CORSE GUIDE

POL 811
CLASSICAL AND MODERN POLITICAL THEORY

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **POL811**: **Classical and Modern Political Theory.** This course is a three (3)-credit unit course for post-graduate students in Political Science. The materials have been developed to meet global standards This preliminary section guide gives you an overview of the course. It also provides you with relevant information on the organization and requirements of the course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course exposes post-graduate students to the nature and character of ancient, medieval and Africa political thought from the Greek-Roman period to the 16th century, with emphasis on the works of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Machiavelli and Bodin.

You are expected to study the major writers and doctrines in Western political theory from the 17th century to the late 19th century, especially Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau and Bentham. Our emphasis is on contending schools of thought on the nature of the state, power, authority and legitimacy, law and justice, freedom, equality, liberty and rights. The course is designed to get post-graduate students acquitted with the relations between politics and philosophy, ethics and politics, politics and theology, rationalism and empiricism are discussed.

COURSE AIM

The course attempts a systematic theoretical and empirical study of political thought. Thus, the broad aim will be achieved by:

i) introducing you to the notion of political thought,
ii) providing you with the impotence of political thought to the study of political science
iii) enabling you to evaluate the relevance of political thought in understanding the state, politics and governance
iv) providing you with the current debate on political thought and the development of Africa

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To achieve the aim set out above, POL811 has broad objectives. In addition, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are outlined at the beginning of each unit. I advise you to read them before you start working through the unit. You may refer to them in

the course of the unit to personally monitor and evaluate your progress.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Explain the growth and development of political thought
- Explain the political thought of the Greek classical political philosophers and other European political philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau
- Discuss the social contract theorists
- Discuss modern African political thought
- To understand the political thought that relate to power, religion, economy and the state.

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units and other related materials. It is also necessary to undertake practical exercises for which you need a pen, a notebook, and other materials that will be listed in this guide. The exercises are to aid you, and to facilitate your understanding of the concepts and issues being presented. At the end of each topic and unit, you will be required to evaluate yourself with self-assessment written assignments for assessment purposes.

COURSE MATERIALS

The major materials needed for this course are:

i. Course Guide.
ii. Study Units
iii. Self-assessment exercise
iv. Relevant textbooks including the ones listed under each unit
v. You may also need to listen to political, social and economic programmers' and news reports on electronic media (local and foreign)
vi. In addition, you are also expected to read newspapers, magazines, journals and interact with internet resources.

STUDY UNITS

There are 5 modules broken into 20 units in this course. They are listed below:

Module 1 History and Development of Political Thought

Unit 1 The Growth and Development of Political Thought
Unit 2 The Role of Political Thought in the organization of the State
Unit 3 Political Thought as a Hub of Political Science Development Crisis
Unit4 Political Thought and its significance

Module 2 The Classical Political Philosophers: The State, Power and Politics

Unit 1 Socrates and Plato Political Thought
Unit 2 Aristotle Political Thought
Unit 3 Marsilius of Padua Political Thought
Unit 4 Niccolo Machiavelli Political Thought

Module 3 The Social Contract Theorists

Unit 1 The Hobbesian version
Unit 2 John Locke
Unit 3 Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Unit 4 Thomas Aquinas

Module 4 modern African political thought

Unit 1 Political Thought and Nationalism in Africa
Unit 2 African Marxist Regimes and Political Thought
Unit 3 African Politics, Society and Political Thought
Unit 4 African Political in the Post-Independence Period

Module 5 Power, Religion, Economy and The State

Unit 1 Niccolo Machiavelli: Morality and Religion
Unit 2 Augustine's Political Thought
Unit 3 Usman Dan Fodi's Political Thought
Unit 4 Jeremy Bentham's Political Thought

As you can observe, the course begins with the basics and expands into a more elaborate, complex and detailed form. All you need to do is to follow the instructions as provided in each unit. In addition, some self-assessment exercises have been provided with which you can test your progress with the text and determine if your study is fulfilling the stated objectives.

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

Certain books have been recommended in the course. See the list of books at the end of each unit. You may wish to purchase them for further and personal reading.

COURSE OVERVIEW PRESENTATION SCHEME

The dates for submission of all assignment will be communicated to you. You will also be told the date of completing the study units and dates for examinations.

Units	**Title of Work**	**Week Activity**	**Assignment (End-of-Unit)**
COURSE GUIDE	**Classical and Modern Political Theory**		
Module 1	**History And Development of Political Thought**		
Unit 1	The Growth and Development of Political Thought	Week 1	Self-Assessment
Unit 2	The Role of Political Thought in the organization of the State	Week 2	Self-Assessment
Unit3	Political Thought as a Hub of Political Science Development Crisis	Week 3	Self-Assessment
Unit 4	Political Thought and its significance	Week 4	Self-Assessment
Module2	**The Classical Political Philosophers: The State, Power and Politics**		
Unit 1	Socrates and Plato Political Thought	Week 6	Self-Assessment
Unit2	Aristotle Political Thought	Week 7	Self-Assessment
Unit3	f Padua Political Thought	Week 8	Self-Assessment
Unit4	Niccolo Machiavelli Political Thought	Week 9	Self-Assessment
Module 3	**The Social Contract Theorists**		
Unit 1	The Hobbesian version	Week	Self-Assessment

		11	
Unit 2	John Locke	Week 12	Self-Assessment
Unit3	Jean-Jacques Rousseau	Week 13	Self-Assessment
Unit4	Thomas Aquinas	Week 14	Self-Assessment
Module 4	**Modern African Political Thought**		
Unit1	Political Thought and Nationalism in African	Week 16	Self-Assessment
Unit 2	African Marxist Regimes and Political Thought	Week 19	Self-Assessment
Unit 3	African Politics, Society And Political Thought	Week 20	Self-Assessment
Unit 4	African Political in the Post-Independence Period	Week 21	Self-Assessment
Module 5	**Power, Religion, Economy and the State**		
Unit1	Niccolo Machiavelli: Morality and Religion	Week 23	Self-Assessment
Unit 2	Augustine's Political Thought	Week 24	Self-Assessment
Unit 3	Usman Dan Fodi's Political Thought	Week 25	Self-Assessment
Unit 4	Jeremy Bentham's Political Thought	Week 26	Self-Assessment

COURSE MARKING SCHEME

The following table lays out how the actual course mark allocation is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Continuous assessment	= 30%
Final Examination	= 70%
Total	= 100%

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suits you best.

Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the study units tell you where to read, and which are your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise. Each of the study units follows a common format.

The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course.

The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this course guide thoroughly, it is your self-assessment exercise.
2. Organize a study schedule. Design a 'course over' to guide you through the course, Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you choose, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason why students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late to help.
4. Turn to unit I, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
6. Keep in touch with your study center. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.
7. Well before the relevant due dates (about 4 weeks before due dates), keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the self-assessment exercise carefully. They have been designed to help

you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination.

8. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them, if you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
9. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
10. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the course guide).

TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussion actively.

SUMMARY

This course guide has been designed to furnish you with the information required for a fruitful adventure in the course. In the final analysis, how rich you get from the course is essentially dependent on how much of your time, effort and planning you put in. So, your success in Pol 811 and in the entire programmed is a function of the commitment and dedication you put into it. We wish you success with the course and hope that you will find it both interesting and useful.

MAIN COURSE

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MODULE 1 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

INTRODUCTION

This module which is the introductory module exposes students to understand the concepts of political thought, it historical evolution and development as a hub of political science. It exposes students to the role of political thought to the organization of the State so as to understand why political thought is referred to as the building-block of political science and essential ingredients for democratic governance.

The essence of this module is to get students acquitted with the basic issues about political thought and its relevance to the understanding of political science as a discipline, and democracy as s system of governance. This module is made of four units aimed to give students the basic foundational knowledge about the course.

Unit 1 The Growth and Development of Political Thought
Unit 2 The Role of Political Thought in the organization of the State
Unit 3 Political Thought as a Hub of Political Science
Unit 4 Political Thought and its significance

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

I want to believe that by now you must have read the course guide and familiarized yourself with the introductory comments in module 1. This unit is the first among the four constituent units of this module. The main thrust of this unit is to identify and operationalize the concepts that are fundamental to understanding the course. This is

to enable you to overcome some misconceptions and ambiguity surrounding these concepts arising from the multicultural and multidisciplinary approach to it, and to also appreciate the reasons behind the classification of political thought, it development. This unit, therefore, forms the foundation upon which other modules are built on. You are expected to give it maximum attention it deserves.

1.2 Leaning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Expose students to understand the notion of political thought.
- Trace the historical evolution and development of political thought.

1.3 Main Content

1.3.1 Conceptualizing the Notion Political Thought

To start with, political thought or/and political philosophy is the hub of the discipline of political science. Political thought is an essential field within Political Science as it provides the theoretical and conceptual foundation for the discipline. Political Science deals with the system of understanding of both normative and empirical nature and character of politics in a political system, political thought deals with the normative aspect of political science.

Thus, the study of political thought in Political Science allows students and scholars to understand what they know and what they do not. Political Thought teaches us what questions to ask in Political Science. Political Thought as an area of study in political science focuses at the history and development of political thought, socio-economic and political historical antecedent that influenced the thought, and the nature of the political thought. Political thought is premised on a normative, universal and abstract approach to Political Science; it encourages scholars and students to think suspiciously about the present-day values of politics.

Political thought could center on liberalism, conservatism, and socialism. The essence is to identify the relationship between political thought and reality.

Political Thought has developed with the overall advancement of Political Science. In the past, like most other academic fields, research in Political Thought revolved around western political thought. This reflected an ethnocentric bias in the development of Political Science, but this tendency has recently been challenged. Today, there is much greater interest in other traditions, including the intellectual tradition.

A great deal of effort is now being exerted to understand normative problems that arise in domestic politics through the lens of African political thought. There are several Department of Political Science that teach courses such as African Political Thought," "Oriental Political Thought," "Ancient and Medieval Political Thought, and "Western Political Thought.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Political Thought is a branch of Political Science, True or False
2. Political Thought is a hub of Political Science, True or False
3. Political Thought is not bedrock of democratic culture, True or False

1.3.2 The Historical Evolution and Development of Political Thought

You have to know that for much of ancient history, grand empires ruled by despots held power over much of the known world. These arrangements were justified by a number of public reasons, ranging from tradition to religion, but, in short, what really mattered was that they had the loyalty of the soldiers in these empires.

However, in the span of 2,500 years, we have gone from this 'rule by might' system to a surprisingly wide array of political viewpoints on how to best run a government. Just how that journey progressed is one that tells a great deal about Western civilization. As a post post-graduate student, if you look at the meaning of the words 'democracy' and 'republic', the two most commonly used terms to describe the current ideal arrangement in political philosophy, you will find they share similar meanings.

Democracy comes from the Ancient Greek for 'rule by the people,' and for the Classical Athenians more than 2,300 years ago, that is exactly what it meant. However, 'people' here was a pretty narrowly defined group. In short, you had to be male, Athenian, and, at some stages of the city's history, you had to own land. Still, this idea that some group

of people should choose instead of just a king or emperor was a massive departure. It reached even greater potential under the Roman Republic. The word republic comes from the Latin words for 'pertaining to the public.' For almost 500 years, the Roman Republic's Senate ruled the city and its growing collection of provinces in line with the wishes of the people. Of course, it was a balancing act.

Most of the benefits went to the rich; however, every politician recognized the power of the poorer masses. In this, we see a definite transition from the Greeks. Whereas the Greeks only gave power to the rich, the Romans gave most of the power to the rich but some power to the poor. However, following the fall of the Roman Republic, it would be several hundred years before its ideas were revisited (Morrall, 1977).

Around the 17th and 18th centuries, enough people were finally learning enough Greek and Latin to revisit the writings of the Greek and Roman political philosophers. What they found was truly different from the despotisms that had once again gained power in the Western world. This period of revisiting the old classics and thinking about them in new ways was known as the Enlightenment, and it spurred forth a new round of political thought. Of course, it was self-serving to a great extent, as many of these new philosophers were aristocrats, people who were wealthy, but had no noble ties.

In short, they would have held power in the Greek and Roman systems but had no such authority in the current rule of law. You have to note that the history and development of political thought also influenced revolutions and the nation-state (Finley, 1977). In some places, especially England, change towards a more broad-based governing system that incorporated the views of these newly enlightened people went rather peacefully. However, in other areas, open violence resulted. One of the most paradigm-shifting examples of this was the American Revolution, in which the American colonists, especially middle class and wealthy merchant colonists in the Northeast, challenged the idea that they should be deprived of political power. Ultimately, the colonies won their independence and formed the United States.

Subsequently, the French Revolution looks very different, but it is again on similar lines - the newly rich Third Estate challenges the stronghold on power that the clergy and the nobility have in the First and Second Estates, resulting in a completely new direction for the French government. You should note that the ancient Greeks are said to have invented political theorizing, but the sense in which they *invented* it is frequently misunderstood. Systematic reflection about politics

certainly is not begin with Plato, and Plato himself certainly did not wake up one day, find that he had nothing much on his hands, and begin to write the *Republic*. Equally, it appears to be the case that politics were not the first thing that the ancients reflected systematically about; nor was it the case that when they did begin to think about politics, they had nothing else in their heads. Speculation about the gods, about how a properly conducted household should be run, about what moral instruction the Homeric poems contained, about the nature of the natural world, about the duties and limits of hospitality, and about many other things was already far advanced before anything like political theorizing began (Finley, 1977).

That list of things could no doubt be extended almost indefinitely, and perhaps we should extend it, even if we would have to extend it by guesswork, because what we do in fact know about what the ancients did think about is largely the result of the accidents of the historical survival of manuscripts, and it is perfectly possible that what has come down to us is a distorting fragment which gives us a very misleading picture of what was going on inside the heads of ancient Greeks. And *which* ancient Greeks? Some ancient Greeks were very ancient indeed (the Homeric poems were probably already being recited around 800 BC), and some lived very far from the borders of the modern state of Greece, in southern France and Italy, for instance, or in Asia Minor, or Egypt. Those calling themselves Greeks did not even agree about what it was that made them Greek.

The Greek world had its great centers: Delphi for its oracle; Olympia and Corinth for their games; Athens for its wealth, its empire and its learning; and Sparta for the longevity of its peculiar institutions, but myriads of people thinking of themselves as Greek had never been near any of those places, though they would have heard of them and might have felt their influence. Nobody knows now what all of these people thought, just as nobody did then. If the business of trying to empty a typical Greek mind of its contents is a fruitless exercise, we can still ask the important question of how the mind was organized.

Greek thinker ever thought that in some sense thinking was worth it for thinking's sake any more than any Greek artist did art for art's sake. Questions about how to do something always implicitly contained the question: How ought we to do something? and the question: How ought we to do something? always contained the implicit assumption that anything which was worth doing was worth doing well. Thinking about how things can be done well, how they ought to be done, has to start somewhere, and the ancients were fortunate to have at their disposal the Homeric poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which, if properly read, could answer almost any conceivable question about

how a man should act towards his fellow men and towards the gods. The poems also contain a good deal about how the gods act towards men. The anger of the gods with men, or with each other, frequently results in what we would call 'natural' disasters, plagues, thunderstorms, storms or contrary winds at sea, for Zeus rules the land and Poseidon the ocean, so that the Homeric poems contain a good deal about how the natural world works as well. These three worlds, the world of nature, the world of men and the world of the gods, exist in the poems in very close harmony, so that it would not be stretching the term 'system' too far to say that there is a Homeric system which explains and justifies almost everything that goes on in the world and which answers almost any questions that someone living in the world would care to ask.

It was this Homeric world-picture which in classical times was becoming less and less satisfactory as a universal explanation of what went on in the world, at least to philosophers, but it was also a world-picture which never lost its appeal entirely as the source of a code of conduct, and some classical philosophy can best be understood as an attempt to resurrect the certainties of the Homeric world on the basis of rational argument, so that these certainties could still retain the loyalty of rational men. In particular, what attracted political philosophers to the enterprise of restating Homeric truths was the sense of order and symmetry which pervades the poems, an order which was never complete, but which seemed to survive all the vicissitudes to which it was subjected. A world which was always threatened by disorder but out of which order always eventually came was bound to be attractive to political thinkers as a mirror and image of their own world of politics, where the alternation of order and disorder could easily lead to a sense of despair unless an order could be discerned prior to and beyond the everyday messiness of the affairs of cities. In Africa, the antecedents of slavery, colonialism and nationalistic struggle shaped the developed of political thought in the continent.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. History of Political Thought has much to do with the Greek-City-State, True or False
2. The Roman do not contribute to the development of Political Thought, True or False
3. There were no events that influenced African Political Thought, True or False

1.4 Summary

In this unit, students are to note that political thought precedes the emergence of modern state and its theoretical utility has provided the conceptual basis for the organization of the state. The state was formed by continuous prostitution of political philosophers. Thus, the essence of the study of political thought is for students to understand it prominence in the formation and organization of the state and as well as what is expected of the state for the citizens and the relationship between the state and the citizens. This unit has exposed post-graduate students to have a deeper understanding about the history and development of political thought. It adopts the multilateral approaches to trace the development of political thought from the ancient Greek-city to the colonial African moment. This essence is to enable students to have full knowledge about the historical development of political thought in each epoch or/and episode, how the political thought shaped the political systems within the period and so on.

1.5 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Briefly explain notion of political thought.
2. How important is political thought to the study of political science.

1.6 References/Further Reading

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1.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment Exercise

1. Briefly explain notion of political thought
   Political thought is a construct or an interrelated idea that set standard or norms and values for politics and governance in political systems.
2. How important is political thought to the study of political science.
   Political thought is the hub of political science because it set standard, norms and values for politics, government, and the state.

UNIT 2 THE ROLE OF POLITICAL THOUGHT IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE STATE

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction

It will be erroneous and misleading to generalize that the modern state precedes political thought. How the conceptual and theoretical utility of political thought has aided the formation of modern state is the thrust of this unit to teach you as a post-graduate student.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand and explain how political thoughts have shaped the modern state in different spheres of the society.

2.3 Main Content

2.3.1 Political Thought and the Organization of the Modern State

The formation and development of modern state is rooted in the postulation of political thought. It is the building blocks of the state. The modern state emerged from the feudal order. Beyond that nothing is certain. There is no agreement about how it happened or when it happened beyond saying that it happened at different times in different places. Serious thinkers were still debating well on into the twentieth century whether the state of the tsars had been a modern state or whether it had been some kind of left-over, half-oriental despotism got up in Prussian uniform.

Happily, the case of the history of political thought is different, because these things often happen with greater clarity than they happen in the

real world of politics. It is often the case that a particular political development in a particular place will catch a thinker's eye, and he will see in it the wave of the future. You should note that changes in ideas do signal shifts of political practice, and the world of political practice is so varied at any particular time that it might well be a matter of luck if a thinker does spot in the present what the future is going to be like. The chances are that, if that thinker is at all historically minded, he will then look around for ancient precedents so as not to make what he has got to say too startling, and therefore, inaccessible, to the audience he thinks he is addressing. This is certainly true in Machiavelli's case. We found him searching out ancient precedents for almost everything he had to say about the state, but what he had to say was equally certainly very new in the context in which he said it.Rule by kings, lords, bishops, priests and town oligarchies was a competition for rights of jurisdiction over the lower orders, and a member of those lower orders could be forgiven for not knowing who his real ruler was. Lords had rights in the labor of serfs and also rights of jurisdiction through manorial courts

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The Church decided whom they might marry and how and to whom they could leave their property (Chaturvedi, 1981). The Church had rights of taxation and so did the lord if the labour services of serfs were commuted to a money payment. Different courts could try them for different offences, lay and ecclesiastical, and the king might call upon everybody's services in times of national emergency like foreign invasion.

In feudal societies rights of jurisdiction were jealously defended. The Church kept secular authority out of its own lands if it could; towns governed by their own charters resisted kings, and part of being a king consisted of being beastly to barons. To speak of a state in these circumstances, let alone a centralized state, is absurd. The only thing in societies like these which remotely resembled ancient or modern states was monarchy, but the king was just a greater lord among great lords who owed him fealty, certain military services, and the duty to give advice if asked. The king was to his own tenants what other great lords were to theirs. The only time the realm was a single unit was in time of war. Then every subject and every knight had a specific duty to defend the realm, but even this duty was limited to a period of days, and armies often had to be paid to stay together when the period of agreed conscription was over.

Every medieval society was a patchwork of different forms of rule. It was common to deny jurisdiction to get oneself out of trouble. Benefit of clergy was the most obvious example: clerks in holy orders would be tried by other clerks who would understand. Kings competed for jurisdiction like every other power-wielder and made monarchy

hereditary where they could. The state, meaning the state of the realm, was really family business, though other estates of the realm had a legitimate interest in it. Kings were responsible to the Church for helping to maintain true religion, to lords and people for maintaining their rights and privileges, and to God for keeping the realm safe and passing it on unencumbered to their posterity. In these circumstances, rule, the equivalent of the state function, could not be anything but amateurish and unspecialized. Lots of different orders of men took part in the business of ruling and being ruled, and there could be no pretense that rule was somehow neutral while it was the business of a particular family, and while the fortunes of the realm were effectively family fortunes. Just as each king was supposed to bequeath an unchanged realm to his eldest son, so at every rung in the hierarchy sons were supposed to inherit their fathers' rights and duties. Hence what might be called the Gulliver effect.

Each man was tied down by any number of ties, no one of which was enough to keep him in his place, but the effect of them all taken together kept him in his place well enough. And it is important to remember that a man would be unlikely to distinguish between different kinds of tie. What the priest told him to do would be unlikely to appear to be different in kind from what his feudal superior told him to do, and his lord's economic function would not appear very different from his function as legal or military superior. When his lord presided over a manorial court, or raised his tenantry in time of war, or in a dispute with a neighboring lord, it would not be very obvious to a medieval serf that different functions were being exercised. Lords would simply appear to be the lords of the earth. That is why medieval peasant revolts always seem to have a bull-in-a-china-shop quality to them. Peasants in revolt have always appeared to be indiscriminate.

They burn manorial records (the government files of their day); they attack the ecclesiastical hierarchy; they profane the symbols of authority wherever they find them; they attack moneylenders, and so on. Peasant revolts in contemporary and later historians' accounts of them seem to have all the characteristics of irrational outbursts, but if the Gulliver image of medieval rule is the right one, then what revolting peasants did had a kind of sense. What was the good of attacking one of Gulliver's ties if the others remained in place? Demands could not be programmatic; they could not be economic, or political, or religious, when men could hardly be expected to distinguish between the different kinds of tie which kept them in their places. Disturbing one tie meant disturbing all the rest; in these circumstances a revolt was all, or it was nothing (Chaturvedi, 1981).

Another way of putting that would be to say that all pre-modern popular revolts were bound to fail because there was no public place which could be taken over, either symbolically or actually, no Bastille or Winter Palace. (Medieval kings were not stupid and moved about their realms from palace to palace.) In societies with widely diffused centers of authority and with no very exact borders, it might be difficult to decide when a history of western political thought 266 revolt *had* succeeded.

That is why in continental European countries in the Middle Ages, leaders of popular revolts often claimed to be the *real* emperor or the *real* pope. Claims to universal monarchy were made because the counter-claims on them were of such a universal kind that rebels had to make universal claims in return. So many different kinds of authority made their claims to jurisdiction that only imperial or papal counter-claims of vast pretension could override them.

Two other things made medieval societies remarkably resilient in the face of popular revolts: the ecclesiastical poverty of the Church and the monopoly of honorable arms by the knightly class. This meant that the people could not appear as a *populus* with plebeian demands in the ancient sense. The class wars of ancient republics usually took the same form. The people, victorious in war, came home to demand a redistribution of goods, usually the cultivated land. This they claimed in the name of their poverty and in the name of the arms in their hands. They had saved the republic and they should reap the benefits. Armed valiant poverty has a very strong moral claim and had been a worry to conservative thinkers ever since Plato's account in the *Republic* of how oligarchy changes into democracy.

The demand for an agrarian law was also the theme of the history of the Roman republic up to the time of the great civil wars. (There was still a hint of this in the victorious armies of 1918 and 1945.) In the medieval period, the class of knights monopolized honorable violence and the priests and monks monopolized the moral claims of poverty. Any popular violence was then by definition the violence of the insolent rabble, and any attack on the worldliness of Christ's Church must at best be delusion and at worst heresy. This left the real poor morally and physically naked, and it is a wonder that there were popular revolts at all, let alone so many. The modern state came out of the feudal order. Of course, it is a long story, but we can trace its progress from about 1500 to about 1800 in the works of Machiavelli, Bodin, Hobbes and Adam Smith. In Machiavelli there is no trace of the idea that the political order is part of the god given order of things. Machiavelli thinks that a state is a radically created order, not a differentiated social whole entrusted to and presided over by a king. The Machiavellian prince is a creator, an

artist who designs and builds the state which he is to govern, and the artistic gift is not given to all men. A king of ordinary abilities who is not too lazy to deal with problems as they arise and who has no spectacular vices might do very well in keeping up his state in a hereditary realm whose subjects have become accustomed to being ruled by their princely family, but the creation of new kingdoms is the task of the specially gifted. There is nothing feudal about Machiavelli's account of the princely state, no mediating institutions between prince and people. Rivals in the feudal sense are simply killed off, for there must be no notable figures around which resistance to a new prince might consolidate itself.

The prince gathers up all the reins of power into his own hands, and Machiavelli has lots of advice for princes who want to keep power out of the hands of others. Authority in Machiavelli's scheme of things must have a spatial as well as a personal centre. Princely government represents the victory of the city over the countryside. A prudent prince would do well to build solid walls round his capital, and to build a solid citadel for himself within the walls. There is to be none of the local self-government which is a characteristic of feudal societies. All decisions are to be the prince's decisions, and they have to be the right decisions, otherwise the prince might lose his state, because what can be won can always be lost again (Dryzek, 2008). What this means in the modern idiom is that policy has to be right, and that includes foreign policy. War is the trade of princes with armies of their own making, not the affair of a knightly class. Mercenaries are one possibility, but a prince who knows his business would do well to imitate the ancient Romans and go to war with his own citizen militia who feel that the prince is their prince and the state their state. There is no question of the prince being *primus inter pares* like a medieval king effectively having to negotiate with the mightier of his subjects. The true prince *commands,* and the subjects of a successful prince must come to feel that the prince's glory is their glory.

For all the rigour of Machiavelli's advice to princes, there is still something *ad hoc* about his political theory, which is really a tissue of expedients for princes to use in emergencies. Princely life for Machiavelli is a series of such emergencies. The last thing a prince should do is to dream of retiring to a little kingdom by the sea. Machiavelli does in fact admire the great law-givers as well as the great improvisers, but he talks of the great law-givers as if they were the successful devisers of expedients which lasted. The rules of necessity do not operate at those stages of history in which there is such great need for law-givers. Law-givers, like Moses or Lycurgus, are the founders of peoples which survive for centuries as viable political units, but Machiavelli can give no coherent set of reasons why such law-givers

should appear, beyond saying that in the case of Moses we can see the hand of God. Law for Machiavelli is only one of the ways, though the best way, that a people should be made to feel that it is being ruled, but, the reiteration of ancient pieties apart, it is obvious that for Machiavelli law is only one arm in the armouries of princes, and it is certainly not the means by which a prince in a newly acquired state should begin to make his new people feel the force of his rule (Dryzek, 2008). When Machiavelli speaks of law-giving, what he really means is not legislation, where legislation means generally accepted laws according to some generally recognized standard, but the whipping-in of a lawless people, as with the Roman people under Romulus and Numa Pompilius.Yet what makes Machiavelli modern, or what makes Machiavelli's political thought speak to a world which is no longer medieval, is his recognition that a particular kind of people, living at a particular time and subject to particular circumstances, needs a particular form of rule. (This was, of course, a truth well-known to the ancients.). Machiavelli's political thought is cast in generalizations about the universal character of human nature, but it does not take much of an effort of hindsight to see that princely government is being offered as the proper form of government for Renaissance men who are particularly hard to rule. The men that Machiavelli's prince has to confront are self-assertive, egotistical and opportunist, but they also have the obverse qualities of diffidence, gullibility and indolence. They are recognizably the democratic characters of Plato's *Republic*, notoriously fickle and at the same time self-confident. Such men may have a natural longing for democratic, that is republican, government; they are naturally citizens rather than subjects, but when men like these get themselves into a political mess, then princely government is the only answer. Despite his admiration for the ancient lawgivers, Machiavelli in fact thinks that law and princely force are alternatives in the world in which he thinks he is living.

Something like that perception that the form of government must fit the circumstances of the day informs Bodin's *Six Books on the Republic* (1576), though the theoretical path which Bodin does in fact follow almost seems designed to obscure what is his most important principle.

Bodin thinks he is the follower of Aristotle, but if he is, he is the follower of the wrong Aristotle, the Aristotle who offers a picture of the world as a series of formal definitions. Bodin is probably the first important political thinker to offer what is recognizably a modern theory of sovereignty, and in essence that theory is very simple: a well-ordered state needs an absolute and legitimate sovereign centre. Bodin's motives for saying that are much more intelligible than his arguments. We can see that the France of the sixteenth-century civil wars, those wars being based on differences of religious opinion, needed a strengthening of the

monarchy if France was to survive as a political community. By harking back to Aristotelian precedents, Bodin took the theory of sovereignty out of Divine Right theology and tied it to a view of what a political community needed in its own best interest.Bodin is impeccably classical in his recognition that states are typically destroyed by faction, and the fact that these factions are religious factions does not alter this truth at all. (And it is in this sense that the rider on Machiavelli's political thought, that he doesn't understand the part that religion is going to play in the politics of the Reformation, is misplaced.

Factions are factions, no matter how they arise.) Bodin's defence of sovereignty is really a defence of rule against faction. He accepts the division of Christendom's individual kingdoms into Protestant and Catholic as an accomplished fact. The problem is then how it can ever be that a realm divided into contending religious factions, each of which would coerce the other if it could, could possibly live at peace with itself and prosper.Unfortunately for us, Bodin does not approach his subject in this 'modern' way. He might have, but he didn't. Instead, he approached politics from what he thought was a correctly generalized Aristotelian perspective. Far from confining himself to the task in hand, which was to explain how sixteenth-century France could be made to stick together, his *Republic* was meant to be an account of how any state could be given a solid basis.

What we would now call political stability had to be approached from ancient and very generalized categories, and, Aristotle-like, Bodin decided that the two central categories of political theorizing were the family and the state The family, according to Bodin, was the natural community, and like Aristotle he included in the family both servants (though in Bodin's day they were not slaves) and private property.

Bodin's idea of the family was Roman rather than Greek, since he believed that the state's authority stops at the threshold of the household. The family was a *res publica* in miniature, but here were important differences between the family and the state. As in ancient Rome, heads of families became citizens as soon as they stepped outside their own front doors. What made them citizens was that they all recognized the same sovereign, monarchical authority. No doubt the fact that private property inheres in the family and is inviolable puts a kind of limit on sovereignty, but property apart, the sovereign is supreme in the public realm, and the sovereign typically commands through law (Mulgan, 1977).

Bodin has in mind here the Aristotelian classification of states into lawful and unlawful. The tyrant rules through force in his own interest only, while the king rules through law in the interests of all. Yet behind

this formal distinction between tyranny and kinship lies a very firm grasp of the condition of a kingdom which has yet to free itself from medieval and feudal notions of what law is. It was mentioned above that medieval societies were complex patchworks of competing jurisdictions.

It may have been the case that law-givers in medieval societies did not think that they could really *make* law, only that they could declare it, but that could not make a difference to anyone who was trying to make sense in an Aristotelian way of the meaning of law. What law could make sense in a patchwork of different legal systems except the supreme law of a sovereign? Of course, law is not the only bond which can bind men together. Bodin is enough of an Aristotelian to realize what common sense also dictates, that language, culture, religion and locally made law can create human bonds, and he calls the naturally arising community of this kind a *cité* to distinguish it from the republic which we call a state. For all his Aristotelianism, Bodin recognizes that the ancient city-state cannot be identified with the sixteenth-century realm of France.

That is why the state's law must be supreme over other potentially competing systems of law, whether law means manners, morals, customs, or the law which defines minority or local privilege.Bodin's commentators have often said that there is a contradiction between his avowed Aristotelianism and the fact that he cannot find an Aristotelian 'end' for a realm of millions of subjects, but this is just another example of the notorious difficulty of fitting ancient categories to modern problems. Rather, we should say that Bodin's Aristotelianism, quaint though it can seem, points to the real truth that for political stability to exist there needs to be some notion of the supreme community of which other naturally arising communities are the vital but subordinate parts.

Bodin defines sovereignty as the 'supreme power over citizens and subjects, unrestrained by law', and by 'supreme' he means something very like the modern idea of sovereignty. Sovereignty is perpetual; it can only be delegated to magistrates as the absolute sovereignty that it is; it is unrestrained by law because sovereignty is itself the source of supreme law; the sovereign cannot bind himself or his successors; the sovereign has the power of making war and peace, appointing ministers, acting as a court of last resort, granting dispensations, coining money and taxing. Sovereignty is absolute and undivided. All surviving law-bound corporations—religious bodies, municipalities, commercial companies and guilds—owe their rights and privileges to the sovereign (Mulgan, 1977). It follows, therefore, that estates and parliaments exist only to advise the sovereign, and it also follows that the sovereign cannot be bound to take their advice.

It has become fashionable to call Bodin's political thought inadequate or muddled, and it is easy to see why. His Aristotelianism led him into paths which were simply definitional. Sovereignty in his sense of the absolute rule of the law of an unlimited sovereign authority was a definition suspended over a state. Perhaps it existed or perhaps it did not, which vitiated his own 'historical' method, which was an attempt to show why it was the case that a well-ordered state could not continue to exist without sovereignty as he conceived it.

Bodin was never very clear about the differences between the various systems of laws under which men live, and he had a backward-looking tendency to derive all systems of law from Natural Law; he was also unreflective about what Natural Law was. Perhaps he thought, like many another political thinker, that Natural Law was just obvious, and that it was obvious that kings would feel themselves bound by God's Law in the same way that everybody else was supposed to feel bound by it.

Natural Law for Bodin is really a fallback position, a formal bow in the direction of a body of thought which was becoming increasingly incompetent at explaining exactly why the government of a realm should be as it was. Above all, Bodin was anti-feudal where competing jurisdictions got in the way of the exercise of sovereignty.

Far from thinking that the king's position was at the head of a hierarchy whose justification was the hierarchy itself, Bodin looked at the matter from the top down, and attempted to show that all subordinate authorities derived from the supreme sovereign.It is in this sense that Hobbes on sovereignty can be considered as the successor to Bodin. That Bodin describes the guts of the modern state there can be no doubt, but whether he has a theory of the sovereign state is another matter.

Bodin's theory of sovereignty is a theory waiting for an equivalent view of man and an equivalent sociology. As we noted above, the motives for Bodin's theory of sovereignty are clear enough, but the arguments are merely formal. What Hobbes did was to root Bodin's definition of sovereignty in arguments which owed nothing to Aristotle and everything to a well-worked-out view of man and society. Hobbes's Sovereign, like Bodin's, speaks to his subjects authoritatively through law as command, but Hobbes talks as if it really were true that the only law which exists in a modern realm is sovereign-made law. Bodin had hoped that the sovereign's law would find a way of living with other types of law; sovereign-made law for Bodin was supreme, but that supremacy did not annihilate other kinds of law, including constitutional law. Hobbes's *Leviathan* speaks to a particular political problem, the English Civil War, but there is nothing makeshift about its construction. Significantly, *Leviathan* begins with a whole section 'Of Man', spelling

out systematically why it is that particular kinds of men need a particular kind of state if they are to live together at all and to achieve any of the purposes which their nature prods them into. Every political theory implies a sociology, though you sometimes have to dig for it.

Fortunately, you don't have to dig very deep in Hobbes. His social model is easily recognizable as an atomistic, market model of human relationships between ambitious but fearful men. Men like that would never live together at all were it not for the existence of an all-powerful Sovereign who makes and enforces law. What is remarkable about Hobbes's account of the state in *Leviathan* is that the political order is natural only in a very extended sense because on Hobbes's account of the matter men would be very reluctant to give another power over themselves. The state is an artificial creation which is not *derivable* from human nature, but which is *made necessary* by human nature. The political order is a radically created order, and Hobbes thinks that even if we could go back to the beginning. rational men would create absolute sovereignty because their own self-knowledge would prompt them to it.

There is something miraculous about the existence of the Hobbesian state, but it is not miraculous in the sense of supernatural. There is nothing mysterious about Hobbes's political theory at all.

It has no place for sentimental loyalty to a dynasty or for the reverence due to the Lord's anointed. The Sovereign may command loyalty and he may command obedience to himself as the Lord's anointed, but loyalty and reverence are the result of command, and not the other way round.

Hobbes is careful to say that what reason dictates God also commands, but it is clear that unaided reason could work out the principles of constructing an absolute state whether God commanded it or not. The Sovereign does not necessarily have to be one man. It could be a body of men, an aristocracy or even a democracy. What is startling about the Hobbesian theory of sovereignty is that its nature as sovereignty does not alter with the manner of its exercise. A state could be the purest democracy, but its sovereignty would still be absolute sovereignty. The anti-feudal thrust of Hobbes's argument is unmistakable. Sovereignty, being indivisible, does not have to be shared with hereditary estates or parliaments. We sometimes forget just how much feudal societies were riddled with ideas and practices of representation, and how much modern theories and practices of representation derive from them. From the Hobbesian point of view, political representation as a form of power-sharing could easily seem to be some kind of feudal remnant getting in the way of the exercise of pure sovereignty. When feudal ideas of representation were converted in the modern world into ideas of democratic representation, the political legitimacy they produced in its

turn produced an idea of sovereignty which nobody could challenge because each has a part, however remote, in that sovereignty's exercise. Hobbes and Rousseau may be worlds apart about everything else, but they are in close agreement about what sovereignty means.

The main difference between Hobbes and Rousseau as theorists of the state becoming modern is that Rousseau's version of the state requires it to be the vehicle of a collective moral enterprise. Hobbes sees the state as the expression of civil, not social, association. Men's relations with each other are juridically conceived, and the bond of law is neutral Ebenstein, 1970).

Treat all other men as you would have them treat you and you will not fall foul of the law. The end of obedience to the Sovereign is social peace, which makes it possible for men to pursue their own self-chosen ends within a framework of law. Consideration of the end for which law as the Sovereign's command exists is not enough to make men obey, for the very simple reason that each man would think that it was in his own best interest for everybody else to obey except himself. Of course, men want their neighbors to be law-abiding, but that does not necessarily provide each man with a motive to be law-abiding himself. Each man's motive for obedience according to Hobbes is fear of the Sovereign, and fear of the Sovereign is directly related to the Sovereign's efficiency in seeking out and punishing malefactors. Nothing must get in the way of that, no local immunity or privilege, and not even the privilege of rank.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Sovereignty, power, authority and state are not core concept used in this unit, True or False?
2. Political Thought is not bedrock of democratic culture, True or False
3. Political Thought gives to different bad governance from good governance, True or False

2.4 Summary

In this unit, students are to note that the essence of the study of political thought is for students to understand it prominence in the formation and organization of the state and as well as what is expected of the state for the citizens and the relationship between the state and the citizens. In other words, political thought is the building block for modern state. It provides the conceptual and theoretical basis for questioning the nature

and character of governance in a political system. The unit is structured to critically engage students at the post-graduate level to dissect the role of political thought in the organization of the state.

2.5 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What do you understand that political thought plays an essential role in the organization of the modern state
2. Choose three political philosophers discussed and explained how their thoughts influenced the organization of the modern state.

2.6 References/Further Reading

Bouche,D. & Paul, K.(2009). *Political Thinkers,* Oxford University Press.

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1.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. There is no gain saying that political thought plays an essential role in the organization of the modern state because it the hub of politics, governance and the organization of the state. Political Thought precedes the modern state
2. Aristole, Plato, Jean Bodin,

UNIT 3 POLITICAL THOUGHT AS A HUB OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

As a discipline, political science is much more comprehensive and includes different forms of speculation in politics such as political thought, political theory, political philosophy, political ideology, institutional or structural framework, comparative politics, public administration, international law and organizations etc. With the rise of political science as a separate discipline, political theory was made one of its subfields. However, when used specifically with emphasis on 'science' as distinct from 'theory', political science refers to the study of politics by the use of scientific methods in contrast to political philosophy which is free to follow intuition. 'Political theory when opposed to political philosophy is political science'. Political science is concerned with describing and explaining the realities of political behavior, generalizations about man and political institutions on empirical evidence, and the role of power in the society. Political theory, on the other hand, is not only concerned about the behavioral study of the political phenomena from empirical point of view but also prescribing the goals which states, governments, societies and citizens ought to pursue. Political theory also aims to generalize about the right conduct in the political life and about the legitimate use of power. It is on this basis that the thrust of this unit is to enable students to understand how political thought is the hub of political science.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- know why political thought is referred to as a hub of political science.

3.3 main content:

3.3.1 Political Thought as a Hub of Political Science

It is incumbent on post-graduate students to take a deeper step and that understand that political theory is neither pure thought, nor philosophy, nor science. While it draws heavily from all of them, yet it is distinct from them. Contemporary political theory is trying to attempt a synthesis between political philosophy and political science. Generally, it is the speculation of a single individual who is attempting to offer us a theoretical explanation of the political reality i.e. the phenomena of the state. Every theory by its very nature is an explanation, built upon certain hypothesis which may be valid (or not) and which are always open to criticism. So what we find in political theory is a number of attempts made by thinkers from Plato onwards to unravel the mysteries of man's political life. They have given so many modes of explanations which may or may not convince us but to which we cannot pass any final judgement. Political theory is largely an attempt to seek the truth as the thinker sees it and it is usually expressed through a treatise such as Plato's Republic, Aristotle's Politics, Hobbes' Leviathan, or Rawls'

Secondly, political theory contains an explanation of man, society and history. It probes the nature of man and society: how a society is made up and how it works; what are the important elements; what are the sources of conflict in the society and how they can be resolved. Thirdly, political theory is discipline based. It means that though the phenomena which the theorist seeks to explain remains the same i.e. the state, the writer may be a philosopher, historian, economist, theologian or a sociologist. Thus, we are confronted by a variety of political theories, each distinguished by a discipline on which it is based. Fourthly, political theory not only comprehends and explains the social and political reality but is also actively engaged in hastening the process of history (Chaturvedi,1981). The task of political theory is not only to understand and explain but also to device ways and means to change the society.

As Laski put it, the task is not merely one of description of what it is but also a prescription of what ought to be. Thus, political theory recommends agencies of action as well as means of reform, revolution or conservation. It contains programmers that embody both ends and means. Political theory plays a double role: to understand society and to suggest how to remove the imperfections. And lastly, political theory also includes political ideology. Ideology in simple language means 'a system of beliefs, values and ideals by which people allow themselves to be governed'. We find a number of ideologies in the modern world such

as liberalism, Marxism, socialism etc. All political theories from Plato to date reflect a distinct ideology of the writer. Political theory in the form of political ideology includes a system of political values, institutions and practices which a society has adopted as its ideal. For example, all political theories adopted by Western Europe and America have been dominated by liberalism and the theories accepted by China and east while USSR were influenced by a particular brand of Marxism. Each brand of theory or ideology in this sense claims for itself the attributes of universality and compels others to accept it, leading to what is generally known as 'ideological conflicts' (Chaturvedi,1981). In short, political theory is associated with the explanation and evaluation of the political phenomena and this phenomenon can be examined as a statement of ideas and ideals, as an agent of socio-economic change, and as an ideology.

The nature of political theory can also be understood from the kind of issues it has been grappling with during the long span of more than 2300 years. Different political issues have been dominant in different epochs. Classical political theory was primarily concerned with the search for a perfect political order. As such it analyzed the basic issues of political theory such as the nature and purpose of the state, basis of political authority, the problem of political obligation and political disobedience. It was more concerned with what the state ought to be i.e. the ideal state. The rise of modern nation-state and the industrial revolution gave birth to a new kind of society, economy and polity. Modern political theory starts from individualism and made liberty of the individual as the basic issue. Hence it was concerned with issues like rights, liberty, equality, property and justice for the individual, how to create a state based upon individual consent, and a right to change the government. You should note that at one time, it also became important to explain the interrelation between one concept and the others such as liberty and equality, justice and liberty, equality and property. The empirical political theory, particularly after the Second World War, shifted the emphasis from concepts to the political behavior of man. It invented a number of new issues largely borrowed from other social sciences. Some of the important issue of empirical political theory was authority, legitimacy, elite, party, group, political system, political culture etc. During the last twenty years, quite a number of different issues have come to dominate the scene of political theory (Dryzek, 2008).

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Political theory contains an explanation of man, society and history. It probes the nature of man and society: **True or False**
2. Political theory is largely an attempt to seek the truth as the thinker sees it and it is usually expressed through a treatise such as Plato's Republic, Aristotle's Politics, Hobbes' Leviathan, or Rawls', **True or False**
3. political theory is discipline based. It means that though the phenomena which the theorist seeks to explain remains the same i.e. the state, the writer may be a philosopher, historian, economist, theologian or a sociologist, True **or False**

3.4 Summary

Students must understand that with the resurgence of value-based political thought, there is once again an emphasis on the issues of freedom, equality and justice. Apart from them, some new issues have come to dominate the scene such as feminism, environmentalism, ecology, community, issue concerning development, subalteranism etc. These are the issues which have been engaging the attention of political theorists today. We shall touch upon these issues in the relevant chapters in this book. Moreover, traditional picture of studying the issues from a single perspective i.e. either from liberal or Marxist point of view, is also changing. Though the method was not wrong but today it is found inadequate. To give an example, both liberalism and Marxism have viewed justice or freedom in the male dominated sphere of government and economy and ignored the freedom of the traditional female spheres of home and family.

An adequate theory of sexual equality will involve considerations that simply are not addressed in the traditional right or left debates. Similarly, communitarians have also exposed the weakness of single perspective approach. Recent political theory is trying to redefine the issues of liberty, equality and justice in the context of ultimate values of common good and these the core focus of political science. This unit has exposed students at the post-graduate to understand that there certain concepts that are considered as the core concepts of political science and as such, the study of political thought focuses on those concepts. That is why l referred to political thought as the hub of political science. This is because political science is all about the systematic study of nature and character for the organization of state, its operations and location of authoritative values.

Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Do you agree that political thought is a hub of political science?
2. Attempt the debate, there is no political science without political thought

3.6 References/Further Reading

Bouche,D. & Paul, K.(2009). *Political Thinkers*, Oxford University Press.

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3.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. I strongly agree that political thought is a hub of political science

2 There is no political science without political thought because it provides the normative and empirical lens and parameter and even standard of judgment

UNIT 4 POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

If political thought is the hub of political science, then students have to advance and deduce it significance generally. This is because I want to believe that by now you must have read the course guide and familiarized yourself with the introductory comments in module 1. This unit is the first among the four constituent units of this module.

The main thrust of this unit is to identify and operationalize the significance of political thought. You are, therefore, expected to give it maximum attention it deserves.

4.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Expose to understand the relevance of political thought.

4.3 Main Content

4.3.1 The Significance of Political Thought

The significance of political theory can be derived from the purpose it serves or supposed to serve and the task performed by it. Political theory is a form of all embracing system of values which a society adopts as its ideal with a view to understand the political reality and, if necessary, to change it. It involves speculation at higher level about the nature of good life, the political institutions appropriate for its realization, to what end the state is directed and how it should be constituted to achieve those ends. The significance of political theory lies in providing the

moral criteria that ought to be used to judge the ethical worth of a political state and to propose alternative political arrangements and practices likely to meet the moral standards. The importance of political theory lies in providing i) a description of the political phenomena, ii) a non-scientific (based upon philosophy or religion) or a scientific (based upon empirical studies) explanation, iii) proposals for the selection of political goals and political action, and iv) moral judgement. Examples of such a political theory can be found in Plato's Republic, or Rawls' A Theory of Justice or Nozick's Anarchy, State and Utopia. As mentioned earlier, the fundamental question facing human beings has been 'how to live together'. Politics is an activity engaged with the management of the collective affairs of society. The significance of theory lies in evolving various doctrines and approaches regarding the nature and purpose of the state, the bases of political authority, vision of an ideal state, best form of government, relations between the state and the individual and basic issues such as rights, liberty, equality, property, justice etc. Again, what has become important in our times is to explain the inter-relation between one concept and another such as the relationship between liberty and equality, equality and property, justice and property (Dryzek, 2008). This is as important as peace, order, harmony-stability and unity in the society. In fact peace and harmony in the society very much depends upon how we interpret and implement the values of liberty, equality and justice etc (Chaturvedi,1981).

Contemporary states face several problems such as poverty, over-population, corruption, racial and ethnic tensions, environment pollution etc., conflicts among individuals, groups as well as nations. The task of political theory is to study and analyze more profoundly than others, the immediate and potential problems of political life of the society and to supply the practical politician with an alternative course of action, the consequences of which have been fully thought of. According to David Held, the task of political theorist is really demanding because in the absence of systematic study, there is a danger that politics will be left to the ignorant and self-seeking people who only want to pursue it as 'power. In short, the significance of political theory lies in the fact that it provides systematic thinking about the nature and purpose of state and government.

It helps us to establish a correlation between ideals and the socio-political phenomena. It makes the individual aware of his rights and duties in the society. It helps us to understand the nature or' the socio-economic system and its problems like poverty, violence, corruption, ethnicity etc. Since the task of political theory is not only to understand and explain the social reality but also to change it, political theory helps us to evolve ways and means to change society either through reform or revolution. When political theory performs its function well, it is one of

the most important weapons of struggle for the advancement of humanity (Bouche,2009). To imbibe people with correct theories may make them choose their goals and means correctly so as to avoid the roads that end in disappointment.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Contemporary states face a number of problems such as poverty, over-population, corruption, racial and ethnic tensions, environment pollution etc., conflicts among individuals, groups as well as nations, True **or False**
2. The task of political theory is to study and analyze more profoundly than others, the immediate and potential problems of political life of the society and to supply the practical politician with an alternative course of action, the consequences of which have been fully thought of, **True or False**
3. According to David Held, the task of political theorist is really demanding because in the absence of systematic study, there is a danger that politics will be left to the ignorant and self-seeking people who only want to pursue it as 'power, True **or False**

4.4 Summary

In this unit, students have to understand that the significance of political thought lies in the fact that it provides systematic thinking about the nature and purpose of state and government. It helps us to establish a correlation between ideals and the socio-political phenomena. It makes the individual aware of his rights and duties in the society. This is the theoretical and conceptual premise that you are expected to use your knowledge of political thought to interrogate political phenomenon in any political system. Political thought provides the grounds for students of political science to question the variations or/and nexus between the deals and realities in a political system. The purpose is to course the state to live up to its responsibility.

4.5 Self-Assessment Exercise

i. How is political thought relevant to the state?
ii. What is the essence of political thought in the state.

4.6 References/Further Reading

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4.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. The significance of political theory can be derived from the purpose it serves or supposed to serve and the task performed by it. Political theory is a form of all embracing system of values which a society adopts as its ideal with a view to understand the political reality and, if necessary, to change it.

2 The essence of political thought in the state is to propel an end that is good for all and sundry in a political system.

MODULE 2 THE CLASSICAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHERS THESTATE, POWER AND POLITICS

INTRODUCTION

This module introduces you to the ideals of classical political thought as it relates to the state, power and politics. You have to know that these thoughts set the foundation to the understanding of politics, government, power and the state.

Unit 1 Socrates and Plato Political Thought
Unit 2 Aristotle Political Thought
Unit 3 Marsilius of Padua Political Thought
Unit 4 Niccolo Machiavelli Political Thought

UNIT 1 SOCRATES AND PLATO POLITICAL THOUGHT

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

As a post-graduate student of political science, it is essential that you have a better knowledge of the political thought of Socrates and Plato and their implications for the modern state and the people. The emphasis is on the notion of the Republic and it's setting the Scene, and the guardians of the State and Justice. It is imperative to know that the political thought of Socrates and Plato are classic to the foundation of political science and by extend the development of modern state. Thus, your understanding of Socrates and Plato political thought puts in a better position to have a firm grip of political thought as a branch of political thought.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- have full knowledge of the political thought of Socrates and Plato and their implications for the modern state and the people.

1.3 Main Content

1.3.1 Socrates and Plato

Plato was born in 427 BC into an Athens which had already been engaged in the Peloponnesian War (430–404) with Sparta for three years. Pericles, the great aristocratic leader of the Athenian democracy, had died the previous year. Plato therefore grew up in interesting times, and he came of age while the war was ending disastrously for Athens with the humiliation of a Spartan garrison on the Acropolis and some vicious political infighting between the oligarchic and democratic factions for control of the city's politics. Plato had family connections with both the oligarchic and democratic parties, and, as a well-born youth with a foot in both camps, it was natural for him to consider a political career (Isaiah,1988).

The politics of a city at war was no doubt the staple of conversation in his youth. Contemporary witness suggests that the Athenian democracy changed its nature as the war went on. Pericles took Athens and her allies into the war because he thought Athens had no option, and his control of the popular assembly meant that he could confine Athenian strategy and expenditure within the bounds of the possible. After Pericles, the Athenian assembly began to listen to ill-bred demagogues who were willing to tell the assembly only what it wanted to hear.

Athens became less cautious in its policy towards its own allies, whom it began to treat as part of an Athenian empire, and much less cautious in strategy, which eventually led to the debacle of the expedition to take Syracuse. The rich saw themselves as being bled white to pay for a badly conducted democratic war, while their democratic enemies began to suspect that the oligarchs might be moving towards defeatism because victory against aristocratic Sparta would be a victory for the Athenian *demos* and its leaders. The last years of the Peloponnesian War were years of bitter party strife in Athens, oligarchy alternating with democracy, but the problem was virtually impossible to solve while the Athenian army consisted of the better-off hoplites and the equally important navy relied on the poor for its manpower as rowers.

Athens lost the war, and an oligarchic government of the Thirty came to power partly with the help of Spartan arms. The government of the Thirty was vicious to its democratic enemies but it did not last long, democracy being quickly restored. In 399 it executed Plato's mentor, Socrates, on a charge of impiety and corrupting the young, and this despite a Plato says in the *Republic* that there are people living in his own day who still believe that all aspects of life should be regulated according to precepts derivable from the Homeric poems. This tells us that there are also people living in Plato's day who thought nothing of the kind.

The world view of Homer still commands the loyalty of some men but not of others. Men cannot live without a value system which orders their lives, so it follows that Plato's own world is one in which a number of different value systems compete for the attention of thinking men. That plurality of possible value systems easily led to the Sophist position that value systems are matters of convention only in a world where it was strength which really counted. Of course, none of this might be very obvious to ordinary men, who would try to continue to live according to the values which they had always lived by, though they might be discomfited by whispers that what they had always thought of as values no longer counted for much in advanced circles (Isaiah,1988). This plurality of value systems caused Plato trouble from the beginning.

If there were a number of value systems on offer, they obviously could not all be right. Therefore, most of them would have to be dissolved in moral skepticism in order to see what survived, but the skeptical temper was ill-suited to the construction of the kind of absolute value system which Plato thought was the only antidote to the moral, and therefore political, instability which surrounded him. Plato solved his problem by inventing a double Socrates, a skeptical Socrates and a Platonic Socrates. The historical Socrates undoubtedly existed, but he did not write anything, so that what we know about his opinions comes to us at second-hand and largely through admiring friends, the chief among whom is Plato. What was it that led Plato to write so much of his philosophy through the mouth of Socrates? Socrates was an extraordinary man, capable of arousing famous pronouncement by the Delphic Oracle that he was the wisest man in Greece. The political experience of the Athens of his youth and early manhood appears to have sickened Plato. As he says in the (possibly spurious) autobiographical Seventh Letter, 'I was forced, in fact, to the belief that the only hope of finding justice for society or for the individual lay in true philosophy, and that mankind will have no respite from trouble until either real philosophers gain political power or politicians become

by some miracle true philosophers.' Plato travelled widely after the death of Socrates (there are rumors that he dabbled in the olive oil business in Egypt), made an unsuccessful attempt to convert a tyrant of Syracuse into a philosopher-ruler, and eventually founded the Academy in Athens in 386 where he taught for the rest of his life. He died in 347. Besides the *Republic* Plato wrote two other books on politics, *The Statesman* and *The Laws* (this latter is often taken to be an account of Plato's 'second best state' and is said to contain the first account of the doctrine of mixed government). His famous account of a drinking party, t*he Symposium,* celebrates homosexual love in a way once thought to be mildly scandalous fierce loyalty and irritated enmity.

According to his friends he was wise, courageous, self-controlled and just, the best man of his time, exactly the kind of man least likely to survive in a society in which injustice was getting the upper hand.

Perhaps there is something too mannered in this description of Socrates (Isaiah,1988): wisdom, courage, temperance and justice are the conventional catalogue of the ancient virtues, but, on the other hand, perhaps Socrates did possess them all. What seems beyond dispute is that Socrates had an extraordinary presence, almost a stage presence in our sense. He was one of those people whom, once you have met them, you never forget. Socrates earned his own living, though he never took a penny-piece for his teaching, but he seemed to exercise a kind of fascination over well-born youths like Plato and Alcibiades. Socrates played the game of philosophy in a way so new that we call his predecessors pre-Socratic. Those predecessors had left knowledge in a mess. The certainties of the Homeric world of natural hierarchies were undermined from any number of different directions, but because those three interlocking hierarchies stand or fall together, a sustained and successful attack from any direction would have been fatal to all three.

The hierarchy of the gods, the hierarchy of men and the hierarchy of nature paid a high price for their card castle elegance; all three would tumble down at the removal of a single card. Among the first to remove a card was Democritus with his brilliant guess at atomic theory. In essence, what Democritus had to say about atoms was simple, but it had very far-reaching consequences. Democritus said that the whole of nature could be explained as the behavior of very small particles acting in ways which were in principle predictable, but which men were in fact incapable of predicting. Everything was made of the same stuff, and every happening was simply the result of that stuff moving around. The implication for the Homeric view of nature was obvious. How could nature be hierarchical if everything was made up of everything else? Some events are bigger than others, a storm at sea bigger than a

storm in a tea cup, but that was just the way things turned out; a sliding-scale of events of infinitely graded magnitude made much more sense than different classes of events clearly differentiated from each other (Alasdair,1977). And it was hardly reassuring for a king to be told that he was made of the same clay as the meanest of his subjects, or his slaves, or ven his domestic animals. If the events which concerned kings and nobles were not qualitatively different from the events which concerned ordinary men, then there was no need to introduce into the world a special class of gods important enough to account for the greatness of great men's deeds. Now only their scale is greater, not their nature.

The world posited by Democritus was a world of constant change. It was Heraclitus who most famously characterized that inconstant world as a world in flux. Democritus and Heraclitus between them fashioned a world about which it was very difficult to say anything very positive at all, beyond saying that it was like what they said it was like. For knowledge to be true, it had to be true always, so perhaps, as Parmenides was to say, it was not worth the trouble to try to find knowledge in the world at all because what would be true of the world today was bound to be untrue tomorrow. For those who took Parmenides at his word, the only honest conclusion to be drawn was that the business of trying to find knowledge should be wound up almost before it had begun (Alasdair,1977). That was the intellectual world in which Socrates lived and died, and, Plato wrote, a world in which all A history of western political thought dogma—moral, political and religious—had had its day.

No doubt there was a good deal of dogma still around; dogma does not die the day it is shown to be baseless (any more than all the machines constructed on the basis of Newtonian physics stopped working on the day that Einstein discovered the principle of Special Relativity). Plato had his work cut out as a philosopher because he believed that it was still possible to find true knowledge, so he had to face the preliminary task of uncluttering men's minds of the baseless opinion which still passed for knowledge in the world after Parmenides. By Plato's account, Socrates was the past master in the art of showing that what men thought of as knowledge was nothing of the kind. The most pleasing image we have is of Socrates stopping people in the Athenian *agora* (the public square)—a famous Sophist, a politician, a noted humbug—and asking them about their beliefs about how men should live, dominating them by his questions, and cornering them in self-confessed absurdity.

What made the whole business maddening, and may have led to his trial and execution, is that Socrates always claimed that he himself

knew nothing. We can only guess that the historical Socrates was really like that, but we can easily see why, if the invention of Socrates the gadfly is an invention of Plato's, it is a necessary invention. He stands for the instrument needed to clear away all outmoded doctrine before the true job of philosophy could begin. Socrates made his living as a stonemason, and he is reputed to have said that the only men who knew anything at Athens were the craftsmen (Alasdair,1977).

For Socrates, there was always more than an analogy between knowing something and a technical skill *(techne)*. What a craftsman knows is the reverse of dogmatic; a craft is not a set of principles to be put into operation; that is not what a craftsman does when he practices his craft, and the learning of a craft certainly does not consist of learning a set of principles and then putting them into practice. It is not even clear that a set of principles could usefully be extrapolated from a craft, and most craftsmen, when asked what they are doing, would be hard put to it to explain beyond saying: 'Any fool can see I'm doing carpentry.' The questions which can sensibly be asked of someone practicing a skill are not about what the skill is like but about how the skill was acquired. Someone practicing a skill would be able to propose a training programmed for skill-learning much more easily than he would be able to describe the end-product of that training (Alasdair,1977).

The relationship between master and pupil would be central to the enterprise. A craft does not exist apart from its exercise, so a pupil has to see the master practice the craft before he can begin to learn, and the whole purpose of the training is to produce a master. That is not to say that all of the training would be on the- job training. A certain amount of 'theoretical' work might be useful, in mathematics, say, and there might be room for physical exercise to cultivate desirable physical attributes, like strength and dexterity, but these too would be learned from a master.

Being a master also requires its own forms of in-service training, because a master is only a master in so far as he actually practices his craft. Skills can become rusty; fitness for anything means keeping fit; practice does not always make perfect, but lack of practice always leads to degeneration. Socrates may have thought that goodness was a kind of skill, being good at doing good. Goodness always had an active quality about it for the ancient Greeks. Goodness was not a passive condition of the soul, like innocence; nor was it simply to be well-Socrates and Plato intentioned. To be good was to do good things, and to be considered good was to be seen to be doing them. Men would be known by their works. The question was how to train a man to do good. If goodness was a skill, being good at doing good, then a moral

training would have to go far beyond posting up a list of things to do and things to avoid: tell the truth, help friends, harm enemies, pay debts, husband inheritances, avoid self-indulgence, and so on. These might well be the things that good men would do, and the list could no doubt be extended almost indefinitely, but there is nothing in that list which guarantees that they will in fact be done. Doing them requires practice so that they become second nature, and no amount of diligent study of the list will produce men like that. And, as with all lists of rules, there will always be exceptions because on occasions rules will conflict. Plato deals with one such conflict in the *Republic*.

The old man Cephalus suggests that two of the rules of justice are helping friends and paying debts. Socrates points out that it could not be justice to return a knife borrowed from a friend if the friend had gone mad in the meantime. That would be paying the debt, but it could hardly be called helping a friend. Cephalus confesses that he is stumped by that objection. He could have said that justice is helping friends and paying debts, but not in that case. Plato does not allow him to say that for the obvious reason that a list of exceptions to the rules of justice would make for a very long list indeed. Not only would the list have to contain all the rules which a just man would follow, but it would also have to contain a complete list of the exceptions. This list of the exceptions would almost certainly have to be much longer than the list of rules because the exceptions would always depend on circumstances, and there is in principle no limit to the number of possible circumstances that could arise in which the rules of justice could come into conflict (Alasdair,1977). And even if the list of rules and exceptions could be made exhaustive, there is still nothing in the list which would guarantee that a particular man would order his life and his conduct in strict accordance with it.

Much better, then, to approach the problem from another direction. Why not devise a training programmed to produce just men? Here the idea of justice as a skill really helps. If there is a man somewhere who is just, then he is the master, and the rest are naturally his pupils. The pupils will themselves become just men by going through the same training programmed as he did and by attending to his example. It does not much matter if the master cannot tell the uninstructed what the end-product of the training will be like beyond saying: 'You will end up by being like me and doing what I do.' Plato may have thought about Socrates like that, and Socrates may have meant that he could not produce a set of rules of justice when he said that he knew nothing. His questioning of those who said they knew what justice was, may have been meant to demonstrate that justice could not be a set of rules for conduct which only had to be memorized for justice to follow. What Socrates obviously had was a disposition to be just, and Plato thought

that the cause of justice could best be served by devising ways in which the Socratic disposition could be cultivated in others. Of course, this can only be a guess because we know practically nothing about the young Socrates, and we certainly do not know enough to know how Socrates came to be just.

Plato knows that there is still one difficulty to be overcome. Just as there is nothing in a list of rules for just conduct which would necessarily compel anyone to follow them (why A history of western political thought should I?), so there is no very compelling reason why I should want to be just like Socrates. I might want to be like Socrates, but I might not. Plato has to find a readily intelligible motive for wanting to be like Socrates, and for being prepared to go through a course of training to become like Socrates. Training implies sacrifice of present inclination for future benefit, so what would make it *worth it*? Plato has to compete in a market in which the Sophists are the market leaders offering success in public life as the bait to potential customers (Alasdair,1977). Plato never denies that the Sophists can deliver the goods on their prospectus, and being Greek, he knows that nobody does anything for nothing, so he undertakes to show that the just man is always happier than the unjust man. Plato takes it as axiomatic that most successful men in corrupt societies cannot be all good. This applies particularly to men who have had to make their own way—exactly the market that the Sophists aimed at. Plato is straightforward about what he means by the happiness of the just man; he means what everybody means by happiness. The lucky or the successful man in a corrupt society may have everything he wants, and his contemporaries may envy him as the happiest of men, but he really is unhappy. Likewise, the just man in an unjust society may appear to be the most miserable of men, always doing good and always suffering calumny and worse from his contemporaries, but he really is happier even if he is hounded to death.

Happiness is the motive for justice: happiness now, not happiness in some state of future bliss after death, and not happiness defined out of existence as something else. That is a tall order. Plato has to convince his audience that justice really is what he says it is and then he has to show that audience that we have good reasons for wanting justice.

Justice is obviously a very odd virtue, different in kind from wisdom, courage and self-control, which, with justice, go up to make the catalogue of the virtues. The difference between justice and the other virtues is that the other virtues are worth practicing even though others do not practice them. It is to my advantage to be wise if others are foolish, brave (though not foolhardy) if others are poltroons, and temperate if others are profligates. At the very least, these virtues do

not make me vulnerable and they might also enable me to protect myself from others; at best, they might help me to a position of dominance on the principle that in the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed man is king (Alasdair,1977). Reason in Plato's sense is not involved in the lesser virtues of courage and self-control. This is not to say that the lesser virtues can be practiced without some kind of knowledge. A courageous man has to be good at being a soldier, which involves training in a skill and in the kind of knowledge which comes from knowing the dangers to be faced in war. Likewise, the moneymaker must know something, otherwise we could not distinguish between those who make money and those who try to but don't. In Plato's view, reason is directed towards true knowledge. By reason he sometimes means what we mean by reasoning, or judgement, or contemplation, but reason is to be thought of as unitary because it is directed towards a single object. Of course, not everything we call knowledge is true knowledge in Plato's special sense, and not all knowing is done by those who possess true knowledge. There is a rough, everyday knowledge, which Plato does not always despise in the way he despises moneymaking—a craftsman's knowledge for instance—but that is not the true knowledge which reason seeks.

It works out what the soul's order should be and it is also the guarantor of that order. Reason's knowledge is its title to rule the rest of the self, and that knowledge, together with the rule which it justifies, makes up the kingly science. What is true for each man within himself is also true for the relations between men. The man who is himself properly self-controlled is fit to command others unlike himself. His relations with others like himself will be friendly and co-operative, but his relations with others unlike himself will be relations of rulership. Plato sees a very close connection between instability of character and political instability. An unstable character is one where the naturally ruling part is not in control, and an unstable state is one where men who are not naturally in control of themselves control public affairs. In both cases, an inherent instability will cause unhappiness sooner or later; much better to get things properly organized at the outset. The *Republic* is largely an attempt to show how just men can be produced and how advantageous it would be if they were to rule a *polis*.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option

1. There is different between Socrates and Plato Political Thought, True or False
2. Both Socrates and Plato talk about just society, True or False
3. Plato laid the foundation for a just society, True or False

1.3.2 The Republic: Setting the Scene

The *Republic* is written in the form of a long conversation between Socrates and others. The tone becomes less conversational as the work goes on, and by the end it has virtually become a Socratic monologue. Some commentators have concluded that the *Republic* as we have it must be a composite of two works because the first at least of its ten books is so unlike the rest; but no-one denies that there is a single connecting argument which goes right through it. Perhaps the best way of looking at the relationship between the beginning of the *Republic* and the rest of it is to see the first and second books as setting the scene for the arguments which follow. 'Setting the scene' is meant in a straightforwardly dramatic sense.

The *Republic* opens with Socrates walking back from the Piraeus to Athens after a religious festival when he is persuaded by Polemarchus, the son of Cephalus, to come home with him and meet a gathering of friends (Michael, 1987). Socrates is greeted by Cephalus, who seems to have aged since Socrates saw him, last, and the talk quickly turns to the question of what it is like to be old. In the course of that discussion Plato allows us to find out a good deal about Cephalus and about the way he looks back on his own life. Cephalus has lived a good life according to his lights. He has told the truth and paid his debts; unlike the other old men of his acquaintance, he does not regret the passing of youth and its pleasures, and he does not take a jaundiced view of the young. He has been a businessman (there is a historical Cephalus who was a shield manufacturer). He inherited a diminished family capital and increased it, which enables him to look forward to leaving his sons more than his father left him, though less than his grandfather left his father (Michael, 1987). He has been able to make money without having to struggle; he has never been tempted to lie and cheat for it, and he has not become over-fond of money. He has heard tales about the punishments which might be visited upon the wicked after death, but when he looks back on his life, he sees no cause for alarm.

Socrates finds his serenity in the face of death admirable. Cephalus' goodness lies in his consistency. His is a businessman's ethic, giving every man what he is owed. He has done his duty by his fellow men

and by his own sons. When Socrates meets him, he has been sacrificing to the gods, for Cephalus will leave no debts unpaid. If he has a fault, it is that he is not very reflective about his own ethic, though Socrates does not chide him for that. Socrates does ask him what he thinks goodness is, and Cephalus answers that it is telling the truth, helping friends and paying debts. Socrates suggests very gently that there may be cases where that definition might cause a problem or two, as when a friend has lent you a knife and gone mad in the A history of western political thought meantime. Would it be just to return the knife in these circumstances? Well, probably not, because that would hardly be helping your friend, though it would certainly be paying your debt. Cephalus can see no way out of the difficulties; Socrates does not press him, and anyway Cephalus has more important things to do because he hasn't finished his sacrificing yet. Obviously, there is more to be said.

He bequeaths the argument to the young men and quietly shuffles off the scene, never to be heard again. We are to assume that a properly conducted sacrifice is not a trifling matter, so at least during a part of the action on-stage (perhaps while Thrasymachus is talking because he is in many ways the opposite of Cephalus) religious rites are still being practiced off-stage.

The scene is charming, but at the same time puzzling. One of the pleasures of old age that Cephalus mentions to Socrates is a delight in intelligent conversation, yet Plato does not keep Cephalus in the dialogue very long. Plato has even prepared us for his exit right at the beginning of the scene where Cephalus is found resting in a chair with a garland round his neck; plainly Cephalus has unfinished business on hand. Cephalus is dismissed because his is not an example to be followed. The *Republic* is a book about justice, and Plato could have said: Being just is being like Cephalus; his life is admirable, so imitate him. When Cephalus leaves the scene the moral authority of a lived life leaves too; justice is to be found elsewhere, in the present, not the past. Perhaps the dismissal of Cephalus is also meant to tell us that the gods can no longer be relied on to provide answers to questions about how we ought to organize our lives. Religion is no longer centre stage; it has lost the moral authority it once had. What old men and the gods have to say is still worth listening to, but what is said has to be examined on its merits. (Michael, 1987). Nothing is to be taken at face value. Cephalus is replaced by the Sophist Thrasymachus, and the scene has been carefully set for him too. The rejection of ancestral wisdom and the wisdom of the gods is meant to tell us that the world has lost its way. Moral authority is no longer adequate; everything is questionable and there are no obvious answers. The great danger in a world like that is the man who peddles easy answers to complex questions, and the greatest danger of all is the man who has only one answer to a host of

different questions. Thrasymachus stands for both. Justice is the interest of the stronger and injustice pays; remember that and life becomes simple; you'll get through and you will never have to think again. Thrasymachus gets a real drubbing from Socrates (Jacques,1999). What happens when the strong tell you to do something which is obviously not in their interest? Is it then right to do what they tell you? Thrasymachus wriggles by saying that rulers *as* rulers never make mistakes. We do not call a mathematician a mathematician by virtue of his mistakes and the same is true of rulers: they are called rulers to the extent that they get things right. This is the moment when Socrates begins to duff Thrasymachus up. On Thrasymachus' own account of it, ruling is a skill like other skills.

Socrates has no trouble in showing that skills like medicine are practiced for the good of the patient, not for the good of the practitioner.

The relationship between doctor and patient is one between superior and inferior (doctor's orders), but the doctor has the good of the patient's health at heart and not his own. It follows from this that all skills are practiced for the good of their object; ruling is a skill, therefore its purpose is the good of the ruled, not the ruler. Therefore, justice is the interest of the weak, not the strong. Thrasymachus does not give up easily, although in the end he concedes defeat; but unlike Cephalus he is not dismissed from the dialogue. He is tamed and allowed to remain, but to remain in silence. It might have made more sense to keep Cephalus and let Thrasymachus go. Thrasymachus is exactly the kind of false philosopher that Plato despises. After Socrates has finished with him, he really ought to go off in a huff. Cephalus ought to stay, not perhaps following all the stages of Socrates' subsequent argument very closely but nodding a kind of distant approval as Socrates expounds true justice to the young men. Yet Cephalus goes and Thrasymachus stays. Why? The answer is probably age. The theory of justice which Socrates will eventually offer in the *Republic* is a theory of self-control. Cephalus is a man with all passion spent. One of the advantages of old age that Cephalus mentions to Socrates is the freedom from the tyranny of desire. That is what makes Cephalus unteachable; there is nothing left to be controlled. Thrasymachus is still vigorous. We are to assume that there is still something there worth controlling, and the whipping-in of Thrasymachus is meant to tell us that it is controllable. Thrasymachus cares about money and will not tell the company what justice is until he has been paid. Socrates has no money, and the others agree to pay for him. Thrasymachus is worthy of his hire. He has a reputation as someone worth listening to and we can assume that he has done well in this kind of discussion before. Thrasymachus is worldly. He makes a

claim to an expertise which looks as if it is based on experience of the political world: no matter where you go you will find that all states are in fact divided into the powerful and the weak, no matter how that fact is disguised. Thrasymachus' expertise is something like the expertise of political science, seeing beyond the appearances to what really is the case. Thrasymachus' claim to his expertise is never seriously disputed.

Socrates' refutation of Thrasymachus is purely formal. Plato wants us to think that the knowledge possessed by Thrasymachus is inferior to the knowledge possessed by true philosophers, but Thrasymachus' claim to knowledge is left substantially intact. Plato probably wants us to think that what Thrasymachus has to tell us about the world of politics is substantially correct, and Plato in fact returns to a power theory of politics in Book IX of the *Republic* where he discusses imperfect forms of rule.

His objection to Thrasymachus is not just that Thrasymachus is dangerous because like all Sophists he peddles false ideas about justice. Rather, it is the claim of Thrasymachus to have seen beyond the appearances to the reality of politics. Thrasymachus says that justice is always the interest of the stronger, and that would be the case even where the interest of the stronger is publicly proclaimed as the interest of everybody (Jacques,1999). Thrasymachus claims a knowledge which is worldly knowledge, but not everyday knowledge. In the *Republic* Socrates is also laying claim to knowledge beyond the appearances, and so it is important for Plato to distinguish between 'real' real knowledge beyond the appearances and bogus real knowledge beyond the appearances of the kind that Thrasymachus possesses. This makes for a certain complication, and it is well to understand clearly that knowledge for Plato is divided into three classes, not two: first, ordinary knowledge as it appears to men living ordinary lives in the world; second, knowledge of the Thrasymachus kind which avoids the deceptions practiced by the world on the perceptions of ordinary men; and third, a true knowledge which sees beyond what Thrasymachus has seen. A history of western political thought perhaps inadvertently, Thrasymachus has put his finger on something which always causes trouble in states. Things are not always as they seem to be the strong do not always proclaim openly that what they say justice is, is really only their own self-interest. Ways can always be found of softening the message. Ideological forms can easily conceal the reality of power, and power itself can always find proxies.

It can be difficult in states to get to the bottom of the question: Who rules? We sometimes forget that the oppressiveness of government is not the only thing about it which causes discontent. Often a sense of alienation arises from not knowing who it is who really does call the

tune. If those who apparently rule is in fact the agents of others, then discontent can be compounded with frustration: I am being badly treated *and* I do not even know by whom. Political science since Thrasymachus, and especially modern political science, has importantly concerned itself with questions of this kind: Who really rules? The Ideal State of Plato's *Republic* is designed to bring the realities of power out into the open. Plato's Guardians rule and are seen to be doing so (Jacques,1999).

There is no place in the *Republic* for informal oligarchs of wealth and influence. Guardians rule, and that's it. Plato knows that family, caste, and class based on wealth, are often the bases of disproportionate power in states, and the purpose of the political engineering in the *Republic* is to neutralize them. Rulers are denied wealth and family life so that they can control the deleterious effects of wealth and family loyalty in others on the state, and the military caste in his Ideal State is kept in strict subordination. In Plato's Ideal State, politics in the sense of naturally arising conflict, or as caused by conflict, has no place. He is not trying to stop family life, or to prevent people from loving honor; rather he devises arrangements which will make them a source of unity, not of division.

The final problem which Thrasymachus leaves unresolved is the problem of divided states. The state as it exists in the world is not one state but two. All cities are divided. Plato could either try to construct a state in which the causes of those divisions were eradicated or try to construct a state in which the causes remain, but the effects are not divisive. Plato takes the second course by making sure that the causes of division, where they operate at all, always have the effect of dividing the ruled and not the rulers.

He has at least as sure a grasp as Aristotle of the principle that the cause of political instability and changes of regime is disunity in the ruling group, and he adds the twist that the ideal recipe for political stability is unity above and disunity below. If all the material wealth in a society is possessed by the ruled class, then they can quarrel about it to their hearts' content provided only that wealth is not concentrated in too few hands.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. The problem then becomes one of finding a principle which can keep the ruling group itself united, and this Plato thinks he has found in the principle of justice., **True or False**
2. The same is true of honour. Provided that competition for honour is confined to a military caste who are kept from the highest positions in the state, then the military are unlikely to compete with their rulers, who are above such things, and they are unlikely to be united as a group except on the battlefield. True or False
3. There is no place in the *Republic* for informal oligarchs of wealth and influence. Guardians rule, and that's it, **True or False**

1.3.3 The Guardians of the State and Justice

You should note that justice is the integrating principle in Plato's Ideal State. It both binds the classes to each other and is the basis for unity in the ruling group. In the *Republic* Socrates changes over from trying to find out what constitutes justice in a single man to trying to find out what constitutes justice in a whole community. It is only when he has given an outline of state justice that he returns to the question of justice in individuals from which the *Republic* began. The reason Socrates gives for this alteration in procedure is that justice is easier to find in the state because there, being public and a quality of the whole thing, it will be easier to recognize, but it will be the same justice. Being a quality of the whole, justice cannot inhere in a part of the whole, in a legal system for instance, administered by wise and learned judges. Justice must touch everybody (Judith,1999). We already know that justice is not a set of do's and don'ts, and so we are already in a position to guess that justice will be a characteristic of a certain kind of arrangement in which everyone has his proper place.

We already know that Plato is concerned to distinguish between different kinds of knowledge, and that for him knowledge is closely related to the idea of a skill, so we should not be surprised when Socrates suggests that a properly organized state is one in which people are assigned to their places according to what kinds of skills they are capable of developing. One of these skills, the art of managing others, will be the basis of the ruling group's claim to rule the rest. Therefore, we would be right to expect that the most important institutional arrangements in Plato's state would be those devoted to the training, and so to the perpetuation, of the ruling group. There would always be Guardians-in-training in Plato's state and preserving that training

unchanged would be the state's first priority. The aim of that training is to produce just men in the double sense that Plato understands justice: men who are in fact just and who know what justice is the training of Guardians, like all training, is a process of selection. Plato does not actually tell us whether everyone in his state will begin the training process, but his concern that there will be no wastage of talent makes it a reasonable inference that nobody will in principle be excluded, and certainly not women. During the education of Guardians, a good deal has to be taken on trust because the end is very far away from the beginning. It is not until Guardians are over fifty that they emerge from the training process as fully-fledged rulers in their own right, and we are to assume that only a few make it right to the end. The selection process also provides the state with its structure, because each person remains in the highest class that his own talents will take him to (Judith,1999). Promoting a person beyond his capacities is neither good for him nor good for the whole.

The training programmed proceeds from lower to higher stages. The less difficult subjects of literature, mathematics, music and gymnastics are followed by the most difficult subject of all, dialectic, or training in philosophy. The whole of Plato's *Republic* is itself an exercise in dialectic, which has led some commentators to suggest that the *Republic* is a textbook for the Philosopher-Ruler's training in the double sense that it contains an account of what that training should be like using the dialectical method of reasoning to show that the training prescribed is the best possible training method for ruling. Being able to understand fully what the arguments are for the training is itself evidence that you are yourself suitable training material. (And perhaps even Thrasymachus could in the end be made to see the truth of the arguments and so be rescued for true philosophy). Perhaps the character of the *Republic* as a dialectical exercise explains why Plato is so careful to set up the dialogue in such a dramatically formal way. Easy definitions of justice have to be formally dismissed to show that philosophy is a serious business (Will, 1995). The early refutations of Cephalus and Thrasymachus, and the long formal re-statement of Thrasymachus' position in Book II, are meant to prepare the young men for a long discussion before justice is finally reached. Only those who stay the course are capable of understanding what justice is, just as there are no short cuts to the training of Philosopher-Rulers.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. justice is the integrating principle in Plato's Ideal State, **True or False**
2. The reason Socrates gives for this alteration in procedure is that justice is easier to find in the state because there, being public and a quality of the whole thing, it will be easier to recognise, but it will be the same justice. True or False
3. The whole of Plato's *Republic* is itself an exercise in dialectic, which has led some commentators to suggest that the *Republic* is a textbook for the Philosopher-Ruler's training in the double sense that it contains an account of what that training should be like using the dialectical method of reasoning to show that the training prescribed is the best possible training method for ruling, True **or False**

1.4 Summary

I believe by now you have acquired a full knowledge of the political thought of Socrates and Plato and their implications for the modern state and the people. The emphasis is on the notion of the Republic and it's setting the Scene, and the guardians of the State and Justice. The political thought of Socrates and Plato are classic to the foundation of political science and by extend the development of modern state. Thus, your understanding of Socrates and Plato political thought puts in a better position to have a firm grips of political thought as a branch of political thought.

1.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

Attempt these questions on your own so as to deepen your study of course:

i. Explain Socrates' contribution to the development of political thought

ii. Attempt the explanation of Plato's political thought

1.6 References/Further Reading

Rogers, S. (2003). *Stories of Peoplehood: The Politics and Morals of Political Membership.* London: Cambridge University Press.

Brian, B. (2000). *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism.* New York. New York University Press.

Sarah, S. (2017). *Justice, Gender, and the Politics of Multiculturalism* New York. New York University Press.

Sankar M, (2003). *Enlightenment and Empire.* Princeton: Princeton University Press

1.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. Reason in Plato's sense is not involved in the lesser virtues of courage and self-control. This is not to say that the lesser virtues can be practiced without some kind of knowledge. A courageous man has to be good at being a soldier, which involves training in a skill and in the kind of knowledge which comes from knowing the dangers to be faced in war…
2. In Plato, The *Republic* is largely an attempt to show how just men can be produced and how advantageous it would be if they were to rule a *polis*…

UNIT 2 ARISTOTLE POLITICAL THOUGHT

Unit Structure

2. Introduction

As a post-graduate student of political science, it is essential that you have a better knowledge of Aristotle political thought and their implications for the modern state and the people. The emphasis is on his classification of forms of government. Thus, your understanding of Aristotle political thought puts you in a better position to have a firm grip of forms of government and their implications on the state and the people.

2.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
Have deep knowledge of Aristotle's biography, the historical antecedents that influenced his political thought, the Political Thought and its implication for the state and the people, and the criticism.

2.3 Main Content:

2.3 .1 Aristotle: His Background

Aristotle was born a subject of the king of Macedon at Stageira in Thrace in 384 BC. His father was a doctor who attended king Amynatas, whose throne was later occupied by the Philip who was father to Alexander the Great. Philip made peripheral Macedon the most powerful state in Greece, and Alexander conquered the world. Aristotle

came to study at Plato's Academy at Athens when he was seventeen, and he remained there as student and teacher until he was nearly forty.

Aristotle's Macedonian court connections may have made him slightly suspect in an Athens that saw its own rather complicated foreign policy being undermined by Macedonian success. Athens still regarded itself in important ways as the centre of Hellas and could be expected to look askance at the threat to Greek city-state autonomy posed by Macedon's rise to hegemony, first in Hellas and then in the whole world. We shall probably never know for certain how far Aristotle was 'involved' in Macedonian politics. Some have seen only the detached scientist in Aristotle, while others have seen him as the cultural wing of Macedonian imperialism (or even as a Macedonian spy) (Rogers, 2003). The evidence for the latter is not much more than ancient tittle-tattle, though the extended treatment of monarchy in *The Politics* has sometimes been seen as a defence of Macedonian kingship.

Whatever the truth of the Macedonian connection, Aristotle had to leave Athens on account of anti-Macedonian feeling at least twice, though his first exodus was probably also bound up with the question of the succession to Plato as head of the Academy, a job Aristotle failed to get.

Aristotle went to Assos in the territory of the tyrant Hermias of Atarneus, whose daughter he married. This is the period of Aristotle's studies in marine biology. He also went to Macedon to become tutor to the young Alexander for a year or two, and he was back in Athens in 336. By this time, Philip of Macedon had established himself as *hegemon* of the Greek cities. He was assassinated in 336, and it was Alexander who became 'the Great' Rogers, 2003). Aristotle founded his own school at Athens, the Lyceum, with its famous covered walk *(peripatos)*, hence the name Peripatetics for the followers of the Aristotelian philosophy.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Aristotle was born a subject of the king of Macedon at Stageira in Thrace in 384 BC, **True or False**
2. Aristotle was mentored by Plato, **True or False**
3. Aristotle was assassinated in 336, **True or False**

2.3.2 The Problem of Aristotle's Politics

Much is usually made of the fact that Aristotle was Plato's pupil. Plato, being the great man he is, must have been an inspirational teacher, and Aristotle, being the clever man he is, must have been a model student,

therefore Aristotle must have learned much from Plato and have come a good deal under his influence. Plato spent his life trying to design the Ideal State, so that any mention of ideal states in Aristotle's work on politics must reflect the influence of Plato. However, Aristotle's conception of what political theorizing consists of contains many things that are not very conspicuous in Plato, so there must have come a time when Aristotle chose to break with Plato and branch out on his own.

Because Plato was bound to have been so influential, Aristotle's break with Plato must have been difficult to make, even painful, comparable with Marx's break with Hegel, or J.S. Mill's with Bentham (which took the form of a much-publicized nervous breakdown).

Therefore, so the argument runs, the break can never have been really complete, which brings the argument back full circle to Plato's own greatness as an influence on Aristotle. Various possible reasons have been canvassed for the necessary influence of Plato on Aristotle. For some, Plato's 'greatness' is enough; he would have influenced anybody, so that it is to Aristotle's credit that he should have sloughed off even a part of Plato's influence. This tendency to patronize Aristotle from the Platonic heights is at its most pronounced in the view that Aristotle, not being quite Greek (he was born in Stageira in Macedonian Thrace) and being an Athenian only by adoption, must have been wonderfully impressed by a philosophical Athenian aristocrat like Plato (Rogers, 2003). The young Aristotle was probably pathetically grateful for any attention the great man could spare him after finishing the education of the gilded Athenian youths for whose benefit the Platonic Academy had been founded.

This picture of Aristotle the outsider is used to explain some of the fundamentals of Aristotle's political thought. By origin the subject of a king and living in Athens as a resident foreigner *(metic)* without political rights, Aristotle came to overvalue the idea of citizenship; coming from the fringe of the Greek world, he made too much of the distinction between Hellene and barbarian; and like all outsiders wanting to belong, he cried up the virtues of the *polis* and took too rosy a view of its faults. Aristotle may even have done this for entirely self-interested motives. It was the rise of Macedon under well as politics, so that Aristotle has a much better claim than Plato to being the founder of the first real university. Athens was divided into pro- and anti-Macedonian parties, roughly oligarchs against democrats, and Aristotle had well-born friends (he was a snappy dresser and affected the aristocratic lisp). There was a renewal of anti- Macedonian feeling at Athens when news reached the city of Alexander's death at Babylon in 332, and Aristotle sensibly took up residence at Chalcis in Euboea, where he died ten years later at the age of sixty-two (Brian,2000).

Aristotle and the science of politics, Philip and Alexander (1999) argued put an end to the free and independent *polis*, and Aristotle himself may have come under suspicion as some kind of Macedonian agent, as the philosophical wing of semi-barbarian military kingship, and so had to cover his tracks by always arguing that life in a properly constituted *polis* was the best life that Greeks could aspire to Aristotle's own father was probably court physician at Pella when Philip was king, and there is a tradition that Aristotle was tutor to the young Alexander. There is something too pat about that tradition. Of course, the greatest ruler of his day had to have the greatest philosopher of his day as tutor, and of course the greatest philosopher of his day had to have the greatest pupil.

The most poignant image we have of Aristotle is of the old man anxiously waiting in Athens for news of the progress of Alexander's eastern conquests, worrying about the orientalisation of Hellas which is its inevitable result, and hurriedly putting together in the *Politics* everything that was worth saying about those little Greek states before they disappeared into the world empire which was to be the standard political unit for the next two thousand years. Greeks and those whom the Greeks called barbarians were going to be living on terms of rough equality in these newfangled empires. Best to get down on papyrus what the *polis* at its best was like while the *polis* was still a living memory, while there was still time, and while it still made sense.

Aristotle's cousin, Callisthenes, accompanied Alexander to the east, ostensibly to compose the official campaign history and to recite Homer to Alexander when he was drunk and thought he was Achilles; but allisthenes, in one version of the story, was really Aristotle's spy, planted on Alexander to report back what he was up to and to put a halt, as far as he was able, to Alexander's admiration for the Persian king Cyrus turning Alexander into the kind of oriental despot which it had been Greece's greatest triumph to stop in his tracks at Marathon, Salamis and Plataea. Callisthenes was eventually executed for complicity in a plot against Alexander's life, though the details of what happened are obscure (Brian,2000). In one version, Callisthenes died as a martyr to Hellenism because he refused to bow and scrape before Alexander in the eastern manner, and after this the rot set in because there was no-one to stop Alexander's ascent into mystical kingship and his companions' descent into subjecthood.

The event which really sent a shudder through all right-thinking Hellenes was the banquet at. By this time, Alexander was leading a multi-racial army. The supply of Greek mercenaries was never enough, and Alexander had recruited large numbers of Persians. Their grievances seem to have been racial: Alexander had allowed Persians into the elite

Companions of Alexander and into the decent regiments, had taken to wearing Persian dress, and had begun to greet his Persian commanders with a kiss. Alexander confronted the Macedonians, threatened to pension them off back to Macedon, and distributed all the commands among the Persians. When the Macedonians had sobered up, they kissed and made up with Alexander, and Alexander ordered a banquet to celebrate the reconciliation (Brian,2000).

The occasion was skillfully used by him to effect a reconciliation between the Persians and the Macedonians. We are told that the priests of the Macedonians and the magi of the Persians shared in the religious rites, and that Alexander persuaded 10,000 of his Macedonian veterans to marry their Asiatic concubines. He made a remarkable speech in which he pleaded for *omonoia,* concord and co-operation, between the races. From that A history of western political thought time onwards it was to be recognized that the multi-racial empire was the coming political unit. This was the supremely anti-Aristotelian moment, when the distinction between Hellene and barbarian, free and slave, naturally at war with each other, so carefully made by reason, was obliterated by the sword of Alexander. And on this occasion, the true Greeks appear to have been ominously silent about the question of racial mixing. Perhaps it was the speed of Alexander's conquests which accounts for the form of Aristotle's *Politic*s as we have it.

All of the commentator's agree that the book is a mess, and the most charitable view we can take of it is that it was put together in a hurry.

There is no evidence that this was in fact the case, just as there is no evidence available to tell us that Aristotle himself wrote the book as it has come down to us. (One view of the *Politics* is that it is a compilation of notes taken by pupils from Aristotle's lectures on politics at the Lyceum.) Aristotle has a great reputation as a systematiser of knowledge, and the *Politics* is on the face of it so unsystematic that it appears to be impossible that Aristotle himself could have been responsible for the finished product (Sarah,2017).

Another, equally plausible, view is that the order of the *Politics*' eight books has become jumbled during the course of the centuries, and several scholarly careers have been made out of the business of rearranging them. The most convincing case for rearranging the books has been made out by Werner Jaeger in his *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development,* though Jaeger's case depends on the basic premise that Aristotelianism took the distinctive form it did as a result of a painful break with Platonism. Jaeger argues that there is a distinction to be made between what he calls 'the Original Politics' and the truly 'Aristotelian Politics' (Books 4, 5 and 6), with Book 1 written

the latest of all as a general introduction. The Original Politics is Platonic in inspiration and deals with the construction of the Ideal, or best possible, State, while the Aristotelian Politics contains a much more empirical grasp of how politics works in the real political world.Aristotle's political science is empirical in the way that Aristotelian biology is empirical. On Jaeger's view of it, Aristotle's chief contribution to political science is to bring the subject matter of politics within the scope of the methods which he was already using to investigate other aspects of nature. Aristotle the biologist looks at the developments in political life in much the same way that he looks at the developing life of other natural phenomena. This rooting of political life in nature contrasts strongly with Plato's tendency to write off most of what actually happens in the life of cities as a hindrance to true political knowledge, as useless in theory and dangerous in practice (Sarah,2017).

As a post-graduate student you have to know that Aristotle often begins a subject of enquiry by reviewing current opinion about it, and it is easy to think that Aristotle does this merely because he has to start somewhere, or because he is modest and fair-minded, and does not want to exclude opinion just because it is received. Aristotle's purpose is rather different. He wishes us to understand that men have not lived for nothing. Men differ from the animals because they are capable of Aristotle and the science of politics understanding the kinds of lives which they live, and it would be absurd to pretend that all previous understanding had understood nothing at all. Aristotle does in fact think that common opinion (common, that is, among Greeks) and other philosophers have got things wrong, have been confused, or have offered a limited understanding of politics, but it is inconceivable to Aristotle that they have nothing at all to teach us. An important part of systematic reflection about politics will consist of sifting through this received opinion and explaining how its errors arose (Sarah,2017).

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. One view of the *Politics* is that it is a compilation of notes taken by pupils from Aristotle's lectures on politics at the Lyceum, True or False
2. Another, equally plausible, view is that the order of the *Politics*' eight books has become jumbled during the course of the centuries, and several scholarly careers have been made out of the business of rearranging them. True or False
3. Aristotelianism took the distinctive form it did as a result of a painful break with Platonism. True or False

2.3.3 A Map of the Politics

Perhaps the best way to approach the *Politics* is through a kind of traveler's guide to the text as we have it because nobody is very likely to read the book in the order that Jaeger suggests it was composed. This can be done in a fairly schematic way, though how the various themes relate to each other is more of a problem. A history of western political thought. Aristotle talks about the community of wives and children among the Guardian class in Plato's *Republic*. Aristotle tries to have it both ways, arguing that property can be held privately but used in common through gifts and hospitality which impart 'friendship to the state' (Sankar,2003). He discussed whether property held in common would decrease wrongdoing which concludes that common ownership would not prevent crime because men steal more than the necessities of life.

The *polis* must be its constitution (the arrangements for the holding of public office, the way it is governed) because the constitution provides the *polis* with its identity over a period of time. You have to known that the *polis* cannot be defined as its citizens, because they die and are replaced; nor can it be its territory because territory expands and contracts. The answer to the question 'What is it to be a member of a *'polis?'* States are composed of citizens, and citizens are those who have a share in public affairs, which means holding office, taking part in the administration of justice and membership of a Aristotle and the science of politics governing assembly. The exact meaning of 'citizen' will of course vary from *polis* to *polis* because citizen is a genus, not a species. Those directly engaged in the business of getting a living with their own hands are excluded from citizenship because they haven't the leisure for virtue.Aristotle's classification of different types of constitution, probably borrowed from Plato's *Statesman*. Aristotle divides constitutions into two groups of three, what we have come to call the 'good' and the 'corrupt' forms. The good forms are monarchy,

aristocracy and *politeia* (Aristotle's best state) and their analogous corrupt forms are tyranny, oligarchy and democracy (which is really rule by the mob, what the historian Polybius was later to call 'ochlocracy').

Aristotle reminds us that this is a broad-meshed classification because in the natural world there are many more species than genera, so that it is convenient to class constitutions on the continuum Few/Many, democratic/oligarchic. Like Plato, he thinks that different types of regimes are based on different ideas about justice (Sankar,2003). A discussion of five different types of monarchy, which leads to the more general question of whether man or law should be supreme. Aristotle comes up with the dubious-sounding formula that law should be supreme in general, but men in particular cases. Kingship, he concludes, is not unnatural, provided the king rules in the interest of all and is truly a kingly man. (In Aristotle there are no queens.) Aristotle, represent a new departure in the study of politics. It is here that Aristotle is at his most biological, discussing the morphology of states and their pathology. So far he has only discussed monarchy and aristocracy, and he goes on to consider *politeia,* tyranny, oligarchy and democracy.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Aristotle talks about the community of wives and children among the Guardian class in Plato's *Republic*. Aristotle tries to have it both ways, arguing that property can be held privately but used in common through gifts and hospitality which impart 'friendship to the state. **True or False**
2. Aristotle's classification of different types of constitution, probably borrowed from Plato's *Statesman*. Aristotle divides constitutions into two groups of three, what we have come to call the 'good' and the 'corrupt' forms. **True or False**
3. The answer to the question 'What is it to be a member of a *'polis?'* States are composed of citizens, and citizens are those who have a share in public affairs, which means holding office, taking part in the administration of justice and membership of a Aristotle and the science of politics governing assembly. **True or False**

2.3.4 The Naturalness of Rulership

Fundamental to everything that Aristotle thinks about politics is the idea that some ways of ordering human life are natural and others not. Aristotle's teleological biology informs his view that only some kinds of human relationship are as nature intended them to be and his treatment of rulership is largely concerned with untangling the natural forms of the ruler-ruled relationship from the unnatural. In the *Politics* Aristotle

establishes the criteria for naturalness in the context of his treatment of slavery in Book 1. Aristotle begins the discussion by identifying what he calls ‘natural pairs’, one half of which rules the other. Rulership, he thinks, exists in any relationship between superior and inferior.

Rulership includes commanding, but it also includes directing, guiding and educating. Aristotle thinks that masters and slaves, husbands and wives, fathers and children, and rulers and ruled, are all natural pairs for the straightforward reason that each needs the other to be what it is. This is more than a matter of definition; of course, fathers cannot be fathers without children and children cannot be children without fathers, but Aristotle also means that neither can begin to be self-sufficient without the other, and neither can perform its function without the other.

The ruling of one of a natural pair by the other must be in the interest of both. The rule of men over animals qualifies as natural. Men are naturally at war with wild animals, as they are with wild men, so it is highly advantageous for animals to become domesticated. They are then fed and watered, are protected by their owners, and, most importantly, are protected from other men. Domestic animals have the stamp of ownership on them, so that men who are not their owners have no reason to fear them because the animals, being at home somewhere, can be assumed to be tame. The same goes for men. Strangers are greeted with the question: Where do you come from? Because the answer they give tells us something about what we can expect from them. The man who has a home acknowledges the authority of a set of manners and morals which we might know about, so we can feel safe in our dealings with him; even the stranger very far from home is at least domesticated somewhere. The most unsettling man is the ‘man from nowhere’, ‘the war-mad man who has no morals and no home’ that Homer mentions. It is probably best to kill him to be on the safe side.Rulership is exercised in different ways. Aristotle gives two illuminating examples: mind over body and intelligence over the desires.

The. rule of mind over body is absolute or despotic in the interests of both, while the rule of intelligence over the desires is constitutional and royal. By this Aristotle means that the mind does not negotiate with the body. If I say to my legs ‘go that way’ and the legs begin to argue, life begins to be difficult; if I say to my legs ‘run away from the battlefield’ because everybody else is running away and the legs wish to discuss the matter, then life itself is put in danger; therefore, the mind demands instant obedience from the body. The desires are a different case. The desires arise naturally, and some, like the desires for food, drink and rest, have to be satisfied sometimes or the body would die and the desires would die with it. The desires are best thought of as subjects

petitioning a king. They ask to be satisfied, but the king decides if and when.

Constitutional monarchy for Aristotle is kingship exercised through laws, and a wise king would outlaw some desires as being too unruly, and would establish some kind of orderly programme for the satisfaction of the reasonable desires, say three meals a day, none in excess, and regular hours of sleep. The desires would then know where they stood, like the subjects of a king ruling through law. Like Plato, Aristotle does not think that the desires are fixed, either in number or in intensity. New desires arise, or old desires assert themselves with a new intensity; a wise mind considers the first kind on their merits and puts down the rebellion of the second. Endless self-indulgence kills desire (the cult of the aperitif), dulls the intelligence and threatens the body. Much better for all that matters to be in the control of a moderating kingly intelligence.

All forms of rulership are limited by the end for which rulership is exercised. Rule is not domination for its own sake; abuse of power for Aristotle means something very close to what we mean by ‘drug abuse’, the use of something which has no end and which can only lead on to disaster because it has no end. Husbands must remember that sexuality is for procreation and not for mere enjoyment (though they are allowed to smile), fathers must remember that children will one day be like themselves, and masters of slaves must remember that slaves are for use and not for exploitation. Slaves exist to free masters from the menial *(banausic)* occupations. Free men need the leisure for virtue and so have not got the time to get their own living. Aristotle is careful to say that slaves are a part of wealth and not a means towards the increase of wealth, by which he means that it is no part of a master’s business to squeeze the last ounce of labour out of his slaves. Some commentators think that in making this distinction Aristotle was already being a little old-fashioned in his treatment of slavery, defending a traditional form of ‘household’ slavery in the face of a new kind of slavery which saw slaves as an investment on which their masters demanded the highest possible return. (There is a parallel between what Aristotle has to say about slavery here and American defences of slavery before the Civil War. What was always considered most defensible was the aristocratic household slavery of Virginia (‘slaves are practically members of the family’) and not the ruthlessly exploitative field slavery, particularly of the sugar plantations in the deep South (‘being sold down the river’).) Aristotle says that a slave is like a bed, not a shuttle.

In principle, there is no limit to the use of a shuttle, which could be used to weave day and night; beds are for sleeping in, not for sleeping in all day, and the bed does not produce anything else. Likewise, the slave. He

is not for increasing his master's wealth; he must, of course, reproduce his own kind, but slave-breeding for profit would be ruled out. The ends of human relationships have their places in a hierarchy of ends. Nature's pattern is a pattern of subordination, otherwise no form of rule would itself be natural and men would not even rule over animals by nature, and this hierarchical pattern extends to the ends for which forms of rule exist. The relationship between husband and wife makes the continuation of the species possible; the rule of the head of a household over wife, children and slaves has as its end the social unit which, together with others like itself, goes to make up economically self-sufficient village communities, and it is a group of these self-sufficient communities which makes up the supreme community, the *polis,* which has as its end not just self-sufficient life but the good life. The end of the family and the village lead naturally to the supreme end which is life in a properly constituted *polis*.

Aristotle's theory of ends is called the doctrine of the priority of ends, and on the face of it can appear to be puzzling on the grounds that it is difficult to see how the *end* of a process can be *prior to* the process itself. It is important to realise, however, that Aristotle does not mean *prior to* in the sense of time but *prior to* in the sense of understanding a process. No natural process is capable of being fully understood until it is complete. It is the end of a process which gives meaning to a process as a whole. Aristotle sometimes speaks as if the end of a process pushes or pulls the process to its completion and has sometimes been accused of mysticism as a consequence, but that is just Aristotle's manner of speaking. There is a metaphorical sense in which the idea of the oak either pushes or pulls the acorn into becoming an oak, just as there is a literal sense about the end determining the process of the formation of the *polis* among men. Men differ from the rest of nature because they alone can have a say in what the processes of their life should be like, and Aristotle thinks that it is difficult to know what life should be like in all its subordinate stages unless we have a clear idea of where the whole process is leading. It is not until we have an idea of what a properly constituted *polis* looks like that can form any just idea about how the subordinate communities within the *polis* should themselves be organized.

Above all, Aristotle's teleology is not prediction. Natural processes are accident-prone; acorns are often eaten by pigs. Aristotle has a tendency to shrug his shoulders when this happens. Everything has its natural place but, the world being what it is, things are frequently misplaced. Aristotle's doctrine of natural places grates on the liberal ear because it justifies slavery. No doctrine, so the argument goes, which justifies slavery can be taken seriously. None the less, Aristotle himself plainly takes his argument for slavery seriously, though to say as some

commentators do that he is especially 'worried' by slavery is to take the matter too far. A rational account of slavery is necessary, just as a rational account is necessary of any other kind of relationship between rulers and ruled; Aristotle is 'worried' about slavery only in the sense that he is 'worried' about all possible abuses of power. There is no special worry about slavery, though there is a special technical difficulty. Nature has made the difference between men and animals, male and female, children and adults, very clear, and it is this clarity which enables Aristotle to speak of nature's 'intentions'.

Nature does nothing without a purpose, and there must therefore be a purpose in these distinctions. In the case of the distinction between free men by nature and slaves by nature a clear-cut distinction is not so easily made. The problem is compounded by the obvious fact that in the world of the Greek cities some obviously superior men ended up by being slaves and some obviously inferior men ended up as the masters of slaves, and the clever slave who outwitted and manipulated his dull master was to become one of the stock figures of ancient comedy. Who, then, is fit to be a master and who a slave? Aristotle says that those who are fit to direct themselves are fit to direct those who are incapable of self-direction. The ability to rule a household is part of intelligence; being good at running a household is part of goodness, so the claims of masters to rule slaves are partly managerial and partly moral. Ideally, the master's intelligence should take the place of the absent intelligence of the slave, but unfortunately slaves, even slaves by nature, are not always entirely stupid. There is *something* in the slave which corresponds to intelligence in the master, and the fact of the matter is that slaves are treated differently from tools or from beasts of burden. Masters talk to slaves and give them orders, and slaves are capable of being trained to do fairly sophisticated jobs.

So, what is the proper relationship between the slave's intelligence and the master's intelligence? The master is fit to rule the slave because he is himself self-directed. This would be true of the master even if he had no slaves. He is capable of a rational course of life; he is a man who knows what his life should be and is capable of sticking to what he knows it should be like. Not so the slave. Left to his own devices he would probably descend to a level of swinish idleness; much better for him to be part of a well-run operation under a master's direction. These generalities are not really very helpful in deciding who should be a slave, and Aristotle provides a sliding scale of suitability from nobly born Greeks, who are the least suitable, to base-born barbarians, who are the most suitable. Base-born Greeks and nobly born barbarians come somewhere in between, and Olympic victors should probably not be made slaves. Barbarians make the best slaves because they have never known the rational liberty which only a *polis* can provide

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Aristotle's teleology is not prediction. **True or False**
2. Aristotle's doctrine of natural places grates on the liberal ear because it justifies slavery. **True or False**
3. Aristotle's theory of ends is called the doctrine of the priority of ends, and on the face of it can appear to be puzzling on the grounds that it is difficult to see how the *end* of a process can be *prior to* the process itself. **True or False**

2.4 Summary

I am optimistic that by now you have a better knowledge about Aristotle Political Thought. As a post-graduate student much, it is expected of you to particularly acquire deep knowledge of his biography, the historical antecedents that influenced the thought, the Political Thought and its implication for the state and the people, and the criticism.

2.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

Attempt these questions on your own so as to deepen your study of course: Give

1. What is the Aristotle's classification of different types of constitution?
2. Explain five different types of monarchy as discussed by Aristotle
3. Complete this statement as offers by Aristotle, in a democracy men should be equally wealthy because they are equally free. In an oligarchy men ….

2.5 References/Further Reading

Rogers, S. (2003). *Stories of Peoplehood: The Politics and Morals of Political Membership.* London: Cambridge University Press.

Brian, B. (2000). *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism.* New York. New York University Press.

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2.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. Aristotle divides constitutions into two groups of three, what we have come to call the 'good' and the 'corrupt' forms. The good forms are monarchy, aristocracy and *politeia* (Aristotle's best state) and their analogous corrupt forms are tyranny, oligarchy and democracy (which is really rule by the mob, what the historian Polybius was later to call 'ochlocracy'). Aristotle reminds us that this is a broad-meshed classification because in the natural world there are many more species than genera, so that it is convenient to class constitutions on the continuum Few/Many, democratic/oligarchic…

2. A discussion of five different types of monarchy, which leads to the more general question of whether man or law should be supreme. Aristotle comes up with the dubious-sounding formula that law should be supreme in general, but men in particular cases. Kingship, he concludes, is not unnatural, provided the king rules in the interest of all and is truly a kingly man. In Aristotle there are no queens...

3. In a democracy men should be equally wealthy because they are equally free. In an oligarchy men should be unequal in all things because they are unequal in wealth.

UNIT 3 MARSILIUS: THE REINVENTION OF SOVEREIGNTY

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

As a post-graduate student you are expected to know that Marsilius of Padua political thought is associated with the notion of the reinvention of sovereignty. He expanded the thesis the treaty of Aristotle and Plato on political thought. Thus, it is expected of you to understand the nature and character of Marsilius of Padua political thought.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
know how Marsilius of Padua political thought is associated with the notion of the reinvention of sovereignty and he expanded works of Aristotle and Plato on political thought particular authority and sovereignty.

3.3 Main Content

3.3.1 Who is Marsilius of Padua

Marsilius was probably born in Padua in 1275. He lived close to interesting events, but we know almost nothing about the part he played in them. We do know that he studied medicine in his native city, that he was rector of the University of Paris in 1313, and that he met his collaborator, the Aristotelian John of Jandun, there. The *Defender of Peace* was complete by 1324. It did not meet with papal approval, and both Marsilius and John were condemned as heretics in 1327. (The book was re-condemned in 1378.) Unsurprisingly, Marsilius found a protector in Louis of Bavaria, who became the Holy Roman Emperor, Louis IV. The *Defender of Peace* served as philosophically up-to-date imperial propaganda in the seemingly endless quarrel between

emperors and popes about who should dominate Italy and the world. Marsilius went to Italy with Louis, saw him crowned emperor in Milan, and entered Rome with him in 1328 (Morrall, 1977. The existing pope, John XXII, refused to confirm Louis as emperor, so Louis deposed him and put the antipope Nicholas V on the papal throne. Nicholas made Marsilius imperial vicar of Rome. Louis's sojourn at Rome depended almost entirely on the approval of the Roman notables who had acclaimed him. They soon fell out, and Louis, accompanied by Marsilius, returned to Germany. Marsilius died in Bavaria some time before 1348. T*he Defender of Peace* enjoyed something of an underground life after Marsilius's death. Wycliffe and Luther knew the work, which was first printed during the Reformation. Ominously enough, Thomas Cromwell is said to have had a hand in publishing it in England. ancient historians in the same re-contextualizing spirit, though by then what we call the Renaissance had intervened between the Florentine and the Paduan.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Marsilius was probably born in Padua in 1275, **True or False**
2. The *Defender of Peace is major work,* **True or False**
3. Marsilius died in Bavaria, True **or False**

3.3.1 Understanding the Political Thought of Marsilius

One of the most boring intellectual activities known to man is re-reading the vast literature produced by the controversy between the Holy Roman Empire and the papacy. It is much less interesting, for instance, than the lemical literature engendered by the controversies between popes and kings over papal supremacy. None the less, the contest for the leadership of Christendom between popes and emperors was about something which everybody at the time thought was important. And it was. Medieval thinkers are sometimes thought of as too other-worldly to have a sure grasp of what we moderns call the 'realities of power', but nothing could be further from the truth.

Part of the reality of power is always bound up with authority and prestige—slippery concepts but none the less real for that. We should never forget the lesson taught to the ancients by the comparative poverty of the *polis*. No properly constituted state wants to spend too much of its economic surplus on ruling itself. Good government has always been cheap government. The secular state has always had to pay a large price for disassociating itself from the constraining effects of established religions, because what religion once did the state then had to do for itself. No sensible medieval ruler ever dreamt of dispensing with the ruling functions of the Church, no matter how much he might hate the pope (Morrall, 1977. The prestige of the priestly calling was too valuable a tool of social control for it ever to be

lightly thrown over. Competitions between popes and emperors, or between popes and kings, were competitions about prestige in an age when prestige was probably, along with money, the most valuable ruling asset. Both sides always knew what game they were playing even when they were trying to change the rules. That is why it is misleading to call the conflict between popes and emperors a contest 'between Church and state'. No state ever thought it could do without the Church; it would never have occurred to a pope that the Church could do without states (and the pope was himself a 'secular' ruler). Everybody agreed that, in some sense, about which definitions differed, both the Church and the secular princes had rights of rulership to men's bodies and souls. Even to speak of the 'state' in this context can be misleading. We speak of feudal 'societies' rather than 'states' because the idea of the state has come to be closely associated with the idea of sovereignty, and it is by no means clear those medieval rulers were sovereign in anything like the ancient or modern senses. Conflict over jurisdiction was not the *problem* but the *condition* of medieval politics. Very complicated 'flow-charts' of authority and allegiance were drawn by medieval lawyers to show who was supposed to be obligated to whom, with kings and emperors at the top and serfs at the bottom, but it is safe to assume that things were much messier on the ground, especially at a time when being high up the authority scale was no guarantee of literacy, clerks in holy orders excepted.

It is often suggested that the ecclesiastical hierarchy complicated the exercise of power in medieval societies, and so it did, but it should never be forgotten that secular authority was already messy. Kings were 'sovereign' because they were at the top of the feudal pile, but they were usually so hemmed in by feudal law and the customs of the realm that they were free agents in only a very limited sense. All kings tried to centralize governing functions when they could, and the kings of France were good enough at it to receive A history of western political thought 124 praise from Machiavelli in *The Prince,* a work not often fulsome in its congratulations of princes. Part of centralization consisted of 'controlling' the Church in one's realm, which usually meant controlling the appointments of bishops and archbishops (or at the very least exercising an informal power of veto). This should not, however, be mistaken for an attempt to 'separate Church and state'. All secular rulers, like all the princes of the Church, freely accepted their rivals for jurisdiction into partnership in the business of ruling, and both saw their authority as coming more or less directly from God (Morrall, 1977.

It has long been a commonplace among medieval historians that the sometimes-bitter contests between popes and emperors for the leadership of Christendom was a contest between two churches or two

empires. Emperors, like kings, based their cases against papal interference on biblical and theological grounds. They saw themselves as arguing from the same premises as the pope even when they weren't. We would now say that popes and emperors were different voices in the same world of discourse, and we would attribute the reluctance of Church and state to go their separate ways as a reflection of the fact that they shared a common discourse. The common discourse was heavily weighted in the Church's favour. Augustine set the tone. Augustinianism clearly implied that there was a hierarchy of human communities ranked according to the objects of their love. The city of God came at the top, to be followed by religious houses, churches, and finally the secular state. God's own city loved only God, while the secular state was made up of all the varieties of sinful loves, with only the imperfect secular justice of the rack and the gibbet to hold it together (Finley, 1977).

Nothing was easier to draw out from Augustinianism than the message that the more ecclesiastical a community was, the closer it was to God. The pope as head of the Church was, through St Peter, manifestly closer to God than emperors and kings, therefore it seemed to follow naturally that the papacy must be superior to all secular states. From there it was a short step to claiming that the pope was really the God-given ruler of the whole of Christendom and that the secular princes were his deputies. Not much of this kind of argument could make sense to those who attended closely to what Augustine actually said in *The City of God*, but that could not matter much to papal apologists who would take their ammunition from anywhere, anyhow. There was even a tendency to equate the Church with the city of God and the secular state with the city of the Devil, a doctrine which Augustine specifically denies he holds.

The relationship between ecclesiastical and secular power was often described in the terms of the doctrine of the two swords in the same scabbard attributed to pope Gelasius. The scabbard was the human Christian community and the two swords ecclesiastical and secular authority. It was difficult to see how secular authority could prevail over the ecclesiastical as long as the community of the Church was seen as serving 'higher' ends than the secular community.

Authority came down to earth from heaven. It followed that no purely human lawgiver, individual or community, could in the true sense 'make law', because no human agency possessed a law-making authority which was not a delegation from the supreme authority which ruled the universe. To think otherwise, that human beings really could make law, was to take a position with potentially very radical implications. Law either came from the top down or the bottom up.

(The world would have to wait until liberalism for a really clear restatement that the world's 'natural law-givers' were 'in the middle'.) 'From the bottom up' meant from 'the people', however defined. This carried with it the rather startling implication that all 'higher' authority was dependent on the 'lower', a delegation from the sovereign people (Jones, 1957). This just could not commonsensically be true in medieval societies which thought instinctively in hierarchical terms, which meant that the lower was necessarily dependent on the higher. This was the case in religious, intellectual, social and political terms. No wonder the heresy-hunters smelled a rat in the ascending theory of authority when it was put so starkly. At its most unthinkable, the ascending theory taken to its logical conclusion implied that the highest authority of all, God's authority, must somehow be derived from popular consent. It would be a very long time indeed before anybody would go that far, perhaps not until the Enlightenment or even later. Radicals usually contented themselves by accepting God's authority from the ascending theory of authority by arguing that His authority was of so different a kind that it lay too far outside, or too far above, all human authority for it to be included in the ascending scheme at all. As with everything in the medieval world, things were never quite that simple. Kings, for instance, were often careful to hedge their bets by incorporating elements of both the ascending and descending theories of authority into their rulership claims. Sensible kings claimed to be both God's and the people's choice and were careful to cultivate the consent and friendship of great barons. Feudal societies ruled themselves through complex networks of contractual obedience based on oaths of fealty.

Consent, real or enforced, lay at the heart of the feudal idea of service to superiors. Only consent, more or less freely given, could confer the rights of rulership, and it was perfectly possible, almost ordinary, for particular embers of the knightly class to owe different allegiances to different superiors for different purposes on different occasions. This could lead to 'ticklish conflicts of loyalty when one's superiors were quarrelling with each other, and this in turn led to a very 'legalistic' view of the rights of rulership. Your lord was your lord, no matter what; if dying in his company was what honor demanded, then that was what you did unless you wanted to befoul your escutcheon. Utility did not come into it; that which was lawful was entirely a question of right. Medieval apologists for papal power were always on strong ground while lawful obedience was discussed purely in terms of right in a society in which rights of rulership were claimed on the same basis at every feudal level. Everybody agreed that all human actions of whatever kind should be governed by some kind of law at a time when the difference between, say, the laws of ethics and the law of a

particular prince was less important than the fact that both shared a lawful character. Because God made everything, all law in some sense or other contained its share of the divine (Jones, 1957). Where there was dispute about the lawfulness of law, the winner was always going to be that law which appeared to be more 'right' than its competitor. Justice was law's only saving characteristic.

Law and order were different sides of the same coin. The emphasis on the necessary 'rightness' of law tended to divert attention from the serious possibility that law might in certain circumstances be the reverse of order. In principle, medieval lawyers could always find the superior among two competing legal claims to an individual's or a whole community's obedience. In this sense, conflict of laws was part of the ordinary condition of the political life of medieval feudal societies. For the system to work properly there had to be some willingness on the part of one of the parties to the dispute to give way, and, of course, there were plenty of cases of disputed jurisdiction in which both parties stubbornly refused to budge. Cases could last for decades, and there was always the arbitrament of the sword, when God would defend the right, but this did not pose fundamental problems in societies which were always going to be rendered more or less disorderly by the inheritance of the sin of Adam. What could cause real problems was the persistence of rival law-declaring agencies neither of which could ever give way. In Marsilius's time (*c.* 1275–*c.* 1350) this meant the Holy Roman Empire and the papacy, and later it would mean the papacy and any secular state feeling its way uncertainly towards the modern concept of sovereignty.

Political communities could be seriously disrupted if competition between Church and state reached the point of enmity, because the papacy and secular rulers both had strong if negative weapons at their disposal. Oaths of fealty, for instance, being oaths sworn in God's name, could be claimed as a special concern of the Church's. Popes claimed the power of 'binding and unloosing', which meant that they could declare oaths of allegiance invalid. In principle, a king could lose the allegiance of the discontented half of his vassals overnight. Also, clerical jurisdiction over such ordinary things as christening, marriage, burial and inheritance could make its power felt right to the bottom of the social hierarchy. (Everybody remembers Chaucer's Wife of Bath who had had five husbands at the church door because England was under a papal interdict at the time which prevented 'proper' marriages inside churches.) In their own lands secular rulers could always make life difficult for the Church. Emperors and princes were often the feudal overlords of clerical vassals.

Vast amounts of monastic and Church lands were held as feudal tenures, and kings could cause a good deal of trouble for the Church by refusing to appoint successors. Kings and emperors also had rights of consultation or appointment to purely religious offices. In addition, there was always the use of force against a Church which was technically defenseless without the support of secular government. Secular authority on the spot might not get away with murder, as in the murder in the cathedral at Canterbury, but it could get away with a lot in an age in which it took a long time for complaints to reach the holy father in Rome. Cases against legally well-advised kings were always going to be long drawn-out affairs, with all the opportunities for muddying the waters which that implied. And there were the crusades, impossible without the active and enthusiastic support of secular princes, and therefore giving secular rulers a certain leverage in other matters. It was not to be left to the twentieth century to invent 'linkage politics.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. It is often suggested that the ecclesiastical hierarchy complicated the exercise of power in medieval societies, and so it did, but it should never be forgotten that secular authority was already mess?. True or False
2. Kings were 'sovereign' because they were at the top of the feudal pile, but they were usually so hemmed in by feudal law and the customs of the realm that they were free agents in only a very limited sense. True or False
3. The relationship between ecclesiastical and secular power was often described in the terms of the doctrine of the two swords in the same scabbard attributed to pope Gelasius. True or False

3.4 Summary

This unit has established that and you have to know that Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor Pacis* ('The Defender of Peace') is only the best known book in a huge literature devoted to the question of the rightful spheres of secular and ecclesiastical princes. What makes it remarkable is its firm overall grasp of the problems involved and the clarity with which Marsilius sets out his anti-papal arguments in favor of the power of secular authority. As a post-graduate student, you know that Marsilius never doubts for a moment that Christian revelation is true, just as he also never doubts that Aristotle's political arguments are decisive. The thrust of Marsilius's argument for the superiority of secular over ecclesiastical power in lay matters can be seen as an

attempt rescue Aristotle from the Thomists. Marsilius is 'un-Aristotelian' about Aristotle in a way that Thomas is not. We do well to recall that aspect of Aristotle's own method of enquiry which seeks for agreement first, and then goes on from there to discuss matters about which there is no general agreement. Thomas approaches Aristotle in Aristotle's own spirit of intellectual reconciliation. What is important for Thomas in Aristotle is the extent to which Aristotelian teleology can be seen to be compatible with, or at least not to contradict, the message of the New Testament. The God of the Christians turns out to be the Aristotelian unmoved mover, the great First Cause, Nature itself. Any differences between Christian and Aristotelian teaching are secondary when compared to this basic agreement, and any disagreements about politics are simply details.

Marsilius uses Aristotle in a very different spirit. He *begins* with Aristotelian politics, so that any political differences between the political teaching of the Christian Church and Aristotle become matters of primary concern. Marsilius finds plenty of these differences, and he uses them subtly to turn the flank of Thomism. Thomism tells us that the teachings of Aristotle and Christ are fundamentally reconcilable. It therefore follows, says Marsilius, that if Aristotle's political teachings are found to be at variance with Christian teaching, then it must be that somebody has got the Christian teaching wrong.

3.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

i. In what way is Marsilius is different from Aristotle
ii. What is the central thesis of Marsilius's strategy in *The Defender of Peace*

3.4 References/Further Reading

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3.5 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. Marsilius uses ristotle as a source of anti-papal arguments, with the important implied Thomist proviso that where Aristotle gets it right the Church's teaching must have got it wrong. Marsilius is also good at watching his back. He can play the game of biblical quotation better than the next man…

2. In *The Defender of Peace* he is very careful to back up every anti-papal Aristotelian argument with impeccable Christian argument based on the Scriptures. We can easily imagine how galling that must have been to popes and their apologists, because the plain implication is that the papal side has misunderstood the Scriptures themselves…

UNIT 4 NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI: THE STATE AND POWER

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

This unit is designed to teach the political thought of Machiavelli and the reason in principle why a prince well-versed in statecraft and with luck on his side should not be able to unite the warring principalities of the state. This background forms the conceptual basis that this last unit of the Module 2 requires you as a post-graduate student to study the political thought of Niccolo Machiavelli as it relate to the state, power and politics.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you expected to understand the political thought of Niccolo Machiavelli as it relates to the state, power and politics.

4.3 Main Content

4.1.1 Niccolo Machiavelli: His Background

Scholars have gone through the life of the great Florentine with a toothcomb, hoping to find clues to the meaning of his books in the character of the man. Many accounts of Machiavelli's life are character assassinations to serve particular religious or political purposes. Machiavelli might be said to have had an 'interesting' life for a political theorist, and he certainly had the misfortune to live through interesting times for his native city. The Machiavelli's were an ancient Florentine family, of sound republican principles, who were a bit down on their luck when Niccolo was born in 1469. Machiavelli's lawyer

father was able to provide his son with the education in the classics, then much in vogue both as a humanist training and as a preparation for public office. Machiavelli entered the service of the Florentine republic in 1498 and busied himself about its military and diplomatic business until his annus horribilis in 1513 (Isaiah, 1988). During these years Machiavelli attempted to refund Florence's hopes of military glory on a citizen militia, and he met the rising stars of Italian politics, popes and princes, and especially the brightest of the shooting-stars, Cesare Borgia. Machiavelli also visited the courts of the French king, Louis XII, and the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian, and these experiences may have provided him with something like an outsider's view of Italian politics as petty, vacillating and mildly contemptible.

Machiavelli moved in circles high enough to observe the highest fliers at very close quarters, and he was already shrewdly weighing up their actions and characters in his diplomatic reports to his masters in Florence.

In 1512, the Medici princes, backed by the pope and the Spaniards, returned to Florence, and the world began to fall in on the successful servant of the former republic. Machiavelli lost his job, and in 1513 he was tortured, imprisoned and fined for suspected complicity in a republican conspiracy against the Medici. Machiavelli still had important friends who he thought would be able and willing to lobby the great on his behalf, and his most famous work, The Prince (completed by the end of 1513), was intended to show Florence's new masters that its author was a man whom it would be The problem of Machiavelli's political thought can be stated very simply: anyone with the energy to trawl through the vast secondary literature on the great Florentine would have no trouble in finding fifty-seven varieties of Machiavelli (Isaiah, 1988). There is a Machiavelli for everyone. Machiavelli commentary from the sixteenth century to the present ranges across such a wide field that Machiavelli has been accused by his enemies of wanting to lead mankind to perdition and praised by his friends for wanting to lead mankind to salvation.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Niccolo was born in 1469, True **or False**
2. Machiavelli's lawyer father was able to provide his son with the education in the classics, then much in vogue both as a humanist training and as a preparation for public office, True **or False**
3. He is the author of the Prince, True **or False**

4.3.2 Machiavelli's Political Thought

How can this be? Machiavelli writes as a Renaissance humanist in beautiful Italian. There are no real problems with the Machiavelli texts. We have The Prince (1513), The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livy (1513–17), The Art of War (1521) and the Florentine History (1525) as Machiavelli wrote them, as well as other political writings, and we have the poetry, a famous play, Mandragora (which is still worth performing), and his correspondence, particularly with the historian Guicciardini. Machiavelli exists whole on the page; there are no prizes for restoring corrupt Machiavelli texts. There are none of those deeply buried contradictions in Machiavelli that we find in some of Rousseau's political writings. And Machiavelli is not Hegel, with his notoriously 'difficult' political writings and his German tendency to sacrifice clarity for profundity. Yet the battle for Machiavelli goes on, some wishing at all costs to show that they are anti-Machiavels while others are keen to show that Machiavelli is on their side (Alasdair, 1977). (Among these latter is the twentieth-century Italian Communist Party.)

The sheer volume of Machiavelli commentary testifies to the continuous importance of what he wrote about politics. There has always been something about Machiavelli's political writings which his readers have found attractive or repulsive, but it is far from easy to pin down exactly what it is. There seem to be, broadly speaking, five distinct possibilities for explaining the perennial interest in Machiavelli's political thought, though to say that there are five is, in a sense, simply to restate that there is a Machiavelli problem. The first possibility is that what Machiavelli wrote about politics is profoundly shocking. This is the stock Machiavelli of the Elizabethan dramatists, the Machiavelli of foolish to overlook in the matter of public employment. None of this ever quite came off, and it is probable that after 1513 Machiavelli began reluctantly to see himself as a man of letters rather than a man of affairs.

The Medicis' loss was the world's gain. In his new poverty Machiavelli wrote the masterpieces for which he has become so justly famous, though, outside the academy, nobody will ever be able to detach his name from the obloquy poured upon it for the supposed wickedness of his little book about princes. The Discourses on Livy, the Art of War, the Florentine History and the brilliant comedy Mandragola can never hope to erase the adjective 'Machiavellian' from the popular mind. So much the worse for the masses, some of whom at least Machiavelli hoped would one day again play a real part, and share a real part of the

glory, of their native lands. 'Machiavellianism' (Alasdair, 1977). In this view, Machiavelli is the teacher of Iago in Othello or Edmund in King Lear, the advocate of utterly ruthless and devious methods for the acquisition of power or the doing down of one's enemies.

This can even be made into a game played for its own sake, the game of power politics and intrigue played for enjoyment like games of chess, with no other object than to keep playing the Great Game. The Machiavelli of Machiavellianism certainly exists. His hands are not bloodless. The prince is full of hard and calculated advice about how a new prince should act to establish himself in a recently conquered princedom, and a good deal of the advice is about the use of violence and deceit. So much is clear, but what is not so clear is why the advice should be considered to be especially shocking. Machiavelli is always careful to cite modern and ancient precedents for what he advises, not to excuse what he has to say but to convince us that his advice would work. His advice to new princes is an extrapolation from the actions of already successful princes, so it is hard to see what was so 'shocking' at least in the sense of being 'shock news' (Michael, 1987).

Machiavelli seems to be saying to princes: 'do what others have already done', only choose your precedents carefully to make sure that you imitate the right prince in the right circumstances. And the notion that princes might have to do some pretty nasty things now and again to save their states had been a commonplace since ancient times. The ancient Romans, so much admired by the Renaissance humanists, had thought nothing of massacring whole peoples, would put their own surrendered armies to the sword to encourage the others, and would decimate a legion before breakfast. (It is only by accident that the word 'humanist' is cognate with our word 'humane'.) Aristotle himself had said that it was a part of political science to advise a tyrant how to survive, and Aristotle's own advice is straightforwardly Machiavellian: he tells the tyrant to 'act like a king'—that is, to deceive.

It is, then, hard to see who exactly it is that would find The Prince so shocking. Not princes, because the successful ones at least are already doing what Machiavelli advises. It is, of course, possible that Machiavelli's intended audience for The Prince was not princes at all but the people upon whom princely wiles are practiced, but why the people should be 'shocked' to find princes doing what the people are already supposed to be looking out for is not clear. It is possible that Machiavelli's Prince is so shocking not so much for what it says but for the way it says it.

Machiavelli's realism, it is sometimes said, must have been devastating to contemporary Christians whose minds were still clouded by the

bewitching speculations of medieval metaphysics. Here was a thinker who did not try to refute the intellectual assumptions upon which medieval political thought was based, but simply treated those assumptions as if they were not there. So in Machiavelli we find no natural law and very little original sin; nothing about the duty of princes to assist the preaching of the true gospel, and no scriptural reference (beyond admiration for Moses as a leader) and nothing from Augustine and the other Fathers of the Church. On this view of him, Machiavelli was able to throw over the whole intellectual baggage of his age, consigning it all to history's dustbin. To this can be added the element of parody in The Prince. The writing of 'Mirrors for Princes' was one of the stock features of medieval political writing (Rogers,2003). No sooner had a king's eldest son learnt to read than the court chaplain would write him a 'mirror for princes', setting out the Christian virtues which the prince would be expected to practice when he eventually succeeded to his father's throne. Mercy and liberality could always be relied on to come high on the list.

By contrast, ruthlessness and stinginess head Machiavelli's list of the princely virtues. This deliberately parodic flying in the face of all decent convention could only compound the shock that Machiavelli's Prince caused to Christian sensibilities. Here was a man who not only defied the intellectual assumptions of Christian Europe but flaunted that defiance. There is something in that view of Machiavelli, but not much. There is a sense in which Machiavelli's political thought is un-Christian, and it might be in some important ways anti-Christian (though Machiavelli never denies the truths of Christianity and seems himself to have been conventionally if erractically pious). But the problem with the 'shocking to Christian sensibilities' thesis is that it depends on comparing what Machiavelli has to say in The Prince to Christian political and moral theory at their most elevated, and not to Christian political practice. It is easy to forget that Christianity is a religion of forgiveness because there is always going to be a lot in human conduct that requires to be forgiven. Medieval political thinkers and good Christian princes had no illusions about human conduct in general and political conduct in particular. Medieval political thought suffers from the reverse of a lack of 'realism', if by realism we mean a jaundiced view of humankind. Even Thomas's appeal for a gentler view of human nature must have fallen on some deaf ears. And as we have seen in the case of Marsilius, salus populi suprema lex could cover a multitude of sins. Part of the 'shocking to Christian sensibilities' view of Machiavelli is the contention that he is forward-looking in a sense that minds still intent on living in the Middle Ages would have found deeply disturbing. Machiavelli, it is sometimes claimed, looked forward to modernity, and he is supposed to have done

this not by challenging the intellectual assumptions of his age but simply by ignoring them.

But it is far from clear in what senses Machiavelli's political thought is forward-looking at all. Machiavelli is, after all, a humanist, which in part means he believes the 'rediscovered' classical past has important things to teach him and his contemporaries. In this sense, Machiavelli's political thought is just as 'backward-looking' as the Christian political thought to which it is compared (Rogers,2003). A case could easily be made for saying that Machiavelli's reliance on his classical sources, particularly Cicero and Livy, is more slavish than the reliance of Christian political thinkers on the Scriptures and the Church Fathers. Machiavelli seems to be saying to princes: 'imitate' the ancients rather than follow them. The lessons ancient history has to teach are not for Machiavelli general lessons but, on the contrary, very particular lessons which are supposed to be useful to princes confronted with particular problems in particular situations. The classical past teaches by specific examples and not by maxims so general that they provide no real help in particular cases. The 'Machiavelli versus the Christians' thesis boils down to this: both are essentially backward-looking, but they look backwards to different pasts. Even this will not quite do because it ignores the enormous amount of ancient learning preserved and incorporated in medieval thought. Where would Augustine be without Cicero, or Thomas and Marsilius without Aristotle? And besides, there was nothing necessarily anti-Christian about the Renaissance humanism of which Machiavelli was such a star. Modern historians have long amused themselves by discovering pre-Renaissance renaissances right in the heart of medieval Christian Europe. There is now a Carolingian renaissance and a renaissance of the twelfth century. There is a Byzantine renaissance (though why it had to be a re-naissance is not altogether clear), and no doubt there will be others. Secularism, anti-Christian cosmology and the puffing-up of man's pride were all directions which humanism could easily take, but that still left plenty of Christian alternatives.

The Reformation itself can be partly explained as the outcome of humanist thought, and whatever else might be said about the Reformation, it cannot be accused of not taking Christianity seriously.

There is another way of looking at the extraordinary fuss that has always been made about Machiavelli's political thought, and it arises as much from the details of Machiavelli's own life as from what he actually wrote. Machiavelli came from a Florentine family of impeccable republican credentials, and he held high office in Florence before the Medici family returned to extinguish forever the city's republican institutions. Machiavelli wrote his Discourses to praise

republican government, and he was even tortured on suspicion of being involved in an anti-government plot after the Medici had returned (Brian,2000). Yet we find him writing The Prince shortly after, a work which appears to explain step by step how a new prince can subdue a newly conquered people.

The book opens with a cringing dedication to a Medici prince which contains a thinly veiled plea for employment in Florence's new anti-republican government. History, it is said, hardly contains another such blatant example of public coat-turning. Machiavelli must have been an exceptionally wicked and cynical man to commit such a barefaced treason to his long-held moral and political beliefs. Other facts are then adduced from Machiavelli's life to add to the portrait of wickedness.

Mandragola is an obscene play; Machiavelli wrote some scandalous letters and verses; he was not a model of husbandly fidelity. He was, in short, a libertine, just the kind of man whom one might expect to betray his political principles with the same levity that he betrayed the principles of ordinary decency. Machiavelli must have been a bad lot, through and through; woe betide the prince who got his statecraft out of The Prince, and God help his people.It need hardly be said that this view of Machiavelli is sustainable only if we confine our reading of Machiavelli to The Prince, or if we choose to see a stark contradiction between The Prince and both the Discourses on Livy and the Florentine History. There can be no doubt that we would conclude that Machiavelli was one of the greatest republicans who ever lived if we were to do what nobody ever does, which is to confine our reading of Machiavelli to the Discourses on Livy. So, the question seems to boil down to this: are The Prince and the Discourses reconcilable? and the answer is a resounding 'yes!' Not only that, but the Discourses themselves provide us with a complete political theory into which Machiavelli's treatment of princely government in The Prince can easily be fitted. Far from there being a contradiction between The Prince and the Discourses, it might be said that The Prince is simply one part of the Discourses writ large (Sankar, 2003). It may even be that, on a simple level, the fact that The Prince is called 'the prince' has misled many readers into thinking that it is specifically and solely intended for the princes of the Renaissance and the restored Medici princes in particular.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. The prince is full of hard and calculated advice about how a new prince should act to establish himself in a recently conquered princedom, and a good deal of the advice is about the use of violence and deceit. True or False
2. Machiavelli is always careful to cite modern and ancient precedents for what he advises, not to excuse what he has to say but to convince us that his advice would work True or False
3. Machiavelli seems to be saying to princes: 'do what others have already done', only choose your precedents carefully to make sure that you imitate the right prince in the right circumstances. True or False

4.4 Summary

You might have known that that does matter a great deal is the way the prince has to think, or the way an adviser to princes has to think on the prince's behalf. If there is a general message in The Prince, it is that the prudent prince will always think the worst of those by whom he is surrounded. It follows from this that thinking about politics and thinking about ethics involve profoundly different ways of looking at the world. Thinking about ethics at all requires that we think of our fellow men as neither very good nor very wicked. If men were very good by nature, then thinking about ethics would be superfluous because men could always be relied upon to act well. If men were very bad, then thinking about ethics would be redundant because men could always be relied upon to act badly. Thinking about ethics is thinking about the 'in between' the very good and very bad, on the assumption that saintliness and devilishness are both very rare. Machiavelli seems to be saying that useful thinking about politics can only proceed on the basis of the assumption that men are always very bad. If the prince acts on the assumption of the universality of human wickedness, it is a case of heads he wins and tails he doesn't lose. It must be stressed that this is a special kind of thinking which applies to politics only.

4.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

i. Discus Machiavelli's view about ordinary family life the prevailing circumstances that informed the prince
ii. Explain one of the annoying things about Machiavelli is that he refuses to argue about Christianity
iii. What is the central thesis of the prince?

4.6 References/Further Reading

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4.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1.Ordinary family life, or ordinary human life in general, would become impossibly miserable and diminished if it were to be conducted on the basis of the political axioms of Machiavelli. People living their ordinary lives have a choice about what assumptions to act upon as the occasion demands. Sometimes they will assume the best, sometimes the worst, and
mostly they will make assumptions which fall somewhere in between.
2 One of the annoying things about Machiavelli is that he refuses to argue that Christian
ethics as conventionally conceived are not ethics at all. We would not have the problems we do have with reading Machiavelli if he would just say with an insider's wink that we all really know that the Christian virtues of the Sermon on the Mount aren't really virtues at all, or that they are pseudo-virtues for popular consumption, useful for keeping the plebs in their place but of no use at all to thinking men. But Machiavelli refuses to be Gibbon or Voltaire. The Christian virtues are virtues, and we are to take seriously Machiavelli's famous assertion that he was quite looking forward to going to hell because there he could enjoy for eternity the conversation of the ancient sages. Behind the moral bravado lies a real belief in hell's existence and a real sense of his own sin.
3. The ends justify the means in the realm of politics and power …

MODULE 3 THE SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORISTS

INTRODUCTION

This module is designed to get you acquitted with the state of nature and social contract means and the varies prostitutions from the social contract theorists. Our emphasis here is on Unit Hobbesian version, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Thomas Aquinas.

Unit 1 The Hobbesian version
Unit 2 John Locke
Unit 3 Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Unit 4 Thomas Aquinas

UNIT 1 THOMAS HOBBES

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

This unit is designed to get you acquitted with the Hobbes aversion of state of nature and social contract.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you are expected to

- acquitted with the Hobbesian version of state of nature and social contract.

1.3 Main Content

1.3.1 Thomas Hobbes: His Background

Thomas Hobbes was born prematurely in 1588, his mother's labor, it is said, being brought on by news of the Armada ('Hobbes and Fear were born twins'), but he survived all the vicissitudes of seventeenth-century English politics to die in his bed at the age of ninety-one in 1679. Hobbes was an Oxford man (Magdalen Hall) who found the prevailing Aristotelian-Scholastic philosophy little to his taste. He was recommended as tutor to the Cavendish who became the second Duke of Devonshire. He spent most of his life in the houses of noblemen. He discovered the new science on the Grand Tour in 1610, and in the early 1620s he became the friend and amanuensis of Francis Bacon. Hobbes was a staunch Royalist. By 1641, when he fled to France to escape the coming Civil War, he had met Galileo and many of the most noted scientists and men of letters of his day.

Hobbes spent some of his time in exile in France (1641–51) as mathematics tutor to the future Charles II. He also worked on *Leviathan*, which was published in London on Hobbes's return to England to make his peace with the Commonwealth. There is some mystery about why he actually came back when he did, though the probability is a combination of homesickness and his growing reputation in *émigré* circles for religious unorthodoxy, if not downright atheism. Charles II, in his good-natured way, always retained a soft spot for Hobbes.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Thomas Hobbes was born prematurely in 1588, True **or False**
2. Hobbes was an Oxford man, True **or False**
3. Hobbes spent some of his time in exile in France (1641–51), True **or False**

1.4 The Hobbesian version

It is in a way unfortunate for the history of political thought that the first masterpiece of social contract theory, Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan,* should be so untypical of social contract theorizing. Social contract was invented to support the case for disobedience to authority. In *Leviathan* Hobbes makes out a social contract case for the absolute government which social contract had been invented to undermine. Hobbes is a masterly political arguer because he meets and beats his opponents on their own ground (Isaiah, 1988). He uses social contract's own language to drive a coach and four through all the libertarian conclusions which previous social contract thinkers had come to. Hobbes is also subtle. He wrote at the time of the English Civil War (*Leviathan* was published in 1651), and his more acute readers soon realized that his arguments are double-edged. What would have been an argument for the absolutist pretensions of Charles I before 1642 could just as easily be an argument for Cromwell's power in 1651, and again for Charles II in 1660.

Hobbes pleased neither the Royalists nor the Parliamentarians, though Cromwell left him alone, and Charles II received him at court where he delighted in watching 'the Bear' being baited by the court wits and giving as good as he got. The basis of Hobbes's argument can be stated simply, though the implications of that argument are far-reaching. Social contract almost always imagined what things must have been like at the beginning before Civil Society, that is society and the state, existed. Hobbes takes that imagined beginning seriously by trying to think away from human life all that it owes to the existence of government conceived of as a regular system of lawmaking and law-enforcement (Isaiah, 1988).

The condition of men living without government Hobbes calls the State of Nature, and he paints a memorably bleak picture of it. Men without government, and without the settled social living which Hobbes thinks only the existence of government makes possible, would all be roughly and naturally equal. No man is so much stronger than another by nature that he could not be killed by him by stealth. This natural equality of human capacities leads men to be suspicious of one another. This wariness makes men very reluctant to take risks in their dealings with other men. Every other man would effectively be a stranger from

whom one would not know what to expect (Isaiah, 1988). Life in the Hobbesian State of Nature no doubt provided a good deal of time for solitary reflection, and it is easy to imagine what each man must have been thinking about. Security for his life would be the prime consideration, and each man would begin to ask himself what the conditions would be in which he would not be in constant fear for his life, and it would soon occur to him that the only way he could feel safe would be if he could dominate all other men and make them fear him more than they feared each other. Dominion over others would be the ambition of all men in the State of Nature, but of course that is a programmed which, in the State of Nature, it would be impossible to fulfil. Granted the roughly equal natural capacity of men, everybody in the State of Nature would be capable of working out the programmed of dominion for himself, and while every man dreamt of dominion over others, no man could ever achieve it because every man was roughly equal in physical strength and cunning. The plan of dominion which would provide for security of the person in the State of Nature would in fact give men an additional reason to fear each other, because each man would now have good reason for suspecting other men of having aggressive intentions towards him. This would lead to a stalemate, a position without a future because the future would be a dreary re-run of the past.

Human aggressiveness would be compounded by the fact that nobody in the State of Nature could predict what he would have to do to preserve his own life. Hobbes calls the preservation of life the Right of Nature. Unlike the situation in an ordinary society where human behavior is reasonably predictable, nobody in the State of Nature would ever know what to expect of other men, so the Right of Nature must be unlimited by definition. It would only be possible to break the Right of Nature down into specific rights of nature if it was in fact predictable what a man would have to do to protect himself. In Civil Society this right of self-defense is defined by law, but in the lawless State of Nature there can be no possible definition. Each man is free to do what he pleases to preserve himself, but of course this unlimited Right of Nature does not really help him because everybody else has it too. The natural fear that men feel for one another in the State of Nature would therefore be increased by the fact that each man would know not only that common sense dictates that other men are likely to be aggressive, but also that they have a right to do anything to others if

they feel that their lives are in danger. In a situation like this the only sensible way of living would be to run away as quickly as possible from other men because the outcome of any contest with another would be uncertain. A rational egotist would always hedge his bets, though occasional clashes would be inevitable. Hobbes calls the State of Nature a state of war, because it is in the nature of war that there will be intervals between the fighting (Alasdair,1977). As Hobbes himself puts it (*Leviathan*, Part 1, Chapter 13): For WARRE, consistent not in Battell only, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battel is sufficiently known: and therefore, the notion of *Time* is to be considered in the nature of War; as it is in the nature of Weather. For as the nature of Foule weather, lyeth not in a shower or two of rain, but in an inclination thereto of many days together; So, the nature of War, consistent not in actual fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary.

The question then arises as to how men managed to get themselves out of the awfulness of the State of Nature into Civil Society with its law and its reasonable degree of social stability. To understand that we have to go back to Hobbes's rational egotists contemplating the miseries of the State of Nature (Alasdair,1977). Each man wished that he could dominate other men to the extent that other men would be too frightened to touch him, but each man also knew that one man could never achieve that by himself. Something else was needed if men were ever to live in subjection, and that something else was law. If only a way could be found to subject men to laws, the fear of punishment for breaking which would be strong enough to secure obedience, then all might yet be well.

Hobbesian men are odd creatures because the two sides of their nature seem to conflict with each other. Their competitiveness leads to what Hobbes calls 'diffidence', that apprehensiveness about each other's intentions and fear of losing out which is at its most acute form in the State of Nature. On the other hand, men want what Hobbes calls 'glory', the wealth, deference and high position which only living in a stable society with an effective state can provide. Part of man's nature is therefore anti-social, while the other part can only be satisfied through social living. The desire for glory and the desire to minimize the effects of diffidence provide the crucial additional motives for

getting out of the State of Nature. The solution to the State of Nature problem is in fact very simple. Men need law and law enforcement to live the kinds of lives they want to lead. Men's natural diffidence in the State of Nature makes it impossible that they could ever come together to make law. Even if they could agree to make law, which is highly dubious, there would still be two insurmountable difficulties (Alasdair,1977). First, who would be the first to obey? The man who first put himself under law would be at an immediate disadvantage in his relations with his fellow men because he would be in the position of refusing to do to them what they might possibly do to him. Second, who would enforce the law? Everybody can't do it, so who would protect the first man to obey law? He could try to enforce the law himself, but that would be the same as saying that everybody else was still in the State of Nature except him. That is obviously the worst position for anybody ever to be in; being the only person to obey the law when everybody else is ignoring it or breaking it is straightforwardly absurd. The way out of the difficulty is not to try to make law by agreement, but to choose a lawgiver and law-enforcer by agreement. Choose one man (or a body of men), make him or them the Sovereign, and authorize all he or they do. This in effect means that every man, or a majority, must give up his right of protecting himself, in so far as he can, to another. The choice of a lawgiver and law-enforcer is the moment of contract. It is nothing less than the creation of political power; as Hobbes puts it, the sword is placed in the Sovereign's hands.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Hobbes pleased neither the Royalists nor the Parliamentarians, though Cromwell left him alone, and Charles II received him at court where he delighted in watching 'the Bear' being baited by the court wits and giving as good as he got, True **or False**
2. The basis of Hobbes's argument can be stated simply, though the implications of that argument are far-reaching. Social contract almost always imagined what things must have been like at the beginning before Civil Society, **True or False**
3. Hobbes takes that imagined beginning seriously by trying to think away from human life all that it owes to the existence of government conceived of as a regular system of lawmaking and law-enforcement, True **or False**

1.5 Summary

So far there is nothing very remarkable about Hobbes's argument. It sounds like any run-of-the-mill social contract argument, but there is one crucial difference: Hobbes argues that the social contract cannot put any limitation on sovereignty. The Sovereign is entirely unbound. In fact, the Sovereign is not a party to the social contract at all. Sovereignty is not created on terms; it must be absolute and undivided. The Sovereign is absolutely unaccountable to his subjects; his law is their command. It hardly needs to be stressed that this is a very remarkable conclusion for a social contract thinker to come to.

Before Hobbes, the whole point about social contract theory was to argue that there was some kind of bargain between rulers and ruled which rulers could sometimes break and thus absolve their subjects from their obligation to obey. Hobbes argues the opposite: even if men could go back to the beginning and re-create the state, they would voluntarily do so in such a way that they would set up a Sovereign more absolutist than any contemporary king dared to be. A large part of the argument in *Leviathan* is designed to show why this must be so. The argument is fairly technical, because Hobbes is a meticulous

thinker. The argument is carried on at a high level of abstraction, but it is marvelously clear. Later in this chapter we will have to stand back from Hobbes's argument and try to give it a historical context, because none of Hobbes's readers at the time could have doubted that a very thorough commentary on English political history lay not very far below the surface. First, we must see what the argument for unlimited sovereignty is, and then try to make it historically specific.

1.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Explain the Hobbesian version of the state of nature
2. In the Leviathan, explain the Hobbesian men

1.6 References/Further Reading

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1.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. Men need law and law enforcement to live the kinds of lives they want to lead. Men's natural diffidence in the State of Nature makes it impossible that they could ever come together to make law. Even if they could agree to make law, which is highly dubious, there would still be two insurmountable difficulties

2 Hobbesian men are odd creatures because the two sides of their nature seem to conflict with each other. Their competitiveness leads to what Hobbes calls 'diffidence', that apprehensiveness about each other's intentions and fear of losing out which is at its most acute form in the State of Nature

UNIT 2 JOHN LOCKE: THE STATE OF NATURE AND SOCIAL CONTRACT

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction

This unit is essentially aimed at making you to understand the John Lock's version of the state of nature and social contract theory. As a post-graduate student, you are to have full knowledge about his political thought and its implications for the people and the state.

2.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit you are to have full knowledge about John Lock's political thought and its implications for the people and the formation of the modern state .

2.2 Main Content

2.1.1 John Lock: This Background

Locke was born in 1632 and grew up with the seventeenth-century scientific revolution. He came from an upwardly mobile Somersetshire family who made it into the gentry class. Though not particularly forward at his books, Locke decided early on an academic career. He

became a don at Christ Church College, Oxford, until he was illegally ejected for his allegedly subversive opinions in 1684. (The Tory university had burned banned books the previous year.) Locke was outwardly not much concerned with philosophy and political theory during his Oxford years, teaching some law and a lot of medicine. The young Locke even seems to have been a bit of a Tory, believing that nonresistance to established authority was the just price of political and social stability (Jacques,1999). His friendship with the first Earl of Shaftesbury, whose life he saved with a miraculous operation on the liver, changed Locke from a mildly subversive Oxford don into a meddler in high politics as adviser and confidant to highly placed plotters against the Divine Right monarchy of the Stuarts.

Locke no doubt provided Shaftesbury with arguments to use in the everyday political battle of the Exclusionist Whigs (who wished to exclude James II when he was still only the Duke of York from the succession to the throne on the grounds that he was a Roman Catholic) against their Tory opponents in the last years of the reign of Charles II. It was probably inevitable either that Shaftesbury would eventually ask Locke's opinions on the most important political question of all, the question of the grounds for legitimate resistance to government, or that Locke's own position in Shaftesbury's circle would eventually lead him without prodding to consider that question. It was in these circumstances that Locke wrote his famous *Two Treatises of Government* (the exact date of the works is still not certain, but a good guess would be 1679– 80). It was while enjoying the patronage of Shaftesbury that Locke worked on the ideas which would see the light of day as *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Jacques,1999). It was also about this time that Locke turned his attention to economics, education and questions of colonial government.

Locke's own attitude to his famous political treatises appears to have been decidedly odd, not to say shifty. He never acknowledged his authorship of the treatises but was very keen that they should be available in a true text. Editions were mangled by printers, and it may also be that Locke was worried that opinions more radical than his own would be attributed to him. On the other hand, it may simply be that there was an impenetrably secretive side to Locke's character which will always hide his true reasons for publicly denying his authorship of such famous books.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Locke was born in 1632, **True or False**
2. He grew up with the seventeenth-century scientific revolution, **True or False**
3. He prominent two works, **True or False**

2.3.2 The Lockian version

A political thinker can influence another in a number of different ways. One thinker can influence another's substantive political conclusions, as with Plato and Aristotle, or one thinker can come to his political conclusions by thinking through another's political thought and attempting to go beyond it, as with Marx and Hegel. Hobbes and Filmer influenced Locke in neither of these ways. Hobbes bequeathed to Locke a particular language of social contract and a particular view of the structure of social conduct itself, while Filmer influenced Locke in a purely negative sense: by attacking Filmer, Locke's own political theory turns out to be everything that Filmer's is not. We used to think that Locke's political thought was very different from Hobbes's, at least in its conclusions, but recent work on both Hobbes and Locke has made us re-think exactly what those differences are thin (Jacques,1999).

No-one claims that there are no differences, but there is at least some disagreement about how deep those differences go. It is easy to read Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government* (1681–3) as a straight attack on Hobbes, and perhaps it is, but there can be no doubt that Locke's *First Treatise of Civil Government* is a direct attack on Filmer.

Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarchia or the Natural Power of Kings* (1680) was probably the most systematic exposition to date in English of what has come to be known as the theory of the Divine Right of Kings. Across the Channel, the Sun King Louis XIV was making absolute monarchy shine brighter than ever before and was implicitly inviting other kings in Europe to imitate him. English kings might dare to follow his example, not Charles II perhaps, but certainly his brother who eventually became James II in 1685.

`Locke may have thought that absolute monarchy was becoming the prevailing political style, and that Divine Right theory was becoming the prevailing way of explaining political obligation. Locke makes fairly easy meat of Filmer in the *First Treatise,* but behind Filmer there was always Hobbes, with his much tougher arguments for absolute sovereignty. The theory of Divine Right scores very high marks for intelligibility. Also, one tends to forget how comparatively modern it is.

Medieval kingship, like any other, had wrapped itself round with a certain mystique, but its grounds for the theory of sovereignty were not nearly as clear as in the later theory of Divine Right. Ideas of God's anointing Because morality existed in the State of Nature and was capable of being enforced there, perhaps imperfectly, by the voluntary actions of men, it follows that social contract is an extension of that pre-existing morality. Locke tends to lay stress on God's permissions rather than on God's prohibitions: Natural Rights before Natural Law. The distinction is still Hobbesian, but Natural Rights now being definable as rights rather than right, they become an asset rather than a liability, something men desire to keep rather than to give up. Restricting the Hobbesian Natural Right to a given number of Natural Rights makes Natural Right much more manageable, and being manageable, Natural Rights can be retained within the framework of Civil Society.

Perhaps the best way of looking at the Lockian doctrine of Natural Rights is to see them as a kind of moral cash, pocket money given to God's children to make their way easier in the world. Naturally enough, children often being very intelligent consumers, men will want to spend as little of their moral cash for as many goods as possible. The good which they buy at the moment of social (it should really be called 'political') contract is an increased protection by government of the Natural Rights of life, liberty and estate. To enjoy more of their moral capital in security, men give up to the state their right to judgement when their Natural Rights have been violated. Of course. a Natural Right being God's gift, part of defining what it is to be a human being, it is impossible to alienate it completely (Judith,1999). At the moment of contract, Locke's men give up the absolute minimum for the maximum gain: they entrust the state with their right to judgement on the condition that the state uses the right to judge when Natural Rights

have been violated in order to allow men to enjoy their other Natural Rights, to life, liberty and property, more abundantly.

Social contract is really a double process in Locke. An implied contract of society operates before the contract to form government is made. *Pace* Hobbes, the society which exists before government ever existed, and the society which would survive government's collapse, is capable of expressing a will before the state exists. Therefore, again *pace* Hobbes, men are capable of making a collective agreement with their rulers in the State of Nature, either in the very beginning or in some future, imaginable emergency when government has collapsed. And in Locke's account of the matter, it is easy to see when and why government would in fact collapse: when it violates, or is seen to violate, enough men's Natural Rights for them justifiably to rebel by taking back to themselves the right of judgement because government has betrayed its trust and misused it. Men therefore have a right of rebellion, and perhaps even a moral duty to rebel, if government begins to frustrate God's purpose for the world. The moment for rebellion happens when enough men are prepared to repudiate their contract with their rulers and fall back on the original contract of society. In all events, the Lockian Sovereign is a party to the contract to set up government. The king is king on terms.

It follows that only my own, explicit consent can make me a member of a commonwealth, though Locke notoriously waters this down later with his doctrine of 'tacit consent'—just by walking on the king's highway I tacitly invite the protection of the law, so tacitly consent to obey that law myself. So, what happens to the non-joiners? Locke is as ruthless as Hobbes on this point. In the beginning non-joiners, like dissenters later, may be killed if they appear to threaten Civil Society (Judith,1999). A man who denies God's Law by invading other men's Natural Rights is at war with God and men and killing in war is no crime. Locke is one of the first political thinkers to think that capital punishment is a special case of punishment and needs a special justification in a way that ordinary punishment—fines and imprisonment—does not.

A man who violates another's Natural Rights by taking his life, or threatening to, is irrational, hardly a man at all, because his natural reason doesn't function well enough to tell him that his own enjoyment

of rights implies the duty of respecting those same rights in others. This Argument is the basis of all right to punish, either in the State of Nature or in Civil Society. If a man breaks God's Law in Civil Society, he is no better than a wild beast and may be killed. that happens if, in Civil Society, I withdraw my consent? Locke thinks that that would not alter my obligation to obey the law, because I would then become as a stranger or visitor in my own country, and nobody ever argues that foreigners are not obliged to obey the laws of the particular country they happen to find themselves in. Strangers implicitly invite the protection of the laws in a foreign country, and they are subject to Natural Law punishments anyway. (The exception would be a group of men coming into another country bringing their own law with them, and therefore not implicitly asking for the protection of that country's laws. A group of men like that would be called an invading army, or a group of English football supporters.) Locke also uses the analogy of visiting another family. Guests are obliged to follow the habits and customs of that family where they differ from the habits and customs of their own.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Locke thinks that that would not alter my obligation to obey the law, because I would then become as a stranger or visitor in my own country, and nobody ever argues that foreigners are not obliged to obey the laws of the particular country they happen to find themselves in. **True or False**
2. He argues that a man who violates another's Natural Rights by taking his life, or threatening to, is irrational, hardly a man at all, because his natural reason doesn't function well enough to tell him that his own enjoyment of rights implies the duty of respecting those same rights in others., **True or False**
3. Locke is one of the first political thinkers to think that capital punishment is a special case of punishment and needs a special justification in a way that ordinary punishment—fines and imprisonment—does not, **True or False**

2.4 Summary

Locke obviously thinks of men as natural bargainers, and he also thinks that men's automatic reaction to the world outside themselves is not to try to dominate it but to protect themselves from it. Natural Rights create a kind of moral space for the individuals who possess them, and that moral space may not be intruded upon except by explicit consent. Natural Rights in this sense create a proper moral distance between men, a claim to a certain individual autonomy. Men's natural liberty is their chief moral resource, and they will be inclined to spend that resource wisely. Giving up some natural liberty in order to enjoy the rest more securely immediately presents a problem: suppose too much has been given up for too little? There is a market in security, so security has its price, and that price would depend on the amount of security available and the demand for it. In the ordinary course of events, men might think they have paid too much for security under law, and that would always be a source of potential discontent.

This Locke would approve of: perpetual suspicion of the state is healthy for liberty. Men in the State of Nature made the contract to form political society because they feared the power of others over them, the Law of Nature notwithstanding. By creating the state, men save themselves from the power of others, but in so doing they create in government a power which is much greater than the power of any individual or group of individuals in the State of Nature. What could be more natural, then, than to want protection from the state? The assertion of the Natural Rights of life, liberty and estate is therefore just as important in a commonwealth as outside it. Perpetually discontented men in Civil Society, grumbling that they've paid out too much of their liberty for security, are healthy for liberty.

2.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. What is Locke's view about Natural Rights?
2. How is Hobbes view of the state of nature different from Locke

2.6 References/Further Reading

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2.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. Natural Rights create a kind of moral space for the individuals who possess them, and that moral space may not be intruded upon except by explicit consent. Natural Rights in this sense create a proper moral distance between men, a claim to a certain individual autonomy. Men's natural liberty is their chief moral resource, and they will be inclined to spend that resource wisely.

2 We used to think that Locke's political thought was very different from Hobbes's, at least in its conclusions, but recent work on both Hobbes and Locke has made us re-think exactly what those differences are thin.

UNIT 3 JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU : STATE OF NATURE AND SOCIAL CONTRACT

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

The problem which *The Social Contract* sets out to solve is therefore posed by the *Confessions* and by the *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*, and concerns how to get out of the mess that these actually existing societies are in. The key to the whole matter is liberty, but not the kind of liberty which men enjoyed in the now-for-ever-lost State of Nature. Going back to the State of Nature would mean having to unlearn everything, including language, which is impossible. Men living in social bonds still hanker after that lost innocence, that freedom from all sense of sin, that life lived according to nature, or as nature, but that life is gone forever for those who have experienced life in one of the world's more sophisticated societies. Small pockets of natural existence might still be holding out somewhere, in high mountain valleys for instance, but for most of us that natural life, or anything approaching it, is out of the question. Therefore, the question for the political theorist becomes one of trying to devise a form of communal life which gives men something equivalent to that complete freedom which they must have once enjoyed in the State of Nature. This Rousseau also calls liberty, and it resembles the lost liberty of the State of Nature because it is complete. As Rousseau says right at the beginning of *The Social Contract*, the problem is to find a form of human association in which the members are as free 'as before'. We

know that Rousseau does not think that we can return to the 'before', to the State of Nature, so he must mean that here is a form of human association in which there exists something as good as the liberty once enjoyed in the State of Nature. This is premise that you have to known about the Rousseauist version of the State of nature and social contract .

3.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit that you expected to:

- know much about the Rousseauist version of the State of nature and social contract for onward analysis.

3.3 Main Content

3.3.1 Jean-Jacques Rousseau: His Background

Rousseau was the first political thinker to make a text of his own life. His *Confessions* and *Rousseau Judge of Jean-Jacques* are apologies for a life which went wrong. Some readers of the *Confessions* find them embarrassingly frank; others point to how limited even honest introspection was in a world of pre-Freudian innocence. Rousseau always seems to have been able to arouse strong passions in others, not least in bluestocking upper-class women (about whom he could make appallingly ungallant remarks). The affection which Rousseau inspired in others sometimes turned into distaste, and even hatred. His was a trusting and suspicious nature by turns; his character contained a wide streak of paranoia, and as is frequently the case with paranoiacs, his paranoia was self-fulfilling because it sometimes made enemies out of erstwhile friends. Rousseau's capacity for dividing people into sides for and against him by no means ended with his unhappy death (Judith,1999). On one day you can find yourself detesting Rousseau, and the next day you can find yourself defending Jean-Jacques to the death. What is certain is that no-one who came into contact with Rousseau for long was likely to come out of it unscathed.

Born in Calvinist Geneva, the young Rousseau was destined for the life of an artisan, but, at the age of sixteen in 1728, he left Switzerland under a cloud, wandered into France, and at Annecy was befriended by Mme de Warens, who made him her lover to protect him from the corruptions of the world. Rousseau then began to climb the greasy pole in a France where noble patronage was the only hope for a man of the people who was also a foreigner. By 1743 Rousseau had settled in Paris and formed his nearly lifelong relationship with his 'child of nature', Thérèse Lavasseur, by whom he had five children, all deposited in the Foundling Hospital by the man who wrote *Emile*. In 1751, Rousseau broke into the philosophic world with an essay on the arts and sciences, and in the next decade he wrote the works which we still read, including the second *Discourse*, the *Nouvelle Heloïse* and *The Social Contract*. These were the years when he tried to give up his social climbing and his posh friends, some of whom were to blacken his name all over Europe. Rousseau returned to Paris in 1767 from a visit to England. He was already what we would now call a 'seriously disturbed' person, and his last ten years were far from happy (Judith,1999). He tried to justify himself to the world, but the more he excused himself, the more he accused himself. In the end, he thought that even God had deserted him, and stories long circulated that he died in 1778 mad and a suicide.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Rousseau was the first political thinker to make a text of his own life. **True or False**
2. At the age of sixteen in 1728, he left Switzerland under a cloud, wandered into France, and at Annecy was befriended by Mme de Warens, who made him her lover to protect him from the corruptions of the world, **True or False**
3. Rousseau returned to Paris in 1767 from a visit to England.t, True **or False**

3.3.2 The Rousseauist version of the State of nature and social Contract

Rousseau's solution to the problem of the division between justice and self-interest lies in the notoriously tricky idea of the General Will.

Ordinary societies, Rousseau thinks, are incapable of acting with a single will: that is one of the reasons that they have to be ruled by force or by the fraudulent claims of a ruling class. Ordinary societies are not free in another and equally important sense: the choices which we make in them are never free because we always end up following our self-interest, either individually or as a group. It is of the essence of Rousseau's concept of liberty that a choice which I make which is predictable in the terms of my own self-interest cannot be a free choice. (How could it be, when an observer can easily tell what I'm going to do, and when I myself have got so used to following my own interest that I probably don't even have to think about it anymore?) Pursuit of one's own self-interest is simply another name for inequality. When everybody pursues his own self-interest, then they are bound to end up unequal because not everybody is equally good at pursuing self-interest, or equally lucky (Judith,1999). The harmless inequality of the State of Nature has been exchanged for inequality of condition in civil society which really matters. So, something really has to change if men are to get themselves into a social condition where they begin to want to rid themselves of that which prevents them living in that condition which Rousseau calls 'political right' (which is the sub-title of *The Social Contract*).

Rousseau knows perfectly well that some people who live in an ordinary society are less free in a straightforward sense than others. If I'm rich, there is a simple sense in which I can do more of what I might happen to want than if I am poor. The rich are less dependent on others, and one of the things Rousseau the rising man of letters hated more than anything else was personal dependence on aristocratic patrons. Rousseau thinks that in an ordinary society, before making a social contract to get out of what is frankly an unsocial state (because every man's hand is directed against every other man), liberty is always going to be a 'more-or-less' condition. Nobody will be completely free (everyone is dependent to some extent on others), and there will in fact be large variations in the amount of freedom enjoyed by particular individuals or groups of individuals (Will,1995).

This is recognizably what we have come to call the Individualist idea of freedom, where men freely accept that some diminution of their freedom is necessary in order that they can live a social life at all. Individualist political theorists like Hobbes and Locke frankly accept

that living a recognizably social life entails the giving up of some natural liberty in order to enjoy security of life and property, though they disagree about how much natural liberty must be given up and on what terms not Rousseau. For his new state of the social contract, liberty is not going to be 'more or- less' but 'either-or'; either men are going to be completely free, or they are not going to be free at all. The clue to Rousseau's solution to the problem of liberty within a political community lies in his assertion that the natural liberty of the State of Nature has gone forever; we now live in a social condition from which there is no turning back. The only way lies forward, so that all this hankering after a so-called 'natural' liberty has to stop. Rousseau has already promised that man in his new state of the social contract will be as free 'as before', and this must mean that the new liberty of the state of the social contract will be as complete as liberty in the now lost State of Nature, but it will be liberty of a different kind.

Rousseau's citizens in his new state are not going to be in the position of always wondering whether they have given up too much of their natural liberty for the benefits which living in civil society brings. They are going to be completely free. Rousseau even reverses the Individualist way of looking at liberty in an ordinary society. The most natural way of looking at liberty in an ordinary society is to say that the rich enjoy more of it than the poor. As a moralist, this sticks in Rousseau's craw. If ordinary societies are all corruptions of the original State of Nature, perpetrated by force and fraud, then must not those who do best out of these perverted societies be the most corrupt of all? Rousseau's famous sentence 'Man was born free; and everywhere he is in chains' is as much a moral statement as it is a political statement. The moralism comes out in the next sentence: 'One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater slave than they.' Rousseau invites us to believe that those who do best in a corrupt world are more that world's slaves than those at the bottom of the pile.

Freedom in an ordinary society is for Rousseau equivalent to the distance we have travelled from the original state of innocence of the State of Nature, and he seems to be saying that those who have done most of the corrupting, or those who have benefited most from it, have travelled farthest from the original State of Nature, and are therefore the least free (Will,1995). Rousseau loves paradox, and nowhere more so than in his treatment here of freedom in ordinary civil society.

Rousseau is also paradoxical in his solution to the problem of freedom and civility. If men are to be cured of their longing for a long-lost natural liberty, and if they are not to put up with the restricted liberty provided by an ordinary society, then the only way forward is a complete submission to a voluntarily self-prescribed law. Rousseau formulated the problem very succinctly: The problem is to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before. For this to be possible, says Rousseau Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will, and, in our corporate capacity, we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole. This is the moment of social contract. It creates a new moral entity, a 'public person' which is called 'state' when passive, 'sovereign' when active, and 'power' when compared to others like itself (Will,1995). By this Rousseau really means that the moment of social contract, when the General Will comes into being for the first time, is a moment of imagined equality.

Everyone gives himself and all his power (the power that proceeds from self-interest) up to the General Will provided others do the same. The General Will then decides what the arrangements, including the property arrangements, of the new society should be. This is what Rousseau means when he says that the state is called 'sovereign' when active: the General Will acts as the decision of the whole sovereign people to decide those things which are important to it. Rousseau then adds one of his famously challenging statements: the Sovereign, merely by virtue of what it is, is always what it should be. Acts of the Sovereign, decisions of the General Will, Rousseau seems to be saying, can never be wrong, even though the General Will is decided by counting votes and so there is always the possibility of a dissenting minority. The majority is always right. How can that be?

Rousseau's answer is that the moment of equality when the Sovereign people assemble, either for the first time or thereafter, means that there can be no prior way of deciding what the General Will ought to decide. Rousseau means us to take this literally, and to understand why it should necessarily be so we have to go back to his analysis of what always goes wrong in an ordinary society. The lack of freedom in an ordinary society comes from the fact that our ordinary life-choices are

made predictable by our differently perceived self-interest, either as individuals or as groups. Posit a moment of equality, then each man, when consulting his own interest, will be consulting exactly the same self-interest as everybody else because he will no longer have unequal self-interest to tell him which way to vote. Decisions of the General Will are therefore *by definition* unpredictable, and therefore free. Of course, not everybody will make the same choice, because there is nothing prior which tells individuals what choice to make. There could obviously be minorities and majorities on all important questions and this lack of unanimity should not surprise us (Rogers, 2003). Free choice is hard to make by definition, and it will be especially hard to make in the beginning in a human group which is used to having its decisions made for it by divisive self-interest. Such a group might even require a special figure, the Legislator, to bring wills into conformity with reason, the perfect outsider who could persuade a sovereign people what it really wanted because it is so difficult for them to make a choice now their conflicting self-interested wills no longer make the business of choice easy for them.

One of the things which a sovereign people ought to decide upon is the system of public values under which they should live, a system of civic morality.

There is nothing very strange about this. Rousseau seems to be saying that all political communities end up with systems of public values which all the members of the community are expected to follow. Political communities as they exist in the world typically receive their systems of public values by accident or fraud, or a combination of both. Rousseau is saying that for the first time the social contract gives a people the opportunity to *choose* the system of values (including religion) under which it should live. Hence the need for the Legislator, because a people brought up under one system of social values will find it very difficult to choose another. Bewilderment might be the immediate reaction of people called upon in a moment of equality to choose the values under which they should live. What about the coercion of minorities? Rousseau does not say that going along with the majority is the price the minority has to pay for living in a new kind of society. On the contrary, the minority is forced to go along with the majority decision, and Rousseau says that forcing them to do so is forcing them to be free, the most famous of all his paradoxes. What can

that possibly mean? On the face of it, Rousseau appears to be making a difficulty for himself by not simply saying that minorities are always coerced in political communities, and that that's just the way things are. On the contrary, Rousseau seems to be saying that the minority really wanted to be coerced all along. The minority apparently suffers the double indignity of being coerced, and of being told that they are being coerced in the name of their own real freedom. Rousseau certainly accepts that all states coerce in the sense that in political communities everybody is expected to pay more than lip service to the prevailing system of public values, but he thinks that coercion under the General Will is so different that it is a mistake to call it coercion at all.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Rousseau seems to be saying that the minority really wanted to be coerced all along.. **True or False**
2. At the age the General Will is so different that it is a mistake to call it coercion at all, **True or False**
3. Rousseau is saying that for the first time the social contract gives a people the opportunity to *choose* the system of values (including religion) under which it should live, **True or False**

3.4 Summary

Rousseau thinks that there are at least six main arguments which show that coercion of minorities is not coercion as traditionally conceived. You have to know that the decisions of the General Will are not predictable, for the reasons outlined above. If you find yourself in the minority, then you can be certain that the decision wasn't fixed beforehand. Those who find themselves in the majority could be just as 'surprised' as those who find themselves in the minority, so you are unlikely always to be in the minority. You should remember that dissenters can be persuaded to go along with the rest. Force is not a first resort but a last resort if persuasion does not work on a specific matter on which the General Will has decided, then there still is persuasion available of a much more general kind. Dissenters could be reminded of why they left the old society to join the new. In the old

society, it was divisiveness which made it such an uncomfortable place to live. The reason for joining the new state of the Social Contract in the first place was that here for the first time there was the possibility of acting *with* others, not against them. Standing out against the majority of one's fellow men is to replicate the conditions of the old society, something which those who have joined the new society show that they do not really want simply by being here.If this does not work, then there is the further argument that agreeing with the others will get easier as you go along. You will get a taste for it until wanting what the others want becomes as automatic as following your own self-interest and spiting the rest in the old society. Being in the minority in the state of the Social Contract is not the same as being ruled by the majority by force. Majority rule, rule by the superior weight of others, typically takes the form of exploitation. As in all forms of rule based on force, majority rule would be used to distance the majority from the minority and to make the minority different from the majority. The minority might, for instance, be forced by the superior weight of the majority to perform those menial tasks in a society for which the majority has no taste. The decisions of the General Will could never be of the kind which chose the street-sweepers, because the majority is asking the minority to do nothing which the majority is not itself prepared to do. It is not like saying '*You* do that' but '*we're* prepared to do this, and you must too'. If none of those arguments work, then coercion follows. Rousseau would say that all states from time to time require some of their members to do things against their declared wills. What makes the state of the Social Contract different is that those who have been coerced have been treated as rational, adult human beings capable of understanding why they should do what they should do. There is a world of difference between just being told to do something and being given the reason why you should do it. (One of the standard reasons usually given for hitting children is that it will 'teach them a lesson' which they can learn in no other way.)

3.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Summary Rousseau the social contract theory
2. What is Rousseau's the natural liberty of the State of Nature all about

3.6 References/Further Reading

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Brian, B. (2000). *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism.* New York. New York University Press.

3.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. To Rousseau, new state of the social contract, liberty is not going to be 'moreor- less' but 'either-or'; either men are going to be completely free, or they are not going to be free at all..

2. The clue to Rousseau's solution to the problem of liberty within a political community lies in his assertion that the natural liberty of the State of Nature has gone forever; we now live in a social condition from which there is no turning back., True or False Rousseau's citizens in his new state are not going to be in the position of always wondering whether they have given up too much of their natural liberty for the benefits which living in civil society brings. They are going to be completely free.

UNIT 4 ST THOMAS AQUINAS: THE STATE AND POLITICS

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

This unit teaches you to know how Thomas's outlook took in the whole of Christendom and the whole of philosophy. The unit is designed to introduce you to know how Thomas's political theory only occupies a corner of a vast philosophical enterprise, whether the aim of which was to make all right in theory those things which were already all right in practice.

4.2 Learning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you are expected to:

- have full knowledge about St. Thomas Aquinas' political and how it relates to the state, power and politics.

4.3 Main Content

4.3.1 St Thomas Aquinas: His background

With Thomas, the work is the life, and there is a huge amount of it for a man who was barely fifty when he died in 1274. He was born an

aristocrat in Aquino in southern Italy in 1224(?) and was early bound for a religious life. There is a story that as a youth he was kidnapped and held for a year by his brothers, and the story exists in two versions. The saintlier of Thomas's biographers attribute the kidnapping to a desire on the part of his family that Thomas should become a Benedictine rather than the Dominican he eventually became, because the high road to ecclesiastical preferment began at Monte Cassino.

Other biographers say that Thomas's family wanted to put a stop to his religious vocation in order to marry him off to a rich heiress. After a spell at the University of Naples, he was sent to Paris by his order to study under Albert the Great, whom he accompanied to Cologne in 1248. In 1252 Thomas was licensed to teach. He became regent of the Dominican school in Paris on the recommendation of Albert. Thomas had to give his inaugural lecture under the protection of a royal guard on account of some nasty piece of academic politics going on at the time. He was back in Paris in 1269 after a longish sojourn at the papal court and began to play his crucial part in the struggle for the mind of Christendom as the Aristotelians and Augustinians slugged it out toe-to-toe. Thomas had no real taste for polemics. Perhaps he was a synthesiser by nature, but his was not a mind which could satisfy itself with facile compromises.

No philosopher ever reasoned more rigorously than Thomas, and he has not many equals in erudition. It would also be a mistake to think of Thomas as a man of the cloister only. The closeness of his friendship with the king of France who became St Louis may have been exaggerated, and the story that Thomas was murdered on the orders of the arch-villain of his day, Charles of Anjou, is certainly a fabrication, but there is plenty of evidence in his works to more than suggest that Thomas had a shrewd idea of what actually went on in the world. Thomas's outlook took in the whole of Christendom and the whole of philosophy. Thomas's political theory only occupies a corner of a vast philosophical enterprise, the aim of which was to make all right in theory those things which were already all right in practice.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. He died in 1274, True **or False**
2. In 1252 Thomas was licensed to teach. He became regent of the Dominican school in Paris on the recommendation of Albert, **True or False**
3. Thomas had to give his inaugural lecture under the protection of a royal guard on account of some nasty piece of academic politics going on at the time., **True or False**

4.3.2 St Thomas Aquinas: The State and Politics

St Thomas Aquinas' state of nature is governed by Divine Law which is the supreme law. To him, men were peaceful among themselves. His notion of the state of nature, and social contract is obviously different from other theorists. Thomas's problem was to try to reconcile the *polis* of the Greeks with Augustine's city of fallen men. Again, it has to be emphasized that ignoring the *Politics* of Aristotle was out of the question. The reputation of Aristotle was so much a part of the intellectual landscape of Thomas's time that Aristotle did not even have to be mentioned by name in philosophical treatises. When Thomas's contemporaries wrote 'as the Philosopher says', or even 'as He says', everybody knew it meant Aristotle. The Philosopher's views about politics would have to be reconciled with Augustinianism somehow. It was partly a matter of tone.

Reading Thomas after reading Augustine is like returning to familiar ground. It is the Aristotelian world of beautiful formal definitions qualified in detail. Aristotelian classifications of types of state and definitions of types of law make their reappearance with their meanings glossed and teased out with references to the Scriptures and to the Fathers of the Church. The difference between Aristotle and Thomas is the difference between the idea of Hellas and the idea of Christendom. Aristotle had assumed that political thought applied only to that small portion of mankind which inhabited the Greek world. Political thought

had nothing to say to the barbarian world, which was nearly everybody, and it had nothing very encouraging to say about how Greeks should treat any barbarians they came across. The barbarian question was relegated by Aristotle to minor technical questions about slavery, and his treatment of barbarians amounts to very little more than pragmatic advice to slave raiders and traders: make sure that those whom you make slaves really are good slave material, otherwise you might burden yourselves with very troublesome slaves. Stoicism and Augustinianism intervene between Aristotle and Thomas. so that Thomas thinks the whole world is worth a theory.

Thomas assumes that Christendom is minimally stable. Its disputes are essentially internal disputes, family affairs in which the disputants implicitly recognize that the survival of the family puts limits on how a dispute may be conducted and how far it can be allowed to go.

Christendom is held together by the love of God and by a desire to do His will. Thomas's God is a rational God. Like Aristotle's Nature, God does nothing without a purpose. He has created a rational universe and a rational world for human beings to live in. God must therefore have had it in His mind at the Creation to make the physical and moral worlds obedient to his law. Indeed, the distinction between the physical and moral worlds which men inhabit is a distinction made only for the convenience of philosophers. Ordinary men live in a single law-bound world, because the God who made the heavens also made the earth and all its inhabitants.Law is the coherence of the mind of God, and that coherence is reflected in the world of ordinary law, the law of *this* kingdom, *that* duchy, and *these* courts. Human law reflects the intense orderliness of God's mind but human law is very far from being a copy of God's law. If human law were to be a copy of God's law, then human living would be approaching that condition of perfection which the Scriptures and the Fathers tell us cannot exist in this world. The reality of the world of human law is in fact bound to be as it is, a confused and confusing patchwork of different and overlapping legal systems. A vertical dimension of human law adds to the difficulties. When legal systems overlap there is always a dispute about the priority between them, and this often takes the form of claims for the superiority of one system of law over another. One system of law is claimed to be 'higher' than another, or it is claimed that a higher law exists by which the priority of the claims of two 'lower' forms of law

can be decided. Time also makes its own claims for the lawfulness of law.

Much human law, and nearly all of feudal law, arises out of custom. Most of what we call 'legislation' has happened through the expedient of making permanent lists of already well-established customs. Somebody somewhere, acting from motives which we can easily guess at, has always had the idea of carving the law in tablets of stone. Law becomes fixed, knowable and known. The great law-givers of history are really misnamed if we think of them as law-inventors. Rather, they are law-declarers, legislating in conditions in which it has become imperative to be able to answer the question: What exactly is the law? Like all legal theorists, Thomas had a healthy respect for law as codified custom. If God takes an interest in everything, then he surely must spend some of his time overseeing how law is actually made and enforced in particular societies at different times. Like Aristotle, Aquinas believes the finger of reason writes the law in different societies and then moves on.

Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Politics* are proof enough of this for Thomas. There is nothing like Aristotle's range of empirical knowledge in Thomas's political writings. He just assumes that what was true for the Greek states in Aristotle's day is also true for Christian Europe: law is nearly always rational in some sense. How can this be? Aristotle's own arguments take Thomas part of the way. Human lawgivers make and change the laws for a variety of human motives, some good, some indifferent, and some downright wicked, but Aristotle appears to believe that there is something about law-making itself which is inherently rational. Nature has implanted a certain end in the human constitution—'the good life'—and has also given men the capacity to perceive, more or less consciously, what the good life is. Two things would seem to follow from this. The first is that men who have an idea of what the good life is would have enough sense to be able to work out for themselves whether or not the laws of their city were compatible with the good life for whose realization the city existed. It would be perceptions like this which would lead rational men to want to have their laws codified in the first place. Rational men know that nature is primarily a set of 'ends' and only secondarily the accomplishment of those ends, and, if men were wise, they would want to fix as much as they could in law in a world in which nature's

purposes were often frustrated. Aristotle's second assumption about the rationality of law comes from the undoubted fact that some cities, and therefore some legal systems, last longer than others.

For Aristotle, the longevity of a thing is bound up with the achievement of its end. Processes which do not get close to their ends fritter themselves away back into nature. Nature is endlessly patient, beginning and beginning again as long as time lasts. A world without partially achieved ends would be chaotic; even the most rational mind could make no sense of it beyond observing that everywhere chaos reigns. (And without the idea of ends, it would be hard to see in what sense the world *was* chaotic. Take away ends, and our very idea of chaos is chaotic.) Partial achievement of ends explains what stability there is in the world of politics, and one of the ways men learn to save and cherish their discoveries of what partial means to the good life is through a developing system of law. The law is a repository of the sensible decisions made in the past about how the good life is to be achieved. Like Aristotle, Thomas is very reluctant to believe that human reason always gets things wrong, and he takes it for granted that there will be greater or lesser degrees of rationality in human legal systems, which only appear to have developed haphazardly.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Law is the coherence of the mind of God, and that coherence is reflected in the world of ordinary law, the law of *this* kingdom, *that* duchy, and *these* courts **True or False**
2. Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Politics* are proof enough of this for Thomas, **True or False**
3. St Thomas Aquinas' state of nature is governed by Divine Law which is the supreme law. To him, men were peaceful among themselves, True **or False**

4.4 Summary

Thomas never wavers from the ancient belief that all human activities presuppose a form of knowledge. All life is either learning or putting knowledge into practice, and in practice the two are often inseparable. (Only Plato believes that the just man's knowledge must be absolutely complete before he can be let loose on the world.) It follows that, whether we realize it or not, we spend all our lives in search of knowledge. Rational men look for guides when their own knowledge is incomplete. What is true of the world in general must also be true about law. The law guides men's actions, so that it is crucially important that the law itself should be well guided. Thomas begins from the Aristotelian presumption in favor of law, and, like Aristotle, he knows that human law cannot stand morally by itself. As in other matters, so in this, the greatest help is to be found in God who, as a law-maker himself, has a certain sympathy with human legislators.

The Thomist God is nothing if not rational. The orderliness of the Creation resembles God's own mind. The divine mind contains other purposes besides those which are implicit in the Creation. The Creation itself cannot be said to have exhausted God's mind, because that would be to say that God's mind is in some sense limited. This is another way of saying that man as God's inferior creation cannot expect to know everything that God knows. Knowing God's mind and being God amount to the same thing; therefore, wishing to know more than God wants us to know is blasphemous. We can know in a very general sense that God wants us to live law-abiding lives because there is a divine law which governed even before time began, the universe which we inhabit is temporal and temporary. God's mind can create time but cannot be confined to it. Therefore, it must follow that there are parts of the divine law which men can never know except by direct communication from God, and it also seems to follow that such communications will be immensely privileged and hard for ordinary men to understand. All that men may reasonably hope to understand is their own historical world as it relates to God. Messages about what God intends for a timeless eternity are likely to mean very little, because they ask men enmeshed in the world of changing appearances to imagine a world in which nothing changes, a world which just *is*.

4.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. What does St. Thomist view, Law is the coherence of the mind of God means?
2. How is Aristotle and Aquinas views about law and the state the same?

4.6 References/Further Reading

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4.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment

1. Law is the coherence of the mind of God, and that coherence is reflected in the world of ordinary law, the law of *this* kingdom, *that* duchy, and *these* courts. Human law reflects the intense orderliness of God's mind, but human law is very far from being a copy of God's law. If human law were to be a copy of God's law, then human living would be approaching that condition of perfection which the Scriptures and the Fathers tell us cannot exist in this world.

2. Like Aristotle, Aquinas believes the finger of reason writes the law in different societies and then moves on

MODULE 4 MODERN AFRICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

INTRODUCTION

This module exposes students to understand nature and character of modern African Political Thought, the major thoughts and their proponents. The emphasis is on how the African political thought have over the years influenced African society from the time of colonialism and nationalist movement, and the immediate post-colonial era. This module adopts a unique presentation different from the previous modules because it discusses the political thoughts in thematic manner. As famous African political thoughts are discussed in this module thematically (colonialism, nationalist movement, the immediate post-colonial era, African politics, society etc) without isolating a particular proponent of political thought as it the case of previous modules. The essence is to deepen your thinking faculty as a post-graduate student.

Unit 1 Political Thought and Nationalism in African
Unit 2 African Marxist Regimes and Political Thought
Unit 3 African Politics, Society and Political Thought
Unit 4 African Political in the Post-Independence Period

UNIT 1 POLITICAL THOUGHT AND NATIONALISM IN AFRICAN

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

First unit of the module is designed to expose you to Political Thought and Nationalism in African. It is basically structured to enable you to know how African political thought influenced nationalism in Africa

1.2 Leaning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you are expected to

- exposed to the nexus between political thought and nationalism in African. As a post-graduate student, much is expected of you know how African political thought have influenced nationalism in Africa.

1.3 Main Content

1.31 African Political Thought and Modern African Nationalism

Modern African political thought refers to the political theories and ideologies enunciated in the speeches, autobiographies, writings, and policy statements of African statesmen and scholars. It varies according to historical circumstances and constantly changing African and world political environments. Political theory and political practice are inextricably linked, which makes for six distinctive periods of African history, each with its own dominant theories: indigenous Africa; imperial Africa; colonial Africa; and (early, middle, and late) modern or postcolonial Africa. Early modern African nationalism was developed in the late nineteenth century by British educated elites in West Africa. In Sierra Leone, James Horton, a doctor of medicine, challenged racist theories and argued that Africans were as capable of achieving "civilization" as Europeans, both biologically and psychologically (Bates, 1981). He advocated the development of "modern" states in Africa.

In Liberia, Edward Wilmot Blyden, politician, writer, and diplomat, developed an ideology of racial pride and non-acculturation and advocated African development through an authentic indigenous Africa, based on an African personality, history, and culture. He also called for the establishment of a West African state. In the Gold Coast (Ghana), Joseph E. Casely Hayford, a lawyer, advocated modernization from indigenous African roots. He believed that African nations, civilization, and political institutions could be revived and modernized to cater to modern needs in an "African way." He also called for the creation of a West African nation.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. African Political Thought are product of African scholars, True or False
2. African Political Thought are influenced by African historical antecedents, True or False
3. Colonialism also influenced African Political Thought, True or False

1.3.2 Pan-Africanism

You have to know that the next major movement in African political thought, Pan-Africanism, was prominently promoted by the African Diaspora—scholars and activists of African descent living in other nations. Pan-Africanism is a political and cultural ideal and movement born in the 1900s aimed at regrouping and mobilizing Africans in Africa and in the Diaspora against foreign domination, oppression, and discrimination (Bates, 1981). Political Pan-Africanism is linked to African nationalism (i.e., the struggle for independence), while economic Pan-Africanism is linked to the struggle against imperialism and neocolonialism. The major proponents of Pan-Africanism in North America were W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Paul L. Robeson, and George Padmore. The so-called back to Africa movement (i.e., the return of the African slaves to their continent of origin) mainly advocated by Garvey, led to the creation of Sierra Leone in 1801 and Liberia in 1817.

Cultural Pan-Africanism was expressed through Negritude, a cultural movement reasserting African culture, values, and traditions as part of the common heritage of mankind (Boele, 1999). Negritude emerged in France in the 1930s among African and Afro-Caribbean elites, notably Aimé Césaire, Léon-Gontran Damas, and Léopold Sédar Senghor.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. African political thought that influenced Pan-Africanism was promoted by the African Diaspora who are scholars, True or False
2. Negritude emerged in France in the 1930s among African and Afro-Caribbean elites, notably Aimé Césaire, Léon-Gontran Damas, and Léopold Sédar Senghors, True or False
3. Cultural Pan-Africanism was expressed through Negritude, True or False

1.3.3 Modern African Nationalist

Modern African nationalism is a political ideal and movement aimed a liberating Africans from European colonial political domination, cultural oppression, social exclusion, and economic exploitation. The goal was to achieve political independence as a prelude to economic independence. In Kwame Nkrumah's words, "Seek ye first the political kingdom and all else will be added unto you." The challenge of African nationalism was to build viable nations out of more than fifty artificially created states, most of which attained independence in the 1960s.

African socialism is a radical form of African nationalism influenced by Marxism-Leninism (though officially non-Marxist), African socialism rejects capitalism as being alien to African culture and traditions. Instead, it is based on the African tradition of communalism, according to which the group takes precedence over the individual. The socialist model of development includes a state-led development strategy based on planning, land reform, industrialization, and the nationalization of the economy (Nkrumah,1962). The foreign policy of African Socialist states is pan-Africanist. The African countries (and leaders) who adopted this ideology between 1960 and 1970 were Algeria (Ahmed Ben Bella); Ghana (Kwame Nkrumah, 1962); Guinea (Ahmed Sékou Touré); Mali (Modibo Keïta), and Tanzania (Julius K. Nyerere, 1968). Senegal (Léopold Senghor) and Kenya (Jomo Kenyatta) paid lip service to African socialism but did not actually implement it. African Theory of Revolution Frantz Fanon, a French-born psychiatrist from Martinique who joined the Algerian

revolution, posits that under the guidance of revolutionary intellectuals, the peasantry is a revolutionary force in Africa. He argues that it is only through violence that the colonized people can achieve their freedom. For Fanon (1968), decolonization is a violent revolution that destroys the social and political structures of the colonial regime, liberates consciousness, and creates a new man. He argues that violence is a cleansing force, but that it must be accompanied by political education if it is to be truly emancipator.Amilcar Cabral, an agronomist and leader of the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau, sees culture as a form of resistance to foreign domination. Cabral (1972) argues that culture is a weapon against the imperialist power; it becomes the instrument through which people reclaim their history. For him, the main goal of the liberation movement is not only national independence and the defeat of colonialism, but also the economic, social, and cultural progress of the people. This can occur only when foreign domination has been totally eliminated.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. African Socialism is a political thought of Kwame Nkrumah, True or False
2. Amilcar Cabral's political thought shaped anit-colonialism struggle in Guinea-Bissau, True or False
3. African Theory of Revolution of Frantz Fanon was essential in African anti-colonialism struggle, True or False

1.5 Summary

I believe by now you have been exposed to some African scholars such as Amilcar Cabral, Frantz Fanon, Ahmed Ben Bella, Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Sékou Touré, Modibo Keïta, and Julius K. Nyerere, and how their thoughts influenced nationalist movement in the Africa, continent. This is basically the aim of this unit.

1.6 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Name African leaders and their political thought that influenced

anti-colonial struggle in Africa.

2. Discuss the scholarly contribution of Amilcar Cabral and Frantz Fanon to anti-colonial struggle

1.7 References/Further Reading

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1.7 Possible Answers to the Self –Assessment Exercise

1. These are African leaders that their thought influenced anti-colonial struggle in the continent. They are: Algeria (Ahmed Ben Bella); Ghana (Kwame Nkrumah, 1962); Guinea (Ahmed Sékou Touré); Mali (Modibo Keïta), and Tanzania (Julius K. Nyerere, 1968). Senegal (Léopold Senghor) and Kenya (Jomo Kenyatta).
2. To start with, Cabral (1972) argues that culture is a weapon against the imperialist power; it becomes the instrument through which people reclaim their history…

UNIT 2 AFRICAN MARXIST REGIMES AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction

This second unit of the module four is designed to enable you to know and identify Marxism-Leninism as an ideology influence on African scholars and its impact on regimes in Africa. The essence is to expose you as a post-graduate of political science to establish and deepen your knowledge about the nexus between African Marxist regimes and political thought.

2.2 Leaning Outcomes

At the end of this unit you to are expected to know how Marxism-Leninism influenced African scholars and its impact on regimes in Africa.

2.3 Main Content

2.3.1 African Marxist Regimes

The period 1969 to 1975 saw the emergence of African Marxist regimes, many of them military—which adopted Marxism-Leninism as the state ideology. However, in general, the self-proclaimed “Marxist”

African leaders did not genuinely believe in this ideology but simply used it an instrument of political domination and control of the people. The African countries (and leaders) who adopted this ideology were Angola (Agostinho Neto and José Eduardo dos Santos); Benin (Mathieu Kérékou); Congo-Brazzaville (Marien Ngouabi, Joachim Yhombi-Opango, and Denis Sassou-Nguesso); Ethiopia (Mengistu Haile Mariam); Guinea-Bissau (Luís Cabral and João Bernardo Vieira); Madagascar (Didier Ratsiraka); Mozambique (Samora Machel and Joaquim Chissano); Namibia (Sam Nujoma); Somalia (Mohammed Siad Barre); and Zimbabwe (Robert Mugabe), 1980–1995. Marxism as a state ideology was officially abandoned everywhere in Africa by 1996.

African Populist Regimes Emerging in the early 1980s, African populism borrows elements of both African socialism and Marxism-Leninism and places the people at the center of democracy and development in Africa. Its main policy is to satisfy the basic needs of the peasantry, the largest and poorest social class in Africa.

African populist regimes advocate popular democracy and people-centered development. African populist regimes include Burkina Faso (Thomas Sankara); Ghana (Jerry Rawlings); Libya (Muammar Qaddafi) since 1977; and Zimbabwe (Robert Mugabe) since 1995). Three African scholars (Claude Ake, Daniel Osabu-Kle, and Mueni wa Muiu) have recently developed Africa-centered theories of democracy and development. Nigerian scholar-activist Claude Ake notes that in the post-independence era, the African elites have privatized the African state for their own benefit, leading to the marginalization of the African people. Ake (1996) argues that "the problem is not so much that development has failed as that it was never really on the agenda in the first place."

Like the populists, he advocates popular development (in which people are the end, agent, and means of development), and popular democracy (which emphasizes political, social, and economic rights). Ghanaian scholar Daniel Osabu-Kle (2000) starts from the assumptions that indigenous African political culture was essentially democratic and consensual, based on the accountability of the rulers to the people. He argues that only a democracy compatible with the African cultural environment (i.e., a modernized form of Africa's indigenous

democracy) is capable of achieving the political conditions for successful development in Africa. Mueni wa Muiu introduces a new paradigm to study the African state. According to A New Paradigm of the African State: Fundi wa Afrika (2009), the current African predicament may African Politics and Society be explained by the systematic destruction of African states and the dispossession, exploitation, and marginalization of African people through successive historical processes (from the trans-Atlantic slave trade to globalization)

New, viable, and modern African state based on five political entities—the Federation of African States—should be built on the functional remnants of indigenous African political systems and institutions and be based on African values, traditions, and culture. Afro-Marxism Afro-Marxism refers to the adoption by postcolonial governments in Africa of Marxist-style models of social and economic development supported through links with Communist Party– led governments such as the Soviet Union and Cuba. Afro-Marxism is characterized by centralized political decision making, typically within a one-party state, economic collectivization or nationalization of productive property and industry, and the direction of a national culture, often without regard for the cultures of ethnic minorities, by the ruling party (Nkrumah,1962).

It is to be distinguished from African socialism, which refers to the perspective that traditional African communities exhibit characteristics, including social relations and sharing of resources that reflect a form of indigenous socialism based on local communal organization and practices. African socialism offered an alternative to the "scientific" or authoritarian socialism of Afro-Marxism, which was based on models borrowed from Soviet or Maoist regimes. For many Africans involved in liberation movements and struggles against colonialism, Marxism, especially the example of the Russian Revolution (1917), offered a model for the launching of economic and political revolutions. This revolutionary model, in which a seizure of national power provides a lever for rapid industrialization, held great appeal throughout the twentieth century within numerous newly liberated African countries.

As postcolonial governments looked for means by which to "catch up" with the industrial might of the former colonial powers, the approach of

socialism, especially statist socialism or Marxism, seemed to provide both a potentially effective political program and an ideological justification for statist reorganization of the economy. It seemed to offer a distinct alternative to the exploitative and oppressive political economic regimes of imperialist rule. The history of such movements in Africa dates especially to the movements against colonialism from the middle or late twentieth century. Important examples of Afro-Marxist movements and systems include the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO), which took power in those former Portuguese colonies in 1975. Between 1974 and 1991 a socialist government under Lieutenant Colonel Haile Mengitsu ruled Ethiopia.

In addition, numerous Marxist parties and organizations have been active in several African countries, including South Africa, where the South African Communist Party played a significant part in the downfall of the apartheid regime. Among the most notable proponents of Afro-Marxism are Amilcar Cabral (Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde), Samora Machel (Mozambique), Michel Micombero (Burundi), Agostinho Neto (Angola), and Thomas Sankara (Burkina Faso). Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who took power in 1980 through an armed struggle movement deploying some elements of Marxist-Leninist ideology, has positioned himself as a defender of African autonomy from Western corporate interests while subjecting his population, especially the poor and his political opponents, to ongoing repression and punishment. Afro-Marxism played an important part in bringing about the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa. Angolan (MPLA) forces, backed by Cuban troops along with forces of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), pushed back the South African forces that invaded Angola (Habyarimana and Jeremy, 2009).

The stalemate forced the South African government to take part in negotiations that eventually led to the independence of Namibia and indeed played a major part in the collapse of the apartheid regime in 1994. Afro-Marxism held out a promise of self-sufficiency, equality, economic development, and prosperity. In practice, most examples of Afro Marxism failed to deliver much in any of these areas. Also, many leaders who had advocated the more moderate African socialism fell back on authoritarian forms of Soviet-style government when attempting to implement their policies. Economic development

primarily directed wealth into the hands of the new elite, which consisted of leading members of the ruling party. Western versions of socialism, especially Soviet-inspired systems, were often inapplicable to the specific social circumstances of less industrialized countries, whose labor base was often concentrated in agricultural or resource-extractive industries.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. The period 1969 to 1975 saw the emergence of African Marxist regimes, many of them military—which adopted Marxism-Leninism as the state ideology. **True or False**
2. The stalemate forced the South African government to take part in negotiations that eventually led to the independence of Namibia and indeed played a major part in the collapse of the apartheid regime in 1994, **True or False**
3. Economic development primarily directed wealth into the hands of the new elite, which consisted of leading members of the ruling party, **True or False**

2.4 Summary

I believe that this unit has exposed you to know how Afro-Marxism failed to draw on local governance practices to organize social and productive life and instead relied on the centralized statist models of Sovietism. You should know that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Soviet systems in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s, along with the passing of Maoism and China's embrace of capitalism by the late twentieth century, all dealt severe blows to Afro-Marxist regimes. As a post-graduate student, you have to note that the loss of aid and trade ties with the Soviet economies left Marxist governments in Africa desperate for aid from Western capitalist governments and international financial organizations like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. At the same time, China maintains aid and investment in many African countries and seeks to expand its influence on the continent. China's financial connection with the regime in Sudan has been highly criticized by human rights activists and

commentators. While China has attempted to develop its influence, it has not supported or encouraged the development of communist regimes or parties as the Soviet Union did. Governments also became more vulnerable to the pressures of Western governments and institutions to accept structural adjustment programs, including the privatization of government works and lands.

2.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Why African socialism successfully practice in Africa? Discuss
2.List and discuss the self-proclaimed "Marxist" African leaders who did not genuinely believe in African socialism ideology but simply used it an instrument of political domination and control of the people.

2.6 References/Further Reading

Ake, C. (1996) Democracy and Development in Africa. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

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Cabral, A. (1968). Revolution in Guinea. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972. Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove. Heinemann Educational Books.

Nkrumah, K. (1962). Towards Colonial Freedom: Africa in the Struggle against World Imperialism. London: Heinemann.

2.7 Possible Answers to the Self–Assessment

1. Many leaders who had advocated the more moderate African socialism fell back on authoritarian forms of Soviet-style government when attempting to implement their policies…

2. The African countries (and leaders) who adopted this ideology were Angola (Agostinho Neto and José Eduardo dos Santos); Benin (Mathieu Kérékou); Congo-Brazzaville (Marien Ngouabi, Joachim Yhombi-Opango, and Denis Sassou-Nguesso); Ethiopia (Mengistu Haile Mariam); Guinea-Bissau (Luís Cabral and João Bernardo Vieira); Madagascar (Didier Ratsiraka); Mozambique (Samora Machel and Joaquim Chissano); Namibia (Sam Nujoma); Somalia (Mohammed Siad Barre); and Zimbabwe (Robert Mugabe), 1980–1995….

UNIT 3 AFRICAN POLITICS, SOCIETY AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

This unit is designed to expose you to the nexus between African politics, society and political thought. This rationale is to teach you those African thoughts that focused on politics and the society and them influenced the African politics and society at a time.

3.2 Leaning Outcomes

At the end of this unit you are expected to:

- critically discuss and understand the rationale why those African thoughts that focused on politics and the society influenced the African politics and society.

3.3 Main Content

3.1.1 African Politics, Society and Political Thought

Throughout this entry, Africa refers to sub-Saharan Africa, the region south of the Saharan Desert that is bounded in the north and west by Mauritania; in the east by Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia; and in

the south by the Republic of South Africa. The contemporary political history of Africa is marked by imperialism, the expulsion of foreign powers and settler elites, and the post independence travails of its roughly fifty states. Imperialism Africa was among the last regions of the globe to be subject to imperial rule. In the so-called scramble for Africa, as described by Thomas Pakenham in his 1991 book of that title, the British and French seized major portions of the continent; Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain seized lesser holdings as well. During the imperial era, most of Africa's people were subject to the rule of bureaucrats in London, Lisbon, and Paris rather than being ruled by leaders they themselves had chosen. Two states in Africa had long been independent: Ethiopia from time immemorial and Liberia since 1847 (Habyarimana, and Jeremy (2009).

In 1910, the settlers of South Africa succeeded in securing independence from British bureaucrats. European immigrants settled in several territories: Kenya in the east, the Rhodesias in the center, and portions of southern Africa. Conflicts between the settler populations and colonial bureaucrats characterized the politics of the colonial era, as white settlers strove to control the colonial governments of these colonies and to dominate their native populations. While Africa's peoples fought against the seizure of their territories, they lacked the wealth, organization, and weaponry to prevail. The situation changed, however, during World War I (1914–1918) and World War II (1939–1945). The wars eroded the capacity and will of Europeans to occupy foreign lands, while economic development increased the capacity and desire of Africa's people to end European rule. During World War II, the allied powers maintained important bases in Africa, some poised to support campaigns in the Mediterranean and others to backstop armies fighting in Asia (Habyarimana, and Jeremy (2009). .

After World War II, the colonial powers promoted the development of African export industries, seeking thereby to earn funds to repay loans contracted with the United States to finance the war. The increase in exports led to the creation of a class of prosperous farmers and the rise of merchants and lawyers who provided services to the export industries.

As World War II gave way to the cold war, the United States began to stockpile precious metals and invested in expanding Africa's mines,

refining its ores, and transporting its precious metals overseas. That Africa's economic expansion took place at the time of Europe's decline prepared the field for its political liberation. The one was prospering while the other was not, and their relative power shifted accordingly.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Thomas Pakenham in his 1991 book argues that the French seized major portions of the continent; Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain seized lesser holdings as well, True or False
2. Cabral puts it that the contemporary political history of Africa is marked by imperialism, the expulsion of foreign powers and settler elites, and the post independence travails of its roughly fifty states. True or False
3. Conflicts between the settler populations and colonial bureaucrats characterized the politics of the colonial era, as white settlers strove to control the colonial governments of these colonies and to dominate their native populations., True or False

3.3.2 Nationalist Revolt and African Political Thought

Among the first Africans to rally against European rule were urban elites, whose aspirations were almost immediately checked by resident officials of the colonial powers. Workers who staffed the ports and railways that tied local producers to foreign markets soon joined them.

In the rural areas, peasants rallied to the struggle against colonial rule, some protesting intensified demands for labor and the use of coercion rather than wage payment to secure it. Among the primary targets of the rural population were the chiefs, who had been tasked by colonial rulers with taxing the profits of farmers and regulating the use of their lands.

Thus did the Kenya Africa Union support dock strikes in Mombasa and the intimidation of chiefs in the native reserves. Similarly, the Convention Peoples' Party backed strikes in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) port cities of Tema and Takoradi, while seeking to "destool" chiefs inland. Adding to the rise of nationalist protest was global inflation (Herbst, 2000).

Reconstruction in Europe and rearmament in the United States ran up against shortages of materials and higher prices in global markets. Throughout Africa and the developing world, consumers rallied to protest against these increases, tending to blame them on European monopolies—such as in Ghana, where the people focused their anger on the United Africa Company—or local trading communities—such as the Indian merchants in Kenya or Lebanese traders in Sierra Leone. The economic development of Africa thus transformed the social composition and political preferences of its people. It was in the post-war period, however, that independence was achieved by the vast majority of Africa's people. At first, political liberty arrived in a trickle—to the Sudan in 1956 and Ghana in 1957. Soon thereafter independence came as a flood, with twenty-nine French- and English-speaking states securing independence from 1960 to 1965, the

Portuguese territories in the mid-1970s, and the settler redoubts of southern Africa in the last decades of the twentieth century.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. The writing of Fanon and Cabral first and foremost influenced Africans in the urban areas, True or False
2. Cites of Tema and Takoradi were hub of African political thought and nationalist revolt, True or False
3. Kenya Africa Union support dock strikes in Mombasa and the intimidation of chiefs in the native reserves, True or False

3.4 Summary

At this stage of the unit, I believe that you have known how the nexus between African politics, society and African political thought. And I am convinced you now understand the rationale why those African thoughts that focused on politics and the society influenced the African politics and society.

3.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Explain the nexus between Nationalist Revolt and African Political Thought
2. In your opinion, did the African political thought penetrated the rural areas like the African urban cities?

3.6 References/Further Reading

Ake, C. (1996) Democracy and Development in Africa. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

Ake, C. (1996). Democracy and Development in Africa. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

Bates, R. (1981). Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Boele van H. P. (1999). Political Discourses in African Thought, 1860 to the Present. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Cabral, A. (1968). Revolution in Guinea. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972. Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove.

Chabal, P. (19999), and Jean-Pascal Daloz. Africa Works: The Political Instrumentalization of Disorder. Bloomington: International African Institute, in association with James Currey and Indiana University Press.

3.7 Possible Answers to the Self–Assessment

1. There is a nexus between African politics, society and African political thought. The rationale why those African thoughts that focused on politics and the society influenced the African politics and society is for awareness and conscience building…

2. In the rural areas, peasants rallied to the struggle against colonial rule, some protesting intensified demands for labor and the use of coercion rather than wage payment to secure it…

UNIT 4 AFRICAN POLITICAL IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

The thrust of this last unit of the module is designed mainly to get acquitted with the nature and character of African Political in the Post-independence Period. The emphasis is on the major thoughts that shaped post-independence African period.

4.2 Leaning Outcome

At the end of this last unit you are expected to;

- acquitted with the nature and character of African Political in the Post-independence Period. You are expected to understand the major African political thoughts that shaped post-independence African period.

4.3 Main Content

4.4.1 African Political in the Post-independence Period

The optimism of the nationalist period very quickly gave way to pessimism, as governments that had seized power turned authoritarian or were displaced by military regimes. Ghana's experience was emblematic of this early post independence trend. Ghana had been among the first African countries to attain self-governance (1954) and

then independence (1957). Both events were celebrated not only in Africa but throughout the globe. In 1960, a change in the constitution gave Kwame Nkrumah, as head of state, the power to dismiss civil servants, judges, and military officers without the authorization of parliament. In 1963, the president acquired the power to detain persons charged with political crimes and to try their cases in special courts. When, in 1964, Nkrumah proclaimed the ruling party the sole legal party in Ghana, he both followed and gave impetus to the trend toward single-party rule on the continent. When, in 1966, Ghana's military toppled the Nkrumah regime, Ghana joined Sudan, Benin, Togo, and the Central African Republic—all states in which the national military had overthrown a civilian regime (in 1958, 1962, 1963, and 1965 respectively).

Following the military's overthrow of Nkrumah's government in Ghana, armed forces drove civilian governments from power in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Burundi in 1966, and Congo in 1968. By the mid-1970s, the military held power in one-third of the nations of sub-Saharan Africa. By the mid-1970s, the politics of Africa had turned authoritarian. Only four states in Africa—Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius, and Senegal—retained multiparty systems. The politics of late-century Africa was marked by two major trends. The first was the return to multiparty politics; the second, an increase in political violence (Herbst, 2000).

These trends had common origins in global political and economic crises. Beginning with the rise in oil prices following the Yom Kippur war of 1973, the economies of the advanced industrial nations fell into deep recession.

As a result of declining growth in these nations, Africa's export earnings declined. Private income fell, and so too did government revenues. Some economies initially eluded economic decline: those that produced oil, of course, and others that produced crops, such as coffee, whose prices rose when frost and war drove two major exporters from global markets.

Those countries blessed with rich natural endowments—Zambia, with its copper deposits, or Zaire, with copper, cobalt, and gold—could borrow and thus postpone cuts in spending. In the mid-1980s, their

incomes also collapsed. In the early 1980s, the U.S. Federal Reserve had precipitously increased the rate of interest, sharpening the level of recession. The subsequent collapse of the Mexican peso led to an end of private lending to developing economies. When in 1986 Arab countries increased oil production in an effort to revive the growth of the industrial economies, Africa's oil exporters experienced a decline in earnings. With this last blow, virtually all the economies of the continent fell into recession (Idahosa, 2003) .

In the recession, Africa's citizens experienced increased poverty; so too did their governments. The result was a decline in the quality of public services. Most African governments secured their revenues from taxes on trade. Given the decline in exports, they could respond to the fall in revenues either by freezing salaries and cutting their payrolls or by running deficits, which lowered the real earnings of public servants by increasing prices. Children attended schools that lacked textbooks. Teachers were often absent, seeking to supplement their salaries with earnings from private trade. In clinics and hospitals, patients suffered from the lack of medicines and the absence of staff. Soldiers went unpaid. In response, the citizens of Africa began to turn against their governments. Parents and children protested the decline in the quality of schools, hospitals, and clinics.

Business owners targeted the erratic supply of water and electricity and the crumbling systems of transport and communications. Discontent with the decline in public services was heightened by the disparity in fortunes between those with power and those without. High-ranking officials could send their children to schools abroad or secure medical treatment in London, Washington, or Paris. The political elite could recruit and pay their own security services, purchase private generators, and maintain private means of transport. In general, those who ruled could escape the misery that befell others. As the economies of African states collapsed, citizens increasingly called for reform, particularly the restoration of multiparty politics and an increase in the power of the masses relative to the power of those who governed. Opposition to Africa's authoritarian regimes also mounted from abroad. Governments had fallen into debt, and foreign creditors increasingly demanded that the governments adopt reform policies aimed at reigniting economic growth on the continent.

Governments that were accountable to their people, the creditors argued, would be less likely to prey upon private assets, distort private markets, and favor public firms over private enterprises. Led by officials of the World Bank, economic technocrats began to join with local activists in demanding political reform. In the later decades of the twentieth century, Africa's political elites thus faced challenges from home and abroad. To a remarkable degree, military and single-party regimes proved able to hold onto power until a second global shock—the fall of communism—destabilized many African regimes. Western governments had tolerated repressive practices in Africa nations in exchange for support in the cold war, but after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western governments no longer urged their economic technocrats to release loans to repressive governments.

They were willing to let fall those African elites whose services they no longer required. In response to increased pressures from home and abroad, some governments reformed. Whereas more than 80 percent of Africa's governments had been no party (largely military) or single-party systems in the mid-1980s, by the mid-1990s, multiparty systems prevailed in nearly one half of African countries. Other governments, however, reacted by intensifying the level of repression (Idahosa, 2003). In Togo, the armies of President Gnassingbé Eyadéma fired on civilians who had gathered in the streets of Lomé, the national capital, to protest his rule. In Liberia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone, thugs hired by the governing parties harassed and harried those who sought to displace them.

In Burundi, the military, once displaced from power, slaughtered the civilians who had seized it, while in neighboring Rwanda; the government unleashed a program of mass killing, seeking to eradicate those who opposed it. Since the late twentieth century, military coups have become rare, and multiparty elections the norm in Africa. In addition, the continent has become more peaceful, with civil wars ending in Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, and, less certainly, Congo. In the mid-1990s, economic growth returned for the first time since the 1980s, apparently sparked by the increased demand for primary products resulting from economic growth in China and India, as well as the return of private investment, much by companies from South Africa. When measured in terms of peace and prosperity, however, the nations of Africa still occupy the

lower rungs of the global community (Meredith, 2005) . For the first time in several decades, there have been distinct signs of political and economic progress in the continent.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. As a result of declining growth in these nations, Africa's export earnings declined. Private income fell, and so too did government revenues. **True or False**
2. Some economies initially eluded economic decline: those that produced oil, of course, and others that produced crops, such as coffee, whose prices rose when frost and war drove two major exporters from global markets., **True or False**
3. The optimism of the nationalist period very quickly gave way to pessimism, as governments that had seized power turned authoritarian or were displaced by military regimes., **True or False**

4.4 Summary

Based on trajectory in this unit, I believe you have gotten yourself acquitted with the nature and character of African Political in the Post-independence period. By now you have enriched your intellectual faculty with the major African political thoughts that shaped post-independence African period.

4.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1.Discuss military and politics in post-colonial African states

2. Post-colonial African states are being governed without defined ideological inclination. Discuss

4.6 References/Further Reading

Ake, C. (1996) Democracy and Development in Africa. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

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Chabal, P. (19999), and Jean-Pascal Daloz. Africa Works: The Political Instrumentalization of Disorder. Bloomington: International African Institute, in association with James Currey and Indiana University Press.

4.7 Possible Answers to the Self–Assessment

1. The military's overthrow of Nkrumah's government in Ghana, armed forces drove civilian governments from power in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Burundi in 1966, and Congo in 1968. By the mid-1970s, the military held power in one-third of the nations of sub-Saharan Africa.

2. It is true that Post-colonial African states are being governed without defined ideological inclination. They were willing to let fall those African elites whose services they no longer required. In response to increased pressures from home and abroad, some governments reformed., Whereas more than 80 percent of Africa's governments had been no party (largely military) or single-party systems in the mid-1980s, by the mid-1990s, multiparty systems prevailed in nearly one half of African countries.

MODULE 5 POWER, RELIGION, ECONOMY AND THE STATE

INTRODUCTION

This module which is the last module exposes students tohow thought talks about power, religion, economy and the State. In this, I will teach you the political thought of Niccolo Machiavelli, **S**t Augustine Political Thought, Usman Dan Fodio Political Thought and Jeremy Bentham. The essence of this module is to get you acquitted with their thoughts about power, religion, economy and the State.

Unit 1 Niccolo Machiavelli: Morality and Religion
Unit 2 Augustine's Political Thought
Unit 3 Usman Dan Fodi's Political Thought
Unit4 Jeremy Bentham's Political Thought

UNIT 1 NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI AND THE NOTION OF POLITIC, POWER AND MORALITY

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

In this unit, it is imperative that you are expected to know how Niccolo Machiavelli, views morality and religion. This forms the background that you will understand his political thought.

1.2 Leaning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you are expected to;

- know how political thought of Niccolo Machiavelli, view morality and religion.

1.3 Main Content

1.3.1 Machiavelli: Morality and Religion

Machiavelli was the first thinker who freed political science or theory from the clutches of religion and morality. He was not interested in high moral or religious principles. His main concern was power and the practical or political interests of the state. It would be the primary concern of the prince in particular and government in general to protect the interests of state. He is also renowned for being exceptionally outspoken and candid in his views, writing with a clinical detachment or sometimes even cynicism about issues. In other words, Machiavelli was the first thinker who took an unequivocal stand in regard to the relationship between religion, morality and virtue on the one hand and politics on the other. He adopted a very clear stand about politics, religion and morality (Boele, 1999).

You have to know that he never denounced virtue, morality and religion. But what he emphasized is that the domain of morality and religion is quite different from that of politics and the prince must maintain it in his treat mental of politics. Machiavelli strongly advocated a dichotomy between morality and religion on the one hand and politics on the other. This dichotomy is not Machiavelli's own creation or discovery. Aristotle in his Politics adopted such form of dichotomy and Machiavelli scrupulously adopted Aristotelian method. Aristotle held the view that the qualities which deserve admiration in a prince may be different from those which deserve admiration in a private citizen. Even many other thinkers following Aristotle and Machiavelli said that "the virtues of the rulers are one thing; the virtues of the people are another." In this way Machiavelli established a separate set of virtues for the prince or the ruler.

In The Prince he emphasized that the prince must follow a virtue which is "creative creative in the sense that the virtue of the prince would be able to maintain the state. With the help of his virtues the prince would "fight off" his enemies. We, therefore, find that Machiavelli used the word "virtue" not in any conventional sense. The supreme objective of a prince is always to maintain the unity of his state and to bring it under good administration. People of the state always demand that they are not to be oppressed and exploited. It is the primary duty of the ruler to look after it and if any ruler fails to achieve it he is unfit for the post of ruler or to be called a prince (Mutiso, and Rohio,1975). At the same time Machiavelli declared that if a prince or ruler fails to achieve this objective, he cannot demand obligation from his subjects.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. Machiavelli was the first thinker who freed political science or theory from the clutches of religion and morality. True or False
2. He was not interested in high moral or religious principles, True or False
3. His main concern was power and the practical or political interests of the state., True or False

1.4 Summary

The assessment of Machiavelli's political thought can best be described in the words of Sabine. He says – "No man of his age saw so clearly the direction that political evolution was taking throughout Europe. No man knew better than he the archaism of the institutions that were being displaced or accepted more readily the part that naked force was playing in the process. Yet no one in that age appreciated more highly the inchoate sense of national unity on which this force was obscurely based.

No one was more clearly aware of the moral and political corruption that went with the decay of long-accustomed loyalties and pieties". This assessment of Sabine is perfectly correct. Machiavelli had profound knowledge about social and political conditions of Italy and that created

a lot of frustration and agony in his mind. He was a great patriot and he thought that Italy could be saved from this ignoble condition. He, for that reason, adopted an uncompromising stand. He, it is true, took an uncompromising attitude towards religion, morality and ethics. The dominating role of church and papacy was primarily responsible for the all-round deterioration of human society. He pinpointed it and suggested a way out. We may not agree with his suggestion, but the mere fact is that he had no other solution. "Indoctrinated as he was in the pagan revival in Italy he was unable both by training and temperament to grasp the constitutional and the moral ideals that European politics would carry over from the Middle Ages.

1.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Briefly discuss Machiavelli's disposition to morality and religion.

2. Discuss how The Prince views the state and morality

1.6 References/Further Reading

Bates, R. (1981). Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Boele van H. P. (1999). Political Discourses in African Thought, 1860 to the Present. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Cabral, A. (1968). Revolution in Guinea. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972. Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove.

Chabal, P. (19999), and Jean-Pascal Daloz. Africa Works: The Political Instrumentalization of Disorder. Bloomington: International African Institute, in association with James Currey and Indiana University Press.

1.7 Possible Answers to the Self–Assessment

1. He is of view that no one was more clearly aware of the moral and political corruption that went with the decay of long-accustomed loyalties and pieties". This assessment of Sabine is perfectly correct. Machiavelli had profound knowledge about social and political conditions of Italy and that created a lot of frustration and agony in his mind

2. The supreme objective of a prince is always to maintain the unity of his state and to bring it under good administration. People of the state always demand that they are not to be oppressed and exploited. It is the primary duty of the ruler to look after it and if any ruler fails to achieve it he is unfit for the post of ruler or to be called a prince.

UNIT 2 ST. AUGUSTINE'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction

St. Augustine (354-430 C.E.), originally named Aurelius Augustinus, was the Catholic bishop of Hippo in northern Africa. He was a skilled Roman-trained rhetorician, a prolific writer (who produced more than 110 works over a 30-year period), and by wide acclamation, the first Christian philosopher. Writing from a unique background and vantage point as a keen observer of society before the fall of the Roman Empire, Augustine's views on political and social philosophy constitute an important intellectual bridge between late antiquity and the emerging medieval world. Because of the scope and quantity of his work, many scholars consider him to have been the most influential Western philosopher.

Although Augustine certainly would not have thought of himself as a political or social philosopher *per se*, the record of his thoughts on such themes as the nature of human society, justice, the nature and role of the state, the relationship between church and state, just and unjust war, and peace all have played their part in the shaping of Western civilization. There is much in his work that anticipates major themes in the writings of moderns like Machiavelli, Luther, Calvin and, in particular, Hobbes.

2.2 Leaning Outcome

At the end of this unit it is expected of you to;

- understand Augustine's views about the State, religion and peace.

2.3 Main Content

2.3.1 Augustine's views about the state, religion and peace.

The Augustinian notion of justice includes what by his day was a well-established definition of justice of "giving every man his due." However, Augustine grounds his application of the definition in distinctively Christian philosophical commitments: "justice," says Augustine, "is love serving God only, and therefore ruling well all else." Accordingly, justice becomes the crucial distinction between ideal political states (none of which actually exist on earth) and non-ideal political states—the status of every political state on earth. For example, the Roman Empire could not be synonymous with the City of God precisely because it lacked true justice as defined above; and since, "where there is no justice there is no commonwealth," Rome could not truly be a commonwealth, that is, an ideal state. "Remove justice," Augustine asks rhetorically, "and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms?" No earthly state can claim to possess true justice, but only some relative justice by which one state is more just than another. Likewise, the legitimacy of any earthly political regime can be understood only in relative terms: The emperor and the pirate have equally legitimate domains if they are equally just (Battenhouse,1960).

Nevertheless, political states, imperfect as they are, serve a divine purpose. At the very least, they serve as vehicles for maintaining order and for preventing what Hobbes will later call the "war of all against all." In that respect, the state is a divine gift and an expression of divine mercy—especially if the state is righteously ruled. The state maintains order by keeping wicked men in check through the fear of punishment. Although God will eventually punish the sins of all those elected for damnation, He uses the state to levy more immediate

punishments against both the damned and the saved (or against the wicked and the righteous, the former dichotomy not necessarily synonymous with the latter). Rulers, as God's ministers, punish the guilty and always are justified in punishing sins "against nature," and circumstantially justified in punishing sins "against custom" or "against the laws." The latter two categories of sins change from time to time (Battenhouse,1960)

In this regard, the institution of the state marks a relative return to order from the chaos of the Fall. Rulers have the right to establish any law that does not conflict with the law of God. Citizens have the duty to obey their political leaders regardless of whether the leader is wicked or righteous. There is no right of civil disobedience. Citizens are always duty bound to obey God; and when the imperatives of obedience to God and obedience to civil authority conflict, citizens must choose to obey God and willingly accept the punishment of disobedience. Nevertheless, those empowered to levy punishment should take no delight in the task. For example, the prayer of the judge who condemns a man to death should be, as Augustine's urges, from my necessities (of imposing judgment to a person) deliver thou me.

Even though the ostensible reason for the state's divinely appointed existence is to assist and bless humankind, there is no just state, says Augustine, because men reject the thing that best could bring justice to an imperfect world, namely, the teachings of Christ. Augustine does not suggest that current rejection of Christ's teachings means that all hope for future amendment and reformation is lost. However, Augustine's whole tenor is that there is no reason to expect that the political jurisdictions of this world ever will be anything different than what they now are, if the past is any predictor of the future. Hence, Augustine concludes that Christ's servants, whether they are kings, or princes, or judges, or soldiers . . . are bidden, if need be, to endure the wickedness of an utterly corrupt state, and by that endurance to win for themselves a place of glory . . . in the Heavenly Commonwealth, whose law is the will of God (Mattox, 2006).

Augustine clearly holds that the establishment and success of the Roman Empire, along with its embracing of Christianity as its official religion, was part of the divine plan of the true God. Indeed, he holds that the influence of Christianity upon the empire could be only salutary

in its effect: Were our religion listened to as it deserves," says Augustine, "it would establish, consecrate, strengthen, and enlarge the commonwealth in a way beyond all that Romulus, Numa, Brutus, and all the other men of renown in Roman history achieved. Still, while Augustine doubtless holds that it is better for Rome to be Christian than not, he clearly recognizes that officially embracing Christianity does not automatically transform an earthly state into the City of God. Indeed, he regards Rome as "a kind of second Babylon" (Mattox, 2006)

Even if the Roman Emperor and the Roman Pontiff were one and the same—even if the structures of state and church merged so as to become institutionally the same—they would not thereby become the City of God, because citizenship in the City of God is determined at the individual and not the institutional level. In as much as the history of human society is largely the history of warfare, it seems quite natural for Augustine to explain war as being within God's unfolding plan for human history. As Augustine states, "It rests with the decision of God in his just judgment and mercy either to afflict or console mankind, so that some wars come to an end more speedily, others more slowly." Wars serve the function of putting mankind on notice, as it were, of the value of consistently righteous living. Although one might feel to call upon Augustine to defend the notion that God can, with propriety, use so terrible a vehicle as war to chasten the wicked, two points must be kept in mind: The first point is that, for Augustine, all of God's acts are just, by definition, even if the application of that definition to specific cases of the human experience eludes human reasoning.

This point invites a somewhat more philosophically intriguing question: Is it just to compel men to do good who, when left to their own devices, would prefer evil? If one were forced to act righteously contrary to his or her will, is it not the case that he or she would still lack the change of heart that is necessary to produce a repentant attitude—an attitude that results in genuine reformation? Perhaps, but Augustine is unwilling to concede that it is better, in the name of recognizing the agency of others, to let them continue to wallow in evil practices. Augustine argues, the aim towards which a good will compassionately devotes its efforts is to secure that a bad will be rightly directed.

As the Roman Empire collapses around him, Augustine confronted the question of what justifies warfare for a Christian. On the one hand, the wicked are not particularly concerned about just wars. On the other hand, the righteous vainly hope to avoid being affected by wars in this life, and at best they can hope for just wars rather than unjust ones. This is by no means a perfect solution; but then again, this is not a perfect world. If it were, all talk of just wars would be altogether nonsensical. Perfect solutions characterize only the heavenly City of God. Its pilgrim citizens sojourning on earth can do no better than try to cope with the present difficulties and imperfections of the earthly life. Thus, for Augustine, the just war is a coping mechanism for use by the righteous who aspire to citizenship in the City of God. In terms of the traditional notion of *jus ad bellum* (justice *of* war, that is, the circumstances in which wars can be justly fought), war is a coping mechanism for righteous sovereigns who would ensure that their violent international encounters are minimal, a reflection of the Divine Will to the greatest extent possible, and always justified.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. As the Roman Empire collapses around him, Augustine confronted the question of what justifies warfare for a Christian. True or False
2. Perfect solutions characterize only the heavenly City of God, True or False
3. for Augustine, the just war is a coping mechanism for use by the righteous who aspire to citizenship in the City of God., True or False

2.4 Summary

In sum, the state is an institution imposed upon fallen man for his temporal benefit, even if the majority of men will not ultimately benefit from it in light of their predestination to damnation. However, if one can successfully set aside Augustine's doctrine of predestination, one finds in his writings an enormously valuable descriptive account of the psychology of fallen man, which can take the reader a very great distance toward understanding social interactions among men and nations. Although the doctrine of predestination is indispensable for understanding Augustine's theology, its prominence does not preclude

one from reaping value from his appraisal of the state of man and his political and social relationships in the fallen "earthly city," to which all either belong or with which they have unavoidable contact.

2.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1.	Discus Augustine's views about the state, religion and peace
2.	Explain Augustinian notion of the state and religion

2.6 References/Further Reading

Augustine (1956). *City of God* [*De civitate Dei*]. Translated by Marcus Dods, *in The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.* Edited by Philip Schaff. First Series. Vol. II. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Augustine (1956). *On Christian Doctrine* [*De doctrina christiana*]. Translated by J. F. Shaw, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.* Edited by Philip Schaff. First Series. Vol. II. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Augustine (1964). *On Free Choice of the Will* [*De libero arbitrio* libri III]. Translated by Anna S. Benjamin and L. H. Hackstaff. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company,

Augustine (1956). *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* [*De Sermone Domini in Monte secundum Matthaeum*]. Translated by William Findlay, in The Nicene and Post- Nicene

2.7 Possible Answers to the Self–Assessment

1. Augustine's views about the state, religion and peace is that the Augustinian notion of justice includes what by his day was a well-established definition of justice of "giving every man his due." However, Augustine grounds his application of the definition in distinctively Christian philosophical commitments: "justice," says Augustine, "is love serving God only, and therefore ruling well all else…

2. Augustinian notion of the state and religion is that justice becomes the crucial distinction between ideal political states (none of which actually exist on earth) and non-ideal political states—the status of every political state on earth. For example, the Roman Empire could not be synonymous with the City of God precisely because it lacked true justice as defined above; and since, "where there is no justice there is no commonwealth," Rome could not truly be a commonwealth, that is, an ideal state.

UNIT 3 USMAN DAN FODI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction

This unit is basically designed to introduced you to Usman dan Fodio's views on religion and war as it relates to the State.

3.2 Leaning Outcome

At the end of this unit, you are expected to;

- know much about Usman dan Fodio's views on religion and war and how them relate to the State and politics.

3.3 Main Content

3.3.1 Usman dan Fodio's views on religion and war

Usman Dan Fodio was a Fulani scholar who launched a religious war (jihad) in northern Nigeria in 1804 that lasted for six years, the goal of which was to revive and purify Islam, and to encourage less devout Muslims to return to orthodox Islam. This influential religious revolution united the Hausa states under Islamic law, and in 1812, led to the establishment of an empire called the Sokoto Caliphate, composed

of emirates and sub-emirates, many of which were built on the sites of previous Hausa states. The Sokoto Caliphate became the most powerful economic and political system of the region during the 19th century and contributed profoundly to Islamizing Northern Nigeria.

Usman was the leading Fulani cleric in Gobir, the northernmost and most militant of the Hausa kingdoms. This was in a disturbed state in the 17th and 18th centuries. The growth of Tuareg power in Aïr on its northern frontiers had led the Gobir ruling class to seek compensation to the south and southwest, in the territories of Zamfara and Kebbi. There is the breakup of the Songhai empire had led to a power vacuum, which had been an encouragement to Fulani settlement. The kings of Gobir, like other Hausa monarchs, were at least nominally Muslims, and for a time Usman had been employed at their court. He then used the influence he had gained to develop a Muslim community of his own, some miles away from the capital, governed according to the strict principles of law preached by the Qādiriyyah. The kings of Gobir gradually came to the conclusion that they could not afford to tolerate this independent jurisdiction within their unsettled kingdom and began to take steps against the Muslim community. By 1804 the situation became such that Usman felt he had no alternative but to declare a jihad and to adopt the role of an independent Muslim ruler (amīr al-muʾminīn or, in Hausa, sarkin *musulmi*) (Martin,1976).

Both sides appealed for wider support. While the Hausa kings proved incapable of concerted action against the movement of Islamic rebellion, discontented Fulani and oppressed Hausa peasantry throughout Hausa land welcomed the opportunity to rid themselves of vexatious overlords and arbitrary taxation. Within three years almost all the Hausa kings had been replaced by Fulani emirs who acknowledged the supreme authority of Usman. The most serious fighting was in and around Gobir itself, where the maintenance of large Fulani forces in the field alienated the local peasantry. Fortresses had to be established for the systematic reduction of the country, and in the process the old kingdom of Gobir was destroyed and two major military encampments, Sokoto and Gwandu, eventually emerged as the twin capitals of a new Fulani empire.

The core of this empire was composed of the three large former kingdoms of Katsina, Kano, and Zaria (Zegzeg), in which, together with

the smaller former kingdom of Daura, a Fulani aristocracy had taken over the Hausa system of government and had brought it into line with the principles of Islam as stated by Usman. But the jihad had not stopped at their boundaries. Hausa clerics and adventurers joined with the Fulani in creating new Muslim emirates farther afield, among the pagan and hitherto largely stateless peoples of the Bauchi highlands, for example, and in the open grasslands of northern Cameroon, where there were large numbers of Fulani. There, the vast new emirate of Adamawa was created. In the south Fulani and Hausa clerics intervened in a succession dispute in the old pagan kingdom of Nupe and by 1856 had converted it into a new emirate ruled from Bida. There had also been considerable Fulani and Muslim penetration into northern Yorubaland, and, in about 1817, its governor rashly invoked Fulani and Hausa aid in his rebellion against the king of Oyo (Martin,1976).

The governor's new allies took over, the new emirate of Ilorin was created, and the disintegration of the Oyo empire was accelerated. The only serious check to Fulani conquest was in Bornu. By 1808 the forces of Fulani rebellion and invasion had reduced its ancient monarchy to impotence. Bornu and Kanem, however, had their own clerical class and tradition, and in the latter province arose a new leader, Muḥammad al-Kānemī, who asserted that the Fulani clerics did not have a unique right to interpret Muslim law for the government of humanity. Al-Kānemī was able to inspire a spirited national resistance, which by 1811 had turned the tide against the Fulani. By 1826 he was the effective master of a new Islamic state, though the traditional kings were maintained in office until 1846, when the puppet of the time rebelled against al-Kānemī's son and successor, ʿUmar, but was defeated and killed (Martin,1976)

`Usman dan Fodio was a scholar and theologian who had little inclination for the political and military direction of the movement he had inspired. His main role was to maintain the jihad's spiritual and moral force and direction, and he left a remarkable memorial of this in his innumerable writings. The practical commanders of the jihad were his brother, Abdullahi, and his son, Muhammad Bello, who were men of action as well as considerable scholars. These two eventually became joint viceroys of the new empire, Bello ruling its eastern half from Sokoto and Abdullahi the western half from a seat of government at Gwandu. They oversaw the installations of the provincial emirs,

received tribute from them, and endeavored to ensure that their governments and systems of taxation followed the principles of Muslim law and were not arbitrary and extortionate. Gradually the original scholarly and clerical impulse of the jihad weakened (though it was never wholly forgotten), and the emirs tended to become more representative of the military Fulani aristocracy, which tended to intermarry into the old Hausa ruling class. Standards of scholarship decayed and Hausa, rather than Arabic, became the language of administration. But for half a century or more after the jihad, some 200,000 square miles of territory enjoyed a unified system of relatively impartial law and administration, and this was much to the advantage of its agriculture, industry, and trade.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. By 1804 the situation became such that Usman felt he had no alternative but to declare a jihad and to adopt the role of an independent Muslim ruler. True or False
2. Within three years almost all the Hausa kings had been replaced by Fulani emirs who acknowledged the supreme authority of Usman, True or False
3. The Sokoto Caliphate became the most powerful economic and political system of the region during the 19th century, and contributed profoundly to Islamizing Northern Nigeria., True or False

3.4 Summary

I believe by now you have known much about Usman dan Fodio's views on religion and war and how them relate to the State and politics. Both Sokoto and Gwandu were in the extreme northwest of the empire, where the jihad had had its origins and where it continued longest, for Kebbi was never entirely subdued. It is possible also that it was in this direction, looking up the Niger toward the Kunta and to the considerable Fulani population of Macina, that it was thought that there might be further advances. Doubtless it was for these reasons that Abdullahi settled at Gwandu with responsibility for the western empire. The main

Fulani successes, however, were to the southeast in Bello's sphere, and it was Bello who in 1817 succeeded to his father's titles of caliph and *sarkin musulmi*.

When, about 1818, a jihad began in Macina, it was an independent movement led by a local Qādirī Fulani, Ahmadu ibn Hammadi. Ahmadu was certainly cognizant of Usman's jihad, and the circumstances in which his own movement was born were very similar to those that had occasioned the jihad in Hausaland. Ahmadu established an independent Muslim community that brought him into conflict with his local, pagan Fulani chief, who was unwise enough to call for help from his suzerain, the Bambara king of Segu. The result was a general rising under Ahmadu that established a theocratic Muslim Fulani state throughout Macina and extended to both the ancient Muslim centres of Jenne (Djenné) and Timbuktu (Martin,1976).

3.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Discus how Usman dan Fodio antecedents shaped the Sokoto Caliph

2. Discuss Discus how Usman dan Fodio's on religion and the state

3.6 References/Further Reading

Martin, B.G. (1976) *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth Century Africa.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

3.7 Possible Answers to the Self–Assessment

1. The Sokoto Caliphate became the most powerful economic and political system of the region during the 19th century and contributed profoundly to Islamizing Northern Nigeria. The core of this empire was composed of the three large former kingdoms of Katsina, Kano, and Zaria (Zegzeg), in which, together with the smaller former kingdom of Daura, a Fulani aristocracy had taken over the Hausa system of government and had brought it into line with the principles of Islam as stated by Usman. But the jihad had not stopped at their boundaries.

2. Usman dan Fodio's views on religion and war and how them relate to the State and politics. Both Sokoto and Gwandu were in the extreme northwest of the empire, where the jihad had had its origins and where it continued longest, for Kebbi was never entirely subdued. It is possible also that it was in this direction, looking up the Niger toward the Kunta and to the considerable Fulani population of Medina, that it was thought that there might be further advances.

UNIT 4 JEREMY BENTHAM'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction

Jeremy Bentham was born on 15 February 1748 and died on 6 June 1832 in London. He was the elder son of an attorney, Jeremiah Bentham (1712–92) and his first wife, Alicia Whitehorn (d. 1759), and brother to Samuel (1757–1831), a naval architect and diplomat. Bentham's later interest in educational reform was rooted in his unhappy experiences at Westminster School (1755–60) and Queen's College, Oxford (BA 1763, MA 1766). He described Westminster as "a wretched place for instruction" (1838–43, X, 30), while his three years at Queen's, which he entered at the age of twelve, were no more stimulating. He viewed the Oxbridge colleges as seats of privilege, prejudice and idleness. His Oxford experience left him with a deep distrust of oaths and sparked a general antipathy toward the Anglican establishment (2011, 35–40). In the early 1770s, he jotted down notes for a critical work on "Subscriptions [to articles of faith]" (UC v, 1–32; xcvi, 263–341), and returned to the same theme in the controversial tract *Swear Not at All* (1817).

Following Oxford Bentham attended the Court of King's Jeremy Bentham, jurist and political reformer, is the philosopher whose name is most closely associated with the foundational era of the modern utilitarian tradition. Earlier moralists had enunciated several of the core ideas and characteristic terminology of utilitarian philosophy, most notably John Gay, Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, Claude-Adrien

Helvétius and Cesare Beccaria, but it was Bentham who rendered the theory in its recognizably secular and systematic form and made it a critical tool of moral and legal philosophy and political and social improvement. In 1776, he first announced himself to the world as a proponent of utility as the guiding principle of conduct and law in *A Fragment on Government*. In *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (printed 1780, published 1789), as a preliminary to developing a theory of penal law he detailed the basic elements of classical utilitarian theory.

The penal code was to be the first in a collection of codes that would constitute the utilitarian *pannomion*, a complete body of law based on the utility principle, the development of which was to engage Bentham in a lifetime's work and was to include civil, procedural, and constitutional law. As a by-product, and in the interstices between the sub-codes of this vast legislative edifice, Bentham's writings ranged across ethics, ontology, logic, political economy, judicial administration, poor law reform, prison reform, punishment, policing, international law, education, religious beliefs and institutions, democratic theory, government, and administration. In all these areas he made major contributions that continue to feature in discussions of utilitarianism, notably its moral, legal, economic and political forms. Upon this rests Bentham's reputation as one of the great thinkers in modern philosophy. This forms the background for you to understand this unit.

4.2 Learning Outcome

At the of this unit, you are expected to;

- understand Jeremy Bentham's political thought of Diminishing Marginal Utility and how it relates to the principle of democracy.

4.3 Main Content

4.3.1 Diminishing Marginal Utility

Bentham occasionally suggested that pains and pleasures might be evaluated in relation to income or wealth, but he was aware of the limitations of this approach. While we might plausibly assume that, of two individuals with unequal fortunes, the richer of the two would be the happier, it does not follow that adding increments to that person's wealth will continue to make him happier in the same proportion. It is in the nature of the case that the amount of increase in happiness will not be as great as the increase in wealth; the addition of equal increments of money will eventually bring successively less of an increase in happiness. Modern economists know this analysis as the law of "diminishing marginal utility". One of its practical consequences for a utilitarian such as Bentham is that, where choices present themselves between giving an additional increment to a rich man or to a poor man, more happiness will result from giving it to the poorer of the two. Also, the analysis underscores why money cannot be a direct measure of utility, since the utility represented by a particular sum of money will vary depending on the relative wealth of the person who receives it.

Moreover, it is evident that diminishing marginal utility is also a feature of the additional increments of pleasure a person may experience beyond a certain point; equal increments of pleasure will not necessarily add to the stockpile of happiness if a person has reached a saturation point.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

You are expected to answer these questions in five minutes. Chose the appropriate option.

1. It is in the nature of the case that the amount of increase in happiness will not be as great as the increase in wealth True **or False**
2. Usman is the proponent of diminishing marginal utility, **True or False**
3. Bentham is a utilitarian, True **or False**

4.4 Summary

You have to know that the numerous commentaries on Bentham's philosophy have also appeared, from the early general accounts of Leslie Stephen (1900) and Elie Halévy (1901–4), to more recent introductions to his ideas (Harrison 1983; Dinwiddy 1989b; Crimmins 2004, 2013; Schofield 2009; Quinn 2022) and a wide range of revisionist disquisitions on discrete aspects of his thought. In addition to the themes and issues already addressed in this article, Hart (1982) and Postema (1989) have penned important studies of Bentham's jurisprudence, while topics that have engaged contemporary commentators include his critical views on race and slavery (Jones 2005; Rosen 2005), colonialism and empire (Pitts 2005; Cain 2011; Causer, Finn and Schofield 2022), marriage, divorce, adultery, desertion and wife-beating (Sokol 2011), and sexual liberty (Dabhoiwala 2010, 168–74; Schofield 2014). Schofield (2013) provides an overview of some new directions in Bentham studies, to which may be added essays on the global Bentham (Armitage 2011; Zhai and Palmer 2021), Bentham and the arts (Julius, Quinn and Schofield 2020), and policing (Jacques and Schofield 2021).

Many of these commentaries have been inspired by the publication of the authoritative volumes in *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham* that began appearing in 1968 to replace the poorly edited and incomplete Bowring edition (1838–43). The *Collected Works* continues to bring to light new and more complete versions of Bentham's writings and previously unpublished material. At the time of writing, 35 of the projected 80 volumes have been published. As new volumes appear the topics of discussion and debate will continue to increase, burnishing the reputation of a philosopher whose ideas remain relevant in a great number of areas of interest to moralists, psychologists, economists, historians, legal and political philosophers.

4.5 Self- Assessment Exercise

1. Explain Bentham's jurisprudence as it relate to the state and economy

2. What is the central thesis of Bentham's diminishing marginal utility

4.6 References/Further Reading

Edgeworth, F. Y., (1881), *Mathematical Psychics: An Essay on the Application of Mathematics to the Moral Sciences*, London: C. Kegan Paul & Co.

Hazlitt, W., (1826) "The New School of Reform: A Dialogue between a Rationalist and a Sentimentalist", in *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, 21 vols., P. P. Howe (ed.), London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1930–4, vol. 12, pp. 179–95.

*Jeremy Bentham's (*1952*) Economic Writings*, 3 volumes, W. Stark (ed.), London: George Allen & Unwin.

Jevons, W. S., (1871) *The Theory of Political Economy*, London: Macmillan and Co.

Mill, J. S., (1963), *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, J. M. Robson (general editor), Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

4.7 Possible Answers to the Self–Assessment

1. Explain Bentham's jurisprudence as it relates to the state and economy

Studies of Bentham's jurisprudence have engaged contemporary commentators include race and slavery, colonialism and empire, marriage, divorce, adultery, desertion and wife-beating and sexual liberty…

2. State exists for the happiness of the greatest number of people.