a fair opportunity to respond to the allegations made. Today, the requirements of due process are seen central to the democratic system.

* * * * *

3

Citizenship: Republican and Liberal; Universal and Differentiated; Citizenship and Globalization.

Structure

3.0 Objectives

In this chapter, we try to answer some fundamental questions on citizenship. What is the concept of citizenship, how did it evolve? What is its meaning ? What is the role of citizenship in a democracy? How do we analyse and update our understanding about citizenship in a changed society and a globalized world? What does increase migration towards developed countries mean for citizenship? How do we understand the responses of countries to such issues? What does this mean for democracies across the world and how to reconcile democratic values with poverty eradication and human rights? These are some of the issues that are discussed below. It is expected that as students of Political Science, the readers will be able to grasp some of these concerns and develop her/his understanding on the topic.

3.1 Introduction

Citizenship implies rights and obligations or duties in exchange of membership to a political community within a country. It is a reciprocal relationship between individual and the state. However, the exact nature of relationship remains disputable and hence needs discussion. It is important to note that there exist differing views about citizenship. These involve mainly, looking at citizenship as a legal status versus as an identity. Thus, legality and identity are the chief components of citizenship. The precise nature of citizen's rights and obligations and balance between the two is the most debatable part. Apart from this, in practice there exists competing views on its nature, namely, social and active citizenship. The discussion on citizenship remains incomplete without discussing the emergence of modern multi-cultural societies and ability of citizenship rights to emancipate disadvantaged groups. Apart from establishing a rights-based citizenship, the debate also involves a redistributive aspect.

Certain rights endow legality to citizenship but only in a formal manner. And this in turn, goes against social justice principles. As a result, socially disadvantaged or racially discriminated 'second class citizens' feel alienated from state. Therefore, citizenship must have a subjective/psychological component. Therefore, political philosophers have tried to redress this problem by arguing for 'differential citizenship'. For the main issues involved in the concept of citizenship, let us first look at the dimensions and theoretical arguments.

3.2 Liberal Democracy

It is important to note here that discussions on citizenship require a liberal democratic set-up. In other words, the liberal democratic framework allows discussions on the various issues involved in citizenship. There has been a growing interest in discussing philosophical issues involved in citizenship, especially since 1990s. This was a result of two main challenges, that led to reexamining the concept in the 90s decade: firstly, it was an outcome of the acknowledgment of the growing diversity of liberal democracies across the world; secondly, globalization led pressures on territorial sovereign state also forced rethinking citizenship in order to find answers for the new challenges that it faced, in a changed world.

3.3 Three Dimensions of Citizenship

The concept of citizenship involves three main aspects, namely:

1) Citiz enship as **legal status**;
2) as **active participation** of individual members in the affairs of the political community; and
3) as membership of a political community that becomes a significant **source of identity** for the individual.

Identity dimension involves several issues, mainly pertaining to, both individual and collective identity, and of social integration of members in the political community. Importantly, it is unavoidable that the citizens sense of belonging has a direct correlation to the sense of the collective identity of a country. Therefore, social integration of members is an important goal or problem that citizenship aims to resolve.

In addition, there exists a complex relation between three dimensions. Citizen rights decide the degree of political participation and also fix the source of their identity in the community. This in turn leads to strengthening of sense of self-respect and encourages citizens to participate in civic and political activities actively. In countries where certain groups have a distinct /separate identity than the larger/dominant political community, it is necessary to recognize such differences. And, this also means that such groups are given special rights that recognize such differential requirements.
Four disagreements about different citizenship conceptions:

1) precise definition of each element;
2) their relative importance;
3) causal/conceptual relations between them; and
4) about the appropriate normative standards to regulate citizenship.

3.4 Social Citizenship vs Active Citizenship

T H Marshall's *'Citizenship and Social Class' (1963)* serves as an important starting point on the philosophical issues involved in citizenship.

Marshall's idea of social citizenship involves 'universality'. It emphasizes relationship between citizenship and achievement of the democratic goal of achieving social equality. Citizenship is a social status linked to full participation in community affairs. Therefore, this was incompatible with class inequality that existed within the capitalist system. Hence, social citizenship associated with welfare state development aimed at providing a minimum standard of living for all.

The idea of social citizenship gained wide acceptance and popularity in 20th century. Civil rights movements, in addition to legal and political demands, also started to demand social issues. This was seen in the demands made in the United States of America's civil rights movements in 1960s, the movements for socially disadvantaged groups, the United Nations UDHR included social rights.

The chief way for establishing social citizenship was a welfare-oriented state and the gradual expansion of its functions. For Marshall, "social rights were crucial to the working class's progressive integration in British society" (Marshall 1950). They were inextricably bound up with welfare provision and the modern state's capacity to ensure for all "a modicum of economic welfare and security"(Leydet, 2017).

Apart from Marshall, the chief advocates also insisted upon vitality of government intervention for 'positive' alongside 'negative' rights. For them, as modern liberals, the social disadvantages 'undermine sense of citizenship'. Further, the social democrats also regarded social and economic rights as civilized life's foundation. It was argued that social citizenship gives all citizens "a meaningful stake in society". It also promotes material equality.

Marshall's (1963) three-fold classification of Rights- was criticized for: emphasizing social rights; exclusion of economic rights, women's rights as well as global citizenship. It emphasizes rights as well as obligations (duties and responsibilities). It corresponds to each type of citizenship rights. Critics highlights the need for these to be underpinned by 'civic virtue' (Derek Heater, 1990) that is loyalty to state and willingness to accept community's responsibility. Therefore, 'education for citizenship' is important in several countries.

Heater's notion of 'multiple citizenship' argues that citizens have a broader range of loyalties and responsibilities over and above the nation state. Therefore, liberal democracy subscribes to 'limited citizenship' vs 'total citizenship' of totalitarian state.

Neoliberal critics challenged the idea and proved to be the most severe critic of social citizenship. Political right argued that such a view of citizenship was an unrealistic view of government capacities to ensure welfare; led to relentless growth in government responsibilities; damaged the possibilities of economic growth; and undermined enterprise and individual initiative.

This criticism led to the development of 'active citizenship' out of the New Right citizenship model. This was inspired from two faces of contrasting active citizenship's traditions': one emphasized self-reliance; other focused on duty and responsibilities.

3.5 Active Citizenship based on New Right/Neo-Liberalism

Inspired by the growth of neoliberal ideas about within economics and politics, active citizenship, was developed as alternative to social citizenship. In this, is included Samuel Smiles concept of 'self-help'. It looks at citizenship as based on "enterprise, hard work and self-reliance". On the economic front this involves relieving the burden on public finance and resources of the state that are needed to implement welfare policies. This was mainly taking away the welfare orientation of the modern state and reorienting it as a 'regulatory state'. Morally, this meant, the promotion of individual dignity and self-respect due to its emphasis on 'self-help'. However, the major flaw in such an understanding was that it considered private qualities of individuals as equal to citizenship.

Another approach was the one by neo-conservatives, who focused on civil duties and refused to acknowledge the idea of rights-based citizenship. They, criticized Marshall's 'citizenship of entitlement' which led to the notion of rights bearing citizens without any corresponding duties or obligations. It was argued, that citizens without duties leads to "social fragmentation and permissiveness-selfishness, greed and lack of respect for both social institutions and fellow human beings"

Above arguments led to the growing understanding since the 1980s that civic engagement had weakened due to citizens' rights-based claims. This led to several western governments adopting a 'third way' of policies that aimed to adopt "rights and responsibilities" agenda. One of the ways to implement this kind of citizenship role was to replace Higher Education grants with student loans system along with introduction of tuitions fees. This was based on the argument that the "student do not merely have access to education, but the duty to pay for it."
Critics of active citizenship, was strongly rejected this and argued that it undermines a concern for rights and claims. Further, active citizenship based on self-help and obligations is bound to increase existing inequalities.

In the next section, let us examine the different types of citizenships as discussed in the syllabus.

Check Your Progress

1. **Explain the concept of Citizenship**
2. **What are the main elements of Citizenship**
3. **Distinguish between social and active citizenship.**

3.6 Republican and Liberal Citizenship

The two models of citizenship based on republican and liberal ideals, serve as the main source of discussions on the concept.

While the republican model is drawn from works of authors ranging from Aristotle to Rousseau. It is also based on ideas taken from ancient Greek Athenian democracy to Italian city states and worker's councils. The main idea here is derived from Aristotle's formulation who saw "citizens, as capable of ruling and being ruled in turn".

Rousseau's social contract involving the "general will" also emphasizes citizens participation in deliberation and decision making. It ensures that individuals remain

active and participating citizens and not docile/passive members of the political community. Therefore, this model also highlights another aspect, that of, political agency or active participation as inherent to citizenship.

On the other hand, the liberal model has its roots in the Roman empire and modern interpretations and views on Roman law. The expansion of Roman empire meant extension of protection to those who were newly conquered. However, this was only limited to protection by law and did not include any kind of participation in decision making. In other words, this meant emphasis on only first dimension of citizenship, namely, as a legal status rather than as an opportunity to participate in the civic affairs. Positively speaking, in this manner, the idea of citizenship was inclusive and limitless in its extent.

Later, in the seventeenth century, the liberal tradition emphasized that political liberty was important to protect individual freedoms. However, this was to be exercised by citizens in private and not in the public domain.

Based on above, it is clear that both notions of citizenship, involved different implications: while republican version involved citizenship as a political office, the liberal version involved the same as legal status. It is clear, that the liberal democratic model prevailed in the contemporary constitutional democracies, although representative critique of passive citizenship remains relevant and robust till date.

Major criticism of republican model comes from those like Benjamin Constant, 1819, (cited in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy) who argue that it has become irrelevant because of the sheer vastness and complexity of the modern state. Further, the heterogeneous character of modern states challenges the functioning of republican institutions (Walzer, 1989). However, republican model continues to serve as an indicator of the vibrancy of our institutions and functions (Miller 2000, 84).

In sum, both versions can be seen as complementing each other, as political liberty ensures importance of individual freedom, while participation helps build collective sense of belonging. Both, political liberty and active participation help protect individual liberties and the institutions that are needed to preserve liberty under the modern state.

3.7 Feminist Critique: Public vs Private as 'Socially Constructed'

A strong critique of both the above models comes from feminist thinkers. They criticize both republican and liberal citizenship models for their shared assumption of the separation of public and private sphere. Alternatively, feminist propose that the

rigid division of human life into public versus private is based on myths and perpetuates inequality in household. This hinders the creation of an egalitarian family that is a requirement for creating a basis for equality amongst citizens. The liberal model emphasizes the private sphere and treats wives as subordinate to husbands, and this strict division has denied women, as members of political community, the access to public sphere.

Feminist see the public versus private distinction as a deliberate "social construction" for subjugation of women. They argue that this can be contested and reformed in a manner that does not rank men and women in a hierarchy or as superior and inferior. They further claim that such rearrangement of the political sphere would have a positive impact on private, social and economic spheres. In sum, the feminist view point helps contextualize and revive the political and has led to alternative thinking on citizenship based on recognition of differences among members of a state.

Check your progress

1. **What are the main elements of Republican Citizenship/Liberal Citizenship?**
2. **Briefly discuss the chief criticisms of Republican/Liberal Citizenship.**
3. **Write a note on the Feminist Critique of Citizenship**

3.8 Universal Citizenship and Diversity

Universal citizenship model, mainly developed by Marshall, acquired significance in post-world war II liberal democracies. He emphasized that significance of social rights expansion was important for integration of working class in the British society as well as the other western democracies. Sceptics argues, however, that in spite of citizenship rights extension, there was no transformation in the integration and social equality for Afro Americans and Women. They questioned the assumption that legal status led to civic integration.

The concept of universal citizenship is based on the liberal notion of separation between public versus private spheres of life. This is portrayed as "difference-blind" due to its focus for uniform rights for all. This is because it does not take into account the differences among citizen groups. Its emphasis on universality has given the idea

of citizenship its radical and change oriented character. Thus, the disadvantaged sections demand replacement of 'second-class citizenship' with full citizenship. This is demanded in terms of right to equal treatment and equal participation.

However, increased awareness of diverse and pluralist nature of modern societies led to questioning of universal citizenship. Critics alleged the model as exclusionist because it kept out the particular views to achieve majoritarian goals and that difference blind laws and policies further increased inequalities for minorities. Hence, critics advance an alternative conception of citizenship that recognizes the pluralist nature of democracies and special rights of minorities.

Hence, Iris Young advocated "differentiated" citizenship that included group differences. It is assumed here that modern pluralistic societies are far from homogenous. The norms and values of the dominant determine the nature and extent of equal treatment. This in turn prevents disadvantaged groups from taking full advantage of their formally equal status. The idea of universal citizenship hides the disadvantages and unequal participation for weaker sections. Hence, Young calls for recognition of "special rights" along with universal rights. However, these were demanded only for specific categories like women, disabled or the elderly.

Multiculturalist justify special rights on the basis of need to conserve the distinct identities of particular groups. They take into account the pluralistic nature of many modern societies reflected in growing evidence of communal diversity and identity related difference. It is usually associated with cultural difference of race, ethnicity or language and upholds differences and need to be respected and publicly recognized cause of multiculturalism taken in the USA in form or Black rights movement, 1960; Australia since 1970 acknowledges 'Asianization'; New Zealand's recognition of Maori culture towards forming a national identity; Canada's reconciliation between French speaking Quebec and English speaking majority; and recognition of importance of black and Asian communities in UK and Western Europe.

Multiculturalists and Minority Rights advocates have supported differentiated citizenship by way of special representation rights; multicultural rights; and self-government rights. On the other hand, in response to issues of social and civic unity, liberal democracies have attempted to integrate immigrants by way of compulsory requirement of language proficiency test for citizenship eligibility. Measures like banning religious symbols from public schools, laws that withdraw citizenship from those involved in terror activities. This has in turn given rise to further issues that involve western culture and religion.

The minority rights issue, reconciles citizenship with cultural diversity. It goes on to include group specific efforts to accommodate national and ethnic differences. Will Kymlicka's three kinds of Minority rights are:

1) Self-governing rights for national minorities;
2) Polyethnic rights for ethnic groups and religious minorities; and
3) Special rights to address underrepresentation of disadvantaged groups, taking the form of reverse or positive discrimination.

Apart from ensuring full and equal participation, it makes sure that public policies reflect the concerns and interests of all groups and peoples and not merely of those from traditional dominant groups.

Multiculturalism and minority rights doctrine was criticized on the following grounds:

1) Emphasized division among people rather than unite them;
2) Social stability requires shared values and common culture; and
3) For the leftists, multicultural societies are bound to be welfare oriented and have low political participation.

Some liberal theorists question such emphasis on intense diversity's aggregability with survival of liberal polity. They find it difficult to accept cultural practices that are illiberal and orthodox. Instead, they replace this with respect for Human Rights over and above group identity and traditional values. Liberals also support representation and group rights.

Poly ethnic rights are criticized for their focus on exemption from laws or regulations that are needed due to cultural distinctiveness. This it is argued comes at the cost of civic and political values that demand respect from all. For instance, France's ban on all dress and symbols from schools to uphold liberal secularism.

With the spread of globalization, and its related flows of humans and materials, several new challenges have arisen in thinking about citizenship. It is to this, that we now turn, in order to grasps some key issues involved in a globalized world.

Check your progress

1. What is Universal/Differentiated Citizenship?

2. Explain the main criticism of Universal/Differentiated Citizenship.

3. Differentiate between Universal and Differentiated Citizenship.

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3.9 Citizenship and Globalization: Is Global Citizenship Possible ?

Developments related to globalization have increasingly brought into question the 'territorial' requirement of citizenship. The questions raised in this regard with respect to citizenship involve three issues :

1) Tighter immigration control amidst growing inequality globally;
2) Questioning of differential rights between citizens and non-citizens within a state's boundaries; and
3) Citizenship's need for a democratic nation state

3.10 Citizenship and the issue of borders

As far as moral right of political community to decide who can/cannot acquire citizenship is concerned, then the answer to this has a direct bearing on the right to freedom of movement. Based on one's understanding of our obligation towards strangers, immigrants, it is possible to form redistributive policies and mutual aid. Those who call for 'open borders' use three ways to argue in its favor:

1) They argue that freedom of movement is a fundamental right and requires important changes in the policies of western countries towards immigrants and refugees.
2) Also, they deny the democratic state's right to control its borders without due consideration for migrants' issues.
3) The idea of open borders is to be strongly pursued to achieve distributive justice across the globe.

The above involves the rights of those from poorer countries towards the developed ones. It is seen as an obligation or duty of advanced countries towards poverty eradication and achievement of equality.

Michael Walzer points to the fact that state's democracy and political integrity is crucial towards developing a sense of solidarity amongst individuals. However, it is important to point out here that the modern state's pluralist nature go against Walzer's requirement of distributive justice that requires redistribution of resources and opportunities in an interconnected world.

Habermas highlights the importance of political culture, that should precede over the background culture or majority's culture. In turn migrants should embrace the liberal democratic principles (that constitutes political culture) of their new country. This will bring different influences to shape the future political culture.

Liberal nationalists like Will Kymlicka, favor intense cultural integrity as important for individual interests and also of the state. However, under severe inequality, integration policies should not harm, but should be able to enhance liberty to citizens and aliens equally.

3.11 Rights: Citizens and non-citizens

Baubook refers to mismatch in entitlement to citizenships of residents and immigrants. The stakeholder principle is an alternative to claim permanent citizenship for those whose "life prospects depend on the country's laws and policy choices". However, critics question such tight correlation between citizenship, territory and state authority in a globalization led changes in relations between individuals and states. As a response, contemporary democracies have begun to extend civil and social rights to all individuals within their territories. Human Rights has made such a delinking of rights from territory possible at international level.

The debate over voting rights emphasized that the voting rights are best seen as territorial while citizenship rights are understood as fluid/do not need membership of a territorial state.

Voting rights to expatriates (nonresidents of a country, who have moved to another country. E.g., NRIs in USA or Europe) has been severely criticized for "re-ethnicization of citizenship" and also pose a danger to the resident citizens right to self-determination due to non-resident voters.

Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the impact of globalization on the idea of citizenship.
2. Explain the challenges to citizenship in a globalized world.

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3.12 Conclusion:

Citizenship has evolved along with major changes in the states. Modern states brought to the fore the sheer complexity of dealing with huge populations, often of mixed nature. The advent of rights-based citizenship corresponded with the idea of a state that was responsible for the wellbeing of its residents. This led to universal rights-based citizenship that was based on rightful claims of members of the political

community within the state. With the surge of neoliberal ideas and the growth of a market led economic policies, the state assumed the role of a regulator. Based on such neoliberal ideas, citizenship also shed its welfare orientation and theorists claimed that the citizens had duties towards the state and were supposed to show initiative and enterprise rather than make right based claims on the state.

While the universal citizenship was a result of liberal democratic values, multicultural states saw the rise of social movements that demanded recognition of special and different needs of those who were disadvantaged. This led to the development of differentiated citizenship, that recognized that citizens had differences due to social inequality, and that special or minority rights were compatible with the democratic ideal of social equality.

With the spread of globalization since 1990s, the rise in poverty and immigration towards western countries became a way to escape suffering and oppression. In this context, human rights demanded that all persons be given social and civil rights if democratic values are to achieved. Therefore, the issue of social integration became necessary in advanced democracies along with the problem of border control. Finally, if human rights are to be universalized, it remains the responsibility of each country to treat its immigrants and refugees in a human manner. These members present a problem for social integration, and hence liberal democratic government have made policies that aim to preserve liberal and secular values for all. While, minorities also have added to the discourse of right to freedom of movement and of the right to culture. Citizenship debate, thus has acquired new dimensions in the 21st century, and presents new challenges for liberal democracies who are committed to universal human rights.

3.13 References

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4

MODERNITY AND POST-MODERNISM

Structure

4.0 Objectives

- To understand the institutions and ways of living characteristic of Modernity have been replaced by Post-modernism
- To understand Post-Structuralism and critical theory in context of Post modernism

4.1 Introduction to Modernity

The history of the Western Political thought is full of twists and turns depending upon which era we are referring to. It all began with classical thinkers like Plato and Aristotle of the BC era. Then from the 4th century AD, the Christian Thought dominated for nearly a thousand years, from St Augustine [354 AD-430 AD] to St Thomas Aquinas [1225 AD-1274 AD].

Modernism.

It is interesting to note that the movement of Modernism began initially in the field of art. In the history of art, the term 'modern' refers to period through 1860s to 1970s. The scholars of western political thought argue that the roots of modernism go back to the middle of the 19th century. This has been a debatable issue among the scholars as for some historians; the modern period actually began in the 16th century, which is normally called the 'Early Modern Period'. They also regarded that this period in turns extends up to the 18th century. The intellectual foundation of modernism was laid during the Renaissance period when the study of art, poetry, philosophy and science of ancient Greece and Rome began in earnest. Basis this study the scholars focussed on the notion that man is the measures of all things. This study also promoted the idea of citizenship and civic consciousness. The period gave rise to 'utopian' visions of a more perfect society, beginning with Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, written in 1516. Here more had described a fictional island community with seemingly perfect social, political and legal customs.

In retrospect we can recognize in Renaissance humanism an expression of that confidence in the potential of humans to shape their own individual destinies and the future of the world. Also present here is the belief that humans can learn to understand nature and natural forces, and even grasp the nature of the Universe. The modernist approach that emerged in the Renaissance began to take shape as a larger pattern of thought in the 18th century. This era also saw a battle between the traditional values versus modern ideas. Modern thinkers felt suffocated under the restrictions imposed by religion, traditions and customs. This conflict introduced an important dichotomy that became fundamental to the modernist question: the battle between the tradition and the modern.

Enlightenment thinkers had pictured the human race as striving towards universal moral and intellectual self-realization. It was believed that reason allowed access to truth, and knowledge of the truth would better humankind. The vision that began to take shape in the 18th century was of a new world, a better world. In 1762, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his *Inquiry into the Nature of the Social Contract*, proposed that a new social system should rest on 'an equality that is moral and legitimate, and that men, who may be unequal in strength or intelligence, become every one equal by convention and legal right.' By joining together into civil society through the social contract, individuals could both preserve themselves and attain freedom. These tenets were fundamental to the notion of modernism.

The Age of Revolutions

The first great experiment in creating a new and better society was undertaken in what was literally the new world and the new ideals were first expressed in the *Declaration of Independence* of the newly founded United States in 1776. The Declaration mentioned 'we hold these truths to be self-evident' and which underpins the notion 'that all men are created equal.' The document further spoke of concern for man's right to pursue happiness in his lifetime, which signalled a shift away from a

God-centred, Christian concentration on the afterlife. Fundamental to this Declaration was the notion of freedom; liberty which were regarded as man's inalienable rights.

After the American Revolution came French Revolution, 1789. It also attempted to create a new society. Its aim was to supplant an oppressive absolute monarchy with an aristocracy with feudal privileges, and a powerful Catholic clergy, with new Enlightenment principles of citizenship, nationalism, and inalienable rights. No wonder the revolutionaries rallied to the cry of equality, fraternity, and liberty.
Unfortunately, the French Revolution failed to bring about a radically new society in France. Several changes of regime quickly followed culminating in Napoleon's military dictatorship, the establishment of the Napoleonic Empire, and finally the restoration of the monarchy in 1814. Revolutionary activity continued, though, in 1830 and again in 1848. Mention can be made here of a third major attempt to create a new society along fundamentally Enlightenment lines that took place at the beginning of the 20th century. The Russian Revolution, 1917, perhaps the most idealistic and utopian of all, also failed.

It is in the ideals of the Enlightenment that the roots of Modernism, and the new role of art and the artist, are to be found. Simply put, the overarching goal of Modernism, of modern art, has been the creation of a better society.

What were the means by which this goal was to be reached? If the desire of the 18th century was to produce a better society, how was this to be brought about? How does one go about perfecting humankind and creating a better world?
Until recently, this concept of the role of education has remained fundamental to western modernist thinking. Enlightened thinkers, and here might be mentioned for example Thomas Jefferson, constantly pursued knowledge, sifting out the truth by subjecting all they learned to reasoned analysis. Jefferson, of course, not only consciously cultivated his own enlightenment but also actively promoted education for others, founding in Charlottesville an 'academical village' that later became the University of Virginia. He believed that the search for truth should be conducted without prejudice, and, mindful of the Enlightenment suspicion of the Church, deliberately did not include a campus chapel in his plans. The Church and its narrow-minded influences, he felt, should be kept separate not only from the State but also from education.

Jefferson, like many other Enlightenment thinkers, saw a clear role for art and architecture. Art and architecture could serve in this process of enlightenment education by providing examples of those qualities and virtues that it was felt should guide the enlightened mind.

In the latter half of the 18th century, the model for the ideals of the new society was the world of ancient Rome and Greece. The Athens of Pericles and Rome of the Republican period offered fine examples of emerging democratic principles in government, and of heroism and virtuous action, self-sacrifice and civic dedication in the behaviour of their citizens.

The Moderns envisioned a world conceived anew, not one that merely imitated ancient models. The problem for the Moderns, however, was that their new world was something of an unknown quantity. The nature of 'truth' was problematical from the outset, and their dilemma over the nature of humans who possessed not only a rational mind open to reason but also an emotional life which had to be taken into account.

In the 18th century, the Enlightenment witnessed the intellectual maturation of the humanist belief in 'reason' as the primary guiding principle in the affairs of humans. Through reason the mind achieved enlightenment, and for the enlightened mind, a whole new and exciting world opened up.

The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement for which the most immediate stimulus was the Scientific Revolution of the 16th and 17th-centuries. Scientists like Johannes Kepler, Galileo Galilei, and Isaac Newton, through the application of reason to the study of the natural world, discovered many scientific truths. More often than not, these newfound truths based on science flew in the face of conventional beliefs, especially those held by the Church. For example, contrary to what the Church had maintained for centuries, the 'truth' was that the Earth revolved around the Sun. The idea that 'truth' could be discovered through the application of reason based on the study was quite exciting and challenged many conventional beliefs.

The open-minded 18th-century thinker believed that virtually everything could be submitted to reason: tradition, customs, morals, and even art. But, more than this, it was felt that the 'truth' revealed thereby could be applied in the political and social spheres to 'correct' problems and 'improve' the political and social condition of humankind. This kind of thinking quickly gave rise to the exciting possibility of creating a new and better society.

The 'truth' discovered through reason would free people from the shackles of corrupt institutions such as the Church and the monarchy whose traditional thinking and old ideas had kept people subjugated in ignorance and superstition. The concept of 'freedom' became central to the vision of a new society. Through truth and freedom, the world would be made into a better place.

Progressive 18th-century thinkers believed that a lot of humankind would be greatly improved through the process of enlightenment, from being shown the truth. With reason and truth in hand, the individual would no longer be at the mercy of religious authorities, which had constructed their own truths and manipulated them to their own self-serving ends. At the root of this thinking was the belief in the perfectibility of humankind. This was hailed as a triumph of modernism.

Challenges to Modernism

After the Second World War ended in 1945, the triumphalist perspective on modernism had to face serious challenges. It was felt that the modernist had failed the

world. The principles on which modernism stood, its belief in progress, human freedom, liberty and equality came to be questioned. The frontal question was: what had been achieved?

Though this was a pertinent question in the context of the destruction witnessed during the Second World War, it cannot be denied that modernism had a lot to show in terms of scientific progress, advances in education and medicine, voting rights, inclusive politics and physical comforts. But despite this, the world had to suffer two World wars in the early decades of the 20th century. Hence it was argued that modernism has not been able to create a better world. And in the post-second world war world, the answer was a big 'no'.

Interwar Years

In the period between World War One [1914-1918] and World War Two [1939-1945] progressive modernism continued to its onwards March, but now often in association with other forces. It should be recalled how progressive artists like Pablo Picasso actively supported the political revolution. Picasso had joined the communist party in 1944. He was followed by many other artists. For these progressive artists, the Russian Revolution, 1917 was a 'dream come true event.

The Russian Revolution was perhaps the boldest attempt to create a better society, adopting not a political democracy but an economic democracy that aimed at achieving economic equality. Communism offered the vision of universal freedom predicated on the freedom of ideas.

In 1932 under Josef Stalin, this freedom was sharply curtailed and modern art was forced to adopt a more conservative form, known as Socialist Realism. On the other side of the political spectrum, the suppression of modernist art in favour of propagandistic Socialist Realism also occurred in Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany. Hitler, too, had wanted to create a new and better society, but his method [Final Solution] of achieving it horrified the world. Whereas progressive modernism sought to improve a lot of all humankind, the Nazis, utilizing ideas derived from social Darwinism, aimed at establishing a superior and racially pure 'master race'. Under this project, humans who were considered racially inferior or were deemed medically, mentally, or physically defective, disabled, weak, or impure, were initially targeted for euthanasia or sterilization, but later were simply killed.

The Second World War and the Nazi Holocaust dealt a mortal blow to modernism. It shattered the modernist dream and defiled the impulse that sustained modern art. After the Second World War, optimism in the future was difficult to live with. To make matters worse, with the advent of the Cold War and the mindless nuclear arms race, any sort of future looked doubtful.

4.2 Introduction to Postmodernism

Scholars like Terry Eagleton summed up postmodernism as a style of thought which is suspicious of classical notions of truth, reason, identity and objectivity, of

single frameworks, grand narratives or ultimate grounds of explanation' However, there is no one unified theory of postmodernism. Instead, it should be regarded as a mode of interrogation that seeks to question assumptions and notions of rationality that characterise much of social science.

At the same time, it must be understood that while postmodernism has been highly influential in areas such as literary criticism and the study of international relations, it has not made a huge impact on the discipline of political science. In fact, many authors have dismissed postmodernism as irrelevant, despite the serious challenges it poses. Nevertheless, postmodernism should not be ignored. It has questioned the notions of progress and emancipation, attacked the philosophical position of traditional political science and denied the possibility of objective research and emphasised the socially constructed nature of reality. These are important contributions to a critical approach to political science. The challenges posed by the postmodernists to orthodoxy should not simply be dismissed.

The critique of positivism is one of the important contributions of postmodernism. Postmodern social theorists have argued that claims to 'objectivity are misleading and dangerous. Their work has exposed some of the assumptions and bias underlying supposedly objective studies. Postmodern critiques also highlight the huge limitation of modernism: the exclusion of marginalized from traditional political theory such as women, ethnic minorities, etc. This is why postmodernism becomes a potent tool for feminists and others wishing to empower their own social groups.

The method of deconstruction is a final significant contribution to political science. Deconstruction is certainly in line with postmodernism's suspicion of claims of truth and objectivity.

Postmodernism emerged from the existentialist and phenomenologist philosophies of Nietzsche, Heidegger, Husserl, etc. It is not surprising that it has many features in common with social phenomenology and ethnomethodology, which share some of the same philosophical precursors. Many of these aspects of phenomenology and ethnomethodology are reflected today in postmodernist texts: the rejection of Universalist theories, the emphasis on subjectivity, and the focus on uncovering concealed assumptions. However, they have been developed by postmodernists in order to interrogate language, history and culture and to question the validity of claims to have discovered a universal 'truth'.

A central feature of postmodern writing is scepticism towards 'meta' or 'grand' narratives, including liberalism, Marxism and other attempts to formulate a universal political theory. These theories overlook the diversity of the social world and hold a sceptical view of meta-narrative. This scepticism is reflected in the works of authors such as Jacques Derrida, who criticised the totalising effect of structuralism and queried whether meaning could really only be said to have importance within the totality of a unified system or narrative. This critique of metanarratives is fundamental to postmodernists' rejection of the project of modernity, itself a grand narrative.

Postmodernism

The beginning can be traced to Kant's "Copernican revolution," that is, his assumption that we cannot know things in themselves and that objects of knowledge must conform to our faculties of representation. Ideas such as God, freedom, immortality, the world, the first beginning, and final end have only a regulative function for knowledge since they cannot find fulfilling instances among objects of experience.

The later nineteenth century is the age of modernity as an achieved reality, where science and technology, including networks of mass communication and transportation, reshape human perceptions. There is no clear distinction, then, between the natural and the artificial experience. Indeed, many proponents of postmodernism challenge the viability of such a distinction. A consequence of achieved modernism is what postmodernists might refer to as de-realization. De-realization affects both the subject and the objects of experience, such that their sense of identity, constancy, and substance is upset or dissolved.

The term "postmodernism" first entered the philosophical lexicon in 1979, with the publication of *The Postmodern Condition* by Jean-François Lyotard. Normally scholars cite the events of May 1968 [popularly known as 'Paris Uprising'] as a watershed moment for modern thought and its institutions, especially the universities. There has been a very serious debate on postmodernism. Nobody suggests that postmodernism is an attack upon modernity or a complete departure from it. Rather, its differences lie within modernity itself, and postmodernism is a continuation of modern thinking in another mode.

The computer age has transformed knowledge into information, that is, coded messages within a system of transmission and communication? Analysis of this knowledge calls for pragmatics of communication insofar as the phrasing of messages, their transmission and reception, must follow rules in order to be accepted by those who judge them. However, as scholars have pointed out, the position of judge or legislator is also a position within a language game, and this raises the question of legitimation. As he insists, "there is a strict interlinkage between the kind of language called science and the kind called ethics and politics", and this interlinkage constitutes the cultural perspective of the West. Science is therefore tightly interwoven with government and administration, especially in the information age, where enormous amounts of capital and large installations are needed for research.

Postmodernism as a critique of Positivism

Postmodernism's critique of positivism is a potentially important contribution to political analysis. While most political scientists do not label themselves positivists, they often rely implicitly upon the positivist tenets that experience is the basis of knowledge and it is possible to reflect the world objectively, without relying upon philosophical and theoretical assumptions

Postmodernism has done much to challenge this positivistic attitude in the social sciences. Michel Foucault, a key postmodern thinker (although he rejected the label), is noted for his appraisal of the social sciences. He dismissed social scientists' claims to objectivity and neutrality by showing how they conflated moral and legal norms into

scientific truth. For example, Foucault asserted that crime was judged against a scientific 'knowledge of what was normal and that punishment had come to be legitimated as much by social science as by the legal system. Deviations from the law came to be seen as offences against 'objectively' known human nature.

Specifically, Foucault expanded Nietzschean historic philosophy in order to question beliefs and aspects of everyday life – such as madness or sexuality – thought to be timeless. For example, in his first major work *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault argues that the modern experience of madness, rather than being grounded in unchanging scientific fact, has its roots in the 'Great Confinement' of the seventeenth century when 'unreasonable' members of society were placed in asylums.

Jacques Derrida advanced an equally significant critique of positivism. To Derrida, all discourses, including supposedly scientific reports, rely on concealed assumptions and cannot be understood without them. As with Foucault, these texts also present a certain view of the world as objective truth. Thus, traditional status-attainment research which defined social mobility in terms of the occupational status of one's father was far from neutral: it presented a view of the social world where only men worked or should work, and in fact misrepresented reality by ignoring women who worked. Derrida pioneered the technique of 'deconstruction' in order to expose the hidden assumptions of texts.

These critiques are valuable ways in which to interrogate the positivistic attitude underlying much of political theory and research. Foucault and Derrida's contributions to political analysis have shown that ideas, institutions and language conceal assumptions and presuppositions about the social world, and provided methods for exposing these assumptions. In uncovering the values and assumptions underlying supposedly neutral research and political theory, postmodernists have greatly aided critical analysis of political science.

Postmodernist critiques often lead to the conclusion that absolute truths cannot be attained because all theory and research are based on subjective norms, and all theory and research present a view of the world that is far from neutral. As above, however, the conclusion that claims to truth are always flawed is internally inconsistent. Rather, we should conclude from these critiques of the positivistic attitude that objective truth is difficult to access – though not necessarily impossible – and that self-reflection is essential if it is to be obtained.

Postmodernism condemns the exclusion of the weaker groups and seeks to shift political science's focus to them. As it emphasises what a large amount of political thought takes for granted or even views as 'common sense' (e.g. issues of gender, race or sexuality), this approach has a great deal to offer critical analysis. Thus, the postmodernist critique of the status-attainment research cited above reveals the dominance of a male viewpoint and the marginalised status of women in political inquiry.

This approach has clear utility for those wishing to critique and transform the existing political order. All critical theory is keen to tackle inequality, and it is clear that

political research and other discourses have a part to play in making unequal power relations seem natural. It is possible to confront these discourses within a foundationalism framework that allows for some truths to be known about the world. In fact, the contradictions inherent in postmodernism show that this is the only way this task can meaningfully be undertaken. Critical analysts can learn a lot from postmodernism's attempt to '[allow] the other to speak'.

The Criticism against postmodernism

This approach was famously dismissed by Habermas in 1981. Habermas was concerned that postmodernism's rejection of modernity undermined the modern project of emancipation. Habermas connected the postmodern rejection of grand narratives with neoconservative attempts to link progressive ideology to extremism. Postmodernism can thus be interpreted as a rejection of progressive politics. In emphasising diversity, a plurality of experiences and the decline of the metanarrative, postmodernism also reject the notion that the social sciences can provide universal, solid foundations on which to ground political theory and action. Since this argument has some merit, Habermas dismissal of postmodernism as a neoconservative project has some justification.

A further criticism of this approach to grand narratives points out that the postmodern critique of metanarratives is itself a metanarrative, and therefore 'silenced by the very voice that expresses it'. Postmodernism's suspicion of claims to truth is founded on a similar contradiction. As Habermas has demonstrated, all communication relies on the concept of truth, even if the speaker knows what they are saying to be untrue. In other words, claims to truth are a necessary condition of communication and as such, postmodern texts rely on the very condition of truth they try to deny.

However, scepticism towards metanarratives and truth claims does not have to lead to their rejection. This element of postmodernism can be of use to critical analysis if reasserted properly. The postmodernist approach may be seen as a way to interrogate narrative forms of knowledge and to give voices to those who have been excluded.

Conclusion

Postmodernism is, on the whole, problematic. What is more, postmodernism's insistence on the lack of validity of truth claims is a contradiction. The critique of the metanarrative is itself a metanarrative; the critique of notions of 'truth' is itself a claim to truth. In short, postmodernism's scepticism makes it inconsistent and unreliable. This does not mean that postmodernism has not made any useful contributions to political science as a discipline. While its input has largely been ignored or dismissed, it has the potential to greatly aid critical theory and analysis.

Postmodernism's first great contribution to the discipline has been its appraisal of positivism. Postmodern theorists have exposed the hidden values, assumptions and generalisations underpinning supposedly objective, value-free research. Theorists such as Derrida and Foucault have shown social and political theory and research to be

founded upon subjective principles, and that this research, in turn, helps to legitimate the existing political order. As such, postmodernist work is a valuable resource for those wishing to critique and challenge power relations in society. Postmodernism has also brought attention to the 'other': those who are marginalised, ignored or repressed. By emphasising what political theory and discourse excludes the postmodern approach shows how unequal power relations are created and provides a way of tackling them. This is an especially important contribution for feminists, minority groups and anyone desiring to confront social exclusion and marginalisation. Finally, the postmodern method of deconstruction has an important role to play in critique. While it does not offer a sound basis for political action, it can aid political theory by forcing a rethink of what the 'political' is and by uncovering the hidden values and assumptions mentioned above.

To conclude, it may be said that while postmodernism may not have had a huge impact on the discipline of political science, it has certainly made some positive contributions. These contributions should not simply be dismissed because of the flaws inherent in the postmodern perspective. Rather, they have much to offer critical political analysis, and postmodernism can teach critical theorists a great deal.

Check your progress

1. Discuss the post-modernist theory and its characteristics

2. Write about positivism in critical view of Post-modernists

4.3 Deconstructionism

Jacques Derrida [1930-2004] is best known for developing a form of semiotic analysis known as 'deconstruction'. He had analysed numerous texts and developed them in the context of phenomenology. He is one of the important scholars associated with 'post-structuralism' and 'postmodern philosophy'. During his career, Derrida published more than 40 books and more than hundreds of essays. Derrida had addressed ethical and political themes in his work. Some scholars consider 'Speech and Phenomena' [1967] to be his most important work. His other books are 'Of Grammatology' [1967], 'Writing and Difference' [1967] and 'Margins of Philosophy' [1972]. These books impacted various activists and political movements.

Derrida was born on July 15, 1930, in Algeria in a Mizrahi Jew family. He moved to Paris in 1949. In earlier years, he was influenced by Rousseau, Nietzsche, Gide, Camus and Sartre. In 1956 he received a scholarship to study at Harvard University, USA. In 1966 he wrote 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences. This gained him recognition in international circles. The same year he published the three books mentioned above. In 1986 Derrida became Professor of the Humanities at the University of California, Irvine, where he taught until shortly

before his death in 2004. He was a regular visiting professor at several other major American and European universities like John Hopkins University, Yale University. He died in a hospital in Paris on 9th October 2004.

A deconstruction is an approach to understanding the relationship between text and meaning. It was brought into discussion by the philosopher Jacques Derrida, a 20th-century French philosopher who wrote the book 'Of Grammatology' in 1967. Derrida's original use of the word "deconstruction" was a translation of 'Destruktion', a concept from the work of Martin Heidegger that Derrida sought to apply to textual reading. Heidegger's term referred to a process of exploring the categories and concepts that tradition has imposed on a word and the history behind them.

In its simplest form, it can be regarded as a criticism of Platonism and the idea of true forms, or essences, which take precedence over appearances. Deconstruction instead places the emphasis on appearance, or suggests, at least, that essence is to be found in appearance. Deconstruction argues that language, especially ideal concepts such as truth and justice, is quite complex and impossible to determine. To this end, Derrida follows a long line of modern philosophers, who look backwards to Plato and his influence on the Western metaphysical tradition. Like Nietzsche, Derrida suspects Plato of dissimulation in the service of a political project, namely the education, through critical reflections, of a class of citizens more strategically positioned to influence the polis. However, like Nietzsche, Derrida is not satisfied merely with such a political interpretation of Plato, because of the particular dilemma modern humans find themselves in. His Platonic reflections are inseparably part of his critique of modernity.

In his book 'Of Grammatology', he had spoken of the majority of ideas influential within deconstruction. According to Derrida, language as a system of signs and words only has meaning because of the contrast between these signs. Words have meaning only because of contrast effects with other words. A concept, then, must be understood in the context of its opposite. For example, the word "being" does not have meaning without contrast with the word "nothing". It also means, meaning is never present, but rather is deferred to other signs. Derrida refers to this as 'metaphysic of presence. When one of the two terms governs the other or has the upper hand, for example, 'signified' over 'signifier', 'intelligible' over 'sensible', 'speech' over 'writing', etc. The first task of deconstruction is to find and overturn these oppositions inside text. But the final objective of deconstruction is not to surpass all oppositions, because it is assumed they are structurally necessary to produce sense-the oppositions simply cannot be suspended once and for all, as the hierarchy of dual oppositions always re-establishes itself as it is necessary to mean. Deconstruction only points to the necessity of an unending analysis that can make explicit the decisions and hierarchies intrinsic to all texts.

Derrida further argues that it is not enough to expose and deconstruct the way oppositions work and then stop there in a nihilistic or cynical position. To be effective, deconstruction needs to create new terms, not to synthesize the concepts in opposition,

but to mark their difference and eternal interplay. This explains why Derrida always proposes new terms in his deconstruction, not as a free play but from the necessity of analysis. Derrida called these 'undecidable' as they are "false verbal properties" that can no longer be included within philosophical binary opposition. Instead, they inhabit philosophical oppositions, resisting and organizing them, without ever constituting a third term or leaving room for a solution in the form of a 'Hegelian Dialectic'.

Contribution in deconstructionism:

Derrida referred to himself as a historian. He questioned assumptions of the Western philosophical tradition and also Western culture. He called his challenge to the assumptions of Western culture "Deconstruction" On some occasions, Derrida referred to deconstruction as a radicalization of a certain spirit of Marxism.

With his detailed readings of classical western philosophy, Derrida frequently argued that Western philosophy has uncritically allowed metaphorical depth models] to govern its conception of language and consciousness. He sees these unacknowledged assumptions as part of a "metaphysics of presence" to which philosophy has bound itself. Derrida argues, this creates "marked" or hierarchized binary oppositions that have an effect on everything from our conception of speech's relation to writing to our understanding of racial difference. Deconstruction is an attempt to expose and undermine such "metaphysics."

Derrida approaches texts as constructed around binary oppositions which all speech has to articulate if it intends to make any sense. This approach to the text is, in a broad sense, influenced by the semiology of Ferdinand de Saussure who is considered to be one of the fathers of 'structuralism', posited that term, get their meaning in reciprocal determination with other terms inside language.

Phenomenology v/s Structuralism

In the early 1960s, Derrida began speaking and writing publicly. One of the subjects on which he spoke was the new and increasingly fashionable movement of structuralism, which was being widely favoured as the successor to the phenomenology approach, which had been started by Husserl sixty years earlier. Phenomenology, as envisioned by Husserl, is a method of philosophical inquiry that rejects the rationalist bias that has dominated Western thought since Plato in favour of a method of reflective attentiveness that discloses the individual's "lived experience". Derrida's method consisted of demonstrating the forms and varieties of this ordinary complexity, and their multiple consequences in many fields. He achieved this by conducting thorough, careful, sensitive, and yet transformational readings of philosophical and literary texts, to determine what aspects of those texts run counter to their apparent systematicity or intended sense. Derrida hoped to show the infinitely subtle ways in which this originary complexity, which by definition cannot ever be completely known, works its structuring and de-structuring effects.

On several occasions, Derrida has acknowledged his debt to Husserl and Heidegger and stated that without them he would not have said a single word. Among

the questions asked in various essays are "What is 'meaning', what are its historical relationships to what is purportedly identified under the rubric 'voice' as a value of presence, presence of the object, presence of meaning to consciousness, self-presence in so-called living speech and in self-consciousness?

The collection of three books published in 1967 elaborated Derrida's theoretical framework. Derrida approached the very heart of the Western intellectual tradition, characterizing this tradition as "a search for a transcendental being that serves as the origin of meaning". He contributed to "the understanding of certain deeply hidden philosophical presuppositions and prejudices in Western Culture, arguing that the whole philosophical tradition rests on arbitrary dichotomous categories such as sacred/profane, mind/body. Any text contains implicit hierarchies, "by which an order is imposed on reality and by which a subtle repression is exercised, as these hierarchies exclude, subordinate, and hide the various potential meanings."

Some scholars argued that in the 1990s Derrida's work took a political turn. To support this observation, 'Force of Law' [1990], 'Spectres of Marx' [1994] and 'Politics of Friendship' [1994] are quoted.

Check your progress

1. Write about deconstruction theory and its contribution?

4.4 Post-structuralism

Post-structuralism is a term for philosophical, theoretical and literary forms of theory that both build upon and reject ideas established by structuralism. Though there are many critiques of structuralism, common themes among them include the rejection of the self-sufficiency of structuralism, as well as an interrogation of the binary oppositions that constitute its structures. Accordingly, post-structuralism discards the idea of interpreting media (or the world) within pre-established, socially constructed structures.

Structuralism proposes that one may understand human culture by means of a structure modelled on 'language', and this understanding differs from concrete 'reality' and from abstract 'ideas' by proposing, instead, a "third-order" that mediates between the two. On the other hand, a post-Structuralist critique might suggest that to build meaning out of such an interpretation, one must (falsely) assume that the definitions of these signs are both valid and fixed and that the author employing structuralist theory is somehow above and apart from these structures they are describing so as to be able to wholly appreciate them. The rigidity, tendency to categorize, and intimation of universal truths found in structuralist thinking is then a common target of post-structuralist thought, while also building upon structuralist conceptions of reality mediated by the interrelationship between signs.

Writers whose works are often characterised as Post-Structuralist are Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Judith Butler, Jean Baudrillard and Julia Kristeva. Though many theorists who have been called 'post-structuralist later rejected this label.

Background

Post-structuralism emerged in France during the 1960s as a movement critiquing structuralism. According to J G Merguior, a love-hate relationship with structuralism developed among many leading thinkers in the 1960s. The period was marked by the rebellion of students and workers against the state on 2nd May 1968, which in popularly known as the 'Paris Uprising'. In a 1966 lecture titled 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences', Derrida presented a thesis on an apparent rupture in intellectual life. Derrida interpreted this event as a "decentering" of the former intellectual cosmos. Instead of progress or divergence from an identified centre, Derrida described this "event" as a kind of "play."

A year later, Roland Barthes published 'The Death of the Author", in which he announced a metaphorical event: the "death" of the author as an authentic source of meaning for a given text. Barthes argued that any literary text has multiple meanings and that the author was not the prime source of the work's semantic content. The "Death of the Author," Barthes maintained, was the "Birth of the Reader," as the source of the proliferation of meanings of the text.

Poststructuralism encourages a way of looking at the world that challenges what comes to be accepted as 'truth' and 'knowledge'. Poststructuralists always call into question how certain accepted 'facts' and 'beliefs' actually work to reinforce the dominance and power of particular actors within international relations. The post-structuralists believe that language is key when seeking to explain the social world. They argue that there is no reality external to the language we use.

Post-structuralism and structuralism

Structuralism is an intellectual movement in France in the 1950s and 1960s. It studied underlying structures in cultural products [such as texts] and used analytical concepts from linguistics, psychology, anthropology and other fields to interpret those structures. Structuralism posits the concept of binary opposition, in which frequently-used pairs of opposite but related words (concepts) are often arranged in a hierarchy. For example: enlightenment/Romantic, male/female, speech/writing, rational/emotional, signified/signifier, symbolic/imaginary.

Post-structuralism rejects the structuralist notion that the dominant word in a pair is dependent on its subservient counterpart. Poststructuralism argues that founding knowledge either on pure experience [phenomenology] or on systematic structures (structuralism) is impossible. This is because history and culture condition the study of underlying structures and these are subject to biases and misinterpretations. Gilles Deleuze and others saw this impossibility not as a failure or loss, but rather as a cause for "celebration and liberation." A post-structuralist approach argues that to understand an object (a text, for example), one must study both the object itself and the systems of knowledge that produced the object. The uncertain boundaries between structuralism

and post-structuralism become further blurred by the fact that scholars rarely label themselves as post-structuralists. Some scholars associated with structuralism, such as Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault also became noteworthy in post-structuralism.

Criticism

Many scholars raised serious objections to post-structuralism. Some observers from outside the post-structuralist camp have questioned the rigour and legitimacy of the field. American philosopher John Searle suggested in 1990: "The spread of 'poststructuralist' literacy theory is perhaps the best-known example of a silly but non-catastrophic phenomenon." Similarly, physicist Alan Sokar in 1997 criticized "the postmodernist/poststructuralist gibberish that is now hegemonic in some sectors of the American academy."

Literature scholar Norman Holland in 1992 saw post-structuralism as flawed due to reliance on Saussure's linguistic model, which was seriously challenged by the 1950s and was soon abandoned by linguists. David Foster Wallace wrote "The deconstructionists ("deconstructionist" and "poststructuralist" mean the same thing, by the way: "poststructuralist" is what you call a deconstructionist who doesn't want to be called a deconstructionist) ... see the debate over the ownership of meaning as a skirmish in a larger war in Western philosophy over the idea that presence and unity are ontologically prior to expression. There's been this longstanding deluded presumption, they think, that if there is an utterance then there must exist a unified, efficacious presence that causes and owns that utterance. The poststructuralists attack what they see as a post-Platonic prejudice in favour of presence over absence and speech over writing. We tend to trust speech over writing because of the immediacy of the speaker: he's right there, and we can grab him by the lapels and look into his face and figure out just exactly what one single thing he means. But the reason why poststructuralists are in the literary theory business at all is that they see writing, not speech, as more faithful to the metaphysics of true expression. For Barthes, Derrida, and Foucault, writing is a better animal than speech because it is iterable; it is iterable because it is abstract, and it is abstract because it is a function not of presence but of absence: the reader's absent when the writer's writing and the writer's absent when the reader's reading.

Check your progress

1. Discuss the Post-structural theory comparing structuralism?

4.5 Critical Theory

Critical theory is a Marxist approach to social philosophy that focuses on reflective assessment and critique of society and culture in order to reveal and challenge the power structures. It is a social theory oriented toward critiquing and changing society as a whole. It aims to dig beneath the surface of social life and uncover the assumptions that keep human beings from a full and true understanding of how the

world works. It teaches that knowledge is power. This means that understanding the ways one is oppressed enables one to take action to change oppressive forces. Critical social science makes a conscious attempt to fuse theory and action. Easily identifiable examples of critical approaches are Marxism, postmodernism, and feminism. These critical theories expose and challenge the communication of dominant social, economic, and political structures.

Critical theory has origins in sociology and literary criticism, it argues that social problems are influenced and created more by social structures and cultural assumptions than by individual and psychological factors. It further maintains that ideology is the principal obstacle to human liberation. The critical theory was established as a school thought primarily by the Frankfurt school theoreticians like Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Erich Fromm, and Max Horkheimer. Horkheimer described a theory as critical as it seeks "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them."
In sociology and political philosophy, "Critical Theory" means the Western-Marxist philosophy of the Frankfurt school, developed in Germany in the 1930s and drawing on the ideas of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud.

Modern critical theory has also been influenced by Gyorgv Lukacs and Antonio Gramsci as well as second-generation Frankfurt School scholars, notably Jurgen Habermas. In Habermas's work, critical theory transcended its theoretical roots in German idealism and progressed closer to American pragmatism. Concern for social " base and superstructure" is one of the remaining Marxist philosophical concepts in much contemporary critical theory.
Postmodern critical theory analyses the fragmentation of cultural identities in order to challenge modernist-era constructs such as metanarratives, rationality and universal truths, while politicizing social problems "by situating them in historical and cultural contexts, to implicate themselves in the process of collecting and analysing data, and to relativize their findings."

Overview

Max Horkheimer first defined critical theory in his 1937 essay "Traditional and Critical Theory", as a social theory oriented toward critiquing and changing society as a whole. This was in contrast to traditional theory oriented only toward understanding or explaining it. Wanting to distinguish critical theory as a radical, emancipatory form of Marxist philosophy, Horkheimer critiqued both the model of science put forward by logical positivism and what he and his colleagues saw as covert positivism and authoritarian of orthodox Marxism and Communism. The critical theory involves a normative dimension, either by criticizing society in terms of some general theory of values or norms or by criticizing society in terms of its own espoused values.

Kant and Marx

This version of "critical" theory derives from the use of the term 'critique' by Immanuel Kant in his 'Critique of Pure Reason and from Marx, on the premise that Das Kapital is a "critique of political economy".

In Kant's transcendental idealism, 'critique' means examining and establishing the limits of the validity of a faculty, type, or body of knowledge, especially by accounting for the limitations of that knowledge system's fundamental, irreducible concepts. Kant's notion of *critique* has been associated with the overturning of false, unprovable, or dogmatic philosophical, social, and political beliefs. His critique of reason involved the critique of dogmatic theological and metaphysical ideas and was intertwined with the enhancement of ethical autonomy and the Enlightenment critique of superstition and irrational authority. Ignored by many in "critical realist" circles is that Kant's immediate impetus for writing *Critique of Pure Reason* was to address problems raised by David Hume's sceptical empiricism which, in attacking metaphysics, employed reason and logic to argue against the wisdom of the world and common notions of causation. On the other hand, Kant pushed the employment of 'a priori' metaphysical claims as requisite, for if anything is to be said to be knowable, it would have to be established upon abstractions distinct from perceivable phenomena.

Marx explicitly developed the notion of *critique* into the 'critique of ideology', linking it with the practice of social revolution, as stated in the 11th section of his 'Theses on Feuerbach': "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."

Important scholars of Critical Theory:

Adorno and Horkheimer

One of the distinguishing characteristics of critical theory, as Theodor W Adorno and Max Horkheimer, elaborated in their 'Dialectic of Enlightenment (1947), is an ambivalence about the ultimate source or foundation of social domination, an ambivalence that gave rise to the "pessimism" of the new critical theory about the possibility of human emancipation and freedom. This ambivalence was rooted in the historical circumstances in which the work was originally produced, particularly the rise of Nazism, state capitalism and culture industry as entirely new forms of social domination that could not be adequately explained in the terms of traditional Marxist sociology.

For Adorno and Horkheimer, 'state intervention' in the economy had effectively abolished the traditional tension between Marxism's "relations of production" and "material productive forces" of society. The market had been replaced by centralized planning.

Contrary to Marx's prediction in the Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, this shift did not lead to "an era of social revolution" but to fascism and totalitarianism. As such, critical theory was left, in Habermas's words, without "anything in reserve to which it might appeal, and when the forces of production enter into a baneful symbiosis with the relations of production that they were supposed to blow wide open, there is no longer any dynamism upon which critique could base its hope." For Adorno and Horkheimer, this posed the problem of how to account for the apparent persistence of domination in the absence of the very contradiction that, according to traditional critical theory, was the source of domination itself.

Habermas

In the 1960s, Habermas, a proponent of critical social theory raised the epistemological discussion to a new level in his 'Knowledge and Human Interests' (1968), by identifying critical knowledge as based on principles that differentiated it either from the natural sciences or the humanities, through its orientation to self-reflection and emancipation. Although unsatisfied with Adorno and Horkheimer's thought in 'Dialectic of Enlightenment, Habermas shares the view that, in the form of instrumental rationality, the era of modernity marks a move away from the liberation of enlightenment and toward a new form of enslavement. In Habermas's work, critical theory transcended its theoretical roots in German Idealism and progressed closer to American pragmatism.

Habermas's ideas about the relationship between modernity and rationalization are in this sense strongly influenced by Max Weber. He further dissolved the elements of critical theory derived from Hegelian German Idealism, though his epistemology remains broadly Marxist. Perhaps his two most influential ideas are the concepts of the public sphere and communicative action, the latter arriving partly as a reaction to new post-structural or so-called "postmodern" challenges to the discourse of modernity. Habermas engaged in regular correspondence with Richard Rorty, and a strong sense of philosophical pragmatism may be felt in his thought, which frequently traverses the boundaries between sociology and philosophy.

Postmodern critical social theory

Focusing on language, symbolism, communication, and social construction, critical theory has been applied in the social sciences as a critique of social construction and postmodern society.

While modernist critical theory concerns itself with "forms of authority and injustice that accompanied the evolution of industrial and corporate capitalism as a political-economic system", postmodern critical theory politicizes social problems "by situating them in historical and cultural contexts, to implicate themselves in the process of collecting and analysing data, and to relativize their findings." Meaning itself is seen as unstable due to social structures' rapid transformation. As a result, research focuses on local manifestations rather than broad generalizations.

Postmodern critical research is also characterized by the *crisis of representation*, which rejects the idea that a researcher's work is an "objective depiction of a stable other." Instead, many postmodern scholars have adopted "alternatives that encourage reflection about the 'politics and poetics' of their work. In these accounts, the embodied, collaborative, dialogic, and improvisational aspects of qualitative research are clarified."

The term *critical theory* is often appropriated when an author works in sociological terms, yet attacks the social or human sciences, thus attempting to remain "outside" those frames of inquiry. Michel Foucault has been described as one such author. Jean Baudrillard has also been described as a critical theorist to the extent that he was an unconventional and critical sociologist; this appropriation is similarly casual,

holding little or no relation to the Frankfurt School. In contrast, Habermas is one of the key critics of postmodernism.
Communication studies

From the 1960s and 1970s onward, language, symbolism, text, and meaning came to be seen as the theoretical foundation for the humanities, through the influence of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Ferdinand de Saussure, George Herbert Mead, Noam Chomsky, Ronald Barthes, Jacques Derrida and other thinkers in linguistic and analytic philosophy, structural linguistics, symbolic interactionism, hermeneutics, semiology, linguistically oriented psychoanalysis and deconstruction.

When, in the 1970s and 1980s, Habermas redefined *critical social theory* as a study of communication, with communicative competence and communicative rationality on the one hand, and distorted communication on the other, the two versions of critical theory began to overlap to a much greater degree than before.

Pedagogy

Critical theorists have widely credited Paulo Freire for the first applications of critical theory to education/pedagogy, considering his best-known work to be 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed', a seminal text is now known as the philosophy and social movement of 'critical pedagogy. Dedicated to the oppressed and based on their experiences helping Brazilian adults learn to read and write, Freire includes a detailed Marxist class analysis in his exploration of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. In the book, he calls traditional pedagogy the "banking model of education", because it treats the student as an empty vessel to be filled with knowledge. He argues that pedagogy should instead treat the learner as a co-creator of knowledge.

In contrast to the banking model, the teacher in the critical-theory model is not the dispenser of all knowledge, but a participant who learns with and from the students—in conversation with them, even as they learn from the teacher. The goal is to liberate the learner from an oppressive construct of teacher versus student, a dichotomy analogous to the colonizer and colonized. It is not enough for the student to analyse societal power structures and hierarchies, to merely recognize imbalance and inequity; critical theory pedagogy must also empower the learner to reflect and act on that reflection to challenge an oppressive status quo.

4.6 Criticism

While critical theorists have often been called Marxist intellectuals, their tendency to denounce some Marxist concepts and to combine Marxian analysis with other sociological and philosophical traditions has resulted in accusations of revisionism by classical, orthodox and analytical Marxists and by Marxist-Leninist philosophers. Martin Jay has said that the first generation of critical theory is best understood not as promoting a specific philosophical agenda or ideology, but as "a gadfly' of other systems."

Critical theory has been criticized for not offering any clear road map to political action, often explicitly repudiating any solutions. A primary criticism of the theory is that it is anti-scientific, both for its lack of the use of the scientific method and for its assertion that science is a tool used for the oppression of marginalized groups of people.

Check your progress

1. Discuss the Critical theory in view of Kant and Marx

4.7 Summary

Modernity is the term used by sociologists to describe the "modern" period which began in Europe several hundred years ago. Some of the key features of modern societies are:

Economic production is industrial and capitalist, with social class as the main form of social division.

The growth of cities, or urbanisation. During the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries thousands of people moved to cities to find work and make their homes.

A powerful central government and administration, known as a bureaucratic state. Local and central government have played an ever-increasing part in our lives, the development of compulsory education, public housing and the welfare state for example.

People's knowledge is derived from scientific and rational thinking rather than religious faith, magic or superstition.

Post-modernism is a term that refers to new ways of thinking about thought. Post-modernists believe that knowledge itself needs to be understood in a different way to modernist's sociologists such as Functionalists and Marxists.

Critical theory has origins in sociology and literary criticism, it argues that social problems are influenced and created more by social structures and cultural assumptions than by individual and psychological factors.

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