

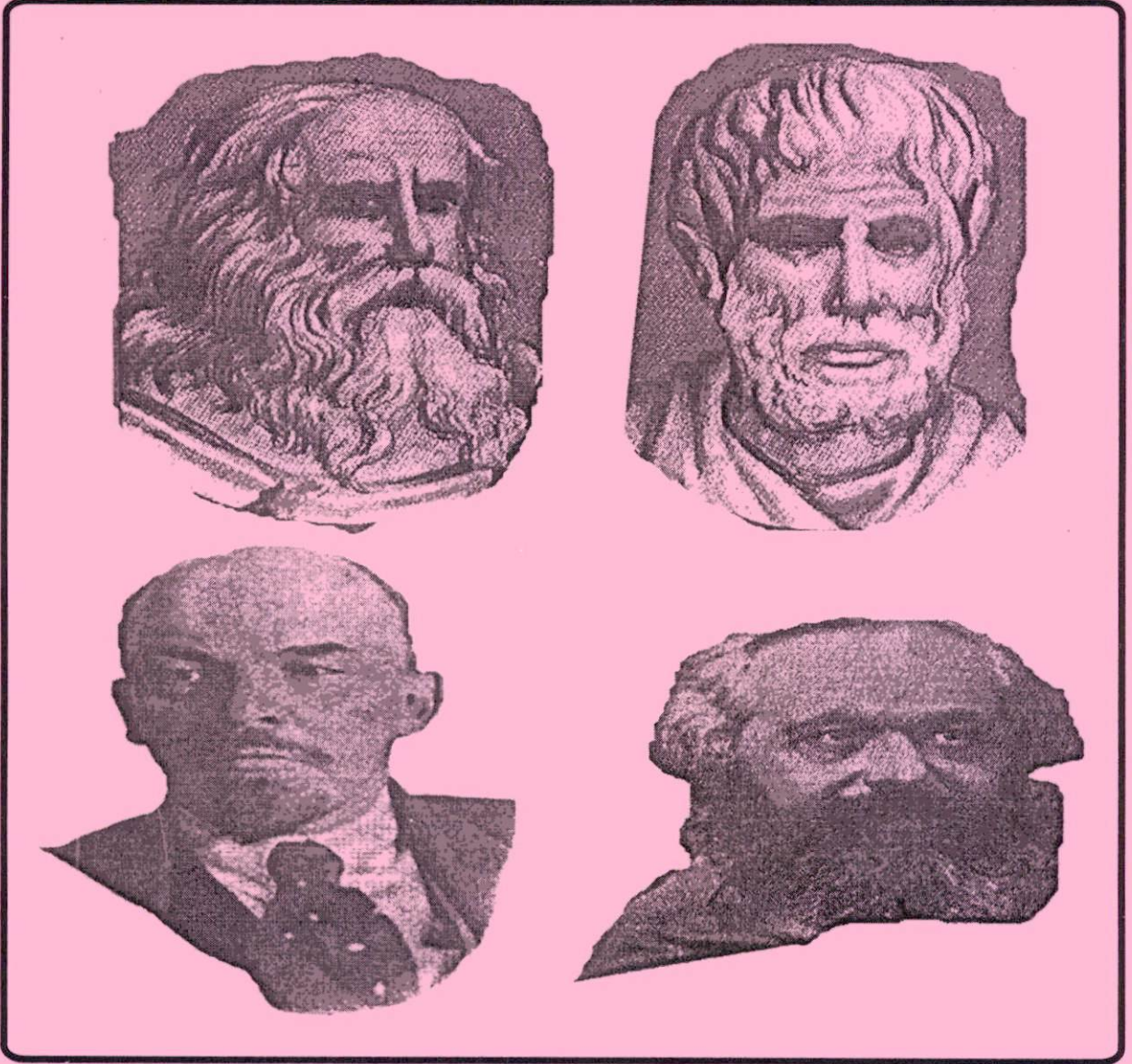
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ
ಮಾನಸಗಂಗೋತ್ರಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು - ೫೭೦ ೦೦೬



KARNATAKA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY
Manasagangothri, Mysore - 570 006

POLITICAL SCIENCE
MA [PREVIOUS]

2944



Course - I
Paper - Western Political Thought

Block - I

ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಇರುವ ಅವಕಾಶಗಳನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಮತ್ತು ಶಿಕ್ಷಣವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಜಾತಂತ್ರೀಕರಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆರಂಭಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ನೀತಿ 1986

The Open University system has been initiated in order to augment opportunities for higher education and as instrument of democratizing education.

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ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯವು ದೂರಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹುಮಾಧ್ಯಮಗಳನ್ನು ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.ವಿದ್ಯಾಕಾಂಕ್ಷಿಗಳನ್ನು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಪಾದನೆಗಾಗಿ ಕಲಿಕಾ ಕೇಂದ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯುವ ಬದಲು, ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನು ವಿದ್ಯೆ ಕಲಿಯುವವರ ಬಳಿ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯುವ ವಾಹಕವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಡಾ. ಕುಳಂದೈಸ್ವಾಮಿ

"The Open University system makes use of Multimedia in distance education system. it is vehicle which transports knowledge to the place of learners rather than transport to the place of learning.

Dr. Kulandai Swamy

ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ ಸಂದೇಶ

ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಮಗುವು ಹುಟ್ಟುತ್ತಲೇ - ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ. ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತಾ ನಾವು ಅದನ್ನು 'ಅಲ್ಪ ಮಾನವ'ನನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಅದನ್ನು 'ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ'ನನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುವುದೇ ವಿದ್ಯೆಯ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವಾಗಬೇಕು.

ಮನುಜ ಮತ, ವಿಶ್ವ ಪಥ, ಸರ್ವೋದಯ, ಸಮನ್ವಯ, ಪೂರ್ಣದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಈ ಪಂಚಮಂತ್ರ ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗಬೇಕಾಗಿದೆ. ಅಂದರೆ, ನಮಗೆ ಇನ್ನು ಬೇಕಾದುದು ಆ ಮತ ಈ ಮತ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಮನುಜ ಮತ. ಆ ಪಥ ಈ ಪಥ ಅಲ್ಲ; ವಿಶ್ವ ಪಥ. ಆ ಒಬ್ಬರ ಉದಯ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ; ಸರ್ವರ ಸರ್ವಸ್ವರದ ಉದಯ. ಪರಸ್ಪರ ವಿಮುಖವಾಗಿ ಸಿಡಿದು ಹೋಗುವುದಲ್ಲ; ಸಮನ್ವಯಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಸಂಕುಚಿತ ಮತದ ಆಂತಿಕ ದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಭೌತಿಕ ಪಾರಮಾರ್ಥಿಕ ಎಂಬ ಭಿನ್ನದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನು ಭಗವದ್ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಕಾಣುವ ಪೂರ್ಣದೃಷ್ಟಿ.

ಕುವೆಂಪು

Gospel of Universal Man

Every Child, at birth, is the universal man. But, as it grows, we turn it into "a petty man". It should be the function of education to turn it again into the enlightened "universal man".

The Religion of Humanity, the Universal Path, the Welfare of All, Reconciliation, the Integral Vision- these *five mantras* should become View of the Future. In other words, what we want henceforth is not this religion or that religion, but the Religion of Humanity ; not this path or that path, but the Universal Path ; not the well-being of this individual or that individual, but the Welfare of All ; not turning away and breaking off from one another, but reconciling and uniting in concord and harmony ; and, above all, not the partial view of a narrow creed, not the dual outlook of the material and the spiritual, but the Integral Vision of seeing all things with the eye of the Divine.

Kuvempu



Block

I

Introduction

Unit 1

Nature, Characteristics and Importance 1 to 13

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Plato-Life-Works-Theory of Justice -Ideal State 15 to 34

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(Plato's Views on) Education and Communism 35 to 48

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Course - I

Course Introduction

The discipline of Political Science includes Political Thought, Political Theory, Political Organisation, Political Process, Public Administration, International Relations etc. But the study of Political Thought is a very significant aspect in the study of Political Science. It helps us understand how man has thought over centuries about politics. As a matter of fact, it becomes the foundation for understanding the other aspects of Political Science. It provides the background for Political Science today. Political Thought equips the students and others with a sense of history and a perspective of Philosophy. It is for this reason that Political Science post graduate courses are offered with a study of Political Thought.

Western Political Thought is a vast body of Political Philosophy or a big volume of Political Ideas. It contains a vast variety of political subjects. It deals with various types of political orders or systems and institutions. It provides different varieties of Political Philosophies and thoughts advocated by illustrious Political Philosophers and a galaxy of Political Scientists. The study of these Philosophers, thought and their works will undoubtedly enlightens and enkindle the political knowledge of students and people about Political Ideas and problems. It also helps to broaden the mental horizon of the students.

This subject Western Political Thought is offered as Course I to the students of M.A (Previous). This has been structured into 7 Block written in 30 Units based on self instructional mode.

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Block - I Introduction

Block - I consists of 7 units from 1 to 7: Unit - 1 explains Nature, Characteristics and Importance. Unit - 2 explains Plato-Life-Works-Theory of Justice -Ideal State. Unit - 3 explains (Plato's Views on) Education and Communism Unit - 4 explains Aristotle-Life, Works, His views On State, On Family. Unit - 5 explains Aristotle on Citizenship -Slavery-Property-Best State-Theory of Revolution-Classification of Governments. Unit - 6 explains Greek Contributions to Political Thought. Unit - 7 explains Epicureans and Cynics.

Block 1

Unit - 1 Nature, Characteristics and Importance

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Concepts of W.P.T. : "Western" "Political Thought"
- 1.3 Origins and Importance of Political Life
- 1.4 Origins and Importance of Political Thought
- 1.5 Importance of Greek Political Life and Thought to
- 1.6 Nature and Characteristics of W.P.T
- 1.7 Importance of Western Political Thought
- 1.8 Let us Sum Up
- 1.9 Key Words
- 1.10 Some Useful Book
- 1.11 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

1.0 Objectives

- Objectives of this lesson Unit 1 is to introduce the Student to
- The basic concepts : "Western", "Political Thought".
- Origins & importance of Political Life
- Origins & Importance of Political thought
- Importance of Greek Political Life and thought to political thought in general and W.P.T in particular.
- Nature and Characteristics of W.P.T
- Importance of W.P.T in Understanding Political Science.

1.1 Introduction

I am happy you have become a student of Political Science. I am sure, soon you will also be very happy as you start understanding it. Political Science is a systematic study of the exciting world of Politics. Politics is an exciting world because it deals with high values like Justice, Law, Order, Liberty, Equality and Institutions like State, Government, kings, Presidents, Prime ministers, Legislators, Judges, Administrators and their high powers and duties as well as the rights and duties of the citizen and all the exciting processes of and games in acquiring and using position and power. Political thought or political theory is all about ideas as to how these are and should be organized. Political Science today is a area including political thought/ theory, political organization, Political process, Public Administration and International relations. But, the study of political thought is very basic and first. It helps us to understand how man has thought over centuries about politics. It become the foundation for understanding the other aspects of political science.

Therefore, in this Unit No 1 we attempt to understand a) origins and importance of political life and thought; b) Importance and role of Greek Political thought; c) Nature, characteristics importance and scope of Western Political thought in general as well as in this paper in particular.

1.2 Concepts : 'Western', 'Political', 'Thought'

The terms, western, and political thought' require some explanation here. The term 'Western' refers mainly to the European in particular and the Euro-American geographical and more so philosophical world in general. Any way, in political thought it is Europe which has contributed more than America or any other continent. That is why we begin, our discussion on political science with Western Political thought. The term 'Political, individually, refers here to all activities, processes organizations connected with all authoritative and mainly sovereign or supreme decision - making power i.e, State in any human society. This term Political, is derived from, the word Politics which mean the affairs of the polity or polis i.e. state.

The phrase 'Political thought' together is used very broadly to refer to all political ideas, theories and philosophies whether they are stray ideas, well developed philosophies or scientifically or very systematically arrived at concepts and theories. The phrase 'Political thought' is the same as 'Political Philosophy'. But 'Political Theory', is slightly different. It can be both philosophical (merely logically argued) or scientific (i.e. not only logically argued but also facts based) political thought came first, nearly 2500 years ago and political Science only recently nearly 150 years ago. Today, the term 'Political Science' is used very broadly to refer to the whole subject or discipline or study connected with politics. It includes and begins with political thought and moves on to the 'Political Science' proper or scientifically developed political theories later. But here in this paper our concern is with 'Political Thought'. How political thought began? And what is its importance? are very interesting questions. But as thought is only a reflection of life or as thought emerges from life, it is needed here to understand first the origin and importance of political life.

1.3 Origin and Importance of Political Life.

In the jungle, where life began, the primitive man had a hard life. He was a hunter. He was a nomad. He had no family or village. He lived and moved in hords or bands or big groups like other animals. This group life required solidarity i.e., a feeling of oneness of the group. This is at the base of today's 'groupism' 'Party Loyalty', nationalism, regionalism or internationalism

Solidarity has to be maintained. An elder or leader does this. Solidarity provides stability. But stability leads to stagnation. Life requires change. Change comes from initiative. Initiative comes from leadership. Therefore, the role of the leader becomes important. The jungle life is hard. There is less leisure. Therefore there is less thought. But without thought life would not progress. Therefore, elders or leaders are allowed more leisure. They provide the thought. Life moves on to become better, from animal to human, from human to social and social to political. With the birth of leadership therefore we can say there is the birth of politics.

In early communities which were simple leaders were their elders. Even today we have village Yajman (Leader). Later magicians emerged as leaders. As man gradually moved out of forests into river, valleys, and built villages and temples for settled life priests (like purohita or Rajarishi in India) emerged as leaders and rulers. Thus the 'temple - state' was the first 'State' in the political sense. It emerged in all river - valley civilizations such as Nile, Euphrates, Indus, Ganjus and so on. Political life and structure emerged.

River - valley, produced wealth. Wealth lead to greed and war. Priests and kings become separated. War lead to full-time Military leaders or Generals or Kings with Pattada Kathi, (annointed sword) Pattada Kudure (annointed Horse) etc., In other words Raja (King) and Rajya (State or kingdom) emerged. Occasionally, here and there, in small localities, the "Gana" people tried to rule themselves in Ganarajya or Republics. But neighboring Kings were

always afraid of them and therefore attacked and conquered them. Kings and Kingdoms were the main political forms that prevailed. Kings built armies, and forts and fought wars after wars. More wars made the state more and more militaristic and even brutal. Wars lead the more successful king to become an Emperor. The Empire - State, vast in size and wealth emerged in Babylon, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia, Rome. More wealth and more order lead to the building up of civilizations in these places with emphasis on architecture, arts, arithmetic, calender, wheels and ships - instruments of material happiness and civilization.

Thus, the importance of political life is in the order it provides for good life. Its emphasis on law, order and Justice distinguishes it from the jungle law of anarchy or Matsyanyaya (the law of big fish swallowing the small fish). It paves way for civilizations. Therefore man has always remained political and continues to do so. Anarchists (like Bakunin and Marx) and anarchism (the idea of "state less Society" have come and gone but not state and politics.

1.4 Origin and Importance of Political Thought.

In these river-valley-States the main and perhaps, the dominant political thought has emerged was about the rights and duties of Kings. In India these were known as "Rajaniti", "Raja Dharma", "Dandaniti" "The principles of State Power" and even as "Arthashastra". ("The Science of Political economy). The other types of political thought particularly about Democracy was very rare in existence and not noticeably developed. It was in Greece, in Southern Europe, where they had an usually rich variety, of political life forms and institutions beyond monarchy, such as, Aristocracy, Tyranny, Oligarchy and above all democracy that a richer and almost a very expansive and inclusive political thought emerged. This you will come to realise and appreciate as you will come to know about Greek political philosophy in the Units to follow. It is even said that between themselves Plato and Aristotle - the two earliest and great Greek

political philosophers covered up everything in political thought leaving very little to others. In a while you will here more about them. But now the importance of political thought needs our attention.

Political thought forms the foundation of political Science. It provides the background for Political Science of today. If Political Scientist is mainly concerned with Scientifically analysing the Political Processes and institutions of today, Political thought equips him with a sense of History and a perspective of philosophy. This makes to better and richer scientific understanding of the political reality as it was, as it is and as it ought to be. It is for this reason that Political Science Post-graduate Courses are begun with a Study of Political thought.

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Explain the Concepts of “Western” and “Political Thought”

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2) Trace the origin and growth of Man’s Political Life

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3) Briefly outline the origin and importance of Political Thought.
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1.5 Important of Greek Political Life and Thought to Western Political Thought

The contribution of Greeks to Western art, architecture, literature, Science and Philosophy in short to the whole of Western civilization is very primary and great. That is why, Greek and (its neighbor and later) Latin Languages are to the Western world i.e. the European World, what the Sanskrit and Prakrit are to the India of today. Indeed, Greece is considered as the cradle of European civilization. As European civilization is at the heart of the world's 'modern man's' or present day civilization Greek becomes the cradle of modern world's civilization itself, to a considerable if not complete extent. The Ionian's (early Greeks) physics, Homer's Epics, Herodotus's History, Hippodamus's architecture, Socratic Wisdom, Plato's Philosophy and literature, Aristotle's politics, Pythagorean

mathematics, Euclidean Geometry and the richness of stoic philosophy and personality make the contributions of Greeks unquestioned foundations of all modern civilization.

Regarding political thought and life, the West owes maximum to Greece. The Greek Political Life was very rich in its variety and vitality as early as in 5th and 4th Centuries B.C. Apart from monarchy they had Aristocracy, Oligarchy, tyranny and above all democracy. The Athenian democracy made the ancient Greek city of Athens the fountain of a rich Political debate and philosophy. It is here that great political philosophers like, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and statesmen like Solon and Pericles lived, wrote and spoke. As we will come to discuss about all their works and contributions later, the richness, of Greek Political philosophy would endear itself to you. But, here it suffices to say that the contemporary political institutions and ideologies of the west be it democracy, or communism, or fascism or philosophical discourse on Justice or Scientific analysis of politics are all rooted in the works of ancient Hellenic Greeks. This is partially true of all democratic systems and debates, which are so vital and world wide today.

1.6 Nature and characteristics of Western Political Thought.

Western Political Thought is a vast body of Political Philosophy or a big volume of History of Political ideas. Time - wise it spans political ideas of 2 1/2 milleniums or more than 2500 years. Spatially it covers the continent of Europe.

In content it covers a vast variety of political subjects. It deals with various types of political orders or systems and institutions. It examines the pre-political orderless "State of Nature" in either Rousseau's blissful form or Hobbes' wolfish description. Discussion on these moves on through the city State system, Empire - State, theocratic - State, Feudal - State, to the present day Nation - State and beyond to International Relations and order.

It is both descriptive and prescriptive in content. Its descriptive part helps us to understand political institutions spread over history and their merits & demerits and its prescriptive part attempts to provide solution to the political defects of its times. It involves the quest for an ideal or good political order. It is here that we have a rich menu of political ideas and ideologies, from plato's ideal philosopher - King's rule, Aristotle's middle - class rule, roman imperialist state, Augustine's Divine - state, Machiavelli's Nation - state and then the ideologies of Liberalism, Démocracy, Socialism and Communism in all their varieties and colours.

Above all, in esence the Western Political Thought appears as an adventurous and industrious quest for a good political order which is rational, ethical and legal. Those among these thinkers who looked at it mainly from the interests of the community or society advocated a dictatorial order right from Plato to Marx. But those who looked at it from the individual's angle advocated a liberal democratic approach of freedom and democracy. Today, the fact that the western and indeed the world's 'modern' quest for good political order has moved towards representative democratic political order as the solution can be said as perhaps the greatest tribute to and success of the western political thought.

The Characteristics of the western political thought can be summarised in this background as follows:

1. Historically developed
2. Rich in variety
3. Rationalism based
4. Seeking Ethico - legal Political order.
5. Committed to Secular Political Order
6. Committed to Democratic Political Order
7. Leaning towards International or Cosmopolitan Political Order.

Although apart from these, other approaches and ideas are there in Western political thought they are not as common and significant as the above.

1.7 Importance of Western Political Thought

Western Political Thought and its study is important for modern political man, political life and political Science for the following reasons:

1. Its antiquity and Variety of political experiences, experiments ideas and values.
2. Its richness in terms of its quest for rationality, virtues, secularism, freedom and democracy unlike political thought of other areas and people which were limited and burdened by excessively religious or other worldly and almost solely by monarchic mould.
3. Its foundational value for contemporary political science and political life.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Briefly outline the importance of Greek Political life and thought to Western Political Thought.

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2) Bring out the nature and characters of western political thought .

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3) Outline the importance of Western Political thought.

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1.8 Let us Sum Up.

In This unit No.1. We have made an attempt to introduce ourselves first to the concepts “Western” and “political Thought”, origins and importance of Political life and Political thought and relevance of Greek Political life and thought to Western Political thought. Secondly we have tried to understand the Nature, Characteristics and Importance of Western Political thought. Third and finally we have made an attempt to take a bird’s eye view of the scope of the syllabus of this paper I Western Political thought of your M.A Political Science Course. With this introduction now you can easily move on to discuss further Units.

1.9 Key Words

Ancient Period	-	Period from mainly the 10 th century B.C.
Medieval Period	-	Period from 5 th Century A.D. to roughly 14 th / 15 th Century A.D.
Modern Period	-	Period from 15 th Century A.D onwards
Polis	-	Greek City State
Secular	-	This worldly or non - religious.

1.10 Some Useful Books:

Sabine G.H.	:	A History of Political Theory.
Dunning W.A.	:	A History of Political Thought 3 volumes
Gettel	:	History of Political Thought
Bowle Jhon	:	Western Political Thought
Bluhm W.T.	:	Theories of the Political System.
Coker F.W.	:	Recent Political Theories.

1.11 Answers to check your Progress Exercises

Check your Progress I

- 1) See section 1.2
- 2) See section 1.3
- 3) See section 1.4

Check Your Progress II

- 1) See section 1.5
- 2) See section 1.6
- 3) See section 1.7

NOTES

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NOTES

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Unit - 2 Plato-Life-Works-Theory of Justice- Ideal State

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Plato's Life
- 2.3 Plato's Works
- 2.4 Plato's Theory of Justice
- 2.5 Plato's Theory of Ideal State
 - 2.5.1 Its background
 - 2.5.2 Its Literature
 - 2.5.3 Its Implications
- 2.6 Let us sum-up
- 2.7 Key words
- 2.8 Some useful books
- 2.9 Answers to check your progress

2.0 Objectives

The main objective of this and the next unit on Plato is to introduce you to one of the tallest of philosophers and to some of his finest and eternal political ideas. The specific objectives of this unit No.2 are as follows :-

- Understanding Plato's Life
- Introducing ourselves to his work i.e., Books.
- Examining his theory of Justice.
- Knowing his theory of the Ideal State.

2.1 Introduction

What is Gangotri to River Ganga, Plato is the same to Western Philosophy in general and political philosophy in particular. He is called the "philosopher's philosopher", "The symbol of philosophy", and in political philosophy he is called the "First political philosopher". This 5th Century B.C Political Philosopher is known for the earliest and some of the finest books on politics viz., Republic, Statesman and Laws. The best among these is his Republic. It is here that we find, both his 'idea' and the 'ideal' of politics.

Plato is renowned for his 'theory of justice', 'ideal state', 'philosopher-king', 'theory of education' to produce a philosopher-king and even 'communism of wives and property' for his rulers to make them selfless. These have influenced man's political philosophy through history as nothing else. He has examined all other forms of government but prefers the 'philosopher's rule', i.e., 'the rule of wisdom' instead of even 'rule by people' or 'rule of law'. This makes him not only the tallest but also one of the most controversial of political philosophers. Some call him idealist 'romantic' or 'utopian' thinker. Others call him a scientific or a rational thinker. But everyone agrees that he was the first profound philosopher to raise such fundamental issues in politics as ideal state and justice, and to leave eternally influential ideas.

Our plan to discuss Plato's political philosophy is as follows. First we will understand in this unit Plato's Life and works. Then we will examine two of his most important theories viz., theory of justice and his theory of ideal state. In the next unit we learn about his theories of education and communism and conclude about him.

2.2 Plato's Life (487-347 B.C)

Plato's political thought is a reflection of his life background and experience, as is normal with anybody else. He was born in 427 B.C. He had an aristocratic background. He came from a distinguished Athenian clan which included the king Codrus, the famous Athenian law giver Solon, and the leader of the Thirty Tyrants Critias. Plato's mother was a niece of Critias. This made him afraid of democracy once this oligarchic revolution lead by Critias failed and he even spent a few years away from Athens touring Egypt, Italy and Sicily and knowing other political systems. While in Athens since his father died early he was brought up in a household frequented by important political figures.

Another important influence on Plato was that of Socrates. As a student of Socrates he was very much attracted by the Socratic love of philosophy and ethical approach. When the Athenian democracy sentenced Socrates to death for his ideas against democracy and made him die by drinking a cup of poison Plato's hatred of the Athenian democracy deepened. The defeat of Athens in the Pelloponasian war also contributed to his hatred of Athenian democracy as a weak government. The failure of the oligarchic revolution lead by his uncle Critias frustrated him about politics itself. In this background he developed a dual attitude towards politics. His political background and Socratic education impelled him to participate in politics. But his experiences made him to withdraw from it. His foreign tour and knowledge of the weakness of other constitutions completed his hatred of all existing forms of government and to the development of his search for an ideal state where a

philosopher king and well trained guardians rule. This was the main idea of his famous book "The Republic".

After returning from the tour Plato founded in Athens his famous school to train politicians, as though to make them philosophic statesmen. Founded in 387, it was called "Academy" as it was near the shrine of a local hero by name Academus. It is from this, the present name of "Academy" for all institutions of higher learning has developed. The curriculum at the Academy covered all the then known sciences such as astronomy, logic, dialectics, philosophy and mathematics. Plato's Academy which was under the influence of the Pythagorean school of mathematics took a rational or logical approach of almost mathematical precision to the study of politics, the idea of good, the ideal state and the philosopher-king. Whether it produced a philosopher-king or not the Academy did successfully produce another great political thinker, Aristotle.

The aim of producing a philosopher king was dearer to Plato till the end. So, when he got an opportunity, even in his old age, he made a direct and serious effort to produce a philosopher king when he was asked to train the prince of Syracuse the Dionysius II between 367 and 361 B.C. But, this effort was also in vain. The prince remained a prince and did not become a philosopher. Plato returned as a disappointed man. The realism in Plato's later works the Statesman and the Laws is attributed to this frustration.

Plato died in 347 B.C. at the age of 81 at a wedding reception in a disciple's residence after a full life. We don't know whether he was married and left any descendents or not, but he left a great disciple Aristotle and an enormous number of his own works i.e., books of everlasting content and interest in dialogue form.

2.3 Plato's Works

Plato was giant of a scholar and a prolific writer. He produced a number of works. Chronologically his works are classified into four groups. First, his early writings such as Apology, Crito, Euthophro

and Gorgias are there. Secondly, we have a group of dialogues written by a comparatively matured Plato. These are Meno, Protagoras, Symposium, Phaedo, The Republic and Phaedrus. Thirdly, we have a group of dialogues where the Socratic influence is quite dominant i.e., Parmenides, Theatetes, Sophists and Statesman. Fourthly, we find, the last group of works, written by Plato in his ripe old age, namely, Politebus, Timaeus and the Laws.

Plato's political philosophy runs through all his works. But it is found mainly in his three books, namely, The Republic, The Statesman and The Laws. Of these, The Republic is Plato's most important and renowned work. As Dunning puts it, "The Republic is in every respect Plato's greatest work. Both the substance of his thought and the form in which it is expressed have fascinated all succeeding generations and have stimulated endless imitation". About its content there are many views. Dunning considers it as primarily an exercise in dialectic. Rousseau considered it as "not a work upon politics, but the finest treatise on education that ever was written". Some have considered it as an "economic treatise"- a polemic against the capitalism of his days and an exposition of his brand of communism. Again, as The Republic, is also alternatively titled as On Justice, some consider it as a book on the science of jurisprudence. But The Republic is a book which defies classification. It would not fall neatly under any of your modern disciplines. Its subject matter is very inclusive. It covers politics, ethics, economics, psychology, art, education, and philosophy. Reasons for this are many. First, it was a wholesome, philosophical search for good life good man and good state as a whole. Second, its rambling dialogue form permitted relevant entry into all disciplines and areas of knowledge. Third, neither life nor knowledge those days in the city states were classified and subdivided as they are now.

Thus, we find The Republic as Universalistic in scope. It is full of rich and brilliant political ideas for which Plato is renowned

such as Justice, Philosopher-king, ideal state, communism of property and family, eugenics and education. In addition the beauty of its dialogue form, the vigour of his logic, the daring romance of his ideas and the enchanting poetic flavour it has, have made The Republic a book of Universal and eternal charm for one and all. But for political scientists it is a primer of both the ideas and ideals of politics.

His other two political works, namely, The Statesman and The Laws are comparatively known for their realistic than idealistic approach to politics, such as the better place he gives here to democracy, the greater importance he gives to rule of law and the way though reluctantly he posits the second best state. They are the products of his ripe old age and the frustrations in his attempts to produce philosopher kings. This so journey towards reality begins in his Statesman and is completed in his Laws. These dialogues however, are quite prosaic and less known and less attractive of Plato's works on politics.

The beauty and the basis of Plato's ideas in these works are his philosophy and method. His philosophy is mainly metaphysical which believes that the truth exists not in the physical or concrete world but in the above physical or abstract world of ideas. His methods contain, deductive logic, mathematical approach and the dialogue form. The deductive logic is a quest for the general or the perfect idea and an attempt to measure the specific and the ordinary in its light. The mathematical approach is a quest for a precise and as graphic a knowledge as possible. The dialogue method is rich in liveliness, inclusiveness and in its ability to arouse and sustain interest in discussion. These methods make Plato's discussion of such serious issues as justice and ideal state never dull and dry nor poor and inadequate.

2.4 Plato's Theory of Justice.

Its importance

Justice is the most important concept of politics. We can say

it is the goal and soul of politics. It is the goal because politics aims at it always, however imperfectly. It is the soul of politics because without justice, at least in nominal quantity or form, politics becomes crime, as both use force or Danda to control humans. The character or at least the garb of justice is the separating line between the nakedity of crime and the civilization of politics. Therefore, justice has been the most seminal concept and concern of political philosophy.

The strength of the political philosophy of Plato, "the first political philosopher", is in his ability to put his finger on this political pie two thousand five hundred years ago, at the very birth of political philosophy in the West, in the 5th century B.C. in his magnum opus, The Republic. Since then, the concept of 'Justice' has been discussed enormously, endlessly and has gained many interpretations, explanations and theories. Recently, the famous Harward university professor, John Rowls' book A Theory of Justice (1971) has put the concept of 'Justice' once again in the central stage of the debates in political philosophy and enriched its understanding. Yet even today all discussions of justice begins from Plato and his explanation of it as the Supreme Virtue of 'Harmony', both inside man and in Society, retains its glory and centrality.

The importance which Plato gave to the discussion of justice is evidenced by two things. First is the fact that his book, The Republic, is alternatively titled as On Justice. Second, the book begins with the question what is 'Justice'? Or 'Just Life' for the individual and the State or Organised Society and the purpose of the whole philosophical enterprise in it, is to search for an ideal answer to it.

Its Foundation

Plato's theory of justice like everything else in The Republic is based upon his

- (1) Theory of knowledge,
- (2) Theory of virtues and
- (3) The Socratic concept of "Virtue is knowledge", which is the foundation of all of Plato's thought.

His theory of knowledge has the following main points. First, knowledge is important. Second, it comes from reasoning. Third, as the truth exists in the abstract form, it is not in the 'real thing' but in the 'idea of the thing' i.e, it is in a metaphysical (meta = above) condition or in the 'ideal' rather than the physical or 'real' form. Fourth, knowing the truth requires metaphysical logic i.e., reasoning about the abstract truth in a logical way. Fifth, the logical reasoning always moves in the 'dialectic way' i.e., first a thesis (one systematic explanation) develops, it is next countered by an anti-thesis or an opposite view or position and then it ends in a synthesis or a compromised or reconciled stand of the two positions (thesis and anti-thesis). As this dialectical reasoning is helped move by the dialogue method (free discussion method), this becomes his patented method in his books. Plato's ideas of the philosopher-king, the ideal-state and justice are all based on this theory of knowledge.

The Second basis of his theory of justice is his theory of 'Virtues'. According to Plato 'Virtue' or 'Good' has four components or four forms. These are,

- 1) Wisdom
- 2) Courage
- 3) Temperance, and
- 4) Justice.

The first of these three virtues correspond to the three respective psychological or inner faculties of man viz.,

- a) Reason,
- b) Spirit and
- c) Appetite.

The fourth virtue Justice is the master virtue that rules and harmonises the other virtues or components of human nature.

Third, his theory of justice like other ideas of Plato are also based upon Plato's faith in the Socratic concept of "Virtue is knowledge". The meaning of this concept is that virtue (good) is not

a matter of opinion but a matter that exists objectively but abstractly and that it can be known or learnt by reasoning like any other knowledge. Plato agrees that there are many (types of) knowledge in Society but asserts that the knowledge of the Good is the highest knowledge. This is what he means by the Statement "Virtue is knowledge". i.e., knowledge of virtue is the highest knowledge. As already said above, though there are many virtues justice is the highest virtue as it rules or harmonise other virtues. Further, as the knowledge of virtues, above all of justice is important but abstract, only the philosopher can know this and therefore only he is fit to rule.

Its meaning

Plato does not anywhere define justice directly and clearly. But, the meaning emerges clearly at the end of the dialogue on it. He begins his discussion with the question what is Justice at the individual level. But moves on faster to discuss Justice at the level of State and Society, on the Logic, that the individual is small, the state is big and therefore, the Justice written in "Big letters of the Politics" can be seen and understood easily.

In the book The Republic, in the dialogue on Justice, Socrates who is put in the centre raises the question. His students mainly give three answers. Cephalus and polymarchus define justice as "speaking truth and repaying debts". Secondly, Thrasymarchus, a Sophist, argues that justice is merely "the interest of the stronger". Thirdly, Gloucon argues that Justice is at best "to do injustice and escape Punishment and at worst to suffer injustice meekly". But all these three views are rejected as too simple, not comprehensive and beating around the bush as their search is confined to the world outside the human being.

According to Plato, justice is not something that is external but also internal to the individual. It is as much a characteristic of the Soul as of the state. Justice in one word to Plato is 'harmony'. It harmonise various faculties, virtues, and responsibilities both within

the individual and the state. Inside the individual there is justice when each of his various faculties such as reason, spirit and appetite and virtues like wisdom, courage and temperance perform its functions at its best in harmony with others. In the state justice is the harmonious functioning of each part or class of society, (corresponding to the internal faculties of the individual) performing at its best. In short according to Plato justice is a harmoniser of different virtues and their duties within the individual and of individual and the classes as well as their duties within the State or Society. In one word, justice according to Plato is harmony.

Its Implications

First, Plato's conception of justice is architectonic. As Foster observes "Justice is Architectonic in relation to other excellences". It plays the same role in state matters as an architect in a building project. Both harmonise other things.

Second, Plato's theory of justice is more an ethical and an idealistic one than a juridical one. Plato's concept of justice emphasises righteousness that is duty. It is more like the Indian concept of Dharma. In contrast, the present concept of Justice is juridical and Latin in Origin. Its root 'Jus' implies a 'right' and a 'remedy' and today Justice emphasises the same.

Thirdly, Plato's aristocratic conception of rule by Philosophers and Guardian class issues forth from his concept of Justice. Since, in Plato's conception of justice each element or class in Society is expected to perform its duty in a specialised way his rulers are in a way specialists in justice. In Plato's ideal state not everybody can be a ruler as in a democracy.

Conclusion

Justice is the most seminal goal and concept of politics both in theory and practice. The credit for putting it in the centre of political discussion goes to Plato. Since Plato may other interpretations or theories of justice have emerged. Egalitarians see justice in "equality",

Libertarians in 'Liberty', Revelationists in "God's will", utilitarians in the "Greatest happiness of the Greatest number", Communists, in the "happiness of the working classes", individualists in the individual's right, conservatives in "Preserving the past" and the Reformers in "change". But justice is multidimensional. It cannot be anyone of these permanently are in all situations and respects. Plato's ethical and architectonic concept of justice as a harmoniser of all other excellences in Society is an eternally relevant and useful view. After all its concern with justice makes politics itself an ethical and architectonic process. Today's dominating legalistic or juridical view of justice and politics is inadequate. After all law is an aid to politics and not its end. Of course the rule of law is basic to politics. Yet, it is not the triumph of law but the triumph of justice that makes politics triumphant.

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Outline the life of Plato and establish its influence on his political thought.

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2. Give a brief account of Plato's works with special reference to The Republic

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3) Discuss Plato's theory of justice and its importance to political philosophy.

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2.5 Plato's Theory of Ideal State

2.5.1 Its background

Plato's name is synonymous with Ideal State. He is considered as the first utopian. Plato moves towards an ideal state in his book Republic in search of Justice, just life and just State. He considers rule by 'Philosopher'- Kings' assisted by trained Guardians as the best rule. The reasons for his 'ideal State' are

- (a) His frustrations with the politics of Athens and all existing states ;

- (b) His love of Socrates and his philosophy and
- (c) The hatred of Athenian Democracy for its amateurism and the killing of Socrates for his philosophy.

In a rare autobiographical passage Plato reveals his frustration and moves towards ideal state as follows :

“The result was that, I who had at first been full of eagerness for a public career, as I gazed upon the whirlpool of Public life and saw the incessant movements of shifting currents, at last felt dizzy and finally saw clearly in regard to all states now existing that without exception their systems of government is bad. The constitutions are almost beyond redemption except through some miraculous plans accompanied by good luck. Hence I was forced to say in praise of correct philosophy, that it affords a vantage point from which we can discern in all cases what is just for communities and for individuals ; and that, accordingly the human race will not see better days until either the stock of those who rightly and genuinely follow philosophy acquire political authority or else the class who have political control be led by some divine dispensation of providence to become real philosophers” (Sabine pg.37)

His ideal state in the form of philosophers rule also issues forth from his epistemology i.e., theory of knowledge, his metaphysics and his belief in the Socratic philosophy and concept of virtue is knowledge. According to his theory of knowledge, knowledge comes from reasoning or logicking (and not by mere experience). According to his metaphysics, truth exists not in real and the physical but in the above physical ideal form. It is abstract. Therefore its knowledge is not with all but with philosophers who can reason abstractly and acquire better knowledge than anybody else.

Further according to his concept of “virtue is knowledge”, of all the different knowledges in Society “knowledge of virtue” or good is the highest knowledge. It can govern and arrange all other knowledges, excellences and things in society. Since, only the

philosophers can attain this knowledge of virtue or the highest knowledge at its best, only philosophers are qualified to govern and the philosopher's rule is the best rule.

2.5.2 Its nature

In Plato's ideal state for the above reasons, philosophy and philosophers dominate. But we must be cautious here about his ideas of "ideal state" and "philosopher".

First, his idea of the ideal state is not so much a romantic or utopian concept. His concern is actually also with the "idea" or the general notion of state than merely "ideal state". Plato's quest is also for the conceptual perfection of the idea of state. In his philosophy where politics is a search for good life with justice as the end value, State becomes a community where knowledgeable and selfless rulers rule to produce justice. All the existing states are of course, only imperfect states. They only approximate its character. But, there can be no and there is no state which can be a state and is still rejecting these characteristic values of one community, knowledgeable rulers, selfless rulers, producing justice (all these at least in claim).

Second, while Plato stands for "philosopher's rule" we must realise that his philosopher is not the same as either understand today as a student of the discipline of philosophy, nor even as they existed in his times. In this context we should note first, that the terms philosophy and philosophers as used today are very narrowed down versions as they are separated from the disciplines of Science and Art. And, in Plato's time the term philosophy was used just like Veda to cover all the then known knowledge (which was not bifurcated) just in the same way as we used Veda in India. Therefore the philosophers then were men of all integrated knowledge. There was no difference then between philosophers and Scientists. Yet, Plato's concept of philosopher is itself an ideal one. Plato's philosopher was himself an ideal philosopher - not the one who is, but the one who ought to be produced by engenic or planned birth, plato's scheme

of education and Plato's communism. In other words Plato's 'philosopher' is well born, well educated and living under an ascetic communism to be selfless and to become worthy to be a ruler.

Third, Plato's philosopher's rule is a pure rule of wisdom. Therefore his philosopher king is above law. Plato does not wish even law to bind and limit the philosopher's rule. His philosopher is a true political scientist. He is a perfect Statesmen who knows the good, the virtue and even the highest of it i.e., justice. After all law, was those days, mainly customary and therefore Plato considered it as "dead wisdom" and philosopher as living wisdom.

Fourth, the society in the ideal state becomes a perfect one. In it there will be division of labour, specialisation, unselfish and harmonious discharge of functions by every individual and class including the philosopher. By education and guidance from the philosopher rulers every body discharges the duties of his station at his best in harmony with others. This brings in good society and good polity.

2.5.3 Its implications

Number one, Plato's ideal state is Scientific in Organization. It aims at philosophical ordering of Society and Polity. As Sabine puts it brilliantly :

"The true romance of the Republic is the romance of free intelligence, unbound by custom, untrammelled by human stupidity and self-will The Republic is eternally the voice of the scholar, the profession of faith of the intellectual, who sees in knowledge and enlightenment the forces upon which social progress must rely" (Sabine P.53)

If overdone, the scientific society makes man a robot, and the ruler a dictator. Plato compares his philosopher-ruler to a physician in relation to a patient, a navigator in relation to a passenger and a parent in relation to a child. But a citizen is not a sick person, nor a slave passenger to be taken for a ride or a child to be lead by a

parental hand. This makes the philosopher's rule dictatorial, undemocratic and undesirable.

Second in his theory the ideal state is ethical in purpose. It aims at producing good man and good society. For this purpose the ruler has to be moral and selfless. What Plato says in this regard is eternally valuable. According to him :

".....No ruler, so far as he is acting as a ruler, will study or enjoin what is for his own interest. All that he says and does will be said and done with a view, of what is good and proper for the subjects" (Ebenstain P.17)

Third, the philosopher's rule is a rule by a few as wise are only a few. It is aristocratic. Ruling here is an expert's job. There is no scope for amateurs unlike in a democracy. Therefore it is antidemocratic.

Fourth, Plato's ideal state needs and depends on ideal men. Of course it attempts to create them through ideal birth, ideal education and ideal communism. It is impossible to realise.

Fifth, Plato himself was not bothered about its practicability. His main purpose was to develop the ideal state in theory or even the "idea" or theory of state in essence. His thinking is with mathematical precision. His ideal state is like a geometric triangle. It is no where practically and perfectly found yet its theory is necessary. He believes that a theory can never be fully realised as action is always less perfect than thought.

Conclusion

Plato's theory of ideal state is a brilliant statement of both the idea and ideals of state and politics. To Plato state is a perfect community where knowledgeable and selfless rule to produce justice. This indeed is, an ultimate explanation about the state in its "idea" "essence", or "correct nature". Practical deviations and imperfections does not prove the theory wrong. His ideal state is just brilliant.

But, looking back at Plato from our contemporary democratic situation, we find that Plato's ideal state brilliant as it is, nevertheless is anti-democratic. It makes a few dominant permanently. Interposition of ranks is provided for but not guaranteed. What guarantee is there that a guardian who comes to power would continue to be a philosopher and virtuous ? That is why, today's democracy does not trust the philosopher any more than the common man. In a democracy even a philosopher must come to the top by democratic means. But, the elections process, earthly as it is rarely permits a philosopher to come to the top. The modern democracy however has attempted to secure the philosopher or intellectuals as we call them today, to serve the state by means of nomination to second chambers, appointment to planning, inquiry, and administrative commissions, committees and Boards as well as to the Administrative Services and courts. Yet, the Philosopher's available on the top are neither sufficiently heard or needed. Perhaps that is why democracy today continues to be a smug, corrupt and at best an imperfect state. Yet it is perhaps, the best attainable as long as man is imperfect. Democracy represents the force of the will of the people. Plato's Republic represents the force of knowledge. These are obviously, two formidable forces. The question today about them is not either / or. If they are left antithetic they pose the biggest danger to mankind. The biggest dilemma of political theory today is how to blend them together in law and public action.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Explain the background of Plato's ideal state.

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2) Outline the nature of Plato's ideal state.

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3) Discuss the implications of Plato's ideal state.

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2.6 Let us Sum Up

Plato, the Greek Philosopher, who lived in Athens in 487-347 B.C. is considered as the first political philosopher. His times, when Greece was a great political laboratory experimenting with various forms of government, the vibrant intellectual debate lead by Socrates on the various forms of government including the ideal one, Plato's aristocratic political family background and his frustrations with Athenian Democracy and even other types of constitutions and Governments made him to write elaborately on politics and in favour of ideal state. His political philosophy though found in all his works, is found mainly in his three political works viz., The Republic, The Statesman and The Laws. In these works we find Plato's brilliant and rich contribution on all seminal political concepts like, state, justice, law, democracy, ideal state, communism of property and family, eugenics and education. Plato's idea of politics as an ethical process searching for the good of the community; state as a perfect community where knowledgeable and selfless rule to produce justice ; wisdom as the qualification for rulers and therefore his preference for philosopher-rulers, their education and communism and his idea of justice as an architectonic harmoniser of all other excellences and things in society are of Universal and eternal appeal and value. His political philosophy is a brilliant light house for the political ships of today sailing in dark and troubled waters to guide them to the safer shores of the politics of wisdom and selflessness.

2.7 Key Words

- | | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| Philosopher | - | Lover of knowledge or a man of wisdom. |
| Justice | - | Harmony |
| Utopia | - | Ideal State |
| Metaphysics | - | That branch of philosophy which deals with truth in its abstract and ultimate form. |
| Dialectics | - | The art of discussion or disputation moving from thesis to antithesis to synthesis. |

2.8 Some Useful Books

- Earnest Barker. Greek Political Theory : Plato and His
Predecessors 1918
- V.S.Nersesyants. : Political Thought of
Ancient Greece 1986
- Sabine G.H. : A History of Political
Theories, 3rd Edition
1964
- William Ebenstein : Great Political Thinkers :
Plato to Present 1966
- Dunning. W.A. Political Theories : Ancient and Medieval
1959

2.9 Answers to Check your Progress Exercises

Check Your progress - 1

- 1) See Section 2.2
- 2) See Section 2.3
- 3) See Section 2.4

Check Your progress - 2

- 1) See Section 2.5.1
- 2) See Section 2.5.2
- 3) See Section 2.5.3

Unit - 3 (Plato's Views on) Education and Communism

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Plato's views on Education
 - 3.2.1 Importance of Education to Plato's political philosophy.
 - 3.2.2 Background and Basis of Plato's Scheme of Education.
 - 3.2.3 Nature and Content of Plato's Education System.
 - 3.2.4 An Assessment
- 3.3 Plato's Theory of Communism
 - 3.3.1 Introduction
 - 3.3.2 Nature and Purpose
 - 3.3.3 An Assessment
- 3.4 Let us sum up
- 3.5 Key words
- 3.6 Some useful Books
- 3.7 Answers to check your progress Exercises

3.0 Objectives

Education and Communism occupy a very important place in the development of Plato's ideal state. In this Unit our Objectives are

- To understand the importance and background of Plato's Education Scheme
- To understand and assess the nature and content of Plato's Scheme of Education.
- To Introduce ourselves to the theory of 'Communism' he prescribes to the rulers to produce selflessness among them.

3.1 Introduction

In the previous unit on Plato we have understood his ideal state. He conceives there a rule of wisdom. Therefore, he wants the philosopher-kings to rule. Plato is a through planner. To produce such philosopher-rulers apart from eugenics i.e., the science and Scheme of arranged marriages between right male and a right female, to produce an able and strong child, he plans an elaborate scheme of education and a communist i.e., a community life without private, property and private family for the rulers. The noble purpose and the meticulous details of these schemes of education and communism of Plato are an integral and a very interesting part of Plato's ideal state. We must know it because we are also worried today as to how to make our politicians men of wisdom and selflessness.

Our plan of understanding Plato's education and communism are as follows. First, we take up education and discuss its importance, background, basis, the nature and content of his schemes for education. Second, we move on to a discussion of his theory of communism. We will also make an assessment of Plato's communism to understand its limitation and differences from modern communism.

3.2 Plato's Views on Education

Plato was basically a philosopher and teacher. Though he came from a family with high political connection in Athens he did not participate in politics. He thought deeply about all aspects of politics and become the 'first political philosopher'. He started his famous school called 'Academy' to train and produce philosophers and perhaps politicians. He went to Syracuse to train its prince. In this background, for the 'Super Academic' that Plato was, it was natural for Plato to be concerned with education. But, it was also very much necessary as he wanted to produce philosopher's rule in his Republic. His views on Education are elaborately presented in The Republic.

3.2.1 Importance of Education to Plato's Political Philosophy

Plato attached great importance to education. The large amount of space devoted to education and the meticulous details of Syllabi discussed in The Republic is enough proof for it. This has indeed made some people to consider The Republic as mainly a book on education. Rousseau, the French philosopher of 18th Century A.D., considered it as hardly a political work but the greatest work on education ever written. However, the importance given by Plato to education is not strange. For Plato who held knowledge, philosophy, virtue and justice high, education was the best instrument to shape the life of man within himself and outside to be happy, ethical and just. For producing the philosopher-ruler education was a natural imperative.

As Barker observes Plato indeed gave more importance to education than communism in producing a philosopher-ruler or a wise-man. Education is an attempt to turn the inward eye towards the light. It is an attempt to shape the man from inside, from the core i.e., his spirit. It is an attempt to treat ignorance, superstition, selfishness, greed and conflicts right at their source. It is a positive remedy and resource against all evil and weakness. In contrast the scheme of communism is a negative and material remedy and

supplement in the fight against selfishness to the positive, primary and spiritual effort in producing the just man and just society.

3.2.2 Background and Basis of Plato's Scheme of Education

Plato's education system was not totally an invention by Plato. It was only an innovation on the then historically existing system of Greek Education. Greek education by the time of Plato was well developed. There were two types of education systems in Greece - one represented by Athens and another by Sparta.

The Athenian system of education was basically a system of private education. A law of Solon had obliged parents to educate their boys. But the State did not interfere in education. The curriculum at Athens had emphasised art and literature. In short education at Athens was haphazard, costly and aesthetic. The end product of such a system was an Athenian cultured, versatile soft and individualistic. Plato disliked this unplanned system and its end product, though he appreciated its cultural content.

The Spartan system on the other hand was a state planned and controlled education system. For centuries Spartan had maintained a system of State-training. The Spartan child- both male and female- was taken away from parents at the age of seven and was trained by state officials under complete state care. Its curriculum was state-planned. It was mainly Athletic and militarist in content. Its end product was a Spartan taught, disciplined and with a high social motivation. Plato was appreciative of the emphasis on strength and the high social motivation in the Spartan education system.

Both these systems, then existing, especially the Spartan system, did influence Plato. He borrowed certain good aspects of the both, but went beyond. Plato's purpose was not merely to produce a strongman as in Spartan system or a cultured man as in Athenian system. His purpose was to produce strong man of philosophical and moral heights. Therefore Plato provided for longer and continuing period of education. He added a system of higher education not found

in the Athenian and Spartan systems . His syllabi was also richer with all the then known higher studies of Science, art, philosophy, mathematics and dialectics apart from music and gymnastics at lower level.

Plato's vision was that of a healthy, strong, wise just and full man. Therefore his education system was meant to develop the whole man by shaping his plastic soul through education. It was an attempt to prepare the man for the fullness of human experience. It was an attempt to turn his spirit and the inner eye toward, all excellences and virtues especially the highest one, Justice. This high ethical purpose made him to go for strict state control and censorship over education.

3.2.3 Nature and Content of Plato's Education System

Plato's scheme of education consists mainly of two stages viz., elementary and higher. The elementary education is meant for children and young men up to the age of twenty. The higher education was from the age of twenty to thirty five. Plato's education was meant for both sexes, male and female. It was designed mainly to fit each individual and each class to one's own role. Its focus was especially on educating and training the Soldierly (Auxiliary) and the Guardian(ruler)class.

The curriculum studied at the elementary level were mainly two subjects viz., 'Gymnastics' and 'Music'. Gymnastics is primarily understood as for strengthening the body. But for Plato it was meant for training the mind through the exercise of the body. It was meant to teach such soldierly qualities as discipline, self-control, courage and physical strength tempered by gentleness. Gymnastics included diet and medicine apart from physical exercises. Its main purpose was to construct a sound body suitable to house a sound mind. The content of the subject called 'Music' by Plato was extensive. It included art, poetry, culture and history apart from harmonious sound. It was meant to train the mind directly in the knowledge of all these. It was meant to develop not merely aesthetic appreciation but a sense

of proportion, a sense of harmony and indeed a sense of righteousness needed for a cultured and moral personality.

In short, together, Gymnastics and music were to produce a sound mind in a sound body - an Appolo (The Greek God of Wisdom) in a Hercules (The Greek God of Strength) or to put in Indian terms, a Buddha in a Bheema. Plato's dream, indeed was, that if education could do this, doctors and hospitals, lawyers and law courts could be banished from society.

Another point which we must know while discussing Plato's theory of elementary education is the state censorship of all art and literature in society, including the grandmother's lullaby and the street bard or Beedhi Dasa's songs, which Plato proposed. Plato's fear was that uncensored art and literature would be dysfunctional to the purposes of the elementary education system he designed. Plato's advocacy of censorship has been attacked by some as totalitarian while some defend it as essential, normal and done even today to protect the children.

Plato's scheme of Higher Education was a very original one. It was meant for a selected group of young men above the age of twenty who had graduated through elementary education and military training. It was spread over fifteen years upto the age of thirty five. Its purpose was to prepare the soldierly class to become the Guardian class of wise rulers in the highest positions.

The curriculum of higher education, meant to train the guardian class, included all philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and dialectics in short, all the then known higher, and what we call today as scientific learning. Plato was particular about ten years of mathematical and five of years of dialectics studies. The purpose was to train a mind capable of abstract and highly logical reasoning in search of good - individual and social - with mathematical precision.

Even after 35 years of age and this higher education, the Guardian was not yet ready. He had to undergo another 15 years of

apprenticeship or practical work and training under guardians. Only after this, those who successfully underwent all this would be promoted to the class of Philosophical Guardians.

3.2.4 An Assessment

In Plato's scheme of things where the design is to produce just life - individual and social-knowledge and wisdom play an important role. Good citizens, Good politicians and Good Society and Good State are all products of good education. Therefore Plato's Republic rightly devotes so much of attention to education.

Plato's scheme of education, especially the elementary education, is influenced by and based upon the then existing Spartan and Athenian education systems. But Plato went beyond and was innovative and especially his system of higher education was indeed original. His Academy practiced it, became popular and lasted nearly 10 centuries.

Plato's scheme of education was for a full man and full life. Therefore it started from childhood and continued in maturity. Rightly, the curriculum was comprehensive and covered from gymnastics to dialectics.

Plato's reliance on censorship and state control over education have been criticised by liberals as totalitarian in character. But, even today State, State censorship and State control over education especially the elementary education continues, even in the most liberal of states. The Evil is not in their presence but in their misuse and excesses. The debate on them is eternal. And, the emphasis on education which Plato gave for good life and good polity is eternal.

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Bringout out the importance of education in Plato's political philosophy.

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2) Outline the background and basis of Plato's scheme of education.

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3) Discuss the nature and content of Plato's Education System and assess it.

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3.3 Plato's Theory of Communism

3.3.1 Introduction

As already said above, Plato's communism emerges as a supplement to his scheme of education. Both are meant to make the ruling class enlightened and selfless. If education does this from inside by shaping and training his spirit or soul, communism does the same from outside by arranging a communistic way of life for the guardian class with regard to the mundane matters.

3.3.2 Nature and Purpose

Plato's theory of communism has two aspects. First it is communism of property and second, it is a communism of wives and children. The communist way of life that results from these are meant to free the ruling class from routine worries and to make them devote themselves fully to the common good.

According to his theory of communism of property first, none of the guardians shall have any private property of his own beyond what is absolutely necessary (i.e., his clothes and such absolutely minimal personal belongings). He should not have any private house or store. Secondly, all guardians should live in a common mess, as in a military camp, for their food and shelter maintained at public cost. Thirdly, since they are by nature men of divine gold, they should have nothing to do with metals like gold or silver. The appetite for these earthly things or property befits the common folk. The guardian class is above these as they are golden in their character.

The Second aspect of Plato's communism is the communism of family or of wives and children. On this aspect Plato observed that guardians should not set up private families but should have common wives and common children. Plato considered private family and the instinctive attachments that go with it as the fortress of selfishness. To avoid this he advocated state arranged and temporary marriages or union of sexes and state rearing of children away from their genetic parents. Such a system would promote:

- (a) Engenics i.e., planned breeding of children by arranging unions of best of both sexes;
- (b) Gender equality as Plato considered women as equally capable like men. He provided for banishing of marriages without state permission and of children born of inferior unions from the Guardian flock. All these were meant to replace the feeling of "mine and thine" with regard to children and women by a healthy feeling of "ours" i.e., one strongly bound community. In such a community as the guardians know that their own wives and children are there in the community, even though they do not know them individually, they would fight and work devotedly for the interest of all or for commonweal or common good for which the ruling class is essentially meant for.

3.3.3 An Assessment

Plato's theory of communism is a logical offshoot of his idealistic political philosophy. The communist way of life he prescribes is mainly to make his rulers entirely selfless and completely devoted to the common good. That is why his advocacy of communism is only for the ruling class of auxiliaries and Guardians in his state and not to others.

This limiting of communism to his ruling class makes Plato's communism to be mainly political in purpose. In the dialogue when a student Adeimantus objects to this stating that it resulted in denial of happiness to the ruling class, Plato answers that it was necessary to make them Guardians and that without it the Guardians would be anything but Guardians.

Plato's communism and modern communism differs from each on many grounds and they have only some similarity. First, Plato's communism is mainly political in purpose modern communism is mainly determined by economic factors and dreams. Plato's communism is "half-communism" confined only to the ruling class. Modern communism covers the whole society. Plato's communism is ascetic in character as it attempts to discipline the ruling class in a

saint like way. It is indeed spiritual and ethical in character. But modern communism is economic and materialistic in character. It aims at socialisation of the means of production economic equality and prosperity for all. The only similarity between the two is their aim to restrict selfish competition and to promote the common good.

Check Your Progress - 2

- Note:* 1) Use the space given below for your answer.
2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Discuss the nature and purpose of Plato's Communism.

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2) Critically Assess Plato's theory of Communism.

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3.4 Let us Sum Up

In this Unit, we have understood two important components which are part fo his ideal state viz., Eduction and Communism. Both

these are logical accompaniments of his idea of philosopher is rule. Both these are meant to make his rules enlightened and selfless.

His Scheme of education was based to an extent on the existing Athenian and Spartan education systems. But, Plato went beyond with innovations in elementary education and the addition of an entirely original scheme of higher education. His purpose was to produce enlightened rulers.

In this unit No.3, We have also examined Plato's theory of communism. Like his scheme of education his theory of communism is a logical accompaniment of his idea of philosopher's rule. It is meant to provide a way of living which would avoid private property and private family to his rulers and make them live like soldiers in military common mess. The purpose was to make the soldiers and rulers selfless and totally devoted to the common good. His scheme includes temporary state arranged marriages of best guardians of both sexes to produce good quality children. Second, it includes taking away of those children by the state for common rearing to avoid a sense of mine and thine with regard to wives and children. But all these were meant only for soldiers and the guardian class and not for others in Society. Therefore, Plato's communism differed from modern communism by its confinement to the ruling class, political purpose and ascetic nature unlike modern communism which extends to the whole Society, and is economic in purpose and materialistic in nature. But in their concern for common good both are alike.

Plato was not only the first political philosopher, but giant of a thinker who examined the ideas and ideals of politics in their perfection. His idea of ideal state developed in his Republic have been of eternal and universal influence. Though his later political works viz., The Statesman and The Laws comparatively moves towards realism his best political philosophy is in the Republic. We have examined it in the two units viz., Unit No.2 and Unit No.3. We can now go on to consider the political thought of Aristotle, a student

of Plato but another giant of a political thinker, who indeed wrote the first book under the title. POLITICS.

3.5 Key Words

- Curriculum - Courses of study in an education system
- 'Gymnastics' - Exercises of the body to discipline both body and mind.
- 'Music' - A package of courses prescribed in Plato's scheme of elementary education.
- Academy - Plato's School of philosophy started and run by him.
- Censorship - The act of scrutinising books or any literary or art work to cut out undesirable material. The authority exercised for this purpose mainly by the State.
- Communism - The political theory which holds the community interest as higher to individuals interest and stands for common ownership and control over social and economic matters for this purpose.
- Eugenics - The Science of breeding good offsprings.
- Ascetic = Saint - Like

3.6 Some Useful Books

Same as in Unit No.2 Section 11

3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

Check your progress - 1

- 1) See Section 3.2.1
- 2) See Section 3.2.2
- 3) See Section 3.2.3 & 3.2.4

For Check your progress - 2

- 1) See Section 3.3.2
- 2) See Section 3.3.3

NOTES

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Unit - 4 Aristotle - Life, Works, His views On State, On Family.

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Life
- 4.3 Works
- 4.4 His views on State
 - 4.4.1 On Nature of State
 - 4.4.2 On Law
 - 4.4.3 On Constitution
 - 4.4.4 On Government
- 4.5 His Views on Family
- 4.6 Let us Sum up
- 4.7 Key Words
- 4.8 Some Useful Books
- 4.9 Answers to Check your Progress Exercises

4.0 Objectives

The main Objective here is to understand the nature and importance of Aristotle's contribution to political thought and political Science. In Unit No.4 we aim at Understanding :

- His Place and Importance
- His Life
- His Works
- His Views on State
- His views on Family,

4.1 Introduction

Aristotle was another major political thinker of ancient Greece. He was a student of Plato and made equally important and famous contributions to both political philosophy and political science. To 'Political Science' as such, he made more contributions than Plato. Therefore, he is even known as the "First Political Scientist". He deserves this because, he was the first person to write a book under the title POLITICS 2500 years ago, and more than that to underline the importance of the scientific methods of Observation and comparison in arriving at the truth. He used these to found not only political science but also many other Sciences, especially natural sciences, particularly zoology and botany, as well as ethics, arts, aesthetics, rhetoric, psychology and so on. Therefore, he is called an "encyclopaedic mind" and also as the founder and father of the European Science and Civilization.

In political science, like Plato and other Greeks, he started by considering politics as an ethical activity, a search for 'good' or 'virtuous' life for the individual and the community. Therefore, like them, especially under the influence of his 'Gurn' Plato he considered that the philosophical method of reasoning to find out the political truth was necessary. But, Aristotle differed from them all, by moving on to say, that political truth can be found out not only by reasoning but also by observing and comparing the political affairs,

activities and experiences. By reasoning we arrive at the abstract 'ideal state'. By observing we arrive at the concrete 'real state'. By bringing harmony or compromise between the 'ideal state' and the 'real state' we get the 'best state' possible. This was his approach. Therefore unlike Plato he gave value to 'political experience' or 'living politics'. This made Aristotle to concentrate on studying contemporary politics empirically by observation and comparison. He founded political science and even political sociology.

By the same logic, in Aristotle's political philosophy politics is a compromise between the ideal and the real in managing public affairs. Therefore unlike Plato, who is an idealist and extremist, Aristotle becomes a 'realist' and 'relativist'. Aristotle's philosophy also lays foundation for modern conservatism, liberalism and pragmatism which are at the centre of modern western democratic outlook. He emphasised the importance of "middle class rule" for this purpose. But it was also true that he defended slavery, considered women as inferior, and held property as an important qualification in politics. Thus, at times he looks self contradictory. But we should understand that Aristotle lived and thought 2500 years ago. Contradictions are more visible in Post-mortem. Anyway there is no doubt that Aristotle was a 'great philosopher', the "First political scientist" a 'living mind', an "open-minded" thinker and has made encyclopaedic contributions to human thought and civilization in general and to political science in particular. In our study of him we plan to understand him in two units viz 4 to 5 of this paper W.P.T. In Unit 4 we begin this by understanding his life, works and his views on State and Family.

4.2 His Life (384 BC to 322 BC)

The close relation between life and thought we have already emphasised. This becomes illustrated as we study Aristotle's Life. Aristotle was born in 384 B.C. He was native of Stagira a Greek colonial town on the Macedonian Coast. His father was a physician

-serving in the court of king Phillip of Macedon. The importance which Aristotle gives to observation, comparison and experience were all the result of his close observation of his doctor father. He gradually developed a passion for observation. This made him found biology and psychology as well as political science.

But, his contact with Plato and his philosophy also made Aristotle to give the political 'ideal' and 'virtue', their due. Aristotle came to Athens and became a student of Plato and his Academy at the age of 17. He studied under Plato for the next 20 years until the death of Plato. The relationship that developed between Plato, the great teacher and Aristotle the great student was excellent. Aristotle came under the great influence of Plato, especially with regard to the ethical and philosophical approach. But the student also had the courage to differ from the teacher in taking a more realistic and relativistic the outlook of politics and to be critical of his 'Guru' where needed. Plato was proud of Aristotle but is reported to have made a remark that Aristotle was like "a foal that kicks his mother after draining her dry".

Another connection contributed considerably both to Aristotle's science and politics. It was the connection with Alexander the great of Macedonia. We have already mentioned that Aristotle's father was a physician at the court of king Phillip of Macedon. Because of this background and the reputation Aristotle had gained for his scholarship, in 343 B.C, he was invited to become a tutor of the young prince Alexander. For three years this relationship bonded them. Both were geniuses, liked and influenced each other. But their political philosophies never coincided. While Aristotle was all through singing about the narrow city-state, Alexander dreamt and went on to build an empire-state which extended upto India. His empire controlled Athens also. The democrats in Athens hated Macedon. But Aristotle who was not at all an Athenian and because of his Macedonian connection was Pro-Macedonian. Athenians suspected

him for this. After Plato died, first he wandered for 12 years outside. But in 335 B.C. he came back to Athens and founded his own great school called Lyceum and made it a success till the death of Alexander in 323 B.C. The death of Alexander brought out Anti-Macedonian feelings to the open. Aristotle exiled himself from Athens and died an year later in 322 B.C. at Chalcis a stronghold of Macedonian influence. The Macedonian connection brought to Aristotle lots of money, men and support in his study, research and life. It is said that Alexander had provided 1000 men to Aristotle to study birds, animals, plants and fish upto River Nile in Egypt. But in one thing this connection failed. Alexander's empire had no influence on Aristotle's political thought. There is not even a mention of it on Aristotle's political thought. There is not even a mention of it in his works. Aristotle perhaps did not visualise its importance and implications to the future of politics.

4.3 His Works

Aristotle had an encyclopaedic mind and contribution. His works though many, have been destroyed by time. But references to his works have been galore and continuous through history. His works have been on many subjects like logic, physics, metaphysics, ethics, psychology, rhetoric, biology and politics. But his works have been available in disorganised form. Many are just in notes form, not orderly and even incomplete. It is only the editor's who have struggled and succeeded in giving some shape to his works.

Concerning politics, there are four works which are important.

These are

- 1) Organon
- 2) Ethics
- 3) The Constitution of Athens
- 4) Politics

Of these the first one Organon is a work on logic and epistemology or theory of knowledge. It is here that Aristotle's theory

that experience is the true source and the real cause of all knowledge, is found. The Second one Ethics is also known as Nichomachean Ethics. It is named so, after the name of Nichomachus Aristotle's son who edited it for publication. In Ethics he discusses the telos or purpose of Life. He concludes that the purpose is happiness based on knowledge and virtue. He examines many virtues in detail and puts forward a "doctrine of golden mean" among them in practice as the best rather than taking extreme positions. He considers politics as a process of establishing and extending ethical happiness to whole society. The third work, The Constitution of Athens deals with the history of the Athenian Constitution as well as its working in the 4th Century B.C. It was one of 158 constitutions of Greek City States whose comparative research study he had undertaken at his school Lycem.

His great treatise POLITICS was the first book under that title in history. But it is not available even today in well organised and complete form, in spite of all the great efforts of many editors. Reasons given are : additions by others, loss of written material by age and the form of Lecture notes or study texts it constituted at Lycem developed over years between 335 and 322 B.C. at different times by Aristotle. Therefore, the text is never in unified and finished form. Perhaps for this reason instead of calling them chapters each part of the text is itself called a Book. The text is spread over VIII Books. The subject matter of this book covers both the "ideal state" and "Actual States". In other words it covers ideal politics and actual politics of different types of Governments, constitutions and institutions both political and social. But, more than on ideal state Aristotle's concentration on the Actual States and their politics and its relation to socio-economic factors makes this book a great one. It is this which distinguishes Aristotle from Plato. His treatise is indeed a Political Sociology of the Greek City States and therefore the first book on political science. And, as Ebenstein says, "after twenty three

hundred years it is still an introductory text book to the entire field of political Science".

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Examine the relationship between Aristotle's Life and his political thought.

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2) Outline the salient features of Aristotle's Life.

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3) Write a Critical Note on Aristotle's Works.

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4.4 His Views on State

4.4.1 On Nature of State

Regarding State, Aristotle, in common with Plato, has two basic beliefs that (1) State is a community and (2) State is the highest of all communities. First, to the ancient Greeks City - State was their basic political unit. Its compactness and small size made it a natural community. It was an intimate community heard by one herald when assembled. It was an all in one organisation - a church, a social system and a political system. It regulated their whole life. It was indeed an organic concept of State which like other, Greeks Aristotle also had. According to him State was natural in two ways. In order of evolution or time sequence it evolves from family to the village and then naturally into the state. But, secondly, in the order of thought or logic, since the whole is prior to the part State is prior to the family and the individual.

Any way, to Aristotle also State is the last and the highest form of Association. It is a perfect community aiming at the highest good. Tracing its evolution, Aristotle refers to the family as the first association, lowest in the chain of social evolution and lowest in the rung of values because it is established by nature "for the supply of men's everyday wants". The village is the second one in the chain of

values and occupies a slightly higher rung in the scale of value since it aims "at something more than the supply of daily needs" viz., some rudimentary and primitive cultural wants which the family could not satisfy". The City-State is the third and the highest form of association, highest in terms of values and purpose, because, "the State exists for the sake of good life and not for the sake of life only". It is in conformity with and in reflection of man's own nature which is moral. Man can realize himself, that which is most human in him, in society and state alone. That is why Aristotle calls man as a "Political animal" and holds that only Gods and Ghosts can live outside the State.

Interestingly, State is the highest association for another reason. To Aristotle all associations are political in as much as they aim at a common good (atleast of their members) through joint action. But the State differs from other associations in that it aims at the highest good of the community in general for the general advantage of all. The state is therefore Supreme because of its supreme purpose. Greeks emphasised the moral supremacy or Sovereignty of the State. They did not consider its legal sovereignty.

About the nature of the State, there is one difference between other Greeks, especially plato, and Aristotle. Like them, Aristotle agrees first with the Organic Conception of the State and also with the need for Unity of the State for its strength. But Aristotle did not stop there. He develops a relativist and pluralist view of State. His pragmatic mind was aware of the differences that prevailed in any society. He did not consider the differences as alien and as a sign of weakness, but as a part of the nature of the State. He held that " a State is not made up of only so many men, but of different - kinds of men" and that "the nature of a State is to be a plurality".

It is his belief in "Plurality" that makes his political science comprehensive and realistic and his political philosophy more relativist, and pragmatic. His book POLITICS is comprehensive as it includes the discussion of family or household its various

component's such as Master, slave, wife, children, and property - citizenship and the various socioeconomics classes and forces that affect the nature of the State and its politics in actuality. It also covers the resulting varieties of good states and bad states or constitutions that emerge from these differences as well as causes and remedies for revolution that threaten their stability. His political philosophy becomes relativist as he sees the possibility of many types of "Good States". It becomes pragmatic and emphasises the rule of law, rule of middle class, a politics of golden mean or compromise between the ideal and the actual for stability, peace, happiness and orderly change. And, this belief in the plurality of political truth also makes his political science more empirical than that of Plato. Aristotle though like Plato also talks of an ideal state, does so dragging his feet and runs more towards the study of actual states and their politics.

Further, for understanding Aristotle's views on State completely, we have to understand his concepts of law, constitution and Government as well as their various types atleast briefly. As Sabine puts it, in the Aristotelian ethical conception of Politics : "Law, Constitution, State, form of government all tend to coalesce, since from a moral point of view they are all equally relative to the purpose which causes the association (state) to exist". (Sabine 1964 P 100) After all, law, constitution and governments are all instrumentalities to realise the moral goal of the state. Therefore, unless they are really moral they are not truly political. Aristotle indeed was the first political scientist who came, to distinguish between paper-law, paper-constitution, paper-Government and paper-States and the "living" ones, or what Rajni Kothari has called the difference between "Form and Substance".

4.4.2 On Law

Aristotle's views on Law were shaped by two factors,

- (a) Plato's Books The Laws and
- (b) Aristotle's own epistemology and wisdom.

First, Aristotle came to Plato's school Academy almost at a time when the matured Plato was formulating his book, The Laws. Aristotle was influenced by Plato's move towards realism and the resulting revision of his views towards law in this period. Aristotle liked in particular two statements made by Plato in The Laws, that "Law is a golden-mean" and "Man when perfected is the best of animals but when separated from law and justice he is the worst of all". Therefore, he came to hold that in any good state the Law must be sovereign and not any person. But, he takes to and sticks to this view not as a concession to human frailty or weakness, as Plato did, but as an intrinsic part of a good government.

Rule of law is good by itself for even the wisest ruler cannot dispense with law because the law has an impersonal quality which no man, however good can attain. The Law is "reason unaffected by desire". Rule of law is consistent with the dignity and freedom of the individual for it is his consent to it which gives Law its strength and success.

The genius of Aristotle identifies three elements in the rule of law. First, it is a rule in the Public or general interest as distinguished from private interests. Second, it is a rule by deliberated Rules and Regulations and not by arbitrary decrees. Third, it is a rule with the consent of the governed. But his scientific mind conceded the possibility of a form of government existing in actuality only with one or two of these elements or properties instead of all. Thus a tyrant may, at least in exceptional cases, may be ruling genuinely in Public and General interest while a democracy or a lawful government may be ruling unjustly for Private group or Personal Interests. Legality may not guarantee legitimacy or goodness completely and automatically.

The Second factor contributing to his firm belief in rule of law was his epistemology and wisdom. As the son of a Physician, being empirical in approach he valued conventions and experience as a

source of knowledge. Laws those days were mostly conventional. Therefore, Plato had rejected laws as dead wisdom. But Aristotle held conventions, Public usage or even Public opinion as not only unavoidable but just at least to a certain extent in Public Life. Law is also valuable because it is the result of collective wisdom of ages. Collective wisdom is better than the wisdom of any one man. Many people supplement each other better and their wisdom is more self-sufficing than of any one individual's. The reason of the Statesman in a good state cannot be detached from the reason embodied in the law and custom of the community. To Aristotle, the state being the highest and moral association, the political rule in it must always be subjected and subordinated to law, freedom and consent of the people. These were factors not of his second best but of the ideal State itself.

4.4.3 On Constitution

With such firm faith in rule of law, Aristotle naturally holds rule of law as Constitutional Government and considers Constitution as the basis of Law and State. Constitution is the structure and arrangement of the State. The affluence of Aristotle's political Science is visible in his analysis of different types of constitutions. Aristotle identified three types of Constitutions viz.,

- 1) Ethical Constitution
- 2) Political Constitution and
- 3) Socio-Economic Constitution of a State.

The Ethical Constitution is "an arrangement of the Citizens" or their ethical mode of life or indeed the "life of the state" or the living (moral) constitution. The Political Constitution is "an arrangement of offices" (Or institutions deliberative, magisterial executive and judicial). The Socio-Economic Constitution is the arrangement of Social and economic institutions or structures and forces such as families, classes and occupational groups within the

state which in turn determines the nature of "Political arrangements" and "ethical life" of the State.

Aristotle deals with Constitutions in two Contexts : One, while dealing with different types of Governments or Actual States and second, while dealing with his "ideal State" or "Polity". While dealing with Actual States or different types of Governments, and their classification Aristotle makes a subtle but implied distinction between the constitutional form which may be of one type and substance which may be of another type. In other words he understands the possibility of a constitution looking like one (for eg., Democratic) but working like another (for eg., Oligarchic). Secondly, the importance he gave to Constitution becomes best expressed when he considers "Constitutional Government" as a character of his Ideal State.

4.4.4 On Government

Regarding 'Government' Aristotle is more interested in discussing "forms of Government" than in clearly defining government. According to him the "Government is same as constitution". Both deal with "Arrangement of Offices" Especially the highest one or the Sovereign one. The form of Government depends on this arrangement of offices and location of Sovereign power. Thus, if Sovereign Power is with one, it is monarchy, if with few it is aristocracy and if with many it is democracy. But he find that the practice of classifying Governments merely on numbers is wrong, For it is simplistic and fails to take into consideration the qualitative aspects hidden behind numbers.

Therefore, Aristotle discusses different forms and proceeds to classify governments both on quantitative and qualitative grounds. Again on the 'qualitative' ground he further classifies Governments into true or good and false or perverted governments. True Governments are Constitutional or Law-abiding ones and the false are perverted are unlawful and despotic governments. Aristotle's

classification of Governments will be discussed in detail at the end of the next lesson i.e., Unit No.5.

Thus, Aristotle's views on State is well understood in the light of his views on Constitution, rule of law, Government and different forms, classes and issues of Government mentioned above. Unlike anybody else's, Aristotle's views on these are comprehensive, deep, rich, sociological, comparative and of contemporaneous relevance and value.

4.5 His Views on the Family.

While discussing the nature of the State, Aristotle discusses the family or the Household to compare, differentiate and to establish the higher nature of the state. He rejects the Plato's assumption that the State is only enlarged household. He says, while the family comes first, into existence for meeting the daily basic, physical or animal needs of man, the State comes into existence for the purpose of highest good.

For making man happy, the household has many components such as Head of the Household, Wife, Children, Slaves and Property. He examines these and especially their relations to the Master or head of the Household and compares these relations with that of the relations between State and Citizen.

Aristotle's views on woman and her relationship with man are traditional hierachical and pro-male. He considers woman as the necessary but the lower part of the family. Man is superior and he has to rule over her. But interestingly he reject's the "barbarian's practice of equating slaves and women. Woman has a better mind than that of a slave or child but inadequate or lower than that of man. Therefore, man and woman relationship is one of ruler and ruled. But the man is not a despot in relation to woman but a constitutional ruler.

Children are underdeveloped and immature. To children man as father is the king i.e., one who rules in the interest of the subjects.

Slaves and property he equates. Slave is animate property like other animal assets. We will discuss Aristotle's views on slavery and property in the next unit in more detail. Here it suffices to say that the relation of the master over these two is one of despot. It is completely based on force, convenience and control for comfort of the family.

In contrast, the political relationship i.e., the relationship between the ruler and ruled is an ethical and legal one. It is based on equality, law and consent and to the extent that bases would be other than these, the relationship between the state and the citizen would not be political.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Bringout Aristotle's Views on the nature of State.

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2) Discuss Aristotle's views on rule of law.

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3) Explain Aristotle's views on the Constitution.

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4) Outline Aristotle's classification of Governments

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4.6 Let us Sum Up

In this Unit No.4, we have discussed the life, works and political thought of Aristotle with regard to State and Family. He considers State as a natural and highest moral association. Therefore he advocates rule-of-law as the best rule in a State. He considers Constitutional Government as the best government and subtly sees the three types of constitutions working in a state viz., the ethical, political and Socio-economic ones. He examines Government as the location of highest Sovereign Power in the State and Classifies them on quantitative and qualitative considerations into three good and three perverted forms of government. He examines the family or household while discussing the nature of the State. He considers it

as the first association born to meet the daily needs of man.

Aristotle's views on State are very comprehensive, scientific and ethical. But his views on family when compared to contemporary views are very traditional, conservative and even regressive. On the whole Aristotle's views on these aspects are interesting sociopolitical analysis. They have laid good foundation for modern day sociology and political science.

4.7 Key Words

- Relativist - One who views things in relation to their context.
Pragmatic - Open - minded
Conservatism - A philosophy which values and preserves the traditional or past values.
Polity - Aristotle's "Ideal State" or "Constitutional Government".

4.8 Some Useful Books

- Ebenstein, William : The Great Political Thinkers : Plato to the Present. Oxford and IBH, Bombay 1966.
Sabine : G.H. A History of Political Theory Harrap, London 1964.
Bluhm. W.T. : Theories of the Political System : Classics of Political Thought And Modern Political Analysis Prentice Hall, New Jersey 1978.
Dunning. : Political Theories: Ancient and Medieval. 1959.

4.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

Check Your progress - 1

- 1) See Section 4.2
- 2) See Section 4.2
- 3) See Section 4.3

Check Your progress - 2

- 1) See Section 4.4.1
- 2) See Section 4.4.2
- 3) See Section 4.4.3
- 4) See Section 4.4.4

**Unit -5 Aristotle on Citizenship - Slavery - Property -
Best State - Theory of Revolution -
Classification of Governments.**

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Citizenship
- 5.3 Slavery
- 5.4 Property
- 5.5 Best State
- 5.6 Theory of Revolution
- 5.7 Classification of Governments
- 5.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.9 Key Words
- 5.10 Some Useful Books
- 5.11 Answer to check Your Progress

5.0 Objectives

The objective of this lesson in the main is to continue our discussion of Aristotle's Political thought. Specifically our objectives are to understand:

- Whom he considers as citizens
- Why and how he defends slavery
- Why he considers property as the basis of virtue
- What is his best state
- What is his theory of Revolution
- How he classifies Governments.

5.1 Introduction

In the previous lesson bearing unit No.4 we have introduced ourselves to the life and works of Aristotle and the general nature and trend of his thought. We specifically focused on and understood his views on State and Family. In this Unit No.5 we will continue the discussion on Aristotle and learn his views on other important topics such as citizenship, slavery, property, best state, Revolution and classification of governments in that order.

5.2 Citizenship

Aristotle's ideas on citizenship are just in conformity with the then prevailing Greek conception and practice. In the Greek city State, slaves, aliens and tradesmen were excluded from citizenship even if they together constituted the majority. His views on citizenship are its clear defence.

In an ideal State Citizen and good man are one and same, according to Aristotle. But as this is not possible in the actual states, he defines the citizens differently.

Aristotle defines a citizen as one who "has the power (and duty) to take part in the deliberative or judicial administration of any state". Since the city states followed direct democracy every citizen had a right and duty to be a legislator, judge or administrator as the

situation demanded. That is why, the qualification for and expectation from the citizens were very high. This resulted in the citizenship being given always to a smaller number than the people present or living in a state.

In this background, the citizen for Aristotle was an economically independent gentleman with property, education, experience and leisure capable of being an "active citizen". Ownership of property by citizen is necessary as it gives him leisure, education and stature to participate in politics actively. It is for this reason that slaves, mechanics or tradesmen (lower classes) and aliens are excluded from citizenship as they lack the above qualifications necessary for it. Of course, these "lower classes" and "aliens" are very much necessary for the purpose of making happy and self-sufficient community. They are in other words a "necessary condition" but not a "necessary part" of the state according to Aristotle. The citizen is one who is capable of producing the "virtue" or the "moral good" which is the aim of politics. The lower classes and aliens produce only the material good and therefore are not qualified to be citizens according to Aristotle.

Aristotle's views on citizenship are an elitist one. His views on slavery and property are also in the same line.

5.3 Slavery

Aristotle defends slavery as natural and essential. Slavery is held natural because some are capable of using only their body and can do nothing else better. In other words, some are masters because of their developed mind and some are slaves by their underdeveloped mind. It is the law of nature according to Aristotle for the superior to rule the inferior. It is advantageous to both.

Aristotle permits hunting and control "against men, who though intended by nature to be governed will not submit". He also permits enslaving of defeated people in wars. But he is against enslaving of the Greeks and for enslaving only non-Greeks.

He considers slaves as essential for household happiness like animals. But the difference between household animals and slaves is that slave can understand the reason of the master unlike the animal. Yet both are possession of the master. A slave is a live - tool. Therefore the use made of animals and slaves are not different. Slaves are not normally capable of acting rationally on their own. But Aristotle considers the possibility of exceptions, both in the case of slaves and masters, with regard to their rational abilities due to historic reasons. There can be a wise slave and an unwise master. He also conceded that often men are slaves by law than by nature. Therefore, he opened the door for a liberal approach by insisting that the rule over the slave must be based on moral superiority or excellence, by reminding that friendship is possible between the two and that the abuse of authority even over a slave is injurious to both. But, he just opened the liberal door but did not dare come out of the dark practices and traditions of his age.

5.4 Property

Aristotle's views on property are also just in line with the attitude of Greece of his times towards it. Generally, those days in Greece possession of property was considered as a right qualification and a just claim for citizenship and political power. Property was considered as necessary as it provides leisure, comfort and education necessary to produce virtue needed for politics. Some forms of Governments like oligarchies or Plutocracies (rule by rich) over emphasised property qualifications. Others tried to balance between the claims of property, number (majority of men), and quality or wisdom for political power.

Aristotle's discussion of property starts as an attack against Plato's idea of communism of property suggested in his Republic. Aristotle wrongly assumes that Plato was suggesting it for the whole Society whereas Plato was limiting "Communism" only to the ruling class to make them selfless, united and virtuous. Aristotle attacks

“Communism” as producing too much “unity” and destructive of the “plural” nature of State. He indeed considers private property not as a threat to moral perfection but as an aid to it and defends it.

Aristotle defends private property on four grounds. First, he considers it as providing incentives to the hardworking individual and as an agent of progress of Society as it makes “everyone to attend to his business” regularly. Second, it is defended as necessary for “pleasure” it gives to men as it meets needs, helps self-realisation and self-respect. In this context he nicely differentiates between private property and selfishness and miserliness. He considers these bad qualities as more due to bad human nature than private property. Third, he defends it on the ground that it permits “liberality i.e., generous and right use of property for alleviating poverty in society. Fourth and finally he defends private property on the ground that it is an age-old institution which has proven its value over time.

It is interesting to note, that Aristotle while defending private property, argues at the same time for the right use of property and even control over inequality or too much unequal distribution of wealth in society as an essential requirement of a good polity. Inequalities are dangerous to the balance, harmony and stability of states. That is why he prefers rule by middle class as it avoids extreme favours to the wealthy or poor and thus saves society from tyranny and instability.

In short to Aristotle, who owns property is less important than how it is used or what human nature controls it. The evils of private property system is due to the evils of human nature. The solution is in moral improvement of man. He says, beautifully that “the beginning of reform is not so much to equalize property as to train the nobler sort of natures not to desire more, and to prevent the lower from getting more.;”.

Aristotle was the first person to defend private property system in such vivid and powerful terms. But, at the same time, Aristotle’s views are not a more championing of the greedy and consumerist

capitalism. Perhaps, as we just saw in the above paragraph, Aristotle's views go beyond capitalist conception of private property, and came nearer to Gandhian and sarvodaya conceptions of "trusteeship" (administering private property like a social trustee) and "Aparigraha" (promoting non-desire)

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Examine Aristotle's views on citizenship

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2. Do you agree with Aristotle's defence of slavery. Discuss

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3. Aristotle is a champion of the propertied class? Comment.

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5.5 Best State or Ideal State

With regard to the ideal state, Aristotle seems to have no burning interest, as much as he had in actual states and their reforms. Therefore, in the traditions of his Guru Plato though he begins to sketch an ideal state in Book III and continues in Block VII and VIII of his Politics, he never finishes it. Dunning, indeed says that Aristotle was more concerned with the best state attainable by men under given conditions than with the absolutely and abstractly best state. Sabine, sees in Aristotle's efforts in this direction a search for best attainable Government which existing states can attain to avoid the imperfections of oligarchy and democracy.

In an absolutely ideal state the absolute or ideal "Virture" or the absolutely virtuous men or best men must rule. Therefore, if the best is one it results in monarchy, if the best are a few it results in aristocracy. But the best absolute being unattainable he passes on to the best attainable.

His ideal state, he calls it as, "POLITY". Polity is on the average best to him. Polity is the Constitution in which the principle of mean or via media is embodie. In other words it avoids extremities of richness and poverty or oligarchy and democracy. The richness breeds arrogance and a lack of capacity to obey; the other brings

slavishness and a lack of capacity to command. When class division is serious there can be no state since there can be no real friendship between the classes and the friendship is the essential principle of all associations. Therefore, Polity is the best state as the middle class and the middle path rule there. Peace and stability are insured here.

But the pragmatic Aristotle is very well aware that even this polity which is best on the average, is not necessarily the best for every people under every set of circumstance. What is best depends on circumstances. In this sense, democracy is best where the poor greatly exceed the rich in numbers; oligarchy, where the superiority of the rich in resources and power more than compensates for their inferiority in numbers ; and, Polity is the best where the middle class is clearly superior to the rest. It is a Constitutional Government. It is a judicious combination of quality (oligarchy) and quantity (democracy). Its social foundation is the large middle class, the class which "saves - states", a class which is large enough to give a popular foundation to the state, which is not poor enough to be degraded or rich enough to be greedy and not disinterested to hold the magistrates responsible, and yet is select enough to avoid the evils of government by the masses.

Aristotle attempts to lay down in detail the conditions essential to the best state. But, the details are not with regard to constitutional and institutional organization but with regard to the most favourable external conditions for the best state and the most effective methods of character building for people. This approach is suggestive of Plato in his The Laws. But Aristotle follows the principal of mean in everything. He suggests a territory which is compact and neither too nearer nor far away from the sea. He suggests a population size suitable for self-sufficiency, security and easy supervision. He recommends a Greek like character combining spirit and intellect. He relies on liberal and compulsory education to shape the character especially through farming good habits among citizens.

Thus, unlike Plato's, Aristotle's best state is not the abstract and the absolute best state but the best state or Government attainable under given conditions. His polity is a Constitutional Government of middle class and middle path with balance, harmony and stability. It is a combination and improvement over the existing Aristocracies and democracies. Indeed the struggle of political engineering in modern democracies is also in the same direction. Aristotle's quest has many lessons for today.

5.6 Theory of Revolution

In ancient Greece where city-states were many, political instability and changes were frequent and common. Evolutions due to socio-economic changes were gradual and more stable. But revolutions or sudden changes in Government were quite problematic. Revolutions created instability, disorders and affect peace and development.

Aristotle who was a serious student of comparative Government was dawn to discuss the problem of revolution. IN his book POLITICS in the Book V he theorises at length on the causes of revolutions and the measures or cures needed to prevent them.

The most general cause of revolutions was, according to Aristotle, the craving of men for equality. Masses demand absolute equality. The oligarchs or upper classes demand only proportionate equality (proportionate to birth, wealth, intellect or merit), Serious conflicts over demand for equality affects stability and heads to revolutions.

Aristotle also enumerates a large number of particular causes of revolution. He discusses them under two groups viz., (1) human passion and (2) impersonal factors in which he groups them. Under human passions are listed such factors as jealousy, arrogance, fear and so on. His discussion of impersonal factors causing revolution covers obscure social and economic sources of revolutions. Interestingly, Aristotle also differentiates between causes of revolution

and timings or occasions or the factors that trigger a revolution. Causes are deep and profound. But the occasions, or actual time when the revolution occurs or is triggered may be incidents of trifling character (eg disrespect shown to a leader of a movement demanding equality or change).

Aristotle next goes on to discuss the causes of revolution of each specific form of constitution. For example, discussing how democracy is undone by revolution and transformed into oligarchy and tyranny, he identifies the demagogue as responsible for both revolutions. In the early days of the chaos, the demagogue by posing as a friend of the people, makes himself a tyrant; and in later days the talking demagogue, while ever appearing to be attacking the rich, actually drives them to oligarchic revolution to defend himself against the poor. Also, more often democracy degenerates from moderate to extreme form i.e., mobocracy, by demagogues making people to believe that they are above law. Analysing the causes of revolution affecting oligarchy, he places his finger on dissensions and ambitions or factionalism as the cause among others.

Further, another major cause he identifies for the fall of constitutions by revolutions is the imbalance in them. For example, both oligarchy and democracy according to Aristotle are by nature imbalanced and run the risk of ruining themselves by being too much of themselves. Too much of democracy becomes mobrule and too much of oligarchy becomes despotic and then they move towards tyranny.

Corruption is another major cause he identifies. It annoys people by robbing them of their money and in Aristocracies of the honour of holding office also. So, he wants corruption and even extravaganza to be curbed.

Cures:

As a corollary to the above analysis of causes, Aristotle suggests one general cure i.e balancing the opposites or attempting

harmony with opposing political forces. This harmony he prefers to be built into the constitution itself in the form of mixed constitution. It is in the mixed constitution that stability is better maintained and changes would be warded off by maintaining proportionate equality and by giving to each class its due.

Aristotle is aware that cures depend upon causes of revolution. In the case of Aristocracy and oligarchy, he considers "poverty is the parent of revolution and crime" and therefore, advises them to treat the inferior classes well. For democracies, he considers the rich as the source of danger to them and advises them to treat the rich well. Tyrants, he advises them on the one hand, like Machiavelli did later, to degrade, humiliate, slain and ruthlessly suppress opposition and on the other to rule less like a tyrant and to show at least some interest in public welfare.

Finally, we should note, that some general cures which Aristotle suggested against revolutions and instability are valid for us also today. These are (1) educating the people in the spirit of the Constitution; (2) preventing monopoly of offices by only some classes or families and opening of offices to every body but without salary; (3) crying danger to the constitution as it rouses those interested in stability (4) transparency or publicity about both the condition and conduct of public finance to inspire public confidence and to fight corruption and extravaganza and (5) observing a policy of golden mean. Indeed, the modern constitutions of today are more stable, when compared to earlier ones, as they are "mixed constitutions" as suggested by Aristotle. Also measure of development, welfare state and social justice which they are adopting are indeed meant to bring not only progress, justice but also harmony and stability.

5.7 Classification of Governments

Aristotle's views on forms and classification of governments is illustrated in the following table.

Forms and Classification of Governments

Sl. No.	Quantity (Number of people with sovereignty)	Quality	
		True	Perverted
1.	One	Monarchy	Tyranny
2.	Few	Aristocracy	Oligarchy
3.	Many or Whole people	Moderate democracy or polity	Extreme Democracy or Mobocracy

Of these forms of Government, monarchy he considers as theoretically best. If one best man of virtue could be found he could be an ideal ruler even above law. But, practically he rules out monarchy for two reasons. One, no government can be best in practice unless subjected to law, and two, Government is always a collective exercise, result of collective wisdom, and it cannot be possible by one man. Monarchy therefore is illogical and impossible. It perverts often into tyranny a government purely resting on force and therefore out of place in rational politics. Aristocracy, a government by a few good and virtuous persons is next best. It is based on birth and wealth. It is difficult to sustain due to internal conflicts and greed and soon perverts to oligarchy. Oligarchy is a government by a few powerful persons based on property and for their selfish purposes. It will be replaced by polity or moderate democracy, a middle class based rule by many in the interest of the common good. It perverts into rule by all or mob in the interest of the poor only. Neglect of the common good by it leads it back to monarchy.

Since Aristotle was a practical minded person and had studied empirically so many actual constitutions and governments, Aristotle's POLITICS contains a lot of detailed discussion on different aspects of Government. First, he examines different claims to power such as birth, wealth or property, virtue and numbers. The most distinguishing

point here is the way Aristotle considers the qualifications of property as positive, having moral consequences since it often gets education, good association, leisure and even good birth. Second, he is able to go into different types of monarchies (five types) Democracies (four types) and oligarchies (four types) depending on the way they care for common good, include or exclude people from offices and use property qualifications for office. Third, Shrewdly he identifies three organs or branches of Government viz., (1) Deliberative (Legislative) (2) Magistrial (Executive) and (3) Judicial and discusses their organization. Fourth, he distinguishes between Forms and Substances or appearances and realities of Government based on the end they serve. Fifth, he discusses the problems of their 'stability' and examines the causes and remedies for political revolutions affecting different governments. Sixth and finally, with all this knowledge, he even attempts to identify the ideal state or the "best government" and holds up his "POLITY" or middle class rule following a non-dogmatic path of golden-mean.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Outline Aristotle's conception of Best - State

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2) Discuss Aristotle's theory of revolutions

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3) Examine Aristotle's classification of governments.

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5.8 Let Us Sum Up

In this Unit No. 5, we have made an attempt to understand Aristotle's views on citizenship, slavery, property, Best state, theory of revolution and classification of Governments. His observations on these are the result of deep and comparative study of many constitutions and governments existing and operating in actuality in his days as well as in the past. Aristotle thus, founded political science and opened up the possibility of conservative and liberal philosophies. Yet, he held up the ethical nature and end of politics as well as Plato. And thus he became the grand patriarch of political studies of all hues.

5.9 Key Words

Aliens	-	foreigners
Tradesmen	-	Merchants or Occupationists
Plutocracy	-	Rule by the rich
Liberality	-	Generousness with regard to money
Factionalism	-	Groupism
Golden-mean	-	The middle-path.

5.10 Some Useful Books

1. Same Books suggested in Unit 4 are useful here also
2. Also see
 - a) Ernest Barker ed. The Politics of Aristotle New York, Oxford University Press 1958
 - b) Ernest Barker. The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle. Dover Publications inc., New York 1959.

5.11 Answer to Check Your Progress Exercises

Check your progress - 1

1. See Section 5.2
2. See Section 5.3
3. See Section 5.4

Check your progress - 2

1. See Section 5.5
2. See Section 5.6
3. See Section 5.7

Unit - 6 Greek Contributions to Political Thought

Structure

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Pioneering Role of Greeks in the Political Life and Thought of Mankind
- 6.3 The Nature of Greek Political Life and Institutions
- 6.4 Politics and Government of Sparta
- 6.5 Politics and Government of Athens
- 6.6 The Nature and Scope of Greek Political Thought
- 6.7 The Greek Contribution to Political Thought and Agreement
- 6.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.9 Key Words
- 6.10 Some Useful Book
- 6.11 Answer to Check Your Progress

6.0 Objectives

The objectives of this lesson unit No. 6 are to make the students to know and appreciate.

The Pioneering place and role of Greeks in the political life and thought of mankind

- The Nature of Greek political life and institutions
- The Nature and Scope of Greek Political Thought
- The contribution of Greeks to political Thought.

6.1 Introduction

In The first lesson unit No. 1 you were introduced to the importance of political thought in the west as well as to the relevance of Greeks to it. In the other lessons of this Block - 1 you have learnt in detail about the contributions of some eminent Greek political thinkers like Plato, Aristotle, Epicureans and Cynics. Here, in this unit No. 6 Our idea is to understand and appreciate the overall nature, scope and contributions of Greeks to political thought. This helps us to understand briefly and comprehensively the entire contribution of Greeks-especially even of those political thinkers and schools not included in the above lessons-to political ideas in particular and political life in general.

To do this we plan as follows. First, we try to understand the causes for the pioneering importance of Greece to the political life and ideas of mankind. Second, we try to understand the nature of Greek political life and institutions in general and of the two most important city-states of ancient Greece Viz., Sparta and Athens in particular as they were the basis of their thought. Thirdly, we will briefly survey the nature and scope of Greek political ideas. Finally we undertake a summary assessment of the overall contribution of Greek to political thought.

6.2 The Pioneering Role of Greeks in the Political Life and Thought of Mankind

The Middle-Eastern river valley civilizations founded the settled life and the first-state, the temple-state. But they were too busy building the instruments of civilization to probe intensely into the question of political life. They were also too religious in orientation to undertake logical discussion on political issues. The Greek who were comparatively less religious and more Philosophical did this job admirably.

The Situation of Greece near the Asia minor and the middle Eastern scenes of great river valley civilization provided a convenient backdrop and access to the instruments of civilization. This made them to move on from questions of "how to live?" to "how to live well?" This lead them to the questions of aesthetics, ethics and politics apart from arts and science in their quest for philosophy. Other factors too, helped Greeks. Racially they were a combination of vigorous northeren invading barbarians and polished people of southern Greece. This had made them both physically strong and intellectually and culturally vigorous people. The mountainous peninsular topography and the salubrious meditaranian climate had combined to foster intelligence and enterprise through comfort and opportunities. The result was the ancient Greek civilization with an eye for experiment, a nerve for vitality, tolerance for variety and a quest for the essential generality. In political life this resulted in multiplicity of city states, constitutions and forms of governments crowned by the democracy of Athens. The rich political thought of Greece was a product of the intense struggles and debates, especially in Athens, over the right form of government.

6.3 The Nature of Greek Political Life and Institutions

Recorded Greek political history is available form the 7th century B.C. Right from the beginning Greec was found to be full of small political communities occupying her various valleys, coasts and

islands. The Greek topography favoured the small states. The city-state was in existence by this period. It continued all through the days of ancient civilization as the major system of her political life with very little exceptions of bigger political formations. The compactness and the close knit nature of the Greek city life led to an unusually intense political life. The political sense, political participation and political debate were always high here. Known as Polis the Greek city state was both a church and state of the small community. But Greeks did not have a priestly class. Nor they had normally a permanent ruling class. The citizenship was not open to all. It was small in size and was always bound by duties of the polis at least as a soldier when it comes to it. High patriotism, secularism, and therefore rationalism and moral concerns informed their political debates and reforms. This made their political life thought and civilization remarkably rich.

By about 5th century B.C among the Greek city states there were two very important ones, viz., Sparta and Athens. They were two polestars guiding and leading the Greek peninsula in peace and war. Yet, they were actually poles apart in their geography, traditions, cultures and institutions. Sparta was a landlocked state representing agricultural Aristocratic and oligarchic traditions and institutions. Athens was a coastal town with commercial and democratic traditions and institutions. But, both these city states were important to the rise of political thought, Athens by hosting it and Sparta by influencing it considerably. Understanding these two representative city states helps us to understand Greek political life, institutions and thought better.

6.4 The Politics and Government of Sparta

Sparta was essentially a rigid social system and a militaristic state system. It was famous for the renowned Greek discipline, organization and strength. Socially in Sparta, there were three classes viz., Helots, Perikoi and Spartans. The Helots were the lowest hierarchically, most numerous in number and agricultural labourers

on the Spartan owned lands by occupation, with no political or civil rights. The Periokoi formed the middle class engaged in commerce and industry with only civil rights given to them. The Spartans were the highest and the ruling class of Sparta with all the rights civil, economic and political.

Though such classification was common to most Greek city states, what was special about the Spartan social system was its militaristic and communistic nature. Particularly these were true of the organization and life of the ruling class, the Spartans. In Gettel's clear and precise words: "The Spartans Had absolute control in public affairs. They owned the land, were forbidden to engage in trade, and devoted their energy mainly to military service until the maturity of physical life was passed, after which they assumed the duties of government. Their life was rigidly regulated and communistic. Children at the age of seven were placed in the hands of state officials for uniform training; the adult males ate at the public mess hall. Physical perfection and eugenics (planned marriages and births for good breed) were emphasized and all forms of luxury and inequality were prohibited." (Gettel p.35)

Spartans were not allowed to be rich or poor and to own gold or silver. Their money was made of iron. "Spartan life" became proverbial for simplicity. Another unique feature was the training given to their girls along with boys in gymnastics to make both of them strong for breeding good of offsprings.

No less interesting was the Spartan Constitution. Its essence was its aristocratic character. It provided for two kings mainly for military and religious leadership functions both perfectly equal in status and authority. Next came a Senate of 28 members elected for life with administrative and mainly judicial duties. The third in place was an Assembly consisting of the whole body of Spartans which met rarely only to approve very important policies or reforms. But the most important of the Spartan institutions was the Ephors, an annually

elected Board of five members, determining all administrative and general policies. With this Spartan Constitution having strength and stability for centuries while other cities had instability and revolutions, it influenced political thought (of many thinkers, especially of Plato) enormously becoming often the sheet anchor of the Greek search for the ideal state.

6.5 The Politics and Government of Athens

Athens was in every respect a contrast to Sparta. Its life was less rigid, less militaristic, not communistic and was actually freedom oriented and democratic. Athens also had three social classes viz., Slaves, Citizens and Aliens. The Slaves constituted two thirds of the Athenian population, discharged much manual labour, and had no civil or political rights. The Citizens were the most important and powerful class of Athenians. The citizenship was conferred by birth to the children of Athenian citizens. Aliens and Slaves were excluded from it. In Athens only citizens had political rights. But within this class of citizens there were two sub-classes viz., Nobility and commoners. This was based on history. Nobility had more powers than commoners in the earlier period. But over time, with democratic reforms brought about by statesmen like Solon, Cleisthenes and finally by Pericles gradually the power shifted to the citizens. As Athens was a coastal city with commerce and industry apart from agriculture, there were many resident and mobile aliens. The aliens had only civil rights but not political rights.

During the height of its democracy in fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Athens had the following institutions viz., (1) The Assembly of the People, (2) The Council of Five hundred, (3) Boards of Magistrates, (4) The Board of Generals and (5) The Peoples Courts. The Assembly consisted of all the citizens and met nearly ten times in an year. Its functions were mainly electing magistrates and generals, controlling other political bodies and occasionally passing binding decrees. But its big number was a liability though theoretically it was

the most powerful body. The Council of Five hundred was a representative body chosen by lot from local districts called Denes. Its comparative compactness made it more powerful. It had executive powers, controlled navy received ambassadors and prepared agenda for the assembly. The Board of Magistrates consisted of ten members, one from each of the Ten Tribes into which Athens was divided. Chosen by lot from within these tribes, The Magistrates had short terms and were subjected to the audit and control of the Council. The Board of Generals with ten members directly elected by people i.e., citizens of Athens i.e., the Assembly, was the supreme body in military and diplomatic affairs. It provided leadership to the city state. In fact Pericles, the great democratic Athenian statesman was one of such generals. Finally, the Peoples' Courts consisted of peoples' judges, numbering in hundreds, of ten upto five hundred, elected by the Assembly from a Panel of Six thousand Popular juries. They considered and decided civil, criminal administrative and constitutional cases. Above all, the control these courts exercised over the magistrates was very relevant in a democracy. This was done in three ways. First, the people's courts examined them at the time of selection. Second, they were subjected by these courts to a thorough review of all their public acts at the time of their exit from each office. Finally, the Courts conducted a special audit of accounts and a review of their public expenditure at the conclusion of every magistrate's term or service.

Thus, the Athenian constitution was a truly democratic one, a direct democracy at it. It provided opportunities and cherished the participation of all in politics. Every citizen was a member of the Assembly and had to participate at least once in other bodies. The democratic character and control over the administration was in choosing of magistrates, Generals and judges by lots or elections, their short terms, restricted number of terms to hold office (except in the case of Generals) and above all the thorough and triple control by people's courts just referred to above.

Finally, the greatest thing about the Athenian democracy relevant for modern and Indian democracy is not only that it held staunch faith in the high democratic ideals, or held them high but gave the best expression to it. No body could hither to outbeat General Pericles, a great Athenian statesman of the 4th century B.C in outlining the political ideals of Athens and of democracy itself. Fortunately, Thucidydes, the great Greek Historian had preserved for us the funeral oration of Pericles on democracy in which the eloquence of pericles flowers on democracy as follows:

“Our constitution does not copy the Laws of neighboring states; we are rather a pattern to others than imitators ourselves. Its administration favours the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we look to the Laws, they afford equal justice to all in their private differences. If the social standing and advancement in public life falls to reputation for capacity the class considerations are not being allowed to interfere with merit; nor again does poverty bar the way, if a man is able to serve the state, he is not hindered by the obscurity of his conditions If we turn to our military policy there also we differ form our antagonists Our rivals from their very cradles, by a painful discipline seek after manliness, at Athens we live exactly as we please, and yet are just ready to encounter every legitimate danger not are these the only points in which our constitution is worthy of admiration. We cultivate refinement without extravagance and knowledge without effeminacy ; wealth we employ more for youth than for show, place the real disgrace of poverty not in owning to the fact but in declining the struggle against it. Our public men have besides politics their private affairs to attend to, and our ordinary citizens though occupied with the pursuits of industry are still fair judges of public matters ; for unlike any other nation, regarding him who takes no part in these duties not as unambitious but as useless ; we Athenians are able to judge at all events if we cannot originate, and, instead of looking on

discussion as a stumbling block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all In short, I say that as a city we are school of Heallas". (cited in Gettel pp 39-40).

In this statement of Pericles we find the Athenian passion for unity, the spirit of the amateur, optimism about the natural political capacity of the average man, democracy, freedom and above all for free discussion. In this background it was just natural for the Greeks in general and Athenians in particular to become creators of political philosophy.

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Outline the causes for the pioneering importance of Greeks to Political thought.

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2) Briefly state the nature and importance of city state.

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3) Discuss the politics and government of Sparta

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4) Outline the institutions of Athenian democracy.

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6.6 The Nature and Scope of Greek to Political Thought.

6.6.1. Nature

The nature of Greek Political thought can be out lined as follows. First, it was the pioneering effort in building political philosophy and laying foundation for political science. Second, influenced by naturalistic philosophers of Greece like Ionians who founded science, sophists who raised social and logical issues the Greek political thought was logical, rational and philosophical in approach. Third, as it considered politics as a search for good life it was highly ethical in approach. Fourth, this highly rational and ethical approache made the Greek political thought to become democratic. Fifth, the dissatisfaction of the perfectionists with democracy, not to talk of other forms of Government, lead the Greek political thought to

become a search for the ideal state and ideal politics. Sixth, the narrowness of the Greek city - state and its politics made those inside Greece who were denied citizenship, to make the Greek political thought also a search for the cosmopolitan i.e., universal state.

6.6.2. Scope

In scope the Greek political life, institutions and above all their thoughts were quite comprehensive. Though pioneering in nature, the Greek political thought covers the domain of politics in its entirety conceptually, temporally and spatially. Conceptually, they covered all political concepts starting from politics, citizenship, state constitution, government, law and justice. Temporally i.e., time-wise, they covered their past, present and future (ideal) politics. Spatially, they covered both the narrow city-state politics to cosmopolitan or universalistic politics.

On politics

Greeks considered politics as a moral public life. Its aim was good life for all. Therefore all (citizens) had a duty to participate in it. Therefore politics they looked at essentially as a Republic i.e., an affair of the people and a democracy at it.

On citizenship

Their idea of citizenship was narrow. In a state all were not citizens. Slaves, Aliens and labouring class were all excluded from it. But every citizen had a duty to participate in civil affairs of politics. Otherwise he was considered as "useless". The Greek emphasized only the duties and not the rights of the citizen.

On State: The City - State

The Greek State was essentially small in size. It was for most part the idea of City - State. Occasionally, the need for larger confederations of City - State were felt and even attempted but failed. Those who were denied citizenship of City - State, like Cynics and

Stoics even glorified the Cosmopolitan - State. But the city - state normally was their state size and formation. The city state was a compact, close - knit, intense political community life. It was three-in-one community viz., moral religious and political. Absence of the priestly class made it secular. And, the duty on all citizens to participate in it made it democratic. Greeks did not emphasize the sovereignty of the state as they emphasised only its moral duties.

On Constitution

The multiplicity of City - States lead to the multiplicity of Constitutions in ancient Greece. That Aristotle could collect 150 Constitutions and study them high lighted this. Per haps they were not written constitutions but constitutional traditions and systems deeply rooted in their folklore and literature. Never-theless, their existence emphasized the rule of law as basic. Aristotle's preference for the constitutional polity was the highest tribute to it.

On Government

The Greek conception of Government was essentially Republican and democratic as they considered politics as a public affair and citizenship as duty - bound to participate in it. All Governments except tyranny were accountable. Their amateur oriented political institutions were all more oriented towards wider participation and accountability than efficiency. This made the rulers amateurs, choosen by lot or election with short and even restricted terms and subject to control of popular bodies. Greeks knew many forms of Government due to the scope in experimenting Governments in multiplicity of city - states. They even noticed a cyclical change in Governments over time in city - states from Monorchy to Monarchy through Tyranny, Aristocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy and Mobocracy and developed a cyclical theory of Governments. But they underlined the value of democracy, rule of law and freedom as none else.

On Law

Greeks considered law as a moral rule that binds the community. Their view of law was less 'legalistic' as they emphasized not 'positive' or ruler-made law but traditional, customary theological or wise man's codes and even natural laws. But they valued law and rule -of-law very much as necessary for justice.

On Justice

Greek view of 'Justice' was also more moralistic than legalistic. It glorifies and emphasizes moral duty than legal rights. Justice to Greeks was the highest of virtues. To plato, Justice in one word was Harmony as it puts in place and order all other virtues and functions. Therefore, it was not a mere function of a judicial tribunal but of all citizens and rulers and their wisdom.

On Democracy and Freedom

Greeks' love and practice of democracy was at its best in Athens. But as it was restricted to only the citizens and the inefficiency and mob orientation of democracy made some Greeks to opt out for Aritocracy. Much of Greek political thought emerged amidst the rich debate that ensued in this connection. Greeks loved freedom also as necessary for free discussion and wise decision making in society and government. But, as this was also limited to the citizens and as slavery was justified Greeks' approach to freedom was contradictory. Those who were kept out of freedom and democracy turned towards other states including the ideal state.

Ideal State

Dissatisfaction with democracy, its deficiency, intense and frequent political life, conflicts wars instabilities and revolutions in the context of multiplicity of small city - state often lead some thinkers to dream of ideal - state. Plato dreamt of an ideal - state where Philosopher - Kings and select Guardians developed by planned birth, education and communism ruled with strength and wisdom. Aristotle

thought of a middle class-ruled mixed - state as ideal. But while both these thinkers limited their search to within the small city - state, some like cynics and Stoics who considered city - state politics as narrow and narrow minded yearned for universal or cosmopolitan state of the wise men.

6.7 Greeks' Contribution to Political Thought : An Assessment

Ancient Greeks contributed richly to the founding of all sciences, arts, architecture and philosophy including political philosophy. But their contribution to philosophy was highest. While Socrates in a way founded 'Philosophy' his student Plato founded 'Political philosophy' while Plato's student Aristotle founded 'Political Science' and wrote the first Book under the little 'POLITICS' 2500 years ago.

Engles, Friedrich wrote in 19th century in his *Dialectics of Nature*.

"..... we are compelled in philosophy as in so many other spheres to return again and again to the achievements of that small people where universal talents and activity assured it a place in the history of human development that no other people can ever claim. The other reason, however, is that the manifold forms of Greek philosophy contain in embryo, in the nascent state, almost all latter modes of outlook on the world". (cited in Nersesyants V.S. Political Thought of Ancient Greece Progress Publishers Moscow 1989, p.5)

In their political thought Greeks took an idealistic view of the political process. The politics according to them exists for the sake of good life. In search of it they debated freely. Their thought spanned the entire domain of politics. In the Greek conception of politics there is an unusually rich scope for morality reason, freedom, respect for law, justices and democracy. The cardinal problems of human politics in these regard, raised by Greeks and the institutional system they developed to control public officials, have never lost their theoretical

and political significance. Even today we struggle to grapple with them. Our political battles over ideologies, institutions, process and politics are enormous and never ending. But it is an eternal tribute to the undying richness of the Greek contributions to political thought that we again and again dig into their treasure to take support to our arguments, struggles and reforms in politics. As a Russian writer puts this beautifully:

“In our time, like in olden days, the history of Greek philosophical and political thought remains an inexhaustible well of ideas and arguments used by the representatives of various political schools and trends in ideological battles in order to substantiate their own views and to flout the views of their opponents”.

(Nersesyants V.S. Political Thought of Ancient Greece Progress Publishers, Moscow 1989. p.208).

6.8 Let us Sum Up

In this lesson we have discussed the Greeks' contributions to political life and thought of mankind. For this propose we first examined the causes for their pioneering contributions. Second, we examined the nature of Greek political life and institutions especially of those in two representative cities of Sparta and Athens. Third, we discussed the nature and scope of Greek Political thought. Finally we made an assessment of the Greeks' contribution of political thought.

Greeks were the founders of Political philosophy in all its variety and of political science in its roots. The variety of institutions and political experiments they had in their multiple city - states over centuries, the almost secular vigorous logical mind they had developed, the free discussions their democracies permitted all contributed to the richness of Greek contributions to political concepts starting from politics, state, citizenship, constitutions, government, law, justice, freedom and democracy both as ideas and ideals. Their perspective on politics has both local and global dimensions. In this

background, it is not surprising that the Greeks' contribution to political thought has both an universal and eternal appeal.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit.

1) Outline the nature of Greek Political Thought

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2) Briefly sketch the Scope of Greek Political Thought

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3) Make a brief assessment of the Greeks' contribution to political thought.

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6.9 Key Words

Secular	- This worldly / Non religious
Polis	- The Greek city - state
Ephors	- A small cabinet like body of five members in ancient Sparta
Cosmopolitan	- One who argues in favour of world - state / citizen of the world / one who is very broad minded
Aristocracy	- Rule of the wise (few)
Oligarchy	- Rule of the powerful few or rich few.

6.10 Some Useful Books

Gettel R.G	: <u>History of Political Thought</u> . George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1959.
Nersesyants .V.S	: <u>Political Thought of Ancient Greece</u> Progress publishes, Moscow, 1973
Maxey .C. Chester	: <u>Political Philosophies</u> Macmillan, New York, 1959.
Sabine G.H.	: <u>A History of Political Theory</u> George .G. Harrap and Co. Ltd., London 1964.

6.11 Answer to Check Your Progress Exercises

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See section 6.2
- 2) See section 6.3
- 3) See section 6.4
- 4) See section 6.5

Check your Progress - 2

- 1) See section 6.6.1
- 2) See section 6.6.2
- 3) See section 6.7

NOTES

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Unit-7. Epicureans and Cynics

Structure:

- 7.0 Objective
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 The Background and Nature of the Schools of Post-Aristotelian Political Thought of Greece.
- 7.3 Epicureans
- 7.4 Cynics
- 7.5 Let us sum up
- 7.6 Keywords
- 7.7 Some useful books
- 7.8 Answers to check your progress

7.0 Objectives

The main purpose of this unit is to understand the background, nature and schools of the post-Aristotelian political thought of ancient Greece.

- The specific objectives are to understand:
- The nature and importance of Epicureanism
- The nature and importance of cynicism as schools of political philosophy

7.1 Introduction:

The death of Aristotle in 322 marked the end of an era with regard to both the Greek politics and the Greek political philosophy. In politics it was the end of the Greek city, state and its replacement by empire state. In political philosophy it was the end of the political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, which was about the political ideas, and ideals of city-state and their replacement by the post-Aristotelian political philosophies, which hated and rejected them. The post-Aristotelian schools of political philosophy were mainly

- 1) Epicureans with their predecessors called Cyrenaics and revisers called Skeptics, and
- 2) Cynics and their reviser called Stoics.

In this unit of W.P.T. we plan to understand them as follows. First, we will examine the background or context in which these philosophies emerged. Second, we understand the nature and importance of the school of Epicureans. Third, we will discuss the school of Cynics and its importance to political philosophy.

7.2 The Background and Nature of the Schools of Post-Aristotelian Political Thought of Greece

Post-Aristotelian political thought was a product of

- 1) dissatisfaction with the limited citizenship and the collectivism in the city-state, and
- 2) the failure of city-state as political units.

We have already learnt in earlier lessons that the citizenship was conferred on a smaller number and the majority which consisted of slaves, aliens and tradesmen were denied citizenship. Such people hated the politics of the city-states and the political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle which sang about them. Again, the city-state politics and its philosophies practiced and advocated an idealist and collectivist approach to politics. It glorified the state, emphasized duty of the individual and undervalued his rights and freedoms. Of course, Plato's communism was limited to the ruling class only. But, some people hated this collectivism. They valued individualism and the freedom, rights and happiness of the individual more. There was rigorous dissent and alternative philosophical schools were developed.

Plato and Aristotle were great philosophers. Yet practically speaking from the point of view of their impact on their own and the immediately succeeding times, their philosophy was a great failure. The reason was that they sang about the city-state as a political institution and went out to perfect it at a time when, the city-state itself was singing its swan song. The city state was declining due to various reasons. First, while a state must secure self-sufficiency the city-state was gradually found to be too small a community to secure it. Second, even the city-state of Greece had practically experienced this. This was indicated in their attempts to build bigger associations of states called Leagues (for example Aetolian and Achaean Leagues). But, before this federal movement could mature and stabilize, thirdly, the Macedonian empire suggested itself as an alternative. The renowned student of Aristotle, the Prince of Macedon, Alexander, did not believe in the city-state and went out to build an empire. Though the Leagues and some city-states survived during the Macedonian Empire, they could not survive before the conquering arms of the Roman Empire.

The empire-state which replaced the city-state welded races

and civilizations. They widened the then known world. They mixed together Greeks and non-Greeks. Essentially, there was nothing totally new in this. Long before the Macedonian war drums sounded, the Greek city-states had lots of immigrants. But the ethnocentric Greeks had denied equality and citizenship to them. Plato and Aristotle had also declared "political life" as the highest moral life. But only citizens could enjoy this. Non-citizens disliked it. This was enough ground for counter and compensatory philosophies to develop. Epicureanism and Cynicism were such philosophies. These were philosophies retaliated to deprivation by turning their face away from politics.

The vagueness and vastness of Socratic philosophy and the simple nature of Socratic personality provided yet another ground for the opposite philosophies in variety to rise. The Socratic philosophy emphasized politics, philosophy, virtue and happiness simultaneously. The different disciples of Socrates who heard him understood and interpreted him differently. Plato and Aristotle pictured him as glorifying philosophy and politics. Antisthenes found in Socrates's simple life the origin of Cynicism. Aristippus interpreted Socrates's statement, "virtue is happiness", as the origin of the Cerenaic line of thinking which became later Epicureanism in the hands of Epicurus who was influenced by Aristippus.

The rigorous dissent against the narrow and the narrow-minded city-state civilization and philosophy took many new forms. Many new schools of political philosophy emerged. The School of Skeptics questioned the intellectual basis of the Greek philosophical structure. They were less philosophers of politics than philosophers of science. Therefore they are discussed today more under philosophy than political science. The school of Cynics questioned Greek civilization, culture and politics and went in quest of an ascetic life of indifference particularly to the politics. The school of Cerenaics valued pleasure and happiness as higher than the philosophy and politics

and became the foundation for Epicureanism. The school of Epicureans gave a polish and refinement to the Cereanaics' selfish pursuing of happiness. But they too found pleasure in withdrawing from the useless cares of public life into a life of private pleasure. In this unit we are focusing on the Epicureans and the Cynics because, unlike Plato and Aristotle they look down on politics, but each one for reasons of its own. Their negative attitude to politics was popular for some time. Then came Stoicism or the Stoic School, which polished and converted Cynicism into a very positive attitude to politics, and became very popular especially in Rome. About this Stoicism we will touch briefly while summarizing. Now we will move on to discuss the philosophy of Epicureans and Cynics one by one.

7.3 Epicureans

The Epicureans were the successors to Cereanaics. They were the followers of Epicurus (314 to 270 B.C), a Greek philosopher. Founded by Epicurus in 306 B.C the Epicurean school was one of the four great Athenian schools of philosophy. It continued for centuries.

Like Cereanaics Epicureans also held that private pleasure or happiness is more important than public life. But Epicureans were more sophisticated, more rational and more philosophical than Cereanaics. While both of these schools advocated egoism (selfishness) and hedonism (pleasure seeking), Epicureanism refined egoism with an ethical touch and hedonism with an aesthetic polish not found in Cereanaics. The Epicureans, also had a different and clear philosophy of their own with their own metaphysics, ethics and politics.

In their metaphysics the Epicureans were rationalistic, naturalistic and materialistic atomists. According to them nature means the atom out of which all things are made. Man is a stage in the evolution of matter. Human nature has essential selfishness and the individual's desire for happiness. Society and all its conventions and

institutions have evolved gradually and naturally to cater to the needs of the individual for satisfaction and self-sufficiency. They are the creations of human intelligence and endeavour. God has nothing to do with man. He cares little about men and their affairs. Indeed Epicureanism was pure rationalism which wanted to save man from all superstitions including religion and astrology. God to them was only a model of perfection to the imperfect human being.

In their ethics, the Epicureans do not recognize any other moral virtue than the attainment of happiness. The Good is a feeling privately enjoyed and the social arrangements are useless except when they act as measures to secure the largest private good. To the Epicureans pleasure was found not only in materialistic sensation but also in intellectual enjoyments and in the pleasures of duty. The essence of pleasure for them, was in avoiding pain. All men want pleasure. They are selfish. Happiness is a private sensation. Therefore, the test of everything is individual happiness. All conventions, institutions including language, religion, morality, society, state, law and government came to serve this end. They continue because they continue to serve this end. There is nothing intrinsically moral. Morality after all is an expediency. Justice is also a convention. Its use is in maximizing this individual happiness and avoiding pain. But in society the selfishness of different individuals clash. Clash results in pain. To avoid pain men create morals, justice, law and conventions and keep to them. Thus, men are just because injustice is not profitable and will be visited by punishment whether social or legal. Friendship, justice moral consciousness further happiness by avoiding clash and harmonizing social life. This emphasis on such positive values differentiated them from Cynics and brought Epicureans nearer the Stoics.

The politics and the Political Philosophy of Epicureans, issues from their rationalistic metaphysics and utilitarian ethics. To them, politics, state, law and government even justice are not inherently valid but arise in contract and are only expedients. They are justified

and continued by the order and security they provide. So in the entire society.

They had a negative view of politics. The Epicureans believe that good life is possible only outside the city-state. A wise man should withdraw from public life and should aim at self-sufficiency. Public life is indeed dangerous and obstructive. The wise man need not care for the external political and economic conditions. He must realize his good by his inner resources, particularly virtue. A virtuous man need not be afraid of state and law. He requires no state and no religion.

The rationalistic and naturalistic philosophy made them to appreciate certain very important political values. The Epicureans expounded that all men are equal and no distinction between man and man could be made. All, rich or poor, Greeks or non-Greeks were equal. Thus, for the first time in political thought Epicureans advocated the philosophy of natural equality. This led them also first, to the theory of Social Contract as the basis of all society and state, and second, a theory of world brotherhood since all men and even states are basically equal.

Regarding forms of Government, Epicureans are not so much interested. Since security is an important element of human happiness, any form of Government which provides this most is best. From this angle, they find monarchy as the best. Monarchy is a rule by a single virtuous, strong ruler who rules firmly in the interest of all. Yet, the ideal state for them was a state of tranquility achieved privately outside public life.

Thus, Epicureanism was on the whole a philosophy of escape. Like almost all the post-Aristotelian schools of Greek philosophy, Epicureanism was a quest for individual self-sufficiency. Its distinctive character was its aesthetic and ethical hedonism. Its political philosophy was individualist, utilitarian, contractualist and monarchist. Epicureans were the precursors of modern utilitarianism and contractualists.

7.4 Cynics

The Cynics were one of the first and the most extremist among the counter philosophies. It was founded by Antisthenes (450 to 366 B.C) a student of Socrates. It was a philosophy of escape and protest.

The Cynics were a vague band of wandering teachers. Almost, all the Cynics, including Antisthenes-its founder, Diogenes- its most notorious member, and Crates - its most able representative were all of foreign origin or aliens in Greece. It was born from a "grapes are sour" approach towards the Greek or Hellenic civilization. Not admitted to the privileges of the Hellenic civilization these outsiders rebelled and protested against all the mores and institutions of Greece. They rejected the city-state politics as too "narrow and narrow-minded". They rejected the Hellenic theology, philosophy, science, arts, and customs. They held up common sense, moral character, simple life and even poverty as good. They adopted a life of poverty as a matter of principle and indifference as a philosophy. They renounced and denounced everything which the Greeks considered as good.

There are two theories as to how they got the name "Cynics". According to one, they got it because their school was located at a place called cynosarges, meaning white dog, and because they even took pride in the name connected with the dog an animal which is loyal, grateful, tenacious spirited and a terror to thieves. According to the second theory, because the Cynics were indifferent to everything including decency and decorum and made a virtue of animal like simple, poor, wandering life to an extent which irritated the Athenians to name these thinkers as Cynics, i.e., the "dog-people".

In their philosophy, the Cynics were naturalistic, ascetic, nihilistic and universalistic. They were naturalistic in the sense that they advocated that life must be lived according to nature in a simple way, independent of all artificial conventions, ways and institutions

of so called civilization. They were ascetic in the sense that they denounced the luxury and the indulgence of their time and advocated a return to the simpler life of older times. Also, they wanted the wise man to free himself from all desires and attachments including to family and city-state. Moral liberty from passion or desire they valued as a supreme virtue. For this purpose they demanded a readiness to value suffering and pain. They were nihilistic in terms of their disdain and contempt in all philosophy, learning and civilization. They were universalistic in the sense that they considered a wise man as a citizen of the world and all wise men as equals.

In their ethics, Cynics considered self-sufficiency as the highest virtue or good. Self-sufficiency is internal to the individual. It is in one's own thought and character. Search for the good is therefore an inner quest. Externally, the Cynics advocated indifference to every thing property, marriage, family, State, citizenship, learning, good reputation, decency and decorum and even to slavery or freedom. Good to them is in a philosophic indifference to the world.

Their political philosophy was in a way utopian - an idealized communism of an ascetic sort or a state of anarchy where the State, property and even marriage has withered away. They were not bothered or indeed turned their face away from politics because actually they were not concerned with the good life for all or common wealth or welfare but only of the wise man. Indeed, most men are fools, as such, are incapable of real happiness or good i.e., Self-sufficiency. Wise man needs no law, no state or no citizenship. He is equally free anywhere and everywhere. His virtue is his law. A true world state or a cosmopolis is his state. He is a citizen of the world. He is governed by nature and natural law.

Cynics and cynicism did not make much impact. It was indeed a crude cry of the disappointed and excluded people. Their advocacy of the cause of the wise man, of pain and suffering alienated it from the common man. Its greatest political idea was the idea of cosmopolis

an universal state. But even that was a negative and nihilist concept in their hand. It was left to the Stoic school to adopt this idea and give it a positive shape and attraction.

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Also check your answer with the clue given at the end of the Unit,

1) Outline the background and nature of the Post-Aristotelian schools of Political thought.

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2) Critically assess the contribution of Epicureans to political thought

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3) Examine the ethical and political idea of Cynics

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7.5 Let Us Sum Up

In this Unit No. 7, the last unit of Block 1 i.e., Greek Political Thought, we have first understood the background or the conditions which gave rise to the counter philosophies in the Post-Aristotelian period. The narrowness of Greek politics, the rise of the empire-state and the vagueness of Socratic philosophy and the simple nature of his personality gave rise to the opposite philosophies. These were all escapist philosophies. Epicureanism emphasised self-sufficiency and happiness as their main goal. Its political philosophy was individualist, utilitarian and contractualist. The Cynics were the first and the most extremist thinkers who rebelled against the politics of city-states. They hated and protested against the narrowness of the city-state politics by turning away from politics and yearning for the moral liberty of the cosmopolis. Anyway, they were negative philosophies which did not have much impact.

But the last of these rebel schools of philosophy in Greece, known as Stoicism took a full positive approach to the politics of the post-city State Greece and also Rome which conquered Greece after Alexander. Stoicism was founded by Zeno in 300 B.C. It was developed by Chryssipus, Panaetius and Polybius. It borrowed from Cynics the ideas of self-sufficiency and cosmopolis. Though, initially

under the influence of Cynics it was also negative, gradually stoicism developed into a very positive philosophy. Stoicism argues that self-sufficiency need not be achieved in escape but in rendering self-less disciplined ethical duty and service to humanity, society and polity. Against the narrow politics of city state it advocated equality of all men including the wise and non-wise, world brotherhood, world state and natural law. This suited and was cherished and nourished by the Roman empire. And, to this day the Stoic philosophy has been the most positive political philosophy emphasising reason, equality, discipline, service, humility, humanity and universal state. It has influenced enormously all latter schools of thinking on these lines.

7.6 Key Words

- Epicureans - Followers of Epicurus - a Greek philosopher who contributed to the philosophy of pleasure.
- Cerenaics - They were the predecessors to Epicureans and founded the theory that "happiness is virtue".
- Hedonism - The doctrine that holds that pleasure or happiness is highest good.
- Egoism - A self-centred or selfish philosophy or approach.
- Cynics - a group of thinkers who believe in moral self-sufficiency of the individual and his indifference to everything else.
- Nihilism - The philosophy of nothingness or nothing as valuable.
- Cosmpolis - World state
- Stoics - A Greek school of positive philosophy which held selfless, disciplined and devoted duty to society and polity as self-sufficiency.

7.7 Some Useful Books

- Sabine, G.H. A History of Political Theory 4th Ed., 1964.
- Robert Eisler, "Epicureanism". The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences Vol V-VI
- Robert Eisler, "Cynics" in the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences Vols III and IV pp,680-684.

7.8 Answers to Check Your progress Exercises

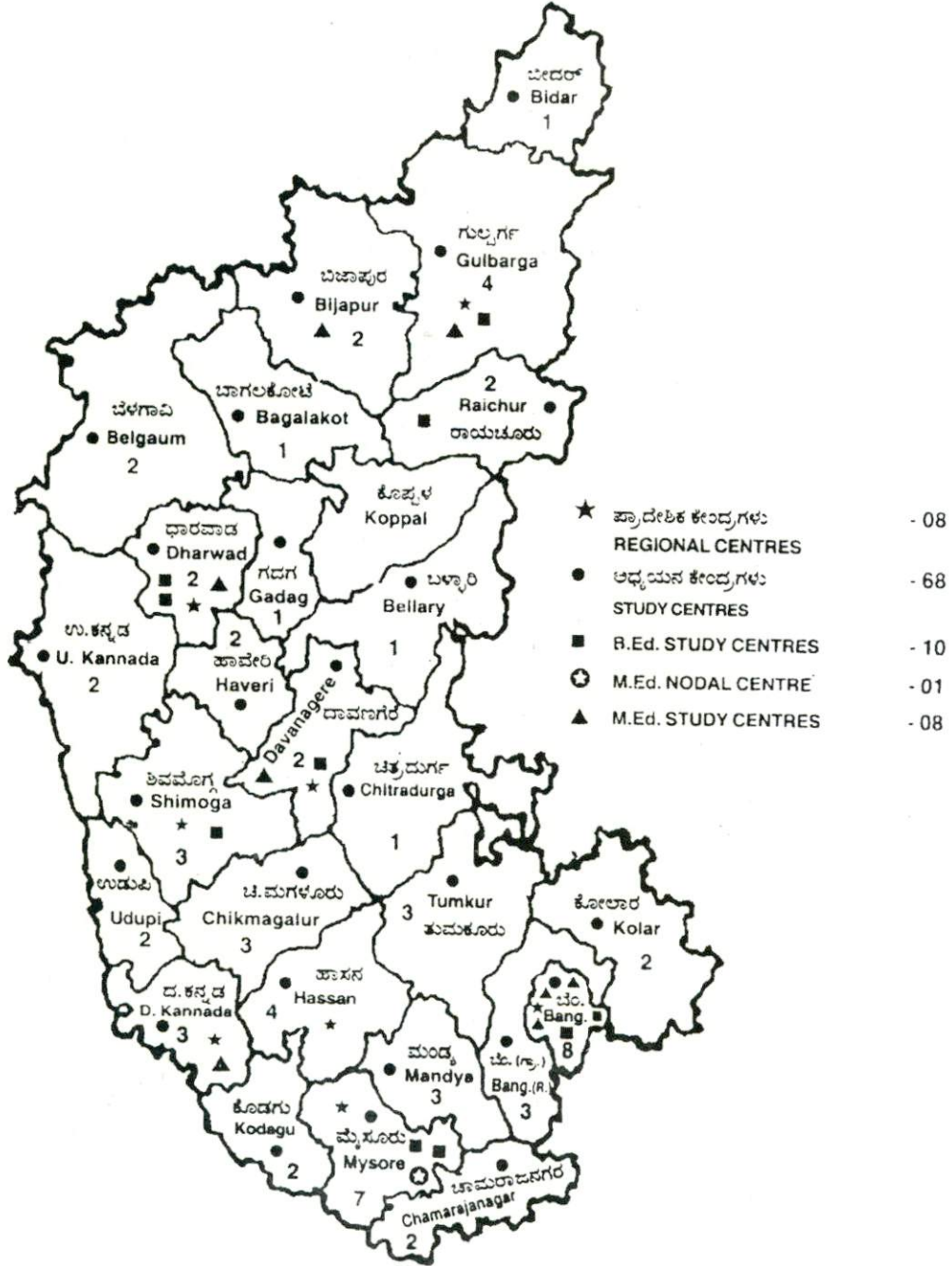
Check Your progress -1

- 1) See section 7.2
- 2) See section 7.3
- 3) See section 7.4

NOTES

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ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯದ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳು
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