**PHL 253
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **PHL 253: Political and Social Philosophy**. PHL 253 is a three-credit unit course with a minimum duration of one semester. It is a compulsory course for Philosophy Major (degree) students in the university. The course is expected to provide instruction on the basic concepts of political and social philosophy. It is also expected to espouse its method and relevancies to human society. The course, which has evolved over time as distinguished from political science, domiciled in the arts; pay particular attention to the study of the major themes and figures in the history of social and political thought such as Justice (Plato, Aristotle, Rawls, Iris Young), Power and Authority (Machiavelli and Hobbes), State of Nature and Social Contract (Hobbes and Locke), General Will (Rousseau) Majority Rule (Locke), Liberty (Mill), Revolution and Alienation (Marx), Democracy, etc. The aim is to equip you with the skill to identify, explain and express the basic concepts and a broad understanding of political and social philosophy. It also enables you to relate these themes to contemporary concerns in African thought and situation, etc.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- identify the basic questions in political and social philosophy
- discuss the methodology and the relevance of political and social philosophy to human society
- distinguish between political philosophy and political science
- explain the socio-political philosophies of major philosophers in the West
- clarify the major concepts in political and social philosophy
- examine the development and history of social and political thought
- clarify the concept of power and authority
- discuss the concept of justice
- identify and explain the various political ideologies, such as democracy, capitalism, socialism etc.
- define the meaning and nature of political power.

WORKING THROUGH THE COURSE

To complete this course of study successfully, please read the study units, listen to the audios and videos, do all the assignments, open the links and read, participate in discussion fora, read the recommended

books and other materials provided, prepare your portfolios, and participate in the online facilitation.

Each study unit has an introduction, intended learning outcomes, the main content, conclusion, summary and references/further readings. The introductory part will tell you the expectations in the study unit. You must read and understand the intended learning outcomes (ILOs). In the intended learning outcomes, you will come across what you should be able to do at the end of each study unit. So, you can evaluate your learning at the end of each unit to ensure you have achieved the intended learning outcomes. For you to achieve this goal, that is, to meet the intended learning outcomes, there are texts, videos and links arranged into modules and units in the study material. Do not ignore any of these, rather, you should click on the links as may be directed, but where you are reading the text offline, you will have to copy and paste the link address into a browser. You can download the audios and videos to view offline. You can also print or download the text and save in your computer, android or any other external drive.

The conclusion tells you the subject matter of the unit, which indicates the knowledge that you are taking away from the unit. Unit summaries are recaps of what you have studied in the unit. It is presented in downloadable audios and videos. The references/further readings are other study materials like journals, encyclopedia, books etc. that were either used in the cause of preparing this study material, or not used but could be of help in enhancing further what you have studied in this material.

There are two main forms of assessment—the formative and the summative. The formative assessment will help you monitor your learning. This is presented as in-text questions, discussion fora and self-Assessment Exercises. The summative assessments would be used by the university to evaluate your academic performance. This will be given as a Computer Based Test (CBT) which serves as continuous assessment and final examinations. A minimum of two or a maximum of three computer-based tests will be given with only one final examination at the end of the semester. You are required to take all the computer-based tests and the final examination.

STUDY UNITS

There are 25 study units in this course divided into five modules. The modules and units are presented as follows:-

Module 1   The Idea of Political Philosophy
Unit 1   Nature and Origin of political philosophy

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PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

The presentation schedule gives you the important dates for the completion of your computer-based tests, participation in forum discussions and participation at facilitation. Remember, you are to submit all your assignments at the appropriate time. You should guide against delays and plagiarisms in your work. Plagiarism is a criminal offence and is highly penalised.

ASSESSMENT

There are two main forms of assessments in this course that will be scored: The Continuous Assessments and the Final examination. The continuous assessment shall be in three-fold. There will be two Computer-Based Assessments. The computer-based assessments will be given under the university academic calendar. The timing must be strictly adhered to. The Computer-Based Assessments shall be scored a maximum of 10% each, while your participation in discussion fora and your portfolio presentation shall be scored a maximum of 10% if you meet 75% participation. Therefore, the maximum score for continuous assessment shall be 30% which shall form part of the final grade.

The final examination for PHL 253 will be a maximum of two hours and it takes 70% of the total course grade. The examination, which is computer-based test items (CBT) will consist of 70 questions, divided into two parts:35 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) and 35 Fill in the Blank space Questions (FBQ).

Note: You will earn a 10% score if you meet a minimum of 75% participation in the course forum discussions and in your portfolios otherwise you will lose the 10% in your total score. You will be required to upload your portfolio using google Doc. What are you expected to do

in your portfolio? Your portfolio should be note or jottings you made on each study unit and activities. This will include the time you spent on each unit or activity.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THE COURSE

To get the most in this course, you need to make use of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to guide your self-study in the course. You also, at the end of every unit, need to examine yourself with the ILOs and see if you have achieved what you need to achieve.

Carefully work through each unit and make your notes. Join the online real-time facilitation session as scheduled. Where you miss the scheduled online real-time facilitation, go through the recorded facilitation session at your own free time. Each real-time facilitation session will be video recorded and posted on the platform.

In addition to the real-time facilitation, watch the video and audio recorded summary in each unit. The video/audio summaries are directed to the salient part in each unit. You can access the audio and videos by clicking on the links in the text or through the course page.
Work through all self-assessment exercises. Finally, obey the rules in the class.

FACILITATION

You will receive online facilitation. The facilitation is learner-centred. The mode of facilitation shall be asynchronous and synchronous. For the asynchronous facilitation, your facilitator will:

- present the theme for the week
- direct and summarise forum discussions
- coordinate activities on the platform
- score and grade activities when need be
- upload scores into the university recommended platform
- support you to learn. in this regard, personal mails may be sent
- send you videos and audio lectures and podcast.

FOR THE SYNCHRONOUS

There will be a minimum of eight hours and a maximum of 12 online real-time contacts in the course. This will be through video conferencing in the Learning Management System. The sessions are going to be run at an hour per session. At the end of each one-hour video conferencing, the video will be uploaded for view at your pace.

The facilitator will concentrate on main themes that must be known in the course. The facilitator is to present the online real-time video facilitation time table at the beginning of the course.

The facilitator will take you through the course guide in the first lecture at the start date of facilitation.

Do not hesitate to contact your facilitator if you:

• Do not understand any part of the study units or the assignment.
• Have difficulty with the self-assessment exercises.
• Have a question or problem with an assignment or your tutor's comments on an assignment.

Also, use the contact provided for technical support.

Read assignments, participate in the fora and discussions. This allows you to socialise with others on the programme. You can raise any problem encountered during your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course facilitation, prepare a list of questions before the discussion session. You will learn a lot from participating actively in the discussions.

Finally, respond to the questionnaire. This will help the university to know your areas of challenges and how to improve on them for a review of the course materials and lectures.

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UNIT 1   MEANING, NATURE AND ORIGIN OF POLITICS

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

I wish to welcome you to the course PHL 256 – Socio-Political Philosophy. The purpose of this course is to get you acquainted with the meaning of the most common concepts in human society. It aimed at preparing you for a better understanding of the content of the entire course, which is **Political Philosophy**. The course is a specialised one; it presumes that you already know what politics means and builds on this presumption to introduce you to critical analysis of political ideas, concepts and other fundamental issues that politics entails. Furthermore, the course would enable you to understand the idea of politics and know the distinction(s) between Political Science and Political Philosophy. This is important, as many people are unable, or unaware, that the two, i.e., Political Science and Political Philosophy are not the same. Following this, you will learn what politics means. In this unit, therefore, you will be introduced to some definitions of politics, the origin of politics and the nature of politics. This is the prerequisite to your learning what Socio-Political Philosophy is all about.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- attempt a definition of politics
- grasp the etymological meaning of the concept of 'politics'
- know why we may not have a single definition for the term 'politics'
- trace the origin of politics
- understand the nature of politics.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   On the Meaning of Politics

You need to know from the outset that there is no univocal definition for politics. Different scholars have tried to define politics in their own ways but they have been faced with difficulties as each scholars definition only reveals the advancement of a different view of politics as well as the individual understanding of the term.

Many attempts at defining politics include, "the art of the possible", "A game of wits", "all that begin and end with the government", "the study of government" (Oji 1997). This last view, present politics as, the study of the control, distribution and use of power over human activities.

What you should understand from the above is that there could be, and, of course, there are many definitions from as many scholars that we have, or that are yet to venture into its study (politics). Every definition, however, will reveal the individual view of what they conceive to be the subject matter of the concept. But, then, you need to know that the word "politics" has its origin. The word "Politics" is derived from the Greek word, ***Polis,*** which means 'city-state'. According to Aristotle (348-322 BC), the most sovereign and inclusive association is the *polis*, as it is called, and the reason for its creation is the establishment of an administrative system or a government, law-making, enforcement and evoking obedience from the citizens or inhabitants of the society.

Aristotle in his political treatise *Politics* observed that human being is by nature a political animal. This implies that human being, either consciously or unconsciously, practices politics. In other words, politics comes naturally to men. Politics, therefore, can be seen in the daily activities or living of human being. No one person can live alone in a community, he or she cannot but live with other people, interact with one another to have a meaningful existence. Through this, relationships are created and the practice of politics evolve. This is because, as each person

seeks to define their position and share the available resources in the society, the questions of how to share, who takes what and many other questions will arise. Aside, the individual member of the society exhibits individual nature when he/she tries to convince or get other members to accept his/her position. As a result, divergent views and crises arise and have to be resolved. To resolve the possible crises, therefore, some elements of politics play out.

From the above explanation, you will agree with me then, that politics can be seen in every form of our lives, that is, in all we do and everywhere. Politics can be seen among members of a family, at the workplace, among students, at clubs, social or religious organisations, between states and countries. In fact, politics exist wherever you can see human beings. The egoistic nature of human beings makes humans to always attempt gaining an advantage over others, this often degenerates to a crisis, which must be resolved.

Some definitions of the term politics
Let us now consider some definitions of the concept politics, you should try to distinguish each of the definition from one another, as they do not give the same understanding of the concept, though, the overall analysis of the definitions will show that they attempt to point to the same goal.

According to David Easton, politics can be defined as "the authoritative allocation of values in a social system" (Oji 1997). Easton's definition shows that a political system is concerned with a system of interaction in a society through which authoritative allocations are made. Thus, by his definition, politics is concerned with making or obtaining binding decisions, which could be on how the resources or values of a given society are shared out.

To Almond and Powel, politics includes not only government institutions such as legislative, courts and administrative agencies, but also all social structures as they relate to the organisation of human beings into collectivities (Lasswell, 1958). Politics, in this regard, is a wide field of activities outside a mere study of government. It also borders on the entire life of citizens in relation to the state or community. This view corroborates the initial claim that there are elements of politics in whatever we do in social life. It also lends credence to Aristotle's assertion, that 'every human being is a political animal'.

In Harold Lasswell, (1958) view, politics is concerned with who gets what, when and how? This definition, although, short and simple, however, it can be described as a more useful one as it expounds the horizon of politics to include all other social settings, which means politics is not restricted to the body that is concerned with the

administration of the society only. It also includes the idea of the social distribution of society's resources. You can also infer from Lasswell's conception of politics, the idea that politics entails implication of some sorts of struggle in the making of decision as to who in a society attains these objectives when and how they do so. His definition is similar to Nwabuzor and Mueller, (1985: 32). These two scholars see politics as a set of social interactions and dispositions which directly or indirectly aim at or actually succeed in obtaining binding decision about who have desired resources (or who do not) and when and how these are obtained in any enduring social system.

Nwabuzor and Mueller's definition of politics extends the frontiers of politics to all enduring social systems. Their definition also points out that what is being sought in politics is a binding authoritative decision on all parties involved (Nwabuzor and Mueller, 1985). According to Obafemi Awolowo, politics is "the science or the art of the management of public affairs" (Ogunmodede, 1986: 37). To him, what is germane in politics is the struggle for the control of power.

Generally, politics is considered as the practice, the art or the science of directing and administrating states or other political units. However, this definition is highly contestable. This is because; there are considerable disagreements on which aspect of the social life that is to be considered 'political'. Some had argued that the essential characteristics of political life can be found in any relationship among human beings. Common to this group are the feminists (McLean, 1996).

Two senses can be made from the various definitions of politics. First, is the narrower sense, here; it is often assumed that politics only occurs at the level of government and the state. The second sense is the idea that politics must involve party competition. Though the phenomenon of politics could be understood in any of the two senses, it is in the second sense that our world, especially Nigeria, tends to understand and practice the idea of politics.

From our understanding of the various definitions of politics by scholars and their submissions, the meaning of politics can be classified as follows:

i. Politics as the pursuit of public interest.
ii. Politics as the implementation and execution of policy.
iii. Politics as the authoritative allocation of values.
iv. Politics as the operation of statecrafts.

It should be stated here that analyses of the various definitions of politics can be subsumed under any of these classifications. This is because the classifications seem to sum up the various activities that politics revolves

around. Besides, these classifications also describe what could be considered as the nature or characteristics of politics. You can also infer from the classifications that politics is a common phenomenon to every human society, and it is sometimes difficult to make a clear-cut difference between politics and governance in society. In a broad sense, politics can be described as an essential ingredient of governance.

Two key points you need to note about politics, especially in what we can call practical politics are:

1.   Politics occurs where people disagree about the distribution of resources and have at least some procedures for the resolution of such disagreements.
2.   Politics is not present in other cases where there is a monolithic and complete agreement on the rights and duties in a society.

3.2 The Origin and Purpose of Politics

The origin of politics can be traced back to the ancient time when people realised the need for social order. According to Thomas Hobbes, human being naturally is egoistic. He has a fundamental drive for his self-preservation and also a 'natural right to do whatever he deems necessary for his self-preservation. Any effort to exercise power over others limits their natural right and this consequently brought about perpetual conflict among people. This situation was characterised by Hobbes (1962: 116) as 'state of nature', where might is right. The 'state of nature' is a state of war of all against all, and life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.

Since the state of nature cannot be continually tolerated by human beings, and given the fact that human beings are rational beings, they reasonably thought out certain principles to caution and restrict individual actions so as to avoid the hazards of such a state and to encourage social order. These principles were equated by Thomas Hobbes with the natural or divine laws among which is that "peace is to be sought after, where it may be found. When not there, to provide ourselves for the help of war" (Payne and Nassar, 2004: 31). To control the egoistic tendencies of human beings for their self-preservation in the society, and to maintain a reasonable amount of peace; to escape from the hazards of the "state of nature", both J.J. Rousseau's and Thomas Hobbes' proposed the social contract theory. Although the two theories employ different directions to achieve the same goal, they are able to show that the individual members of a society voluntarily relinquished and transferred some of their natural rights to be coordinated or administered by a single person, which Hobbes refers to as Leviathan. The Leviathan, therefore, became responsible for social security, order and peace. It is this that led to the formation of the

government and subsequently civil society. We shall discuss in detail, the social contract theory in Unit 3.

Plato's in his political philosophy as explicated in his work *The Prince* placed emphasis on (i) the need for the good life of the people and, (ii) social order in a given society. His idea of justice in the state and human soul, trifurcated state and philosopher-king becoming rulers are efforts that have provided the basic background for Aristotle, Hobbes and Rousseau's discussion of the need for the establishment of politics and government in their various theories. Therefore, we can infer from his idea, that politics began, when human being opted for an organised way of administration of their society, with the power and right of all citizens being centralised in one man. This one-man performs the fundamental role of bringing the values of the society into actualisation. The above position is corroborated by Richard Payne and Jamar Nassar's (2004: 3) argument:

Every society, group or organisation allows certain people to be in charge of the maintenance of peace, order and or the formulation and implementation of policy that are meant to achieve such values. Such individuals are given certain powers over others in the group. It is this idea of power, that is central to politics. The need for a coercive regulatory agency, to repress behaviour that threatens the stability of society and jeopardises the benefits of human interaction, gave rise to political order.

3.3 Functions and Scope of Politics

From all the above discussions, we can identify some fundamental roles or functions that politics is expected to perform. The historical functions of politics are the provision of a system of order through the administration of a given society. Politics is to function as an instrument to maintain peace. Though, sometimes this is not the case. Politics provides the ground for people to compete for control or the instrumentalities of power and favour.

The justification for politics and the institutions in which it is embodied rests on the objectives and the supreme moral and practical significance. These objectives might be seen as constituting the 'end' of politics. They are fundamental goals that can only be achieved or approached through political means. This include among others: order, virtue, freedom, happiness all of which are moral virtues. It can then be argued that the fundamental role of politics is to ensure that moral virtue is enhanced in society. To corroborate this view, John Morrow (1998:18) contends that politics is "an activity that was centrally concerned with the promotion of human goodness". An attempt to deviate from this will amount to politics failing in achieving its end. Politics exist for the pursuit of human welfare

values and the most vital issue that surround politics and the organization of political institution is the practice of virtue, which plays a strong role in the pursuit of human happiness.

4.0   CONCLUSION

From our discussion so far in this unit, it is obvious that human society consists of different people. The needs of the individual people that constitute the society differs. The pursuit of the individual needs and interest degenerates to crises and it is the need to prevent or settle the crises that led to the idea of politics. Although, there may not be a single definition for politics, however, the fundamental role of politics in the restoration of social order and promotion of virtue in human society as well as its effects on human life cannot be undermined.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, you have been introduced to the various definitions or conceptions of politics. Also, the origin of politics have been discussed and you have been told that idea of politics was developed when from the concept of the state of nature, which has its root in the philosophies of J.J, Rousseau, John Locke and Plato. The unit also introduced to you the various roles of politics in human society.

6.0   SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   How would you define politics?
2.   Carefully trace the origin of politics.
3.   Explain the nature of politics.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   MEANING OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit is a follow-up to the first unit. You must remember that in the last unit, you were introduced to the meaning of politics, but this unit, i.e. Unit 2, will be taking you beyond the level of mere consideration of the meaning of politics to acquaint you with the place of philosophy and more importantly, the task of philosophers in the study of politics and political practice. Now that you know what politics is, the purpose of the unit is to 'introduce' you to the idea of socio-political philosophy. It will introduce you to basic questions that are often considered in political philosophy and the nature of political philosophy in general.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

•   attempt a definition of political philosophy
•   discuss the meaning of socio-political philosophy
•   examine the origin of political philosophy
•   explain the scope of political philosopher
•   highlight some of the basic questions being asked in political philosophy.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Meaning of Political Philosophy

Let me first tell you from the outset certain facts that you must know before we go into what we want to study in this unit. First, socio-political philosophers are concerned with defining and interpreting concepts like justice, freedom, authority and democracy in a modern context as well as

in the past. This branch of philosophy, which is sometimes considered as two branches of philosophy is often referred to as political philosophy. This is because you may not be able to distinguish absolutely in the content or subject of concern if they are considered separately. Their subject matter overlap so much, hence, they are usually treated as one area of philosophy. Second, if anyone attempts to draw any difference between social philosophy and political philosophy, the actual difference would not be more than saying that political philosophers are interested in the ideal society while social philosophers are interested in the effect on the people of various social and political organisations. Three, socio-political philosophers tend to overlap their studies with many other fields including Ethics, History, Anthropology, Economics and particularly Law.

The Meaning of Political Philosophy
Just as we have rightly noticed, in our attempt at examining the meaning of politics in unit one, you must also know that political philosophy has varied definitions given by scholars. It can be defined as "philosophical reflection on how best to arrange our collective lives, our political institutions and our social practices, such as our economic system and our pattern of family life" (Craig, 1998: 99). This definition, suggests that political philosophers seek to establish basic principles that will justify a particular form of state, show that individuals have certain inalienable rights, tell how the material resources of a society should be distributed among its members. This activity involves analysing and interpreting various ideas like freedom, justice, authority and democracy and then applying them in a critical way to the social and political institutions that may be in existence at a particular point in time. This is done in other to justify every process of governance or administration of a state and guarantee order, peace and tranquillity in the state. In doing this, the following questions are raised among others. How are we to live? How best do we govern our interaction? All these questions arise due to the need for possible human co-existence. It is the need for human co-existence that led to the formation of political society. The need for human co-existence, which led to the above questions explains political philosophy as the study of various questions that may arise as a result of the establishment of political society.

You need to know here, that the subject matter of political philosophy differs from one historical epoch to the other. This is due to; the methods and approaches employed by philosophers, which reflects the general philosophical tendencies of their era. Also, the political philosopher's agenda is largely set by the pressing political issues of the day. For instance, in the medieval age, the central issue in political philosophy was the relationship between the church and the state. In the early modern period, it was the arguments between defenders of absolutism and those

who sought to justify a limited constitutional state. And, the 19th century revealed social questions relating to how an industrial society should organise its economy and its welfare systems. What about colonised states? Thus, in all, the activity of political philosophy centres on the lives and behaviours of the people in a given society.

To Akinyemi Onigbinde (1999: 183), socio-political philosophy can be described as, "the focus on human conduct within an organised community." For Robert Paul Wolff (1985: 152), political philosophy is the philosophical study of the state and the attitude of the citizens toward the state. These two meanings, present political philosophy as an activity that does not undermine the relevance of social and ethical values in the political lives of the citizens. This, therefore, made Alan Gewirth (1956: 1) assert, "the central concern of political philosophy is the moral evaluation of political power." This is because the idea of political power is central to politics. The concepts i.e. politics and power, are directed towards man and they can have either a positive or negative influence on the lives of the members of society. While good politics will be characterised by moral operation of political power, bad politics is devoid of any morality. In good politics, the activities of politics are geared towards the common good but in bad politics, political power is characterised by injustice selfishness, dictatorship and the manifestation of various forms of vices.

What you must note here is that beyond politics, some other social-political concepts such as political power, rule of law, obligation and many others arise and are very vital in determining what happens in human society and her citizens. The task of political philosophy, we can say, is to regulate political power and institutions by subjecting them to moral requirements concerning their sources, limits and ends. When viewed this way, we can deduce that political philosophy concerns itself with the application of moral philosophy to political theories to critically examine the various fundamental questions of public life.

The role of moral philosophy as it relates to politics is to ensure an ethical justification for the acceptance of political issues, concepts and policies, in terms of what is good or obligating not only for the individuals but, also for the public. It also ensures the promotion of political virtue against vices, which may possibly characterise society without political arrangement. This is because political concepts and actions have enormous consequences for human weal or woe.

The subjection of political concept to moral criticisms is to facilitate the opportunity to explain and clarify ambiguities and settle political and other disputes that may ensue in connection with political practices. This also helps in the proper placement of the application of the various moral

criteria as they affect politics. From this point, it can be argued that political philosophy has, as its fundamental task, the presentation, development and analysis (in a more rational form) of the general normative principles for answering moral questions of governmental and public policy. Thus, the central concern of political philosophy is to present and defend rationally grounded answers to moral questions about political power and other related issues. It develops and presents general normative moral criteria or principles for answering basic questions of political morality.

3.2 Basic Questions in Political Philosophy

Many questions are often raised in political philosophy but which are hardly noticed as to engender philosophical consideration. Different political philosophers frame these questions in various ways. The differences in the ways the questions are framed have little or no impact on the meanings of each of the questions. However, a serious study of the questions will reveal to you, that the questions set out to address the same issues. Another point you must note is that the prominent questions in political philosophy borders on the relationship of individuals to the dictates or needs of community existence.

According to Paul Newall (1999: 21), Political philosophers ask the following questions:
What should be the relationship between individuals and society? What are the limits of freedom? Is freedom of speech a good idea or freedom of action between consenting adults? When may government act against the will of a citizen and when should a citizen act against his or her government? What is the purpose of government? What characterises a good government? And so on.

The above questions cover most, if not all aspects, of the practice of politics in the society apart from the question on how power can or should be acquired and retained, which is paramount to politics. David Muller is considered to have taken care of the missing but vital question in practical politics. Muller, as noted by Craig (1998) divided the question into three segments:

1.   Questions on the meaning of authority, and the criteria by which we can judge forms of political rule legitimately.
2   Question about the form that the state should take.
3   Question of whether any general limits can be set to the authority of the state.

This important aspect of politics, that is, the idea of how power can be acquired and retained, formed the major discussion of Niccolo Machiavelli in his political treatise, *The Prince*. The main thrust of the book is the analysis of political power. He examines how power can be acquired, retained, exercised and expanded with or without moral consideration in a political society.

Allan Gewirth (1956) opined that questions asked by political philosophers are questions about what human being ought to do in relation to society and government, and about the right ordering and functioning of political power. These kinds of questions can be raised at different levels, from the most concrete and particular to the most abstract and general.

The main interests of political philosophy rest on the most general moral questions of society and government. Answers to this lean, in the long run, on deciding answers to all other question of political morality. From Gewirth's idea (which is in line with Miller's classification), the various questions that political philosophers raise can be grouped into two. They are:

i.   General questions about government, such as: why should human being obey any government at all? Why should some men have political power over others?

ii.   Specific questions about the government which examines the following:

   a.   Source and locus of political power. What criteria are to be used in determining who should have political power?
   b.   Limits of political power, i.e. by what criteria are political power to be determined? What should be the extent of political power and what rights or freedom should be exempted from political or legal control?
   c.   Ends of political power. It raises questions such as to the attainment of what affirmative ends should political power be directed. And what are the criteria for determining this?

All the above questions arose from the moment human being came together to form a society. They are questions, that though, relate to politics, have always been explained as the science of administration of society, they have a direct consequence on the values of human being and society. They have a direct link with issues such as justice, equality, freedom and liberty, needs and interest, public interest, rights, welfare and some other virtues that determine the quality of life of the individual in the society, the social status of the society and the achievement of the goals or aims for establishing the society.

3.3   History of Political Philosophy

Let us first assert here, that the history of political philosophy is a developing process. Thus, the history spans over the Ancient age of philosophy, the Medieval Age, the Modern Age and the Contemporary Age. It is still developing, as scholars discover and develop new political theories and ideologies. You need to know that this is made possible, given the nature of human beings that constitutes the inhabitants of the society, and the fact that change is constant in human society.

In the ancient age, the Chinese political philosophy was prominent and it dates back to the *Spring* and *Autumn* period, specifically with Confucius in the 6th century BC. The major political philosophies during this period were those found in the philosophies of *Confucianism, Legalism, Monism, Agrarianism and Taoism.*

Aside from the Chinese political philosophy, the Western political philosophy also originates in the philosophy of ancient Greece, where political philosophy begins with Plato's Republic in the 4th century BC. Plato's political philosophy was followed by Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics and Politics (Sahakian, 1993*).*

The political ideas of Medieval age were religious oriented. They were not circular ideas but firmly revolved around religious doctrines. This is because philosophical discourse during this period was dominated by religious beliefs. The most prominent philosophers who discuss politics in their philosophical teachings were religious fathers, both in Islamic and Christian traditions. Some of the religious fathers include; St Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, who are Christians. Their political teachings were greatly influenced by Christian tenets, which is Catholicism. In the Islamic religion, are Al-farabi and Avicenna, whose teachings about the administration of the state was greatly influenced by the Islamic doctrines and teachings.

Political philosophy in the modern period can be dated back to the time of the Italian philosopher, Niccolo Machiavelli. His political concepts mark off the age which opens up a new agenda for political philosophy. In the modern age, the religionist way of viewing politics was jettisoned and political thinking centres on the state as expressed by Berki (1977: 117). Attention was directed towards the political or civic vision. Man is seen as a citizen, subject and member of the state, and an overview of the state and its components were major concerns of the political philosophers. Aside from Machiavelli, other prominent philosophers whose political discourses were influential are Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and JJ Rousseau. This age was wrapped up by the late modern era, which, of course, cannot be separated from the modern era. The political

philosophies of Burke, Hegel, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and the anarchists like Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Peter Kropotkin and many others that constitute the late modern era have a direct link with some of the conceptual works of the modern era.

The contemporary age has John Rawls with his work *A Theory of Justice*, Robert Nozick's work, *Anarchy State and Utopia*, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jurgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse, Michel Foucault and many others. Generally speaking, communism, colonialism and racism were important issues in the period. There was a marked trend towards a pragmatic approach to political discourses or issues rather than a philosophical one.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Like the nature of philosophy, political philosophy has no univocal definition, however, it is obvious that it is concerned with the analysis of political concepts to unveil the meaning underlying the concepts and how they are applied in political practice. It is also important to know that social environments inform philosopher's reactions and responses to the various questions and issues that are raised in political philosophy. This we can see in the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle, St Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Niccolo Machiavelli and other political philosophers. This also informs the changes in developments of new political ideologies and the various issues that are of concern to political philosophers, from the ancient age to the contemporary as outlined in the history and development of political philosophy above. However, every subject of discourse in political philosophy revolves around human being and environment. In a clear term, the concern of political philosopher centres on critical examinations of how a state is administered or governed.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the various conceptions or meanings of political philosophy. As discussed in the unit, although, political philosophers conceived its meaning differently, however, the subject matter of political philosophy is the same. The unit also introduced you to the historical ages of political philosophy. You were also made to understand the various basic questions that are always asked in political philosophy.

6.0   SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Explain the term political philosophy.
2.   What are the concerns of political philosophers in the various stages of its development?
3.   Discuss the basic questions in political philosophy.

7.0   REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3   SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall be discussing the idea of the social contract. The **social contract**, which is sometimes referred to as a **political contract** is a theory or model that originated during the Age of Enlightenment. It was an attempt made to address the questions of the origin of society and the legitimacy of the authority of the state over the individual. The purpose of this unit, therefore, is to get you acquainted with political philosophers' idea on how political society began. You will learn about the three important aspects of the theory: human nature, the origin of the state and the ends of government The unit will also make you understand how the state derived its authority over the individual members of the society. In the unit, you will learn why the citizens should obey the authority of the state.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- examine the meaning of a social contract
- discuss how the idea of the social contract was arrived at
- explain the principles that are involved in the social contract, i.e authority and obedience
- trace the emergence of a political society
- explain the three central kernels of the social contract, which are, human nature, the origin of the state and the ends of government.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Understanding the Idea of Social Contract

You need to know that the idea of Social Contract was first commonly found in the philosophies of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau. However, philosophers that came after these three, have also, in their attempt at evaluating the ideas from these three discussed social contract in their own way. Their discussion could in a way be seen as either corroborating the already existing ideas of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, or opposing it. In this unit, we shall focus on the social contract theories of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Their positions on human nature, the origin of the state and forms of government shall be explained. First, you must understand that the central argument of the contractarians is that the state or political society emerges as a result of an agreement entered into by men who initially lacked government.

Social contract theory is associated with modern-day moral and political theory. Its origin could be traced to the ancient Greek philosophy, Roman and Canon Law, and the Biblical idea of the covenant has been equated to be a form of the social contract. The idea of social contract gained prominence in the philosophical discourses in the mid-17th to early 19th centuries, when it emerged as the leading doctrine of political legitimacy (Harrison 2003). Its prominence began with the first full exposition and defense given by Thomas Hobbes, after which, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau became proponents of this enormously influential socio-political theory. It was since then seen as one of the most important and noticeable theories within moral and political theory throughout the history of the modern West.

The term 'social contract' is made up of two words 'social' and 'contract'. On the one hand, the term 'social' entails "living in communities, gregarious, not solitary, tending to associate with others, fitted for existence in an organised, cooperate system of society" (*The Cassell Concise Dictionary*, 1997: 1400). Thus, the term 'social' could be seen as aggregate, collective, shared, common or societal. On the other hand, 'contract' is an agreement reached to be binding on a person or persons who entered into it. When one enters into a contract, it is supposed that it entails no imposition, force or coercion. The consent of all parties is sought and the interest of all parties are taken into consideration. Thus, it may not be out of context to say that contract involves consent (tacit and express), agreement or mutual understanding.

With the above little explanation, therefore, and what you have read under the introduction of this unit, the social contract is a version of the theories

on the origin of the state and political organisation that emphasises that political society emerges due to agreement among people in society to establish a government for certain reasons. In this case, the social contract theory presupposed that the establishment of the state is contingent on the reasons for its existence. That is, a state emergence as a means to an end, rather than as an end in itself.

The Cassell Concise Dictionary (1997: 1400), defines a social contract as "a collective agreement between members of a society and a government that secures the rights and liberties of each individual to the extent of not interfering with another's rights and liberties." Thus Lucas (1985: 284) opines that in the social contract: "The State is seen, so far as possible, as a voluntary association of individuals, banded together for mutual protection and the maintenance of law and order, and where all questions of political obligation can be answered by the two rejoinders, 'You promised to' or 'It is what you really want." While the contracts are believed to be entered for certain purposes to be fulfilled, the social contract is aimed at what can be called 'common interest' of individuals in the state since its proponents believe that no man can rule over others without their consent.

To be able to explain why there was a transition from one society to another, the proponents of the social contract theory divide the history of human society into two parts: Pre-political society, which is known as 'the state of nature' and Political society. In other words, they attempt to show a society looks like when it is apolitical from when it is political. Appadorai (1942: 3) asserts: "When a body of people is clearly organised as a unit for purposes of government, then it is said to be *politically* organised and may be called a body politic or State--a society politically organized". In this respect, a state exists, according to Appadorai (1942: 16), "where there are territory, a people, a government and sovereignty…" This is different from the *state of nature* which has only territory and people but without a government or an organised administrative system. Although the *state of nature* is hypothetical, it lacks the machinery that carries out the will of the state such as the executive, legislature and judiciary. All social contract theorists believed like all the theory however, they differ on the conditions that necessitate the transition from pre-political society to the state. But then, they were able to identify what was responsible for the collapse of the state of nature, which they were able to anchor on human nature.

Almost all political doctrines and beliefs are based upon some kind of theory of human nature, sometimes explicitly formulated but in some cases simply implied. To do otherwise would be to take the complex and perhaps unpredictable human element out of politics." However, you must note that "different views about human nature lead naturally to

different conclusions about what we ought to do and how we can do it" (Stevenson, 1974: 3). The belief is that if one can understand the nature of man, then it will be easier to control individuals' behaviour to achieve social order or the common good.

We shall now discuss the various conceptions of human nature that necessitate the social contract as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and J.J Rousseau explicated in their theories.

3.1.2 Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

In his *Leviathan,* Thomas Hobbes tells us that in the state of nature, when there was neither politics nor morality, men lived in a state of chaos, conflict, strife, war, and insecurity. There was no politics, nor law, no morality, no sense of justice or injustice, good or evil. Only might was right. The major concern of men was how to satisfy their appetites, and the only means of doing so was by brute force.

Frontispiece of *Leviathan* (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

In the state of nature, there was no permanent ownership of anything. Men lived in a state of perpetual hostility. Men were enemies of one another, there was no peace. Men lived in a state of fear and danger of violent death. Hobbes described the life of man in the state of nature as **"solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" (Hobbes 1946).**

The realisation of the danger in leaving perpetually in this state of affairs made men decide to come together and form a political society based on a social contract. They made a social contract (an agreement) among themselves to voluntarily surrender their right to do whatever they could, and also restrict their freedom. They, therefore, empower a sovereign to enforce morality, law and order. The sovereign has the sole authority to determine right and wrong, good and bad, justice and injustice, in the society and to enforce them in order to ensure peace and unity. To Hobbes, this is the beginning of political society and morality.

There are three main points that you need to know from Hobbes discussion. One, from his social contract theory, you could see that he describes the nature of man. For him, "man is essentially selfish; he is moved to action not by his intellect or reason, but by his appetites, desires and passions" (Appadorai, 1942: 22). Hobbes also contends that man is by nature equals to one another, hence no man has the right to lord over others who he is equal to. The equality that Hobbes presupposes, here, is physical/mental kind. Hobbes (1651:183) writes:
Nature hath made men so equal, in the faculties of body, and mind; as that, though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another; yet when all is reckoned together,

the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit, to which another may not pretend, as well as he. For as to the strength of body, the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination or by confederacy with others, that are in the same danger with himself.

It is as a result of his description, that men are naturally selfish (egoistic) and equal, that he holds social disorderliness as unavoidable in the state. Thus, his characterisation of human life as "solitary, poor, brutish, nasty and short" (Amosu, 2006: 43) because it is human nature to be violent. He establishes that since all men are naturally selfish:

…there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain; and consequently no cultivating of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the comfortable buildings; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no literature; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short (Pojman and Fieser, 2012: 81).

Two, men were tired of the insecurity of lives in the state of nature and they wanted peace. To achieve this, there is a need for observance or enforcement of morality. Thus, the agreement they had, gave the sovereign absolute power to enforce law and order to have peace in the society. Although, the theory about the state of nature is hypothetical, i.e., a philosophical fiction, but then it clearly points to the view that political society and morality came into existence at the same time. It came at a time when individual rights and freedom were willingly surrendered (for peace and security), using an agreement between them and the sovereign who is to control and checkmate possible excesses of some strong ones over the weaklings in the state. The sovereign he called *Leviathan*.

Three, Hobbes identifies one critical challenge in a society that has no law and government, this is, that neither the weak nor the strong could boast of strength without limitation of it. Another mistake is that there will be nothing that is objectively good or bad. As Hobbes (2002: 2) puts it "…Whatever is the object of any man's appetite, that is it which he for his part calleth *good*: and the object of his hate and aversion, evil: and of his contempt, *vile and inconsiderable*. For these words of good, evil, and contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: there being nothing simply and absolutely so." In the state of nature, therefore, there is strife and conflict. Baumgold (2009:195) clearly articulates the intent of the state of nature construct in Hobbes' view as follows:
One of the classic problems of social contract theory is explaining why a state of nature would be a state of conflict. According to the elements,

there are three reasons for war in the state of nature. The first is structural rather than psychological: in the absence of coercive authority; so long as some are naturally aggressive, all must behave aggressively to defend themselves. Another cause of conflict, also circumstantial, is competition for the same goods. Thirdly, however, war is directly traced to ubiquitous egoism: every man thinking of himself and hating to see the same in others.

The need to resolve this conflict, Hobbes thinks, is only by having a political society (state). Only the state can address the social crisis and disorderliness.

3.1.3 John Locke (1632- 1704)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

It suffices to let you know before we discuss Locke's conception of the social contract that his idea was greatly influenced by Hobbes' view, especially his idea of human nature and the social contract. However, he disagrees with Hobbes position that the state of nature was chaotic and lawless. Locke (1995: 5) writes concerning the state of nature:
But though this be a state of liberty, yet it is not a state of license; though man in that state has uncontrollable liberty to dispose of his person or possessions, yet he has not liberty to destroy himself, or so much as any creature in his possession, but where some nobler use than its bare preservation calls for it. The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges everyone; and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it that, being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions; for men being all the workmanship of one omnipotent and infinitely wise maker (Locke, 1997:5).

So people did not necessarily engage in war as Hobbes had opined, rather crisis emerges only when one man steals from others or makes others his

slaves. It is this, which make human nature that was naturally good to become tyrannical as well as evil, especially when one man tries to use brute force on others. Thus, the state of nature becomes the state of war because:

And hence it is that he who attempts to get another man into his absolute power does thereby put himself into a state of war with him, it being to be understood as a declaration of a design upon his life; for I have reason to conclude that he who would get me into his power without my consent would use me as he pleased when he got me there, and destroy me, too, when he had a fancy to it; for nobody can desire to have me in his absolute power unless it be to compel me by force to that which is against the right of my freedom, i.e., make me a slave (Locke, 1997: 11-12).

He identifies that the state of nature becomes volatile and war ensues because it lacks a political force (government). It is a state where dialogue does not usually resolve the crisis. Locke believes that nature has provided no other means to resolve dispute other than for each man to be the judge in his own case, the state of nature is therefore apolitical and cannot fulfil the condition for existence. This condition is what Locke called 'property'. As he explains it:

Man being born, as has been proved with a title to perfect freedom and uncontrolled enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of the law of nature, equally with any other man, or number of men in the world, hath by nature a power not only to preserve his property – that is life, liberty and estate, against the injuries and attempts of other men, but to judge of and punish the breaches of that law in others, as he is persuaded the offence deserves, even with death itself; in crimes where the heinousness of the fact, in his opinion, requires it (Locke, 1952: 44)

Unlike Hobbes, Locke holds that although, there was no government in the state of nature, however, the principle of law was in existence in the state of nature. This law according to him exists as the 'natural law'. Thus, the state of nature has a law of nature to govern it and this law obliges everyone. The natural law teaches all men that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health and liberty of possessions" (Locke 2009; Krab-Karpowicz and Julian 2010). But what is this natural law that Locke is referring to in his theory? This law was not another law but moral law. Locke's opinion is that the law was not observed in the state of nature due to the absence of a government that could have enforced it and ensure its strict adherence. It is the unsatisfactory affair in the state of nature that made men form a political society by having a social contract. This as we have studied in Hobbes, means voluntary restriction of their rights and freedom, voluntary submission to administration of the society by government and voluntary decision to obey the orders issued by government. Locke (2009) believes, therefore, that the role of government is to enforce order, justice and to

protect the fundamental rights and freedom of the members of the state. Thus, while the government could be seen as the servant of the people and also respond to them, the people are the sovereign and could, if they so wish, remove the government.

There are some key points that you must note in your study of Locke's social contract theory. First, you must note that unlike Hobbes where sovereignty is vested in one individual called the *Leviathan,* sovereignty in Locke's theory is not with the government but in the people who went into the contract by giving their rights and freedom to the government. Second, unlike Hobbes, men in the state of nature are not necessarily evil as Hobbes made us believe. Third, from Locke's view, human positive law is derived from nature and moral laws, which are embedded in nature also provides the basis for natural laws. Thus, morality cannot be separated from the law.

Although, there were points of divergent in the two political theorists contractarian theories, however, there is no disagreement on the fact that the absence of an authority to coordinate the individual citizens' rights and freedom can always lead to crises in the society. Hence, the state of nature tries to relate to us the reason why men decided to live together under a political society.

3.1.4 Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Unlike Hobbes and Locke, Rousseau has two distinct social contract theories, these are what he regarded as natural account and normative account of the social contract. The two are found in his two different political treatises. The first is found in his essay, titled *Discourse on the origin and foundations of inequality among men.* In this essay, Rousseau discussed the moral and political evolution of human beings, which developed from the State of Nature to modern society. This he regarded as a natural account of the social contract. However, he believed that this account is full of absurdities. The second, which is his *normative account* of the social contract, is intended to provide ways by which the problems that modern society has created for us can be alleviated. This is contained in his *Second Discourse*.

In the *Second Discourse* where Rousseau describes the historical process by which man began in a State of Nature and latter 'progressed' into civil society. According to him, the State of Nature was a peaceful one. Mans' condition was good, his life was peaceful and he was happy. Evil was not part of man neither did man ever planned or do evil to fellow men. Man

was at peace with nature and his fellow men. Greed, violence, aggressiveness was not part of human nature as Hobbes has earlier presented. Human beings lived solitary, uncomplicated lives. Their few needs were easily satisfied by nature. Because of the abundance of nature and the small size of the population, the competition was non-existent, there was no private ownership of properties, ther**e was no reason for conflict or fear nor was there any reason to harm one another.**

However, this peaceful and happy state of affairs was disturbed as humanity was confronted by certain changes. There was an increase in population, and how people could satisfy their needs had to change. As a result, people gradually began to live together in small families, and then in small communities. This situation, therefore, led to some other social developments. For instance, divisions of labour were introduced, both within and between families, there were various discoveries and inventions, which brought more meaning to human existence and life was made easier, giving rise to leisure time. Rousseau thought that it was the leisure time that inevitably led people to make comparisons between themselves and others. The comparison being made by men in the state of nature resulted in ascribing public values to themselves. It also led to shame, envy, pride and contempt. One fundamental invention of the time was private ownership of property. It was this that constituted the pivotal moment in humanity's evolution out of a simple, pure state into one characterized by greed, competition, vanity, inequality, and vice. Thus, Rousseau sees the invention of private property as the cause of "humanity's 'fall from grace' out of the State of Nature" (Kelley and Masters 1990: 139).

The introduction of private property made the initial conditions of inequality to be more pronounced. Some have a property and others are forced to work for them. This led to the development of social classes. Eventually, those who have property notice that it would be in their interests to create a government that would protect private property from those who do not have it but can see that they might be able to acquire it by force. Thus, the government was established through a contract. Although the establishment of government was disguised as a means to ensure equality and protection for all, its true purpose is to fossilize the very inequalities that private property has produced. In other words, the contract, which claims to be in the interests of everyone equally, is really in the interests of the few who have become stronger and richer as a result of the developments of private property. This is what Rousseau considered as the naturalized social contract that was responsible for the conflict and competition from which modern society suffers.

As stated earlier, the normative social contract of Rousseau as contained in *The Social Contract* (1762), was directed at providing a solution to this

sorry state of affairs and to remedy the social and moral ills that have been produced by the development of society.

The Social Contract begins with the most oft-quoted line from Rousseau: "Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains" (Rousseau 1987). Rousseau's opined that human beings are essentially free. And, even, in the state of nature humans were free, but the 'progress' of civilization has substituted subservience to others for that freedom, through dependence, economic and social inequalities, and the extent to which we judge ourselves through comparisons with others. Since humans cannot return to the State of Nature nor desire it, politics was created to restore freedom to us, thereby reconciling who we truly and essentially are with how we live together. In this regard, *The social contract* seeks to address is, the problematic of, how can we be free and live together. In other words, how can humans live together without succumbing to the force and coercion of others? This problem, to Rousseau, can be resolved. To solve the problem, he maintained that man only need to submit their individual, particular wills to the collective or general will, created through the contract (agreement) made with all other free and equal persons. He believes that all men are naturally made to be equals, therefore, no one has a natural right to govern others, and therefore the only justified authority is the authority that is generated out of agreements or covenants (Rousseau 1987).

According to Rousseau (1987), the most basic covenant, the social agreement, is that which made the people come together and form a collectivity, which by definition is more than and different from a mere aggregation of individual interests and wills. This act, where individual persons become people is "the real foundation of society". Thus, the collective submission of the individual rights and freedom by the people in the State of Nature, and the transfer of these rights to the collective body, a new 'person', as it were, is formed. The sovereign is thus formed when free and equal persons come together and agree to create themselves anew as a single body, directed to the good of all considered together. So, just as individual wills are directed towards individual interests, the general will, once formed, is directed towards the common good, understood and agreed to collectively. T*his version of the* social contract also entails the idea of reciprocated duties: while the sovereign is committed to the good of collective citizenry who constitute it, the individual citizen is also committed to the good of the whole. Thus, the individual citizen does not have the liberty to decide whether it is in his or her own interests to fulfil his or her duties to the Sovereign, while at the same time being allowed to reap the benefits of citizenship. They must be made to conform themselves to the general will, they must be "forced to be free" (Rousseau 1987).

For Rousseau, this implies an extremely strong and direct form of democracy. No person can transfer his or her will to another, to do with as he or she wants, as one does in representative democracies. This is because, the general will depends on the coming together periodically of the entire democratic body, every citizen, to decide collectively, and unanimously, how to live together.

Some of the implications of Rousseau idea are: This strong form of democracy, which is consistent with the general will is only possible in relatively small states. Also, it implies that the people must be able to identify with one another, and to a great extent know who each other is. These individuals cannot live in a large area, and in such different geographic circumstances as to be unable to be united under common laws. Although the conditions for true democracy are stringent, they are also the only means by which we can, according to Rousseau, save ourselves, and regain the freedom to which we are naturally entitled.

Some other points that you must note in Rousseau's social contract theories are that his theories form a single, consistent view of the society's moral and political situation. The theories indicate that humans are naturally endowed with freedom and equality, however, their nature has been corrupted by their social history. This to him can be corrected by invoking their freewill to reconstitute themselves politically, along strongly democratic principles, which is good for everyone in the society.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Social contract theory is rightly associated with modern moral and political theory and is given its first full exposition and defence by Thomas Hobbes. After Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are other best-known proponents of the theory. These attempt to show the gradual emergence of human society and the fact that morality and political society came together and cannot be separated. Despite their differences on what the 'end' of government is, they see political society as a means of resolving social problems. Of course other political philosophers, like, Spinoza, David Hume, John Rawls etc., that ventured into discussing the theory took after the three Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau that we have discussed in this unit. This has made the theory to remain as one of the most dominant theories within moral and political theory throughout the history of the modern West. Although, while some of the latter discussants build support for the best three known proponents of the theory, some have argued that social contract theory remained an incomplete picture of humans moral and political lives, and may in fact camouflage some of how the contract is itself parasitical upon the subjugations of classes of persons. Whatever the argument against social contract.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the idea of the social contract, which is considered as a theory developed first by Thomas Hobbes and later by John Locke and J.J Rousseau. From the discussion of their various positions of the theory, it has also been pointed out that there were areas of agreement on how the political society emerged and we were also able to point out areas of divergence among them. It has also been pointed out that the contractarianists attempts to show that morality and political society came into existence together and therefore, morality is inseparable from politics.

6.0   SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   What is the social contract?
2.   Explain Thomas Hobbes' theory of social contract
3.   How would you differentiate between Thomas Hobbes and John Locke conception of the social contract?
3.   Discuss Jean Jacque Rousseau's version of social contract theory
4.   What are the similarities and dissimilarities in the various social contract theories you have learnt?
5.   Carefully explain the uniqueness in Rousseau's social contract theory

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UNIT4   BETWEEN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
         POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objective
3.0   Main Content
       3.1   Between Political Science and Political Philosophy
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Given our discussion of the meaning of politics in unit one and what political philosophy is in unit two, we shall be discussing the differences between political science and political philosophy in this unit. This is to enable you to have a clear understanding that these two, although, are concerned with the same concepts of politics and the science of administration of human society. Thus, in the unit, you will be made to understand that political science and political philosophy does not share the same subject matter and methodology.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

* examine the meaning of political science
* discuss how political science is different from political philosophy
* explain the point of divergence between political philosophy and political science.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Between Political Philosophy and Political Science

What is political science?
This is a discipline situated in social science. It is concerned with the study of the society or state and nation as the case may be. It studies government, the political arrangement of a state as well as policies of the government. Essentially, it is concerned with the theory and practice of politics, the analysis of political behaviour, and political culture in any human society.

Although, there is no agreement or a univocal definition of what political science is. In fact, Oji (1997), citing Rodee, et al, believe that the term political science can be traced back to Jean Bodin (1530-1596), a French political philosopher who termed the study of politics as a *science politique* and gave political science an abiding concern for the organisation of institutions related to law. However, a contemporary attempt by political scientists to have a univocal definition has not been successful as the various definitions only reflect differences in individual perception. For instance, while Alfred de Gracia sees political science as the study of events that happen around the decision-making centres of government, Charles Hyneman believes that political science only focuses on the part of the affairs of the state that centres on government, and that kind of part of government which speaks through law. (Janda et al, 1989)

The contemporary conception gave a scientific inkling to the study of politics and therefore gave its study away from humanities by adopting the generic sequential method of scientific inquiry as observed in natural sciences, in their attempt to explain the myriads of problems confronting humanity and his environment. Science is known to be an organized body of truth or knowledge and given this nature of science and the view that the study of politics has certain traits of the method of science, political science can simply be defined as the systematic study of politics, bearing certain characteristics of the natural sciences. But then, since political science does not share full-fledge traits of natural science, it can be regarded as an inexact science or what Oji (1997) called pseudo or quasi-science. As a science, the study of politics involves the process of scientific investigation, which include; identification of a problem; a collection of data; formulation of hypothesis from where inferences are drawn; experimentation and systematic analysis of the data collected and making of deductions and submission of a solution to the problem (Oji 1997).

But then, it should be noted that political science does not engage the use of systematic laboratory experimental processes as we have the natural sciences. Unlike the natural sciences, political science, like economics, sociology and other social sciences deals with social beings whose humanistic behaviour cannot be predicted. Thus, unlike pure science, it is difficult to make a prediction or draw an absolute conclusion about what human behaviour would be, even after having consistent results in a series of observation. For instance, every unpopular government policies in Nigeria (say an increase in petroleum pump price) have always met with public resistance and outcry, but the 2015 increase did not. This is while political science, although is a science but social science. Thus, in political science, there cannot be strict adherence to the natural science

mode of study and explanation because it deals with human behaviour, which to a greater extent cannot be predicted or subjected to irrational changes. As one of the behavioural sciences, political science as a field of study was codified in the 19th century, when all the social sciences were established, and indeed, it originated almost 2,500 years ago and deeply rooted in the works of Plato and Aristotle. However, it has over the years developed to the following classifications:

- Political theory
- Comparative politics
- Public administration
- International relations
- Public law
- political methodology

3.1.2 Between Political Science and Political Philosophy

From what you have studied in unit two and our discussion on the meaning of political science, you would observe that there are distinctions between political philosophy and political science. Some of these are discussed below. One of the important differences is that, while the nature of political philosophy is more theoretical and normative political science is practical and descriptive. Political philosophy is a prescriptive activity, which sets up norms or ideal standards for society and government. This is explicated in Plato's *The Republic* and Hobbes political theory *Leviathan*. Political science is a practical science, rather than a speculative science. A speculative science as we know has "as its object the truth of "what is", whereas a practical science, though concern with the truth of "what is" is further ordained to action for the sake of some end" (Adeigbo, 1991: 13).

Furthermore, political philosophy gives recognition to the problems of value and that these problems of value judgment fall within their scope and province, but on the other hand, the political scientists often claim that their discipline is value-free. Also, the political scientists only keep to observation and examination of facts. Political philosophy does not only offer an analysis of basic concepts but also, sets the aim of this analysis on the establishment of the standards (norm) by which to determine why a particular system, institution, law or belief is better than another.

A consideration of questions that are raised in political philosophy some of which we have highlighted in unit two, shows that political philosophy is concerned with how things should be (normative) and not how things are (descriptive). In political science, different aspects of political

progress are quarried and specific political system is focused upon by the political scientists. The political scientist asks questions such as:
What is the nature of political society?
Why do people create a political system?
What are the functions and structures of a political system?
What issues are at stake in politics?
How can the political system best be transformed peacefully?

These and many other similar questions that are asked in political science portray it as being descriptive.

The hallmark of the difference between political philosophy and political science is the method used in these two disciplines. The methodology, as we can see from the work of political philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, J. J. Rousseau and so on; has been "collection on data". This is contrary to the methodology of political scientists. The political philosopher refined the data collected using a continuous process of analysis and criticism in the interest of the desired increase in the highest and most important form of knowledge, called "wisdom" (Ibid, 17). Thus, political philosopher uses the tools of analysis, which is of two forms- analysis of concepts and analysis of the relationship that exists between concepts. For instance between rights and freedom, equality and equity, power and authority, law and morality and so on.

Though there are established differences between political philosophy and political science, however, you need to know that the two must coexist, if the aim for which the society is established is to be achieved. This is because, the whole idea of politics rests on the enhancement of peace, unity and progress in the society. Whatever it is in any society, social order is germane and the objective that can be factored out of the meaning, scope and nature of the two, that is political philosophy and political science revolves around the ensuring a better society for human beings.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Although, political science and political philosophy shared certain traits which border on the administration of human society, however, they differ in their subject matter and approaches to the study. Political philosophy is prescriptive in its nature and approach, political science, on the other hand, is descriptive.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, you have studied the meaning of political science and you have been made to see some of the basic distinctions or differences between political philosophy and political sciences.

6.0   SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Explain the meaning of political science
2.   Outline the differences and similarities between political science and political philosophy.

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MODULE 2   WESTERN POLITICAL THOUGHTS

Unit 1   Plato and Aristotle
Unit 2   St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas
Unit 3   Thomas Hobbes
Unit 4   John Locke
Unit 5   Jean Jacque Rousseau
Unit 6   Niccolo Machiavelli
Unit 7   Karl Marx

UNIT 1   PLATO   AND   ARISTOTLE'S   POLITICAL IDEAS

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   Plato's Conception of Politics
                3.1.2   Plato on Justice
                3.2.3   Plato on Who Should Rule?
                3.2.1   Aristotle on Politics
                3.2.2   Politics as a Means to an End
                3.2.3   Aristotle on Who Should Rule
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this second module and unit one, we shall be studying the political ideas of Plato and Aristotle. The purpose of this unit is to get you familiar with the conception of politics and the idea of human society as conceived by these two traditional ancient political philosophers. Thus, we shall examine their conception of state, human nature, justice and virtue and leadership.

## 2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

•   attempt an explanation of politics as conceived by Plato and Aristotle
•   grasp both Plato and Aristotle's, understanding of human nature

- identify who should rule as discussed in the political thoughts of the two philosophers
- explain the concept of justice as viewed by Plato
- evaluate both Plato and Aristotle's understanding of the relationship between politics and ethics.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Plato
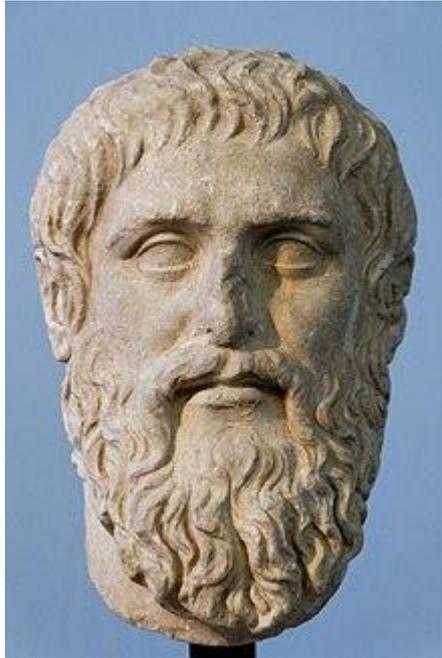
Roman copy of a portrait bust by Silanion for the Academia in Athens

Plato lived between 428/427 or 424/423 – 348/347 BC). He was of Athenian origin in Greece. He was the founder of the Platonist school of thought, and the Academy, which has been described as the first institution of higher learning in the Western world. He was a pupil of Socrates and a teacher to Aristotle. The three were known to be a prominent figure in the history of Ancient Greek and Western philosophy.

3.1.1 Plato's Conception of Politics

Plato's political philosophy as contained in *The Republic* reflects his belief in virtue and the capacity of the human mind to attain truth and the use of this truth by man to order human affairs virtuously and rationally. He believes that conflicting interests of different parts of society can be harmonised, such that peace and social order may be attained. Korab-Karpowiez (2006:2) writes, "the best rational and righteous political order, which he proposes, leads to a harmonious unity

of society and allows each of its parts to flourish, but not at the expense of others". Plato sees virtue as an underpinning factor in political order and more importantly, in the administration of the human society.

Although *The Republic* contained dialogues that cover various areas in philosophy, that is, epistemology, metaphysics and ethics, but then, political philosophy was the area of his greatest concern. Plato embarked on a conceptual analysis of what politics ought to be in other to show what political idea is correct and what political idea is wrong. Very glaring in Plato's *The Republic* is the movement from conceptual analysis through evaluation of beliefs to the best political order. It is in line with this belief that the idea of 'what politics is' was formed.

The Republic shows a critical reflection on how best a society can arrange the collective lives of his people, the political institution and social practices, such as the economic and pattern of family life to attain an ideal state. His conception of what politics ought to be focuses on the 'public good'. The attainment of this, that is, 'public good' rests on who should rule the society, how the ruler should be appointed or elected and how the society should be structured such that friction or chaos would be prevented and social order is realized. Plato's main interest is the consideration of the nature of the 'good life' (Plato, 1941: 358-362). This, he does, by considering the various answers that might be given to the question "What is justice?" The word 'justice' in Plato's idea is not to be misconstrued as having any legal undertone, rather, that with such a wide range of meanings as belonging to the terms 'good' and 'right'. This meaning aligns, with Plato's intention, identified by Karl Popper (1966: 87), as "The building of a perfect state in which every citizen is really happy" this state he considers to be an ideal political state.

Noticeable in Plato's political thought is, the close parallel between his conceptions of justice (or the good life) when considered on a political level and what it is on the level of an individual's personal life. His conception of politics shows that the line of demarcation between ethics and politics will be rather artificial and not make any sense. As a matter of fact, a perfect understanding of Plato's idea of politics shows that a water-tight relationship exists between ethics and politics, such that, we can term his political thought "ethics – politics" (Adeigbo, 1991: 22-23). Any attempt to separate politics from ethics given Plato's idea of justice will create a kind of injustice by means of social disorder both in the individual soul and in the society. This, to Plato, is the only way by which public morality can be attained in the society, that is when the cause of justice is maintained first in the human soul which eventually affects the moral order of the society.

Plato holds this view for the very good reason that one cannot make any serious headway in characterising what the good society is without

having some conception of the good life for the individuals who make up the society. For him, the two go together. Thus, in considering the meaning of 'justice' he maintains that a common structure characterises justice both in a just state and in the life of a just individual.

3.1.2 Plato on Justice

The concept of justice remains an ethical and political concept. As used by Plato, it refers to individual virtue and the order of society. Justice is a virtue whose necessary nature or structure is to be found as much in the life of a person as in the way in which a whole society is organised. Using the words of Berki, (1977: 49) "justice is the summary expression of the good or ideal form of human society".

Plato undertook the analysis of justice first by seeing it 'written in large letters' on a social level (Berki:49). And, with its structure discerned in the workings of a city-state, he turns to its parallels in the way a 'soul' might be exercised or adjusted. The state is seen as a kind of organism: It consists of various parts. In other words, it is made up of the various classes of society where each 'organ' has its function and contributes in its special way to the functioning of the 'political organism' as a whole. Thus, to Plato, the ideal state must exhibit justice in the ordering of her affairs. He dismisses the various formulation of justice, especially that of Thrasymachus. Thrasymachus defines justice as "nothing else than the interest of the stronger" (Plato, 1941: 368): a definition he derived from the city's configuration of power and making it relative to the interest of the dominant social or political group.

Plato also dismisses the idea that justice is based on human convention. To him, justice is something real, objective and rooted in the nature of human beings and society. Justice is performing what one has an ability or skill for. His conviction is that human beings have different skills or abilities which serves their mutual interests. Since human beings are not self-sufficient, they live in communities. And, since the needs of each member of the society vary, many depend on others to meet these needs and also to provide themselves with all the necessities of life, because they are social beings. Human beings pool their resources together, they live together as farmers, weavers, musicians and so on. By living with other people, it is now possible to seek help from other members of the community. It is, therefore, not necessary to do everything by oneself. In his view:

… If the farmer is to have a good plough and spade and other tools, he will not make them himself. No more will the builder and weaver and shoemaker make all the many implements they need. So, quite several carpenters and smiths and other craftsmen must be enlisted (Ibid: 370).

Thus, people tend to specialise in particular functions or activities making a system of exchange and interdependence on one another inevitable. In this way, through their services to others, the economic foundation of the state is laid. The city-state would then develop and expand, and this leads to growing expectations and luxurious wants. The implication is that enmity and opportunities for the act of injustice would arise since greed would creep in. This would eventually lead to war among the people. There is, therefore, the need for a standing body, and armed force (Army), to protect the state. This is supposed to be a bulwark against outside invasion. The state was trifurcated into three groups, the guardians as the ruler, the auxiliaries as the soldiers and the artisans as the producers.

Each of these groups must function independently of one another. None of the three groups can exchange its position for the other because of the differences in the skill and abilities possessed by the members. He contends that it is only when this is the case that justice and temperance will be attained in the state. Thus, an ideal state is where the principle of division of labour functions effectively among the three parts and it is only through this that justice can be attained in the state. Justice in the state, according to Plato, could be likened to justice in the individual soul. One cannot have justice in the state without having it in the individuals or vice versa.

To explain the idea of justice in the individual, Plato divides the human soul into three parts, namely: the spirited, the appetitive and the rational parts. These three must also function independently of each other for justice to exist in the soul. A harmonious relationship existing between the natural constituents, each doing its job, and correspondingly, injustice is disharmony. The central problem here is how to establish harmony in the individual and the state.

Plato's idea on political institution, activities and beliefs emanated from his conviction of what justice entails. To Plato, justice, understood traditionally as virtue and related to goodness, is the foundation of good political order, and as such it is in everyone's interest. Justice, if we rightly understand Plato, is not to the exclusive advantage of any of the city's factions, but is concerned with the common good of the whole political community. It is to the advantage of everyone. It provides the state with a sense of duty, and thus, a basic condition for its health. Plato believes that injustice is the cause of civil war, hatred, and chaos, while justice brings friendship and a sense of common purpose.

As observed in his theory, the starting point for the inquiry about the best political order is the fact of social diversity and conflicting interest which involves the danger of civil strife. The political community

consists of different parts or social classes, such as the noble, the rich, and the poor, each representing different values, interests, and claims to rule. This gives rise to the controversy of who should rule the state, and what is the best political system. Plato, in *The Republic,* sees factionalism and civil war not only as the greatest danger to a society but also that peace obtained by the victory of one part and the destruction of its rivals is not to be preferred to social peace obtained through the friendship and cooperation of all the various parts in the society. Peace is not what a particular privilege group should enjoy; it is a value that must be usually desired by everybody. The best political order to Plato, therefore, is that which promotes social peace in the environment of cooperation and friendship among different social groups, each benefiting from and each adding to the common good. The common good is a phenomenon that ought to be pursued by all members of the society. In the same vein, the general interest ought to be the focus on and the pursuit of good political order. To attain this, Ryn (1999) pointed out that individual souls must be shaped by the moral – intellectual discipline of justice. This is because the polis cannot become just without just individuals. This leads to the earlier identified problem of how to establish harmony in the individual and the state and to solve this problem Plato's discussion of who should rule in the ideal state becomes relevant.

3.1.3 Who should Rule?

According to Plato, if ruling is a craft, indeed statecraft, then politics needs competent or experts, at least in the form of today's civil servants. Who then should the experts be if the proposed harmony is to be achieved in the society and why? According to Plato, the philosophers should rule, that is, those who were chosen from among the brightest, most stable and most courageous children who have gone through a sophisticated and prolonged educational training. These people are competent people with true public interest whose desire is the pursuit of the common good.

Plato assumes that when a state is not governed out of a desire for private gain, and the leader is not motivated by personal ambition, such a state will be free from any form of civil strife. Thus, the philosopher will rule not only because they will be best prepared for this, but also because if they do not, the city will no longer be well-governed and may fall prey to economic decline, factionalism and civil war. Ruling will be approached not as something enjoyable but as something necessary. Aside, the philosophers that are being recommended as rulers include both men and women. They are those who have been trained in various forms of disciplines like gymnastics, music and mathematics, and ends with dialectic, military service and practical city management. They

have superior theoretical knowledge, including the knowledge of the just, noble, good and they are not inferior to others in practical matters as well. This form of education will enable them to see beyond changing empirical phenomenal and reflect on such timeless values as justice, beauty, truth and moderation (Korab-karpowiez, 2006).

The above principle of education discussed by Plato is meant to serve two main purposes. The first is character training, while the second is body training. Though, it is in two parts, namely, primary and higher education. The primary education is meant for every citizen and the analysis of its method and goal is to find a way of selecting and training individuals who will be assigned the job of auxiliaries. It is meant to enable the identification of individuals who possess' traits of characters that are desirable in would-be leaders in the society. On the other hand, the nature of higher education becomes relevant only at a later stage when the problem of selecting future rulers of the society is taken up. This form of education is solely for those who have been identified as possessing leadership traits. They undergo training in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy and so on. This is to expose them to the real truth and develop their reasoning capabilities and also enhance their knowledge of the good. If the philosopher-kings rule, intellectual wisdom and political power would fuse and the result will be perfect justice in the state. This will lead to the desired ideal state.

To Plato, the political authority of the ruler is morally based on the consent of the governed, and the existence of political institution or government is for nothing other than the benefit of all citizens and all social classes. Thus, the government must mediate between potentially conflicting interests in the society. This according to Crossman's examination of Plato's view is to enhance "the buildings of a perfect state in which every citizen is really happy" (Popper 1966: 87).

From Plato's position, there is a connection between politics and ethics, hence the reason why his idea of politics is tied to the understanding of his concept of justice, which he considered as a supreme virtue that should determine the administration of the state and also characterise the nature of the citizens. If we accept justice as a virtue that can bring about a positive effect on the people living together in a community and consequently affect their communal interaction, then, Plato's political idea is a moral way of evaluating political institutions and political activities. When viewed this way, then the idea of public morality underlies Plato's political philosophy. In other words, Plato's traditional philosophy emphasises a great linkage between the practice of politics and the value of ethics. This is necessary to ensure social order and the promotion of public good.

Plato's work has also attracted various criticisms, but that which we shall examine is the characterisation of his work as anti-democratic and a closed society by Popper.

Popper argues that Plato's political ideology gives pride of place to the society at the expense of the individual (Popper, 1966). Plato's basic focus is that society should be stable, well ordered, and harmonious. This led him to emphasise the organic nature of the society, leaving out the individual. Put differently, the individual has no right or freedom because society comes before him or her. In this regard, Plato is seen as the founder of a totalitarian state.

Besides the above, another fundamental point, which you should note is that Plato's political ideology is simply in favour of a class society. His trifurcation of the state into three supports and allows for a rigid class-based society. The ruler must rule, the auxiliaries must defend and the artisans must work. This he called 'justice' in the state. This is not in support of an egalitarian principle. Also, his philosophy is not in any form of egalitarian. However, two very vital points that we cannot take away from Plato's idea is the commitment to the morality in politics and the belief in public morality as an important factor that underlies social order, growth and development. Also, his emphasis on knowledge as a fundamental criterion for leadership cannot be undervalued. He believes that knowledge and its positive application could contribute to wise governance and can enhance the good of society.

3.2 Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC)
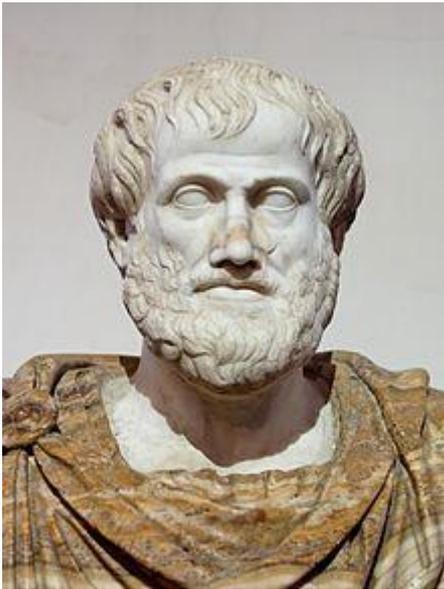
Roman copy in marble of a Greek bronze bust of Aristotle by Lysippos, c. 330 BC, with modern alabaster mantle

Aristotle was a pupil of Plato and was known as the father of what we now know as science. He was a logician, mathematician, biologist etc.

3.2.1 Aristotle on Politics

The political philosophy of Aristotle is characterised by empirical concepts. His concern, interest and attitude towards science greatly reflect in his political writings. He could also be described as the father of empirical political science, because, his work in politics was based on the actual study of societies. Unlike Plato, Aristotle did not create a blueprint for an ideal society and he did not fly into speculative idealism but remained in "the terra firma" of concrete existence in his discussion of politics" (Irele, 1998: 21). His is a kind of dialogic conversation with Plato. Though his conclusion is Platonic, he maintained a teleological view of things in the world. He argues that all things in the world are to be understood in terms of the ends toward which they tend to achieve. To Aristotle, the end of politics is to enable the citizens to perform noble action. This will enable the citizen to attain happiness and noble action, which is morally upright and just action.

To understand Aristotle's conception of politics you need to first understand his ethical ideas. This is because both are closely related. As a matter of fact, in his *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle characterised politics as the most authoritative science. It prescribes which sciences are to be studied in the city-state, and the other capacities. He considers, ethics and politics not just closely related but also that the ethical and

virtuous life is only available to someone who participates in politics, while moral education is the main purpose of the political community. To further show the relationship between politics and ethics in Aristotle's philosophy, Samuel Stumpf (1977: 109) observes that, Aristotle in his Politics, as in his Ethics, stresses the element of purpose.

Aristotle's *Ethics* is a treatise or portrait of good and happy human beings and is premised on virtue and happiness. These two relates to how human beings should live together in society, or the purpose of living together in a society. This logically leads to his political ideas which are articulated in his book, *Politics*. He believes that human beings are not isolated individuals and that virtue cannot be practiced by solitary hermits. To him, man is by nature a social animal. They have a common activity peculiar to them. They can perceive the good and the bad, the just and the unjust and this perception is made possible by a partnership among citizens.

Aristotle's idea of the State and the Individual
To Aristotle, society and state are not artificial but natural to man; they are manifestations of human nature. Every state is a partnership, and it is through it that human beings can attain physical, moral and intellectual perfection. He explained that the state exists to provide the basic necessities of life. It is not just an alliance, because, it has a moral aim, which is, to ensure the good of the community as a whole, whereas an alliance exists for mutual protection. "It differs from a nation in that the state is a well-knitted political association whereas a nation is a large amorphous entity" (Irele, 1998: 24). According to King & Mc Gilvary, (1973: 49), Aristotle asserts:
When several villages are united in a single community, perfect and large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the state comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake of a good life.

The state is considered as a creature of nature, and man is by nature a political animal. Aristotle does relate man and state so closely and he was able to conclude that "he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god" (Aristotle's *Ethics* 1103625. A man by nature is destined to live in a state and the state, "is established with a view to some good" (King & Mc Gilvary: 50) that is, it exists for some end.

But, a state is not an aggregate collection of individuals; it is a community under a single constitution and law. The state is united, not necessarily because of its location and size, but, rather, because of its constitution. It evolves through a whole complex of development; from family household to villages and finally into a state.

The important point to note in Aristotle's idea of the state is that the state was created to ensure a more comfortable life for the citizens. It exists for the sake of "living well". "Living well" to Aristotle means leading a life of happiness and virtue, and by so doing fulfilling one's *teleos*. It is, therefore, necessary for men to live in a state for the realisation of his *teleos* that is, goal or end.

3.2.2 Politics as a Means to an End

In his scheme of things, Aristotle believes that everything has an end or final purpose *(teleos)* towards which it is or ought to be striving. And, in Clayton Edward's (2003) opinion, whatever is the end-product of the coming into existence of any object that is what we call its nature. Thus, the final end or *teleos* of man is happiness, which can be seen as an activity of the soul in conformity with excellence or virtue in a complete life.

To Aristotle, living happily requires living a life of virtue. Someone who is not living a virtuous life or who is not morally good is also not living a happy life, no matter what they might think. They are like a knife that will not cut. Those who do live according to virtue are living a life that flourishes, and they are those who have been able to use their reasoning ability to discover what is right and wrong, what is good and bad, what is just and unjust. Thus, relating the idea of an end to Aristotle's conception of politics, the end or goal of politics is the best of ends, and the main concern of politics is to engender a certain character in the citizens and to make them good and disposed to perform noble actions. By noble action, Aristotle means actions that are morally upright and just.

Aristotle opined that political practice must intend to enable the citizens to achieve their end, which is happiness by inculcating into them moral virtues that will enhance good behaviour towards other citizens and the state. On the other hand, the citizens either as an individual or as a group must also enable the state to attain its end, which is the pursuit of the common good and the interest of her citizens.

The above views of Aristotle may be alien to the contemporary conceptions of politics hence, the various opposition to Aristotle's view. In contemporary society, we are likely to regard politics (and political activities) as aiming at ignoble, selfish ends such as wealth and power, rather than the "best end". To buttress our position, Clayton Edward (2003), argues that many people often regard the idea that politics is or should be primarily concerned with creating a particular moral character in citizen as a dangerous intrusion on individual freedom in large part. Those who argue this way have always premised their argument on the

fact that there is no agreement about what the "best end" is. Thus, contemporary society's political and ethical beliefs are not Aristotelian.

Aristotle identified three kinds of knowledge: theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge and productive knowledge (Adeigbo 1997: 22-23). In a simple term, these kinds of knowledge are distinguished by their aims. Theoretical knowledge aims at contemplation, productive knowledge aims at creation, and practical knowledge aims at action. Theoretical knowledge involves the study of truth for its own sake; it is knowledge about things that are unchanging and eternal, and it includes things like the principles of logic, physics, and mathematics. Productive knowledge means, roughly, know-how; the knowledge of how to make a table or a house and so on are examples of practical knowledge.

To justify the relationship between ethics and politics, Aristotle maintains that to live a moral life, man must possess a practical knowledge which is the knowledge of how to live and act. To him, ethics and politics, which are practical science, deal with human beings as moral agents. Ethics is primarily about the actions of human beings as individuals, and politics is about the actions of a human being in communities. Although, it is important to remember that Aristotle ethics and politics influence each other because of their closeness and both as a kind of practical knowledge, have several important consequences in Aristotle's philosophy. One of the consequences is that Aristotle believes mere abstract knowledge of ethics and politics is worthless. The reason for this is based on his belief that practical knowledge is only useful if we act on it; thus to Aristotle, we must act appropriately if we are to be moral. Edward Clayton puts this idea of Aristotle as contained in *Ethics* 1103625 as follow:

The purpose of the present study (of morality) is not, as it is in other inquiries, the attainment of theoretical knowledge; we are not conducting this inquiry to know what virtue is, but to become good, else there would be no advantage in studying it (Clayton 2003).

The second consequence is, only mature men should be allowed to study politics. Because only these people (in Aristotle's view) have the experience and mental abilities that will benefit society. Women, slaves and underage men lack reasoning ability and the experience in the actions which life demands of them and these actions form the basis and subject matter of the discussion. Moreover, young men will always act based on their emotions rather than according to reason. Since acting on practical knowledge requires the use of reason, young men are unequipped to study politics for lack of the ability to reason. So, the study of politics will only be useful to those who have the experience and the mental discipline to benefit from it.

Be that as it may, what we need to note is that reasoning plays an important role in Aristotle's ethics and political practice. As earlier adverted to, those who engage in politics must use their reason to determine a morally justifiable action such that we can assert to be virtuous. It is only in doing this that they can be proved to be living to attain their *teleos*. Though Aristotle notes that it is not easy to be virtuous, he acknowledges that becoming virtuous can only become possible under the right conditions, that is, both politicians and other people can only fulfil their *teleos* and be a moral and happy human being within a well-constructed political state. The state brings about virtue through education and through laws which prescribe certain actions and prohibit others. Aristotle's conception of politics, therefore, maintains a strong linkage between ethics and politics.

Aristotle in *Ethics* 1103625 asserts:
… we become just by the practise of just actions, self-controlled by exercising self-control and courageous by performing acts of courage … Lawgivers make the citizens good by inculcating (good) habits in them, and this is the aim of every lawgiver; if he does not succeed in doing that, his legislation is a failure. It is in this that a good constitution differs from a bad one.

Given this view, it is obvious that the main concern of Aristotle about the idea of politics is: how can we discover and put into practice the political practice and the political institutions that will develop virtue in the citizens to the greatest possible extent? This is one of the ideas that form the central feature of political philosophy.

3.2.3 Who should Rule?

In defence of his view on politics and to further strengthen his political idea, Aristotle considers the issue of political power by asking the question; 'who should rule?' To answer this question, he attempts an examination of how a regime should be organised or what we can refer to as types of political power that can exist in a state. These are; the rule of the many, one man or a few men. His acceptance of any of these is based on whether these sorts of regimes and the wielder of political power, rule in their own interest or they do rule in the interest of all the citizens. He considers those who rule in the common interest as a good regime, while those who rule in their own interest as tyrants and are deviations from the correct or the good regime.

Aristotle identifies six kinds of regimes, they are monarchy (rule by one man for the common good), aristocracy (rule by a few for the common good), and polity (rule by many for the common good). Those he

identified as flawed or deviant regimes are tyranny (rule by one man in his own interest), oligarchy (rule by a few in their own interest) and democracy (rule by the many in their own interest). Despite this identification, Aristotle favoured monarchy, if it is in the interest of all. In another circumstance, he is for democracy, where a constitution is operative in the state. In a democratic set-up, offices rotate frequently and there is wide participation in government by the citizens. However, citizens do not include slaves as well as servants, manual workers and artisans.

On who should rule, Aristotle believes that those who are most virtuous have the strongest claim of all to rule. This is because, if a city exists for the sake of developing virtue in the citizens, then, those who have the most virtue are the fittest to rule: they will rule best and on behalf of the citizens establish laws that lead others to virtue.

It must also be said here that Aristotle identifies the way by which political administration can be protected such that would not cause instability in the society. First, the cause of 'revolution' or instability should be identified and avoided. Second, one should watch out to ensure there are no transgressions of the laws. Third, every regime should have laws and the management of the society should be arranged in such a way that it is impossible to profit from the offices. This is because people are always bitter when they realise that public fund is being stolen by the ruler. Four, those groups that do not have political power should be allowed to share in it to the greatest extent possible. That is, they are allowed to have a say in the administration of their society. Above all, people should be educated on the value of the administration and exercise of political power as well as the form of the system of administration that is in place in the society.

Some important points are surrounding Aristotle's conception of politics, which you must note. One, his political ideas were grounded in his biography and historical experience. According to Irele (1998: 25), Aristotle did not fly into the speculative terrain like Plato but, that he remained on earth. However, it is imperative to note that his theory in the last instance comes close to that of Plato, most especially in his belief that it is only those who have attained philosophical wisdom who should be allowed to rule the state. Two, to Aristotle, political power is not whatever one fancies at the moment, rather it is the ability to achieve one's most important goals. This goal is happiness, a worthwhile life.

Three, Aristotle's conception of politics, like Plato, also shows support for a classed society. This occurs in his expression of the belief that only a certain class can rule – those who have attained wisdom, the so-called leisured class. We cannot but conclude from this last point that, though

different from Plato in many points, he alludes to the whole idea of the philosopher-king in an indirect way.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Generally speaking, what underscores Plato and Aristotle's conception of politics is 'public good' which has been explained in terms of how best a state can arrange the collective lives of his people as well as the political practices in order to attain an ideal state and a happy life for all citizens in the state. In this regard, the two ancient traditional political philosophers considered ethics as a fundamental part of politics. It is also considered that politics and ethics are not just related, but that ethical and virtuous life must characterise the lives of those who participate in politics.

5.0   SUMMARY

So far in this unit, we have examined Plato and Aristotle's conception of politics. While our discussions of Plato cover his conception of an Ideal State, his concept of justice both in the state and in the human soul and his idea on who should rule in the ideal state, our examinations of Aristotle on the other hands include, his scientific perception politics, his idea of ethics as explicated in his Nichomachean ethics, his view on the state and the individual members of the society and his idea on who should rule.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss Plato's conception of politics.
2. How would you assess the relationship between politics and ethics in Plato's political philosophy?
3. Explain Aristotle's description of politics.
4. Evaluate Aristotle's discussion of who should rule in a state.
5. Briefly explain the relationship between Plato and Aristotle's conception of politics.
6. What is or are the role of ethics in Plato and Aristotle's political theory?

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UNIT 2   ST AUGUSTINE AND ST THOMAS AQUINAS'
POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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3.0   Main Content
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        3.2   Saint Thomas Aquinas' Idea of a Political Society
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall examine the idea of political society as conceived in the medieval age of philosophy. Two philosophers of the age shall be discussed and they are Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas. The purpose of this unit is to let you know that, despite the religious belief of the age, the philosophers of the period consider very important how human society should fare.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

•   explain politics as conceived by Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas
•   discuss Augustine and Aquinas's, believe of the role of God in the creation of the political society
•   examine how political society was created and the purpose it is expected to serve as discussed in the political thoughts of the two philosophers
•   explain the best political regime in the two philosophers' discussions
•   evaluate both Augustine and Aquinas' understanding of the place of virtue in the formation of political society.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Saint Augustine's Political Philosophy
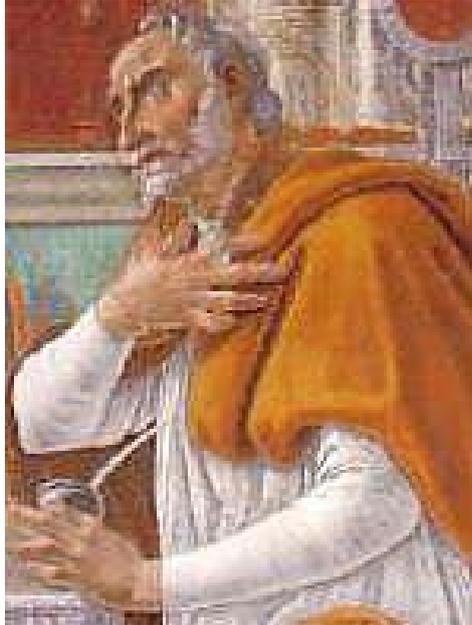
St. Augustine (354-430 C.E.)

Aurelius Augustinus was the Catholic bishop of Hippo in northern Africa, trained in rhetoric. He was generally believed to be the first Christian philosopher. His views on political and social philosophy connect the late antiquity and the emerging medieval world. Augustine's works cover areas like the nature of human society, justice, the role of the state, the relationship between church and state, just and unjust war, and peace. These works were believed to have greatly influenced Western civilisation. This is evident in some of the writings of some modern thinkers like Machiavelli, Luther, and, in particular, Hobbes.

Augustine's political and social views cannot be divorced from his theology. His political arguments are found in his various writings, which include sermons, autobiography, commentaries, expositions, letters, and Christian apologetics. Using the Christian doctrine as the basis of his philosophy and that of political philosophy, Augustine believes that there are a beginning and an end for all things. To him, the earth and human being were created *ex nihilo* by a God he conceived to be perfectly good and just. Thus, the earth is not eternal. There are a beginning and an end for both the earth and time (Omoregbe 1993).

From Augustine's point of view, at creation, God created a perfectly good ordered earth, which was disrupted by the Fall of Adam, the first man He created with free will. The Fall of Adam to Augustine was the original sin. It was the Fall of Adam that made all human beings to be

heirs to this original sin and human beings develop traits of greediness, pride and selfishness. God, to Augustine, out of His unmerited mercy, has, however, predestined some number of men to be saved from the original sin while most other men He has predestined for condemnation. Thus, human history is the revelation of the divine plan of God, which will "culminate in one or other outcome for every member of the human family" (Deane, 1963: 114)

From Augustine's idea, certain points must be noted. First, it is not clear whether every event during man's existence on earth has been predestined by God, however, it would be observed that nothing contravenes His designs on earth. This implies that predestination determines the ultimate destination of every human being as well as their political states.

Although, Augustine's theory may beg for many logical questions which may affect the acceptability of his position, but then his ideas seem to have best "provide a description of political life on earth, but not a prescription for how to obtain membership in the perfect society of heaven; for, even strict obedience to Christian precepts will not compensate for one's not being gratuitously elected for salvation" (Mattox, 2006: 72).

It suffices to let you know here that the latter experience of Augustine about the political situation of his immediate society made him arrive at the central question of politics: How do the faithful operate successfully and justly in an unjust world, characterised by selfishness, lack of public interest, good and evil men, yet search for a heavenly reward in the world hereafter?

Furtherance of his political idea, Augustine created two cities which represents his description of the two sets of human beings in the world, that is, those elected for salvation and those elected for damnation. The two cities are the city of God, which belong to those who inherited the unmerited mercy of God. The citizens of this city are "pilgrims and foreigners" who (because God, the object of their love, is not immediately available for their present enjoyment) are very much out of place in a world without an earthly institution sufficiently similar to the City of God. No political state, nor even the institutional church, can be equated with the City of God. Moreover, there is no such thing as "dual citizenship" in the two cities; every member of the human family belongs to one—and only one.

The second city is the earthly city, which is the city of the damned men. Citizens of the earthly city are the unregenerate progeny of Adam and Eve, who are justifiably damned because of Adam's Fall. These

persons, according to Augustine, are aliens to God's love (not because God refuses to love them, but because they refuse to love God as evidenced by their rebellious disposition inherited from the Fall). Indeed, the object of their love—whatever it may be—is something other than God. In particular, citizens of the "earthly city" are distinguished by their lust for material goods and domination over others.

Augustine's conception of justice is based on the biblical doctrine, which he simply described as, "love, serving God only, and therefore ruling well all else" (Deane 1963). In this regard, justice is seen as the crucial distinction between ideal political states (none of which actually exist on earth) and non-ideal political states—the status of every political state on earth. He opined that "where there is no justice there is no commonwealth" (Ibid). Justice is the foundation for an ideal state and when a state lacks it, then social order and unity cannot be attained. Thus, to him, "Remove justice," he asks rhetorically, "and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms?" (Omoregbe 1993: 173). Augustine holds that No earthly state can claim to possess true justice, but only some relative justice by which one state is more just than another. Likewise, the legitimacy of any earthly political regime can be understood only in relative terms. It was on this ground that he concluded that the then Roman empire could not truly be a commonwealth i.e., an ideal state and cannot be equated with the City of God.

3.2   Thomas Aquinas' political philosophy

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Thomas Aquinas political philosophy shares a certain resemblance with both the Christian doctrine and Aristotle's political philosophy. He modified Aristotle's politics to fit his Christian belief and doctrine. Thus, issues like the nature of the divine, the human soul, and morality were part of what he retained in Aristotelianism. All these he considered with utmost care not to allow Aristotle's conception of politics influences negatively the sacred writings of his religion. To him, "God no longer requires people to live according to the judicial precepts of the Old Law (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 104.3), and so the question of formulating a comprehensive Christian political teaching that is faithful to biblical principles loses it urgency if not its very possibility" (Morrow 1998: 279). Aquinas opined that the conditions for running a civil society are not contained in Christian doctrine. He believes that the legitimacy of the Kingship title, that Jesus claimed in John 18:36 does not belong to this world, yet Jesus Himself suggests that believer must obey the state laws as well as those of God.

Although, Aquinas discussion did not present to us, a concise treatise that can be regarded as whole work on politics, however, his thoughts on politics and political philosophy, in general, are contained in his various discussions on issues of political concerns such as, virtue, justice, common good and other politically related issues.

Like Aristotle, Aquinas believes that human beings naturally cannot but lives in society. This is due to human needs and aspiration, which eventually led to the establishment of political society. This view of Aquinas is different from those who construe the creation of society as the invention of human ingenuity that we have studied in the social contract theory. His view also did not see the creation of the political society as an artificial construction designed to make up for human nature's shortcomings (Omoregbe 2007). Aquinas sees the creation of political society as nothing but that which enables human beings in the society to attain the full perfection of their existence. Thus, the natural desire of man to attain perfection was the drive behind the creation of the political society. Although, political society naturally evolved, since nature has naturally separated man from other natural creature, however, we must note that "the naturalness of politics is more appropriately compared to the naturalness of moral virtue" (Internet encyclopedia of philosophy).   The idea of moral virtue, to Aquinas, is natural to man and this plays a vital role in the creation, maintenance and development of the political society. There is absolutely no person who can live successfully and a full man without a political society. his view in this regard, corroborate Aristotle's claim that one who is separated from society so as to be completely a-political must be either sub-human or super-human, either a "beast or a god."   (Aristotle's *Politics*, 1253a27; Cf. Aquinas' *Commentary*, Book 1, Lesson 1).

Perhaps, we should note here that, Aquinas also emphasise that the naturalness of the political society is not independent of that of the family which has been in existence before the formation of the former. The place of the family is played down when juxtaposed with political society. This is because the political society concerns with the macro-society and politics itself aim at a higher and nobler good than the family. But then, in tracing the development of political society the family serves as the basis for its emergence. This position is similar to Aristotle's explanation of the origin of political power as contained in his work *Politics*. So, like Aristotle, the creation of a political society is for special consequences, in so far that it is meant to meet the difficulties that may arrive as a result of expansion among families and the inability to meet up with the demands for goods that are not within the productive means of some families, i.e., provide economic benefit to the society. Aside, it is also meant to enhance greater protection and the moral and intellectual lives of human beings. Thus, when people live in a community or society, their lives would be more productive and they tend to be more comfortable and fulfilled. More so, it allows for division of labour because individuals will specialize in skills that they are best at and exchange of goods and services for monetary or other gains and rewards will equal thrive.

So, moving from family to village, to conglomeration of villages and then to political society, is the result of the natural growth in population and demand for more commodities and specialization as well as the opportunity for specialization among human beings. The political society, because of its larger size compares to the sizes of family or village is more advantageous to man and consists of an elaborate administrative system. It aims to serve the interest of the whole community, the pursuit of the common good and not the individual interest of the family. This goal of the political society to Aquinas is better and in accordance with the divine purpose.

Aquinas believed that since the political society serves every member, individuals will, therefore, benefit immensely, because, the society will serve them better by promoting a life of virtue in which, the human being will be able to attain his fullness. In this regard, Aquinas contends that although political society originally comes into being for the sake of living, it exists for the sake of "living well." (See the *Commentary on the Politics*, Book 1, Lesson 1, *Internet encyclopedia of philosophy*).

His emphasis on good citizenship in a political society cannot be undermined. To him, a good citizen is someone who places the common good or the good of all over and above his personal interest. He is someone who exhibits the virtue of justice and has all his deeds directed toward public goods and not private goods. Although, the

conditions for good citizenship vary from regime to regime. However, a good citizen cannot be found in a bad regime or an imperfect regime. This is because such a less good regime would never be committed to the pursuit of the public good. Thus, good citizens are only realizable in the best regimes. He, however, was quick to note the possibility of not having very many good citizens in the best regime. His reason was underscored by the fact that it is not possible to have all citizens in the society to be virtuous. The best regime to Aquinas can be known by either or both of the following two characteristics: 1. How the regime is ruled and 2. Whether it is ruled justly.

As he explains, the political rule may be exercised by the multitude, by a selected few, or by one person. If the regime is ruled by one single individual, it is called a monarchy or kingship, when ruled by a few it is called an aristocracy, and a polity or republic when ruled by the multitude. If, on the other hand, a regime is ruled unjustly (that is, for the sake of the ruler(s) and not for the commonweal), it is called a tyranny when ruled by one, an oligarchy when ruled by a few, and a democracy when ruled by the multitude (See Aquinas discussion *On Kingship*, Book 1, Chapter 1; *Commentary on the Politics*, Book 3, Lecture 6; *Internet encyclopedia of philosophy*).

Of all the above-discussed regimes, Aquinas states his support for monarchy as the best regime. His argument in support of monarchy was drawn from both philosophical and theological observations. Inasmuch as the goal of any ruler should be the "unity and of peace," the regime is better governed by one person rather than by many. For this end is much more efficaciously secured by a single wise authority who is not burdened by having to deliberate with others who may be less wise and who may stand in the way of effective governance. (Aquinas, *Internet encyclopedia of philosophy*). However, whether it is possible to have such system of governance or regime in political society or that this favoured regime by Aquinas will be a good regime in the face of possible challenges in the society, are questions that are begging for answers in his political philosophy. This is so, because, the monarchy regime, even though, the monarch is to be selected by the entire multitude of the citizen, yet he can become corrupted and a dictator. Therefore, this suggested the best regime may not at all time enable the realization of the goals of creating a political society. This might be the reason why he at another point, suggest that the best possible regime seems to be the mixed government that incorporates the positive dimensions of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy.

4.0   CONCLUSION

From the above discussions that concepts of politics and human nature in the medieval age have been greatly influenced by religion. This is evident from the two medieval philosophers discussed in this unit. Their understanding and discussions cannot be divorced from their Christian Faith. Thus, God is seen to be instrumental to the creation of political society and political society is simply fulfilling the purpose of God for humanity.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed both Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas ideas on how the political society was created and the purpose that this larger society is to serve. In Augustine's opinion, political society emerged as a result of the Fall of man. While God, out of mercy redeemed some group of human beings and considered them to be citizens of the City of God, those who were condemned were out of His mercy and they are citizens of Earthly city.

Aquinas opined that the creation of political society is systematic, from family to village and then to conglomeration of villages. Political society is to enable the full perfection of man by teaching and making him be virtuous. This, however, can only be realized through a good regime. He identified (although, with caution) a monarchy regime as a good regime.

6.0   SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1. Explain Augustine view of political society.
2. Outline some of the links between Augustine and Aquinas political philosophy
3. Would you agree that Aristotle's politics serves as the basis for Aquinas' political philosophy?
4. Distinguished between Augustine's Earthly city and City of God
5. What are the stages that led to the creation of a political society in Aquinas political philosophy?

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UNIT 3   THOMAS HOBBES

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall examine the political philosophy of Thomas Hobbes. The unit will introduce you to the metaphysical basis of Hobbes' political thought, which is quite connected to his social contract theory i.e., 'State of nature as we have discussed in the first module. You will also learn about how political society emerged as well as Hobbes idea of 'right'

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- attempt an explanation of political society as conceived by Hobbes
- discuss Thomas Hobbes idea of rights and the metaphysical basis of his political thought
- explain Hobbes concepts of 'Rights'

- examine how political society was created and the purpose it is expected to serve as discussed in the political thoughts of Thomas Hobbes
- evaluate the political ideas of Hobbes.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Thomas Hobbes: *Leviathan*

Thomas Hobbes, the great English socio-political philosopher, was born in Malmesbury in Britain at the time the country was going through civil strife. The story is told about how his mother gave birth to him prematurely due to her flight at the approach of the Spanish Armada. In his *Autobiography,* Hobbes says that his mother gave birth to twins: himself and fear. Having therefore been disturbed by the troubled political situation of his time; Hobbes' special interest in political theories was aroused. This enabled him to produce a political philosophy of first-rate importance.

Metaphysical Basis of Hobbes' Political Theory
In dealing with how to avert wars and ensure peace in the society, Hobbes considers it imperative on his part to find the metaphysical basis of conflicts in nature. He would then be in a position to consider how we may make it possible for the causes of disorder to be overcome and the causes of ordered society to operate.

Thus in his 'scientific' study of nature, Hobbes sees the world as being made up of bodies (atoms) in motion, which are arranged in an orderly pattern and which follow well-defined causal laws. He thinks of human societies as starting from a mass of atoms, and wishes to construct human society from its parts by means of a 'causal definition'. Thus in his view, the atoms are always in a collision and liable to knock one another to pieces. This Hobbes' pessimistic notion of human nature explains his idea of the state of nature pre-occupied with civil strife and warfare; the state of lawlessness. For him, the main cause of ordered society is the desire for security; while the main causes of the disorder are competition, distrust and 'glory' (enjoyment of power) (Hobbes 1963).

It suffices to say that Hobbes' political theory started with a description of human nature. This description is fundamental to his moral and political theory. His intention is to understand "the quality of human nature" (Hobbes 1963)**.** He began by analyzing human nature, using the new Galilean scientific outlook to describe human beings. Man to him is like a machine and just like a machine, man, operate in a deterministic way, without any end or purpose. Man is a complex being and his

complexity generates in him a multiplicity of goal which he pursues, which are determined by the motions of will, appetite and aversion. To Hobbes, appetite and aversion are part of man's abnormal nature that makes him pursue his personal interest at all time (Hobbes 1963).

The above description of Hobbes idea of the nature of man shows man as egoistic and as such man would always struggle for whatever he covets and tries to get at all cost. Man, therefore, possesses a restless desire for power and glory by all means, and till his death (ibid). To Hobbes, power is necessary for individual security and self-preservation and this is what each man competes for every time. But power cannot be had by all, so men resort to contention, enmity, violence and war.

You need to know that the above description of human nature by Hobbes has representation in the state of nature where everyone has equal power and ability to do whatever he can do. Human reasoning ability does not absorb him from been egoistic rather it makes him create means by which his personal interest and desires can be achieved without any consideration for others around him.

His State of Nature
Hobbes' idea of the state of nature has been discussed in module 1 (students are advised to go through the discussion in module 1). However, you must know that the state of nature is a hypothetical creation of Hobbes like other contractarians. In other words, it is an imaginary situation of a state without government, laws and check and balances. Such a state is characterised by insecurity and warfare and men are enemies of one another (Hobbes, 1963)**.**

The members of the society agreed to surrender their rights and freedom, to be managed by one man (who would also enforce the law in the society) called the Leviathan. Hobbes believes that the enforcing agency (Leviathan) can do so only if it is "granted absolute power" (Popkin & Stroll, 1993:67). This made him conclude that supreme power must coincide with supreme authority. For him, therefore, governments have to be always backed by force, if not direct, at least, implicit; for covenants without swords are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all" (Hobbes, 1963:119). Only laws made by the Leviathan is acceptable and his authority is total, hence elsewhere, Hobbes referred to the Leviathan as 'Mortal God'.

Hobbes opined that in the state of nature, there existed certain precepts which of course does not have an effect because they were not agreed upon and there was no sovereign to enforce them. Aside, these precepts are contrary to the ground norms or laws of nature, which is self-preservation. These precepts, according to Hobbes, are immutable and

eternal. Dipo Irele (1998:40) identified two of these laws, which are; first, people in the state of nature should seek peace, although, the condition in the state of nature does not allow for this. Also, every man should be willing, when others too are willing, to seek peace and self-defence, not claiming rights, and be contended with liberty which others enjoy. Lastly, that men should obey the covenant made. The covenant made results from the social contract, which member of the society agreed to when they surrendered their rights and freedom in other to enhance peace in the state of nature. As earlier adverted to, Hobbes political theory, which he derived from his idea of human nature, made him postulate an absolute monarchy who can curb human excesses.

Hobbes on 'Rights'
These rights could be seen in two dimensions; the rights of the Leviathan to issue commands to her citizens and the rights of the citizens to either obey or disobey the commands of the Leviathan. Perhaps, we should note here that Hobbes provides for artificial chains, called 'Civil Laws' to bind the sovereign, but these, as he himself admits, are weak (Ibid. 162-163). The chains are weak because Hobbes holds that, the subjects are only free where the laws do not interfere. The subjects have no rights as against the sovereign, except what the sovereign voluntarily concedes. However, Hobbes admits one limitation on the duty of submission to the Leviathan. The right of self-preservation he regards as absolute. This means the sovereign could not command a man to kill himself, for life was a gift by nature to man. The right remains inalienable to individuals since the basic motive for the total surrender of their powers was self-preservation. Thus, "as long as the sovereign existed, he enjoyed absolute, undivided, inalienable powers with just one limitation namely, the right to preserve individuals" (Mukherjee & Ramaswamy, 1999:183).

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UNIT 3   JOHN LOCKE'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

John Locke (1632- 1704)

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss John Locke's idea of political philosophy. As one of the modern age political philosopher, his concrete political concepts and thoughts are quite distinct from what we have in the medieval age. The unit shall discuss Locke's libertarian tradition, his concepts of property, consent, and type of government that may be accepted in society

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- discuss how a political society emerged according to Locke in his political philosophy
- attempt an explanation of political society as conceived by John Locke

- explain John Locke's idea of Class inequality, consent and property
- assess Locke's type of government that may be acceptable in society
- discuss his idea of revolution
- grasp Locke's Liberal tradition
- evaluate the political idea of John Locke.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   John Locke's political idea

John Locke lived through the two British revolutions of the seventeenth century, the civil war of mid-century and the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and 1689. He was much identified with the Whig Party before and during the latter revolution because of his close relationship with the Earl of Shaftesbury, the acknowledged leader of the Whigs in the post-Restoration years. Locke was in exile in Holland when the Glorious Revolution came, but his name is indelibly associated with it because he cast his *Two Treatises of Government* as an effort "to establish the Throne of our Great Restorer, our present King William" (Armitage, 2004:4), the ruler who supplanted King James II as a result of the Glorious Revolution.

Locke's political writings could be seen as efforts to respond to the issues underlying the political turmoil of the age. Those conflicts were complex because they occurred along two dimensions — the strictly political or constitutional and the religious. The political dimension concerned the relations between the powers of King and Parliament; the religious dimension derived from the unsettled character of British Christianity that followed on the Reformation. Locke wrote his *Two Treatises* to settle the political side, and his *Letter on Toleration* to settle the religious side.

Locke's political philosophy is contained mainly in his *Two Treatises of Government*, but others of his works, especially his *Letter on Toleration* contain important supplementary materials. The *Two Treatises* was published in 1690, shortly after the Glorious Revolution and ostensibly to justify the replacement of James II as King by William III. The occasion, it is now believed, was not the Glorious Revolution, but the agitation to prevent the openly Catholic James from succeeding his brother Charles II as King. The leader of this movement for Exclusion, as it was called, was Locke's friend and patron, the Earl of Shaftesbury.

The first of the *Two Treatises* was aimed against the work of Sir Robert Filmer, strong partisan of the royalists in the political conflicts of the

day, who had argued that kings ruled by divine right (Chappell, 1994). Filmer, in his thought, attempted to show that divine right monarchy was established in the Bible. According to Filmer, God had appointed Adam, the first father to mankind, king of all his descendants, with his monarchic power descending to his next heir: According to Locke's subtitle, the *First Treatise* aimed to overthrow "the False Principles and Foundation" of Filmer's system. The second essay was meant to supply "The True Original, Extent, and End of Civil-Government". The first was largely critical while the second was more constructive.

John Locke and Liberal Tradition
Locke is the founder of the liberal tradition in political thought. He asks some questions about politics, most importantly on political power.

Political power then I take to be a right of making laws with Penalties of Death, and consequently all fewer Penalties, for the Regulating and Preserving of Property, and of employing the force of the Community, in the Execution of such Laws, and in the defence of the Commonwealth from Foreign Injury, and all this only for the Public good (Locke, 1998: 4).

Political power, according to Locke, is a certain kind of power to coerce, to make and enforce laws with the penalty of death and consequently all lesser penalties as well. In his discussion, Locke takes for granted the existence and contours of political power. He demands at the outset, a justification for its very existence. It is for this reason that he begins his political philosophizing by positing a state of nature. His idea of the state of nature we have earlier discussed in Module One. This is a state of perfect freedom and a state of Equality, wherein all the Power and Jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another. The main point of the state of nature is not to identify an actual condition, it is to give us the baseline of no authority and to pose for us in a particularly graphic way the question implied in the definition of political power: whence comes the right to exercise coercive power, especially the power to take the life of another?

As the founder of the liberal tradition, he formulates the demand that the very existence of political power as rightful coercion be justified.

The immediate target of his critical *First Treatise* was Robert Filmer, who, according to Locke, rested his argument solely on the Bible. Although Locke engages in Biblical one-manship against Filmer, he rests neither his main critical weight nor his constructive philosophizing there. He emphasis the place of reason in politics, for, contends that politics is well within the sphere of reason. Although, he occasionally

looks to the Bible for confirmation of conclusions he draws based on reason, yet, it is the reason by which he "steers".

Locke's definition of political power highlights rightful coercion as the decisive means of the political and at the same time he emphasises the limited ends for which that power exists. To him, it exists "for the Regulating and Preserving of Property, and … the defence of the common-wealth from Foreign Injury, and all this only for the Public Good"(Creppell, 1996: 201).

Locke on 'Property'
As discussed earlier, the identification of the regulation and preservation of property is the purpose for which political power exists. Contrary to what some have said of Locke, he does not see government as exclusively serving the needs of property and property owners, understood in the narrow sense of external goods. Men form civil societies, Locke says, "for the mutual Preservation of their Lives, Liberties, and Estates, which of could be called by the general, Name, Property" (ibid: 123). All human beings are possessors of some property in this extended sense.

Yet, it is true that Locke is also deeply concerned with property in the narrow sense and that concern is also reflected in his positing the regulation and protection of property as the chief end of civil society. Locke devotes an entire chapter of his *Second Treatise* to the topic of property. This chapter is probably the best-known part of the treatise and seems to have been the part Locke took special pride in, for he commended it above all in the book. However, we should be quick to say that it has been argued against him, that his argument and its conclusions on the idea of property have been held to lay the groundwork for the theory of capitalism. But then, we must understand that Locke's discussion was an attempt against Filmer's Biblical position that all property belongs to Adam and God had conceded the authority of possession to him and his heirs. Locke also initiated his 'labour theory of property' and 'labour theory of value' to refute Filmer's claim.

Both theories defend the possession of lands by individuals as against Filmer's claim. While Locke's labour theory of property proves that the possession of land by the individual is embedded in the natural rights of the individual, the labour theory of value introduced a medium of exchange as a mechanism to appreciate the greater value of labour. This results from the excess of labour that may accrue in the cause of exchange of labour for property or the exchange of goods for labour thereby leading to what he called 'spoilage'. However, he outlines a two-stage process whereby the spoilage limitation is overcome both as a

moral and as a practical matter. The first stage has to do with barter. If one can exchange the surplus of one good, i.e., of what one has (or can have) over and above what one can use without spoiling, for the surplus of another, one can rightly acquire more than the spoilage limitation would otherwise allow. The possibility of bartering, then both encourage and morally permit the expenditure of more labour than life without barter would allow. The decisive innovation, however, is money, for this can be stored indefinitely with no threat of spoilage and thus it leads to an even greater unleashing of human labour, for it, in effect, waives all limits on the acquisition by leading to an exponential increase in productivity.

One result of the invention of money, however, is the disappearance of the commons.

The system of private ownership serves the public good so far as it allows freedom to acquire and use the property. All (more or less) are better off under this system than they would be without it, but the benefits are differentially spread through society, which thus takes on a class character. Some own much and can hire others to do the hard labour that produces value; others must sell their labour to survive. Although Locke affirms that all are better off, some are a good deal better off than others, and great inequality comes to characterise a society.

One important point to note in Locke's property theory is the introduction of class and inequality in the complex society, the society divided between the landowners and the non-owners. Of course, at a point, the non-owners may try to dispossess or redistribute the property of the owners through violence. It is against the backdrop of possible crises that Locke sees the operation of political power. Thus, he affirms that the purpose of political power is also the Preserving of Property, meaning the preserving of the property rights of all in both the narrow and broad senses for property in light of the potential conflict between the two. Without government to regulate and preserve both sorts of property, this institution of so great value to mankind is vulnerable to abuses by both great classes formed around ownership. Property is thus another great reason for the negation or overcoming of the state of nature and the formation of civil government.

Consent
From Locke's narrative of the state of nature, when men discover that they cannot safely abide by the state of nature, they pool their individual natural executive powers. They agree first to form a society and resign up their executive powers to the community. The individuals surrender their rights to wield the executive power on their own and according to

their own judgment. The state that they create thus acquires a "monopoly of legitimate coercion" (Locke 1998: 87). The coercive power that exists in the community is now exercised "by Men having Authority for the community" (Locke:130).

The process whereby the executive power is transferred to the community is called "compact"; and it requires the unanimous and individual consent of every would-be member. The "compact" actually has two elements: first, the unanimous agreement to form a political society, and then a unanimous agreement that the majority of the community will have the power or right to establish a particular sort of government for the community.

As we have seen, Locke emphasizes that the entire process occurs according to the consent of the governed. Since no person is born subject to another, the only way in which subjection can be instituted is voluntarily and consent is how this is done. The consent is, therefore, derived when men give up their original equality; in subjecting themselves to be "regulated" by the laws of the society, they give up their original liberty. However, unlike many of the Whig thinkers who preceded him, Locke did not claim that the consent of some group of "original compactors" was sufficient to bind their descendants. The consent of each member, since each is free and equal, is required to continually reconstitute the political society. Locke explicitly recognizes the following forms of consents in his discussion; express consent, presumably taking an oath or some related act; tacit consent, consent expressed in some lesser way, or implied in some other overt act undertaken; constructive consent, an imputation of consent (and the contents of the consent) to men as what "rational men" in that circumstance would or should consent to; and finally, consent as consensus. All of these meanings one at work in different places in Locke's theory, but one could have a difficult time sorting out which is in the play where and, in particular, how to understand his most thematic claims which are that "nothing can put a man into subjection to any Earthly Power, but only his own Consent" (Locke). Thus, his doctrine of the means of consent is largely intelligible but many ambiguities and uncertainties surround the more specific working out of the doctrine.

Government
Locke lays down quite flexible guidelines for the form of government the majority of the society may settle on. The community may choose among the various forms as they think well, always accepting absolutism. To him, government, people should know, is an artefact of their rational willing, thus they need to realize, it has been made as existing - for certain specific purposes, namely, to secure their preexisting rights. Rational individuals will understand the shortcomings

of the state of nature led to the creation and enforcement of organized laws by legislative authority. From his doctrine of the state of nature Locke thus generates the modern theory of separation of functions. This is clearly represented in the contemporary society's system of administration where we have, judiciary, legislature and executive. Locke also concludes that rational individuals will establish a government that separates the powers in different and independent institutions (Locke: 143). The separation of powers is one device by which rational actors attempt to assure that the government they establish will serve the ends for which it exists. All well-framed governments separate the legislative and executive powers.

Although Locke is strongly in favour of legislative supremacy – the legislative function is conceptually primary, and the legislature, possessing the will but not the force of the community, is more safely entrusted in practice with supremacy. Nonetheless, Locke also demonstrates that there must be a large scope for independent action by the executive, which he calls by the traditional name of prerogative. This, however, is not the traditional doctrine of prerogative. He defines the prerogative as a "power to act according to discretion, for the public good, without the prescription of the law, and sometimes even against it" (Locke: 160).

Revolution
At the end of the *Second Treatise,* Locke turns to the "end" in the sense of the death of government. He surveys circumstance or ways in which civil government may come to an end: conquest, which is the equivalent of "demolishing a House" (Locke:175); usurpation, which occurs when a person or persons other than those designated in the established political order seize power, is also a kind of death for civil government because a usurper "hath no right to be obeyed" (Locke:198), which means that there is no government; tyranny, which Locke sees as the exercise of power beyond right, which nobody can have a right to has the same fatal effects as usurpation (Locke:202). Finally, in a kind of summary chapter Locke speaks of "the dissolution of government", a chapter in which he lays out his well-known doctrine (usually misnamed as) the right of revolution.

Locke's position on "the end" of civil government follows seamlessly from his clear rejection of the legitimacy of absolute arbitrary power and his affirmation of institutionally and constitutionally necessary means to the effectuation of non-arbitrary government. A government that goes beyond its bounds is no government at all. When governments act beyond their powers, they are using force without right, and thus, literally, provoking a state of war with their citizenry. The citizens may then act as they have a right to in a state of war - they may resist

illegitimate authority and act to establish a new, legitimate government. When they do so, Locke insists, they are not rebelling - it is the authorities who go beyond their legitimate powers who reintroduce the state of war and who therefore rebel (ibid: 226). Locke then denies that he is a teacher of rebellion and disorder, as he strives to make resistance to rulers more respectable than it had ever been.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Locke's political philosophy is quite distinct to what we have studied in medieval political philosophy. Like Thomas Hobbes, he was more concerned about the concrete terms in political society. His libertarian tradition was a direct criticism of Robert Filmer's political tradition. Some important points to note in Locke's philosophy are the introduction of the idea of class inequalities and the idea of separation of governmental functions.

5.0   SUMMARY

We have in this unit, examined the various political ideas and concepts of John Locke as contained in his work Two treatises of government. You have been introduced to his libertarian tradition idea on how political society was formed. You have also learnt about his ideas on property, consent, government and revolution.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Assess the political theory of John Locke.
2.   Explain the following concepts as used in Locke's political philosophy, Consent, Property and Revolution.
3.   What led to the emergence of class inequality in Locke's philosophy?
4.   How did Locke arrive at the idea of separation of functions in the society?
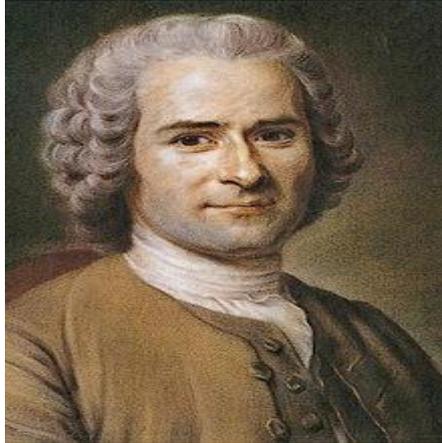
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UNIT 4   JEAN JACQUE ROUSSEAU

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6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss Jean Jacque Rousseau's idea of political philosophy. As one of the modern age political philosopher, his concrete political concepts and thoughts are quite has a sharp contrast to the medieval political thought. The unit shall discuss Rousseau's idea of human nature, his idea of general will and inequality as well as the acceptable system of government in human society.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- discuss how a political society emerged according to J.J. Rousseau
- explain Rousseau's idea of Class inequality, a general will and human nature

- attempt an explanation of political society as conceived by J. J Rousseau
- assess the distinction between Rousseau, Hobbes and Locke's political ideas
- discuss his idea of revolution
- evaluate the political idea of J. J Rousseau

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   J. J Rousseau's Political Idea

J.J, Rousseau was a French political philosopher. His political philosophy was characterised by romantic ideas, and it has a great influence on the French revolution. He is sometimes referred to as the patron saint of the French revolution because his ideas served as a guide for the French revolutionaries. His political theory was a new dimension of the social contract theory and was considered as a new formulation of the theory.

Human nature and the development of political society
As discussed in Module 1 of this study material, his social contract theory did not paint the state of nature in the dark image as we already found in Hobbes' philosophy. Man according to Rousseau in the state of nature is naturally a happy being. Although, he is neither moral nor immoral, because the idea of morality and immorality is considered by him to be associated with civilization. Also, man is not lonely, but he has a loose relationship with other members of the society.

Rousseau believes that man is naturally sentimental and possesses self-respect and compassion. However, the self-respect is not one of egoism (as found in Hobbes' theory), the latter being "a purely relative and fictitious feeling, which arises in the state of society. To him, egoism has a double origin-one relating to individual psychology and the other to social relationships and both lead to a state of inequality (Irele 1998). The individual psychology of inequality developed from the feelings of "pride" which emerged in human communities when men successfully overpowered other animals. This was when they began to compare themselves with other people and attempted to rise or excel above one another in different aspects of life.

Rousseau's other view of inequality was seen in the increase in the productive capacity of human communities brought about by various forms of inventions like fire and agriculture. These inventions led to the creation and ownership of wealth and private property by individual members. In Rousseau's opinion, the man, who first enclose a piece of land and declared it as his exclusive property was the founder of civil

society. It was this that led to the setting up of rules and government as those possessing wealth could no longer live secured lives and by force and cunning way prevailed on the poor to establish these rules in other to safeguard themselves.

Originally, in the state of nature, the people in the state of nature were happy and everyone enjoyed liberty. Rousseau believes that it was a civilisation in the civil state that brought all the social ills and most importantly, inequality. Thus, the freedom that was enjoyed by man in the state of nature was destroyed by the formation of civil society, as a result of the property relations that accompanied it. This was why he said, "man was born free but everywhere in chains" (Locke et'al 1966:246). To remedy the situation, Rousseau suggests that the state of affairs should be legitimized. He thus moved to develop his social contract around the idea of 'general will,' which allows for the state of affairs to become properly a legitimate social order.

His idea of the general will
The general will is introduced as a self-learning device that will unite all into one and it is a moral and collective body, composed of many members, as the assembly consists of voters and receiving from this act, its unity, its common identity, its life and its wills (Irele 1998). The general will in Rousseau's opinion does not consist of the interaction of individual wills but it is the unified will of all members of the society. The general will expresses the real interest of the society and not the interest of the individual or group of individuals in the society. This is because the individual member renounced their freedom to be part of the agreement that produced the sovereign which represents the general will. It is, therefore, a three-fold step that is taken before the final agreement, and the sovereign body is absolute. Once the pact of the agreement is properly made, the individual cannot claim any right against the sovereign body as he must give up all his natural rights in making the contract.

You must also note that the sovereign in Rousseau's philosophy, the sovereign is indivisible as well as inalienable since in the contract, the people agree to act as one, the sovereign cannot be represented since the representative body can push the interest of a particular group in the society, and the sovereign would institute laws that are for the general will.

4.0   CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is obvious that the political philosophy of Rousseau like the other two- Hobbes and Locke is a total shift from theological-metaphysical foundation to one of civic vision that is

thinking that centres on the state. Rousseau ideas show that political society was a clever device by the rich to protect themselves and their properties from the attack of the poor. Thus, man's natural liberty which he enjoyed in the state of nature was lost. Inequality and injustice were given official sanction and protection by law. But then, this is not to say that Rousseau's philosophy did not consider morality in the creation of political society. In fact, he believed that morality and political society came into existence together. The notion of right and wrong, justice and injustice came into use when the political society was formed.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, we have examined the political theory of Jean Jacque Rousseau. You have learnt about his ideas on the emergence of civil or political society, human nature and how this has influenced the development of the political society. You have also studied Rousseau's idea of the general will, inventions and its effect on the development of inequality in the society.
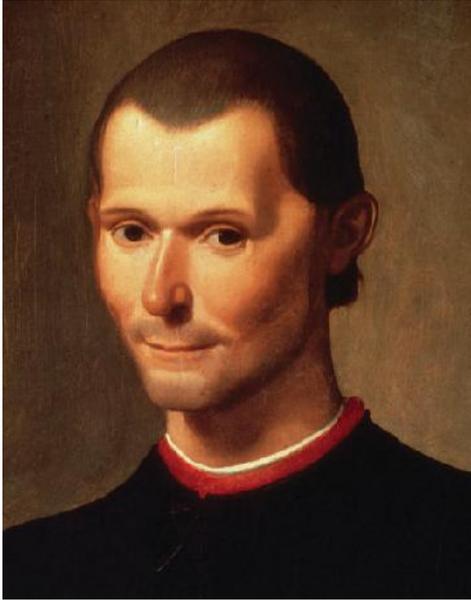
6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Outline the basic features of Rousseau's political philosophy.
2.   How did the problem of inequality arouse in Rousseau's political society?
3.   Explain the idea of 'general will' in the establishment of political society in Rousseau's philosophy.

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UNIT 5   NICCOLO di BERNARDO dei MACHIAVELLI (1469-1527)

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objective
3.0   Main Content
    3.1   Niccolo Machiavelli's Short Biography
    3.2   Niccolo Machiavelli's Philosophical Ideas
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
 7.0   References/ Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you shall be exposed to the political thoughts of Niccolo Machiavelli as contained in his book, *The Prince*. We shall discuss the personality of Machiavelli and how the situation of his immediate society influenced his thought as clearly stated in *The Prince* such that his work was able to make important changes in the politics of late fifteenth century and has continued to shape the politics of the modern world.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain Niccolo Machiavelli's political thoughts
- explain the conception of political power
- discuss the reason for Machiavelli's separation of morality from politics.

3.0   MAIN CONTENTS

3.1   Niccolo Machiavelli's Short Biography

Machiavelli was born in Florence in 1469 to the family of Bernardo and Bartolomea. He started the school of Paolo da Ronciglione with his brother Totto in the year 1481 in which period he attended a lecture by Marcello Virgilio Adriani who reputed to be one of the most influential teachers of the time. This period coincided with the period of active preaching in Florence by Girolamo Savonarola whose years of domination in Florentine politics coincided with the beginning of Machiavelli's mature life. According to Uduma, (2014) in May 1498, Savonarola was executed publicly for heresy while in the June of that same year, Machiavelli was confirmed the second chancellor of the Republic by the Great Council and was also elected the secretary of the Ten of War by July and sent on his first diplomatic mission to Piombino on behalf of the Ten of War in November. He was greatly influenced by Savonarola's life and political experience. Given his position as the second Chancellor and the secretary of the Ten of War, Machiavelli had the opportunity to travel to many places on a diplomatic assignment to represent the Florence Republic. These positions offered him the rare opportunity to know the strengths and weaknesses of many republics outside his own.

Italy in Machiavelli's time was a weak and divided country with city-states, while cities like Milan - Naples, Venice,.Florence, Milian were sovereign states, Rome and Central Italy were under the control of the Pope. Machiavelli accused the Catholic church of being responsible for the political weakness of Italy and the moral decadence and corruption that characterised Italian societies. Omoregbe (1997:187), in his examination of Machiavelli's idea emphasis Machiavelli's assertion that:

We Italians, owe to the Church of Rome and her priests our having become irreligious and bad; but we owe her a still greater debt and one that will be the cause of our ruin, namely, that the church has kept and still keeps our country divided.

The two best-known books of Machiavelli are *The Prince* and the *Discourses* on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius. However, his political treatise, *The Prince* gave him fame in socio-political philosophy or, as Omoregbe avers, made him notorious, because, it was in this book that he boldly expresses his immoral views which have now come to be known as Machiavellianism.

We need to note at this point that the book *The Prince* was not meant for public consumption but to serve as a guide to the prince. Thus, his advice was so blunt and frank (practical and real). Perhaps he saw the implication of religion on politics hence, his separation of politics from morality.

3.2   Machiavelli's Political Thoughts

Before Machiavelli, and from the time of the traditional political philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, etc. politics has always been linked with morality. Most of the earlier treatises assumed that a prince (the ruler) needed above all to be good, to pursue virtue in the traditional sense. According to Whitefield, writers like Bartolomeo Platinma and Francesco Patrai offered, in essence, long lists of the virtues that a prince should cultivate and the vices he should avoid, each supported with ample anecdotes from classical sources (1979:88). From the point of traditional philosophers, morality is seen as the yardstick for measuring good politics and political actions. It is used to checkmate the activities of rulers or leaders. However, in The Prince, Machiavelli maintained the opposite. He was completely against this tradition and by this separated morality from politics. For him, politics should be devoid of moral restraint or control. He advised the Prince (the ruler) to ignore morality if he wants to succeed as a ruler. To Machiavelli, a successful ruler is one who can do anything or employ any means (fair or foul) to perpetuate himself in power. He avers that the ultimate goal of politics is to grab power, by all means, retain it and expand it and that any means moral or immoral can be used to achieve this. He characterises a successful ruler as someone who is prudent, shrewd, practical and swift in his actions. Whatever he employs, cruelty or brutality is justified provided he succeeds. However, he should be ruthless and fast to end the cruelty or brutality within the shortest period.

He cautioned the Prince not to bother himself with moral uprightness, religious virtues, honesty, compassion or humanistic niceties, although he must pretend to be all these and in fact, should employ them only where and when they work in his favour to achieve his goal. He must be vigilant and clever and should know when to use moral or immoral means to achieve his purpose. He should be smart to tell the people what

they want to hear and then do what he wants to do. Omoregbe (1997:191) quoted Machiavelli as saying,

A prince therefore who desires to maintain himself must learn not to be always good, but to be so or not as necessity may require. It is well that when the act accuses him, the result should excuse him and when the results are good, it will always absolve him from blame... nor need he care about ensuring censure for such vices without which the preservation of his state may be difficult.

What does Machiavelli mean by the result of the act excusing him and absolving him from blame? By this, Machiavelli means that the end, that is the result, justifies the means. For Machiavelli, provided the end is good, any means (cruelty, brutality, dishonesty, lies, cunning) employed to achieve it, is justified. Machiavelli opined that whatever means employed by the ruler to keep himself in power and to secure the state, is acceptable and justified. A Prince must not commit himself to moral principles for that is capable of leading to his ruin. Machiavelli writes:

...and again, he need not make himself uneasy at incurring a reproach for those vices without which the state can only be saved with difficulty, for if everything is considered carefully, it will be found that something which looks like virtue if followed, would be his ruin; whilst something else, which looks like a vice, yet followed brings him security and prosperity (The Prince, Ch. 15).

Machiavelli also warns the prince not to encourage such Christian virtues as patience, meekness, mercy, humility, self-denial, compassion, forgiveness. He calls them negative virtues and these negative virtues will only turn his subjects into weaklings and his state into a weak state. Thus, what is outmost is for the prince to possess such virtues as vitality, energy, the strength of character, ambition, thirst for power, ability to achieve one's aims, desire for fame etc. Machiavelli defended his immoral political views by insisting that his views are a more realistic way of living than needless abstractions and utopia that are never real and never can be real in human history. Tracing the history of most successful men, Machiavelli claims that his views align with how these successful men in history actually lived and acted. He, therefore, warns that what is, is actually different from what ought to be and that what ought to be done is different from what is actually done. Thus, he cited Cesare Borgia - the illegitimate son of Pope Alexander VI who was a ruthless tyrant, as one of the great men in history who have achieved greatness and it is through people like this that he drew the strength of his argument.

Machiavelli lists four ways by which a person can gain political power.
1) Through his abilities or qualities.
2) By inheritance.
3) By violence and crime.
4) By election.
It is to be noted that all these four ways are acceptable to Machiavelli provided any of them is successful in helping one gain political power. He gives an example of Agathocles who rose to power through crimes in ancient Sicily. Agathocles killed the rich men and the senators of Syracuse and rose to political power. To the extent that he grabbed political power despite the means he used, to that extent, he was justified (Omoregbe, 1997:191). A ruler who wants to succeed must not always be mindful to keep his promises. If keeping his promises will help him achieve his goal, then it is allowed but if not, he should not hesitate to break them. Deception with a good result is better than honesty without result. For Machiavelli, the ruler is at all times above the law or morality. Omoregbe (1997:191) quoted him in the *Discourses* thus:

for where the very safety of the country depends upon the resolution to be taken, no considerations of justice or injustice, humanity or cruelty, nor of glory or shame, should be allowed to prevail. But putting all other considerations aside, the question should be, what course will save the life and liberty of the country.

As we close this unit, it is instructive to note that a careful reading of the *Discourses* which is the second book by Machiavelli, reveals that Machiavelli is a democrat. He only supports tyranny as the best system of government in a corrupt society. Democracy remains the best system of government but only in a normal society. Italy at the time of Machiavelli was a very corrupt society and so Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* as a recommendation or practical advice for Lorenzo de Medici on how to successfully rule Italy. However, Omoregbe is of the view that it was not just advice alone but also was written to win some favour from Lorenzo to give him a political appointment. Machiavelli has been a civil servant for long in Italy but with the collapse of Democracy to Tyrannical Rule under the rulership of Lorenzo, Machiavelli lost his civil service job and therefore was looking for a political appointment from Lorenzo, thus the writing of *The Prince* which was direct praise to Lorenzo the tyrant. Omoregbe (1997:192) wrote:

With the collapse of democracy, Machiavelli lost his civil service job and made efforts to win the favour of the Medici. Part of this effort was the writing of The Prince and addressing it to Lorenzo de Medici. The Prince can, therefore, be seen as a book in praise of tyranny and addressed to a tyrant to win his favour. The strategy did not work. The Medici who were enemies of democracy had no confidence in anybody

who so closely associated with the preceding democratic government as Machiavelli was. Machiavelli could not win their favour nor was he able to get an appointment from them despite his glorification of tyranny in The Prince.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Machiavelli made the dictates of necessity the guiding principle for the actions and inactions of the ruler and not the dictates of conventional morality. Much has been said in this unit, and your understanding of them will help you to access the success or the failure of *The Prince* as a handbook of political engineering in our present time. Machiavelli, due to his ulterior motives, we may say, may not have envisaged the consequences of his political thoughts on our polity today.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have been made to understand that the best-known books of Machiavelli are two, and these are; *The Prince* and *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius.* You were also made to understand that Niccolo Machiavelli's political thoughts are spelt out in these books. Also, in the unit, it was discussed that Machiavelli in his political treatise attempted a total separation of politics from morality. This idea was contrary to the prevailing traditional political philosophers who existed before him. The views of philosophers, like Plato, Aristotle, John Locke, on politics and morality saw morality as a check to bad politics. Furthermore, you have been told that Machiavelli made the dictates of necessity the guiding principle for the actions and inactions of the ruler and not the dictates of conventional morality.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain Machiavelli's idea of politics.
2. Why did Niccolo Machiavelli separate politics from morality?
3. Outline the Machiavellian ways of acquiring political power.

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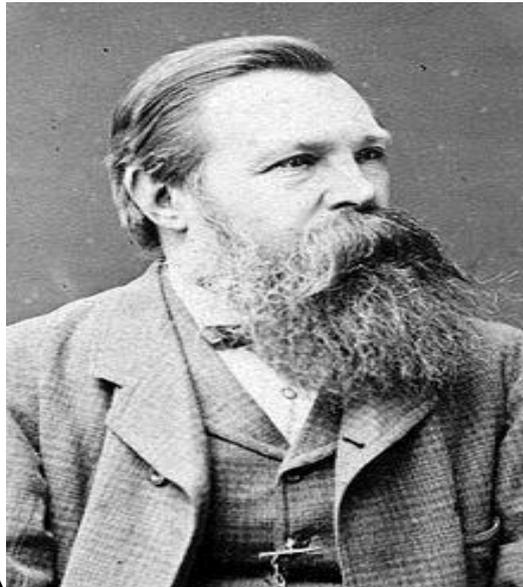
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UNIT 6   KARL MARX AND FREDRICH ENGEL
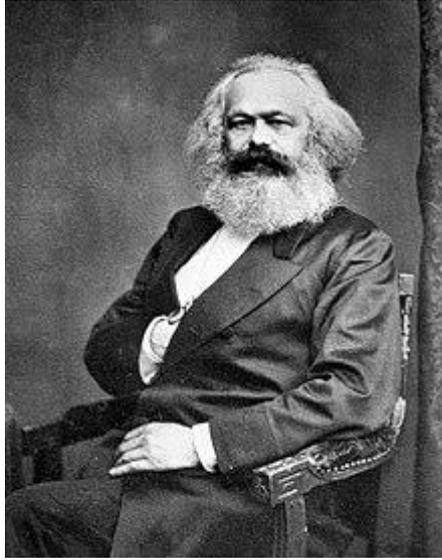
Friedrich Engels

A

Georg Wilhem Friedrich Hegel

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you shall be introduced to the political thoughts of Karl Marx and Fredrich Engel. We shall outline the three sources that influenced Karl Marx political idea and discuss their criticism and rejection of Hegel's idealism. You shall also be exposed to their discussion of the factor considered by the two philosophers as determinants of the whole aspect of life in any society. Finally, you shall be exposed to Karl Marx idea of class struggle, its cause and the possible outcome in the society.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain Karl Mar and Fredrich Engel's political ideas
- explain the concept of class struggle in Karl Marx
   political philosophy

- identify the sources that influenced Karl Marx's political philosophy
- evaluate the place of the mode of production in Karl Marx political idea and its effect on society
- discuss Marx and Engel's discussion of the relevance of economic condition in any society
- outline the sources that influenced Marx and Engel's political ideas
- identify the reason for Marx and Engel's rejection of Hegel's philosophy of idealism.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Karl Marx and Friedrich Engel's Political Philosophy

It is important to point out from the outset, that Karl Marx political idea was inspired by the following three sources: the German philosophic tradition, especially that of Hegel; the French radical political thought; and the British political economic tradition (Irele 1998:62). These sources were used by Karl Marx as platforms to launch his own political thought. He was highly critical of the traditions of the three sources in that he saw certain defects in them. Thus, he critically analysed these three main sources and thereafter developed his own political idea.

His idea is better considered along with that of his friend Friedrich Engel. According to the two philosophers, Hegel's idealism was the basic reason for his wrongly positing consciousness as the basic determinant of social existence. In Marx and Engel's view, the reverse is the case. In other words, it was a social existence that determined consciousness. On this premise, they discarded the idealism of Hegel. Though they accepted his dialectical method but this is because they believed that the dialectical process was operative in both history and nature. Marx contrasts his dialectic method and that of Hegel when he asserts:

My dialectic method is not only different from Hegelian but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e. the process of thinking, which under the name of ''the idea'', he even, ''transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurges of the real world, and the real world is only external, phenomenal form of ''the Idea''. With me, on the contrary, the idea is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought
(Marx 1977:29).

According to Marx and Engel matter is the basic causal factor in the historical process and the evolution of social and political systems.

Hegel was criticised for seeing 'matter' and not 'mind' as the fundamental factor in any human society. They are also of the view that by casting away the idealistic nature of dialectics, the revolutionary side of it could be gleaned, hence the emphasis they place on the dialectical method as a revolutionary concept (Irele 1998).

Both Marx and Engels maintained a materialistic conception of history, but quite different from the earlier conception, in that they believe that the earlier materialists were mechanistic but their materialism is dynamic because of its dialectical nature - hence they have a dynamic view of the historical process of society.

In Marx and Engel's opinion, the whole aspect of life in any society is determined by the mode of production in that society. The mode of production consists of the relations of production and the forces of production. These two aspects of social life determine the other aspects of social existence which they term superstructure. The superstructure of social life consists of the legal, religious and political institutions of the society. The mode of production is the economic aspect of the society that mostly determines the social and political existence.

Marx and Engels contend that the forces of production are very important in the society and they determine the relations of productions, that is, the existence and structure of social classes and the social, legal, and political system of the society (Irele 1998). This position of Marx and Engel implies that the entire social life of any system can be properly explained by the mode of production of that society. It also implies that a change in the mode of production will affect the whole social life of the society, and consequently, the relations of production. The long-run effect will, therefore, be a complete change in the whole structure of society. Thus, Marx (1977) sees the history of man, to be characterized by conflicts between the forces of production and the relations of production.

To Marx and Engels, the contradictions in the mode of production, which men are aware of are the cause of the class conflict between the class that controls the mode of production and the class that does not. In most cases of theses class struggles, those who control the out-dated mode of production would lose out. Marx and Engels argue that this had been the scenario in all societies. Thus, they maintain that the history of all hitherto societies has been the history of class struggle.

They believe that capitalism will eventually collapse because of the inherent contradictions in the capitalist society. The next stage of human historical development would be socialism, which is a stop-gap., and will be characterized by the dictatorship of the proletariat. The

dictatorship of the proletariat would intend to smash the remnants of the bourgeois ideas of thinking; socialism is a transitional stage. The next stage is the communist society where the state will wither away and what you have is simply the administration of things. There will be no state because the state exists to promote the interest of a particular class. Marx and Engels contend that with the advent of communism the history of man has just begun. What existed before communism was pre-history. Man would enjoy freedom in all its ramifications in this stage of human historical development.

Marx holds the view that in the capitalist subsystem, freedom cannot exist because the system is alienating, though that of the proletariat class is more thorough. He believes that in the capitalist system, man is alienated from his labour, from other men, from nature, and he is alienated from the system. These four alienated situations cannot allow a man to have freedom in the capitalist system.

4.0   CONCLUSION

It is obvious that Karl Marx employs a more radical approach in his political theory when juxtaposed with other earlier political thinkers we have discussed. His political thought can be viewed as revolutionary because his ideas are more of an attack of the established social order of his day. The available sources that inspired him no doubt was instrumental to his been critical of existing political thoughts at his time and the development of his political ideology.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt about how Karl Marx was critical about the idea of Hegel's philosophical idea. You have also been informed, that Marx political theory is better understood when considered along with his life-long friend Fredrich Engel and that the two holds that the economic aspect (which consist of the mode of production in the society) of any society determines the social and political existence of the people and the society. Also, you have studied how Marx considers the possible contradiction in the mode of production can cause class conflict in the society, which will lead to the collapse of capitalism thereby leading to the development of socialism and finally communism.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Explain Karl Marx assertion that "the history of all society is the history of class struggle."
2.   What are the three sources that inspired Karl Marx political idea?

3.   "The mode of production determines the whole aspect of life in that society" - Karl Marx. Do you agree with this assertion?

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MODULE 3   THE IDEA OF JUSTICE IN JOHN RAWLS, IRISH YOUNG AND ROBERT NOZICK POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Unit 1   John Rawls Concept of Justice
Unit 2   Irish Young Concept of Justice
Unit 3   Robert Nozick Concept of Justice

UNIT 1   JOHN RAWLS' CONCEPT OF JUSTICE

John Rawls (1921—2002)

CONTENT

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   John Rawls Concept of Justice
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
 7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to John Rawls' idea of social justice. You will learn about his idea of the original position, veil of ignorance and impartiality as the basis for his idea and formulation of the theory of justice in a well-ordered society.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain John Rawls' idea of justice
- explain his idea of the original position as the origin of justice
- discuss his understanding of the veil of ignorance and impartiality
- identify the reason why Rawls subscribe to the particular conception of justice.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 John Rawls' Concept of Justice

John Rawls, political philosophy has influenced many other thinkers such as Thomas Nagel, Martha Nussbaum, and Thomas Pogge, and he is often considered as the most important American political philosopher of the 20th century. Rawls was regarded as the revivalist of political philosophy after the publication of his work *A Theory of Justice* in 1971. From then on, there have been many excellent criticisms on the Rawlsian formulation of a liberal theory of justice (Nozick 1974; Sandel 1982; Walzer 1983; Taylor 1985; Pogge 1989; Young 1990; Sen 1992; Dworkin 2000; Young 2000), notably on the normative content of the two principles of justice. However, all the criticism have amplified the profound ideas that Rawls reflected upon.

Before we discuss John Rawls' formulation of justice, you need to know that his idea was worked out on some assumptions. First, to Rawls, the subject of justice is the basic structure, or "the way in which the major social institutions distribute the fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages from social cooperation" (Rawls 1999: 6). This means that the distribution of fundamental rights and duties and the division of advantages in society are basic functions of the state. In Rawls' opinion of liberal justice, the dispensation of this very important function rests on one important conceptual tool known as the idea of impartiality.

Second, the notion of 'impartiality' is grounded in the reasoning that 'just arrangements' can be realised in an 'initial position of equality' (Rawls 1999). In this regards, the crucial point is the assertion that the Rawlsian 'veil of ignorance' will ensure that the choice of principles will favour nobody. According to Joshua Cohen, the initial position of equality is designed in such a way "in order to reflect the idea that citizens can cooperate among themselves on fair terms, to choose their

own ends and to pursue the ends that they have set for themselves" (Cohen, 2004:115). For liberals, this starting point serves as the basis in the establishment of a fair system of exchange and political interaction.

Rawls' Theory of Justice
In this book *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls writes that "justice is the first virtue of the institution, as truth is in systems of thought" (Rawls, 1999:3). Like Plato, Rawls imagines a political society structured on principles of Justice, a just society where nobody complains of injustice. Like most other political theorists, John Rawls does by constructing a hypothetical situation in which certain individuals are placed in What he called an "Original position" behind a 'veil of ignorance.' In other words, although, the Classical Social Contract theory philosophers-Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, began their theories with "the state of nature", but, John Rawls employs the concept of 'Original Position" as the situation of a group of people who are about to form a political society. Rawls conceived the "Original position" as a state of affair where no one knows, for example, whether he is going to be a teacher, a medical doctor, a farmer, a carpenter, a lawyer or whether they are stupid or clever, lazy or industrious, etc., but given the limited knowledge of their socio-economic configuration of the environment, and also about human psychology (Irele 1997, Omoregbe 2007).

According to Irele (1997:104)., Rawls assumes that the individuals in the original position are rational and at the same time devoid of any altruism In this position, they are asked to choose the principles that will operate in the proposed society, that is, the principle that will govern their mutual interaction in the society. All of them must agree on any principle before it is accepted as a principle that will be used in the proposed society. If any of them objects to any principle (as unjust) it will be rejected and will not be used in the proposed society.

Thus, all principles to be used in the proposed society will be principles every member agree upon as just. And once the principles have been agreed upon and the society is formed, they remain unchanged. By the time everybody comes to know his position in the society, the work he is going to do, his profession, etc., nobody can then object to any of the principles that they had all agreed upon. If, for example, one of the principles does not favour doctors (if for example one of the principles says that doctors' reward is in heaven or that any time a State is "broke" it should always delay teacher's salaries) and there was no objection to it at "the original position" when they were" covered by the veil of ignorance" and nobody knew whether or not he will become a teacher, it will be too late now for any teacher to object to it. Why did he agree to it from the beginning? Because he did not know that he will become a

doctor to the society, he agreed to it. His objection would be considered too late. That is why everybody must carefully examine the principles at the beginning and be sure that they are all just to all professionals, and all classes of people in the proposed society because nobody knows which profession or class he is going to belong to when the society is formed. If you notice that any principle will be unjust to a particular profession or class in the society, object to it so that it will not be accepted. What is unjust is unjust, whether it is going to affect you or somebody else. And it should be rejected.

From the above, Rawls position simply suggests that in a well-ordered society, two basic principles will be accepted as operational, namely (i.) the greatest liberty for the individual, compatible with the similar degree of liberty for all; and (ii) the arrangement of social and economic inequalities such that they are to the benefits of the worst off and attaches to offices and positions to facilitate equal opportunity.

The Two Principles
Let us examined the two principles: The two principles that will guide the social arrangements, policies, rights, duties and distribution proposed society having been formed, are as follows:-

First Principle
Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.

Second Principles
Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both:
a.   To the greatest benefit of the least advantaged. Consistent with the just saving principle.
b.   Attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.

We can see from these working principles that the society proposed by John Rawls is not socialist or communist. Rawls is contemplating the idea of justice in a capitalist society. He does not believe that in order to have justice, society must be transformed into a socialist or communist society. His theory is a reformation of capitalism or how justice can be accommodated in a capitalist's society (Omoregbe 2007). Hence, the two working principles presuppose that there is inequality in the society, inequality in wealth, in position, in social status, etc. but the principles insist on equality of opportunities and equal right to any position in the society. Anybody can by dint of hard work, rise to the highest position in the society. This is the focus of the first principle. The second

principle is aimed at correcting one of the evils in capitalism, i.e. the unjust situation in which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. It is opposed to any policy or social arrangement that would make the rich richer at the expense of the poor whose positions are made worse off. Any arrangement or policy in the society must be such as will at least improve the situation of the poor society. If any privilege is to be attached to any office in the society, that is all right, but the equality in society is inevitable-all citizens cannot be equal in social status. In education, in wealth, etc. even those who claim "all animals are equal" had to admit eventually that "some are more equal than other" (Omoregbe 2007: 53). Rawls in his theory attempted to make the inequality work to favour the poor (the least advantaged) in order to improve their plight. There is no doubt that these two working principles if consistently applied, will go a long way in correcting the ills in capitalism and improve the plight of the poor. They will help narrow the wide gap between the rich and the poor and correct the injustice that may be identified with it.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Although, John Rawls' conception and his origin of justice are far different from what we have studied in the philosophies of all contractarianist before him. However, one of the achievements of Rawls' theory is that it answers two questions which any theory of justice must be asked. These questions are: why should one accept the theory and what makes the theory conception of justice? According to Rawls, what commends the theory to us is that these principles would be acceptable to any self-interested, but rational person and this fact of impartiality of the principles make the theory just

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed Rawls' idea on how a just society emerged from the original position', which is a hypothetical situation, where individual life was characterised by ignorance of his situation and future position. We also learnt that only two basic principles will be acceptable in a well-ordered society.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Explain the following terms as noticed in John Rawls' theory of justice. (i) 'Veil of ignorance, (ii) Impartiality, and 'Original position.'
2.   How would you explain Rawls conception of justice?

7.0   REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   IRIS MARION YOUNG'S CONCEPT OF JUSTICE

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit shall expose you to Iris Marion Young's concept of justice. Her criticism of the idea of distributive justice shall be examined. The unit shall also discuss the alternative model of justice proposed by her. We shall conclude the unit by examining her strategies in addressing structural injustice in human society.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain Irish Young's concept of justice
- explain the alternative model of justice proposed by her against the idea of distributive justice
- discussed her argument against the distributive form of justice
- examine her strategies on how to address structural injustices in society.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Idea of Justice in Iris Young's Political Philosophy

Iris Marion Young was a feminist and political activist. She has written various essays and through most of them, she expressed her idea of justice, especially in her four books, namely, *Justice and Politics of Difference* (1990), *Inclusion and Democracy* (2000), *Global Challenges: War, Self-Determination and Responsibility for Justice* (2007), and *Responsibility for Justice* (2011).

Young's Critique of the Distributive Model of Justice
Young's idea of justice could be viewed as reactions against the concept of distributive justice. In her argument against it (distributive justice) she believed that although distributive justice may be considered good and acceptable, however, what is wrong with it (distributive justice) as a model of justice is when it is been considered as absolute and could address all issues concerning justice and social justice. To her, this is a wrong perception being expressed by people generally and philosophers in particular.

Young's contention on the inadequacy of the distributive model of justice can be summarised in two ways. The first contention is based on her opinion that the understanding given to the distributive model of justice would prevent or at least limit the discussion of it to the fair allocation of material things and resources without given adequate consideration to the more radical question of what are the social structures and institutional contexts that are responsible for the unequal distribution of such material goods and resources as being experienced in the society. Her argument, therefore, is that the distributive model of justice cannot produce lasting fairness. Her reason for this is that the so-called distributive model of justice as it only concerns itself with the present question of how to fairly distribute any given good, without due consideration of the structure that will be responsible for the distribution (Kelly, 2009).

The second contention of Young, in her attempt at proving the inadequacies of the distributive model of justice is directed as an attack against some theorists' claim on the coverage of the distribution which they restricted mainly to materials goods and then extends to something that will include non-material goods and burdens, social rights, power, opportunity and self-respect. Young pointed out that those non-material goods should not be treated as if they are material goods, for doing so will distort their very nature. Power, for example, cannot just be divided and distributed as if it is a bundle of goods, because power, following Michel Foucault's idea, is something relational (Kelly, 2009).

Irish Young, therefore, holds that, although the idea of a distributive model of justice and social justice could be a desirable effort and a worthwhile exercise, it, however, cannot be taken to have considered in its entirety the whole and foundations of justice and social justice. She, therefore, proposed an alternative model of justice that she considered to be structural in nature.

Proposed Alternative Model
In the alternative model, Iris Young was particular about the various questions that could be considered essential in the art of distributing justice such that it will be to the benefit of all in the society. The idea of structural justice which she proposed can be better understood and be presented under five questions:
(1) who is the victim of structural injustice?
(2) What is the context where such structural injustice occurs?
(3) Who is the perpetrator of such structural injustice?
(4) How is structural injustice related to moral wrong and to specific injustice?
(5) what are the main manifestations of structural injustice?

From these questions, it would be observed that Young approached the principle of justice not by examining justice as the direct object of study, rather, she focused on the opposite, injustice, hence all the above-adumbrated questions tend toward the discharge, effect, place, situation and beneficiaries of injustice and not justice. I think by answering these type of questions on injustice, all about justice would have been addressed.
1.   Who is the victim of structural injustice? Young was aware of Karl Marx idea of social class and the effect on society, thus, she was not very keen to talk about it. Her interest was in the social group and not the social class. Thus, her answer to the first question on the victim(s) of structural injustice is the 'social group'. The social group according to her is "a collective of persons differentiated at least from another group by cultural forms, practice, or way of life" (Young, 1990:43) such as "women and men, age groups, racial and ethnic groups, religious groups, and so on" (ibid). Perhaps, you need to note that she acknowledged the fact that individuals are the ultimate victims of structural injustice, but this is because they are members of a particular social group.
2.   What is the context where such structural injustice occurs? Young considers the context, or space, or area where structural injustice occurs to be the 'social structure'. This to her also represents or means 'socio-structural process'. Referring to the context in this way is to enable her to emphasise the dynamism of this context/space/field. Thus, she sees the social structure as:

(a) Objective channels and constraints produced by past actions and decisions in a given society.
(b) The initial position of a given agent/individual.
(c) Something that is produced, affirmed and re-affirmed by action.
(d) The unintended effects of all individual actions.

It must also be noted that this idea of social structure or socio-structural processes is central and germane to Young's idea of structural justice.

3.   Who is the perpetrator of such structural injustice? To Young, the perpetrator of structural injustice is the social structure or the socio-structural processes. She considers the social structure, or the socio-structural processes, not just to be a natural context but also an active field that favours one social group at the disadvantage of another social group. She believed that neither the individual nor social groups should be considered or seen as the perpetrators of structural injustices. Although, some individuals and certain social groups also may benefit from a given structural injustice, however, making them suffer or eliminating them may not result in the eradication of the said structural injustice.

4.   How is structural injustice related to moral wrong and to specific injustice? In her answer to this question, Young differentiate structural injustice from an immoral action. To her, the two are different and does not share resemblance of any sort. This is because structural injustice could not identify specific agent or agents as perpetrators of such action. It does not stand for the same thing with, and equally different from specific notion or policies of states or institutions the reason for this is because structural injustice represents an effect of a network of such actions or policies. However, Young does not foreclose the possibility of structural injustice occurring simultaneously with an immoral action or with another wrong foundation on a specific questionable action or policy. But, then, since structural injustice is systemic, the possibility of its recurring even if attendant individual immoral actions are punished or questionable specific actions or policies are rectified is certain.

5.   What are the main manifestations, or examples, of structural injustice? There are seven main manifestations of structural injustice listed by Young. This list, however, is based on her analysis of American society. The list is obviously not exhaustive, but much can be learned about her idea of structural injustice. (1) The exploitation of workers; (2) Marginalisation: exclusion of some social groups from the pool of workers; (3) Powerlessness of the non-professional workers; (4) Cultural imperialism of the dominant social groups over the dominated

social groups (hegemony); (5) Physical and emotional violence; (6) The over-administration of society: the colonisation of the life-world; and (7) Biblical exclusivism. The essence of this list and Young's contention is that structural injustice is nothing but the presence of domination and oppression in a social structure or social-structural processes, which may prevent or deny any particular social group from exercising its capacities and the attainment of its possibilities.

Young's Strategies in addressing Structural Injustice
Having identified the problem of structural injustice, Young proposed five basic strategies by which structural injustice can be prevented, tackled or overcome. First, the psychological roots of discrimination should be exposed. To explain this strategy, Young used Julia Kristeva's idea of the 'abject' and exposed this abject with the man of colour, the woman, the heterosexual, the aged, and the disabled (Kristeva, 1989). The 'abjects' are capable of disrupting the dominant subject's project of self-construction as something pure (white), strong, heterosexual, youthful/alive and able-bodied. The dominant subject, therefore, fears and despises the abject, but after some time is fascinated by it. Irish Young's second strategy for combatting structural injustice is developed from her support for affirmative action. To her, people should not be consoled for past injustices, rather, they should be given enough capital to make them 'as powerful' as the dominant classes.

The third strategy is her emphasis on the politics of difference. She opposed the utopian view that democracy is all about an aggregate of homogenous people. To her, democracy is all about looking for the good of all, that is, the common good. Irish Young believes that society would always be composed of different social groups and people with different aspirations and desire for the good. Insisting on homogeneity and one common good could mean violence on other groups. The fourth strategy is to resist and challenge the tendency of the state to colonise more and more aspects of the life-world. In her fifth strategy in combatting structural evil, she suggested deliberative democracy wherein her faith lies. For Young, deliberative democracy does not only happen in the session halls of legislative assemblies but more so, on the streets where ordinary citizens should voice out their sentiments and aspirations. Young was not only a political philosopher; she was also a very passionate political activist.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Irish Young's idea of justice was a reaction to the idea of distributive justice. Her contention against the consideration of distributive justice as a model of justice was premised on the claim that this model of justice

could address all issues concerning justice and social justice. Thus, she proposed another model of justice called structural justice, which she believes will be beneficial to all.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, you have been introduced to Irish Young's idea of justice. You have learnt about her rejection of distributive justice as a model of justice and her proposed model of justice which she called 'structural justice'. The unit also introduced to you Young's strategies set up to address structural inequalities that may be affecting the political society.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Evaluate Irish Young's model of justice.
2.   Outline the steps involve in addressing structural injustice in Young's principle of justice.

7.0   REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

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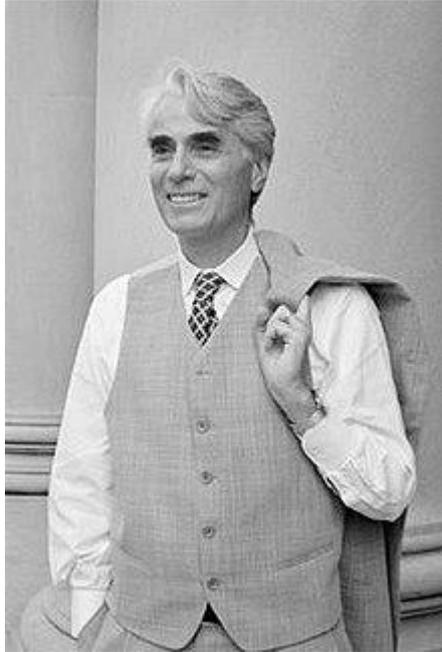Kristeva, J. (1989). *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*. New York: Columbia University Press.

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UNIT 3   ROBERT NOZICK'S CONCEPT OF JUSTICE

Robert Nozick

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you shall study Robert Nozick's idea of justice. The unit shall introduce you to Nozick's argument against the left-wing anarchist, his elementary theory of justice, a brief comparison between him, John Rawls and other philosopher's idea on the idea of distributive justice. You shall also be introduced to his concept of a society, called 'Utopian or meta-utopian as well as his idea of the invisible hand in the theory of justice.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain Robert Nozick's idea of justice
- discuss his argument against the left-wing anarchist
- draw a comparison between his theory of justice and John Rawls' theory of distributive justice
- know his ideas of a utopian society and 'invisible hand.'

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Robert Nozick's Concept of Justice

Robert Nozick (1938-2002) was a renowned American political philosopher and the author of the book *Anarchy, State and Utopia.* His book generated a lot of reaction at the time he was published. His idea of justice as contained in the book is in contrast to Rawls' position which he, Rawls explicated in his work *A Theory of Justice.* He defended a conception of justice he calls "entitlement theory" which he claims would protect the individual's rights against the intrusive authority of the state.

The book is in three parts. The first part of the book defends a minimal state by taking issue with the anarchist. The second part defends his entitlement theory of justice, and the last part is devoted to the conception of meta-utopia, though Nozick finds it justifiable to defend the minimal state which he argues is an ideal worth fighting for.

Nozick's arguments in part I of the work are against the left-wing anarchist who objects to any form of the state organisation. Nozick does not believe that a state is good and that we shall be better off with a state than we would be without one. In fairness to Nozick, he does not claim that a state is a good thing since this is foreign to his procedure of dealing with the anarchist and would be subversive of his entire project. What he maintains is that we can move from a state of nature to a minimal state without violating anyone's rights, such that it will be impossible for anyone to claim that the state has assumed authority illegitimately.

From this position, Nozick discusses how a minimal state, or "state-like entity" as he sometimes calls it, can emerge through some kind of protection agency to which people in the state of nature pay a fee for protection from assault, robbery, and so on. He argues that clients of different agencies would surrender their rights to these agencies in other

to punish violators of their rights and that at a point one dominant agency or federation of agencies combining would emerge through what he calls "invisible hand" in one territory. Thus, without any express agreement or overall intention on anyone's part, people in the state of nature would find themselves with a body which satisfies two fundamental conditions for being a state: it has a monopoly of coercion in its territory and protects the rights of anyone in its territory. Although "everyone may defend himself against unknown or unreliable procedures and may punish those who use or attempt to use such procedures against him" (Feser, 2014). only the dominant protective agency will be able to enforce its clients' procedural rights:

…Its strength leads it to be the unique agent acting across the board to endorse a particular right. It is not merely that it happens to be only the exerciser of a right it grants that all possess: the nature of the right is such that once a dominant power emerges, it alone will actually exercise that right. For the right includes the right to stop others from wrongfully exercising the right, and only the dominant power will be able to exercise this right against all others. Here, if anywhere, is the place for applying some notion of a *de facto* monopoly…(Nozick, 1974:109). Although other agencies can exercise the right, only the dominant agency can do so effectively because of their market advantage. (Galvin, 2010).

This discussion of the first part forms the main bulk of this part, though Nozick grapples with other issues like violations of rights which he contends should be adequately compensated. He contends that risk procedures that can be legitimately prohibited by the dominant protection agency must be compensated if:

i.)   they tend to cause general fear
ii.   either they violate the procedural rights of the members a dominant protection agency to have their guilt fairly determined or they are an illegitimate exercise by independents of their Lockean natural rights. (Sterba, 1986)

The second part of the book is on what sort of justice a just society should operate. Nozick's position on this is a radical departure from the earlier theories of justice which are distributive in nature and justify the extensive state which will distribute wealth to achieve justice in the distribution of wealth. Nozick mounts an attack on this since it deprives people of their rights. He uses the notion "holdings" to characterise the goods, money and property of all kinds that people have. The question is: what holdings people should have in a just society?

Nozick contends that most theories of justice are patterned or end-state ones. According to this conception of justice, holdings are just if they correspond to some "natural dimension" (Nozick, 1974:109). A principle of justice that states people are to be rewarded according to their need, I.Q., labour, moral desert, etc. is a patterned principle. In any existing society, Nozick argues, the distribution of wealth would not conform to a pre-ordained pattern, so there will not be the need to redistribute wealth following what we think is the right pattern.

Nozick's theory of justice is a historical, nonpattern theory. It is an entitlement theory in which the holdings of an individual's property is just if it is a consequence of fair acquisition (which does not involve force or fraud) or transfer. The other aspect of justice is rectification, that is, the principle which allows for past injustices, that is unfair acquisitions, to be corrected. Nozick's position is that people have rights to their holdings if they are got through fair acquisition and that there is no moral justification for any redistribution of their holdings. He argues that they can do anything with their holdings - trade them off, invest them, gamble them off, give them as gifts etc. and the society has no right to interfere with the holdings of the people, so long as their holdings were justly acquired. The entitlement theory makes the justice of any holding on the historical acquisition of it, and not on the conformity to any preordained pattern. In short, the minimal state should protect the rights to property and if it goes beyond this to bring about a state of affairs which is not the consequence of free exchange it is a breach of their rights.

Nozick argues that his entitlement theory fares better than patterned or end-state theory because the problem with the latter is that their application in a society entails an interference with people's rights.

Nozick's theory restricts fair acquisitions and fair exchanges by invoking the "Lockean proviso." (Irele, 1993) Any acquisition must not worsen the positions of others. But this *proviso* is construed narrowly. For other's position to be worsened someone must not appropriate the total supply of good that is essential to life. A case in point is "a person may not appropriate the only water hole in the desert and charge what he will". (Irele, 1998). But this *proviso* will not debar someone who discovers a cure for a fatal disease charging high price since he does not appropriate to himself something essential to the lives of others or made them be worse off. Nor has he prevented others physically from making the discovery.

Nozick makes a devastating critique of Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*. But Nozick's criticism of Rawls is that Rawls' theory of justice impairs the requirement of an individual's inviolability by his incorporation of end-

state principle. Nozick seems attracted by Bernard Williams' The Idea of Equality. In the course of his discussion of equality, Williams argues that the proper ground of distribution of medical care is ill-health, and that, therefore, it is irrational for the distribution of medical care to be governed by the ability to pay. Although Nozick believes that the plausibility of Williams' claim lies not in any supposed necessary truth about the proper ground of distribution of medical care, rather in the claim that a society should provide for the most important needs of its members, he nevertheless rejects it as an inadequate distributive principle because it neither furnishes a criterion for determining how resources, in general, should be allocated nor takes account of the needs and wishes of resources owner, including providers of labour, concerning the disposition of their holdings and services.

The last part of Nozick's book is devoted to the Utopia idea. This part is short but it is interesting. Although he says that the minimal state is not Utopia, minimal state's defects could be shown if compared with the utopian idea. "The utopian tradition is maximal (Ryan, 1979), the best of all possible world but there are limiting conditions since all, possible goods could not be realised simultaneously and there is no unique way of life which is best for all, though there can be one for an individual which is best for him. (Arthur and Shaw, 1978). Nozick believes that there is human diversity and argues that the form which Utopia would logically have to take won't be free associations of men grounded on the market model which allows free entry and exit to people. He contends that this will constitute a "stable world" because each individual would experiment until he establishes himself in a stable community which also needed his contribution. He argues, that stable communities would consist of people with diverse talents and they would compete with each other and through this pleasure would be achieved through the full development of diverse capacities. He asserts that "Utopia will consist of Utopia . . . communities will wax and wane (Sterba, op. cit). Nozick's conception of the minimal state is, therefore, a utopia, though a meta-utopia - a framework for the birth of trial communities, with a minimal central authority to protect the rights of individuals and arbitrate between individuals. He argues that a minimal state is a form of utopia.

It is important to know that Nozick's idea has been seriously attacked by some other philosophers. For instance, some defenders of libertarian justice have criticised Nozick's argument on the legitimate emergence of a minimal state. Some have argued that his argument fails to justify a minimal state while others contend that, his argument somehow justifies much more than a minimal state.

Among those that have supported the first view are Robert Holmes and Jeffrey Paul. Their position is that:

1.   Either the use of certain risky procedures is rights violating or it is not

2.   If rights-violating then its prohibition does not require compensation

3.   If not rights-violating then its prohibition would not be morally justified.

4.   So either the prohibition of the use of certain risky procedures does not require compensation or that prohibition would not be morally justified (ibid).

Murray Rothbard and Erick Mack have contended that the minimal state if allowed to exercise the right to punish transgressors of rights be they independents or other agencies, then the function of the minimal state goes beyond that of a minimal state. In other words, since the minimal state has enormous power it is like a state with all powers normally associated with it (ibid).

Nozick's entitlement theory has been criticised on other grounds. It has been contended that it offends our ordinary moral intuition because it gives priority to market-forces which can result in an unjust situation. It is argued that our moral intuition on social justice necessitates that there should be a redistribution of holdings in order to help those who are in need. Furthermore, market-forces might not necessarily be in accord with fairness in that initial distribution of holdings might not be due to one's ability or talent but due to chance.

Nozick's position is that we should not trade-off liberty with any other value. But a pluralist might challenge the priority of liberty and argue that the loss of liberty consequent on the increase of social justice is perfectly justifiable. Furthermore, it could be argued that, though the trade-off of liberty is coercive since it harms some for the benefit of others, this would enhance the general well-being of many people rather than the few. Again, it can be argued that market relationships, though seemingly a free exchange, are equally coercive since they put individuals at the mercy of those who have economic power.

There is also the fact that in a market relationship situation, the idea is that everyone is free since exchanges are conducted under an atmosphere that is supposed to be so but some people's freedom might have been curtailed because they do not have the economic power. In a capitalist society, there is the presumption that the market ensures freedom but as G.A. Cohen has rightly pointed out it is the case that some people (Proletarial) are unfree because the system makes economic power the basic ingredient of freedom. In words, market

relationships make some to be free while others are not free (Cohen, 1979).

4.0   CONCLUSION

Nozick's work belongs to the libertarian tradition of justice. He defends the tradition with compelling reasons which are rare in that tradition. Although his position might offend our moral intuition if we believe in an egalitarian society, his arguments compel us to follow him where they lead to.

5.0   SUMMARY

So far in this unit, you have learnt about Robert Nozick's conception of distributive justice as discussed in his work *Anarchy, State and Utopia.* You have studied his entitlement theory, libertarian justice and his idea of a minimal state, which he regarded as utopia.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Explain the role of the invisible hand in Robert Nozick's conception of justice.
2.   Carefully explain Nozick's idea of justice.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER AND REFERENCE

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MODULE 4   SOME POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

Unit 1   Communalism
Unit 2   Socialism
Unit 3   Democracy
Unit 4   Anarchism

UNIT 1   COMMUNALISM

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   The idea Communalism and Communitarianism
4.0   Conclusion
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall examine the ideas of communalism and communitarianism. The unit will make you understand that although, some scholars sometimes want to differentiate between the two, given the different states of their practice, yet, the two concepts communalism and communitarianism are the same.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain communalism and communitarianism as a political ideology
- discuss the values that are inherent in the two concepts
- identify the reason why they are favoured by some society such that they are adopted as an ideology in some state
- explain the limitations of these concepts in human society.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

The Idea of Communalism
The word Communalism necessarily means the idea of a community. From the etymological understanding of the term, 'communalism' is

derived from the adjective 'communal', which has its origin in the French word 'commune' and the Latin word *communitas*. The Oxford Dictionary describes it as the process of forming collective communities where property and resources are owned by the community and not individuals. It also means a principle of political organization based on federated communes. Communalism can also be referred to as strong allegiance limited to one's own ethnic group, commonly based on shared history and culture. It is characterised by cooperation and ownership by members of a community.

If we critically analyse the various definitions of the doctrine of communalism, it would be observed that it seems to have certain things in common with communitarianism. The doctrines of the two concepts affirm the relevance of the community in the formation of the individual's character and the validation and ascription of meaning to his personality. It is important to point out here that communalism appeared as a socio-political idea and it featured much in the works of African nationalists who, as a result of their commitment to forging a new and radically different beginning for their respective countries (Masolo, 2004). Communitarianism, on the other hand, is a contemporary idea in western scholarship. As a contemporary idea in western scholarship, it challenges the libertarian claim about the primacy of the individual over the community. Communalism on the other hand, as an idea in African political thought, challenges the claims of individualist and capitalist ethical orientation within the historical framework of the colonial experience. In one sense, communalism, like communitarian ideas, seeks to promote the values of collectivity as existed in pre-colonial African social and political lives and practices. In another sense communalism, from the African viewpoint is seen as a reaction against European (colonial) description of Africans as a people lacking rationality, invention, self-initiative and ambition as found in the works of scholars such as Hegel, Hume, Kant, J.S. Mill, Levy Bruhl among others (Oyekan 2015).

Communalism is often seen as the main foundation of traditional African society. This perception is premised on the claim that (a) traditional African societies were largely communalistic and (b) that any understanding of an African person, whether at the metaphysical level or socio-political level, must be from the communalistic perspective (Oyeshile, 2006: 108).

One of those who provided the theoretical framework for Communalism is Edward Blyden when he used the principle of the extended family to explain the communal organisation of social life in Africa. For this reason, he is widely regarded as the father of Pan-Africanism (Ibid). His view was corroborated by Leopold Senghor, who avers that Negro African society

"is collectivist, or more exactly, communal because it is rather a communion of souls than an aggregate of individuals" (Senghor, 1968: 29).

The idea of communalism was given a descriptive meaning in John Mbiti's book, *African Religions and Philosophy* (1969). In his description of the idea, he talks about the 'I' in relation to 'We'. According to Mbiti, the traditional African believes that,

The individual owes his existence to other people. ... He is simply part of a whole. ... Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say; 'I am, because we are; and since we are therefore I am' (1969: 108).

From the above Mbiti's excerpts, the individual's life is only meaningful to the extent that the community attains the same and vice versa. The idea must be noted thus connotes a symmetrical situation in which the relevance of one to the other is mutual.

It suffices to say that Nyerere's philosophy of *Ujamaa* was also rooted in traditional African values and had as its core the emphasis on family togetherness and communalism of traditional African societies (Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003). *Ujamaa* (translated as brotherhood), which was more of a socio-political idea, embodies the cultural principles and practices in the extended families in traditional Africa. According to Nyerere:

An African does not look at one class of men as his brethren and another as his natural enemy, [that] he does not ally with the 'brethren' for the extermination of the 'non-brethren' [and that] an African regards all men as his brethren – as members of his extended family (Nyerere, 1977: 11-12).

Thus, Nyerere perceives people in traditional African societies as caring for one another. The idea of oppression or subjugation of one another has no basis in traditional African society. No class structure, every member is treated equally. Aside, Nyerere equally posits that "in traditional Africa, everybody was a worker" (Ibid: 4), meaning that in traditional African society, every member of society – barring only the children and the infirm – contributed his fair share of effort towards the production of its wealth and the wealth created are shared among the members of the society. No one could hoard wealth or accumulate it for the sake of gaining power and prestige. (Ibid: 5). Since everyone contributed to the wealth of the community, there were no "loiters, or idlers who accept the hospitality of society as their 'right' but gives nothing in return" (Ibid).

For Kwame Nkrumah, the African personality is defined by the cluster of humanist principles which underlie the traditional African society (Bamikole, 2012). According to him, in Africa, man is regarded as primarily a spiritual being imbued with inherent dignity. This inherent dignity he said, underpins African communalism which expresses a socialist attitude (1964: 69).

Kwame Gyekye opined that it is well known, that the social order of any African community is communal, though he felt that it is more of an amphibious relationship which manifests features of individuality and communality. He used the Akan concept of humanism to explain the nature of African communalism. He defined communalism as the doctrine that the group (that is, the society) constitutes the focus of the activities of the individual members of the society (Gyekye, 1987: 155). He saw this doctrine as that which emphasises the activity and success of the wider society rather than, though not necessarily at the expense of, or to the detriment, of the individual.

Although communalism presupposes collectivism, Gyekye argued that there is still a place for individuality. This he explained with the Akan concept where individuality is seen not as a negation of commonality, but rather as the recognition of the limited character of the possibilities of the individual. He wrote: "Communalism, as conceived in Akan thought, is not a negation of individualism; rather it is the recognition of the limited character of the possibilities of the individual, which limited possibilities whittle away the individual's self-sufficiency" (1987: 156).
Gyekye (1987: 156) illustrated the rationale behind this system with the following proverb:

One finger cannot lift a thing. If one man scrapes the bark of a tree for medicine, the pieces fall. The left-arm washes the right-arm and the right-arm washes the left-arm

This proverb shows the value of collectivism and interdependence, as opposed to individualism in traditional African societies. Despite this distinction, Gyekye argued that due recognition must be given to the claims of both the community and individuality, for, after all, a society is a community of individuals and individuals are individuals in the society (1987: 162).

3.2   Communitarianism

As mentioned earlier, most of the ideas in communalism discussed by scholars are very similar to what have also been saying about communitarianism in the West. Although, some African scholars are of the view that African communalism is different from communitarianism

in Western thought. Wiredu, for instance, seemed to believe that communalism and communitarianism embody the same values, as he used both interchangeably (2008, 334). Still, he felt that one major difference between the African conception and its Western variant is that the latter shares some characteristics with certain forms of cultural individualism while the former does not. In other words, while Western communitarianism is a theoretical approach to the political organisation within an individualistic culture, African communalism (or communitarianism) is first and foremost a "social formation founded on kinship relations", which later became a theory developed by nationalist philosophers. He further aversed that communalism is a way of life as actually lived, while communitarianism is the theoretical articulation of the values of communal life.

Nature and Scope of Western Communitarianism
In its contemporary sense, communitarian thoughts represent a body of critical reaction to John Rawls' book, *A Theory of Justice* (Rawls 1971). Drawing primarily upon the insights of Aristotle and Hegel, political philosophers such as Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer contend Rawls' claim that the principal task of government is to secure and distribute fairly the liberties and economic resources individuals need to leave freely chosen lives. These critics of liberal theory did not identify themselves with the communitarian movement. Rather, the communitarian label was pinned on them by others, usually their critics (Bell, 2012: 5).

The contentions of the communitarians are numerous. One of such, for instance, is the communitarian's contention of the claim to universality by libertarian theorists who often advance abstract bases they consider impartial as the take-off point of their claims. An instance is Rawls' description of the original position as an 'Archimedean point' from which the structure of a social system can be appraised, a position whose special virtue is that it allows us to regard the human condition 'from the perspective of eternity' from all social and temporal points of view (Ibid). Whereas Rawls seemed to present his theory of justice as universally true, communitarians counter that standards of justice are embedded in forms of life and traditions of particular societies and hence can vary from context to context. For instance, Alasdair MacIntyre (1978) and Charles Taylor (1985) contend that moral and political judgment are products of the language of reasons and the interpretive framework within which agents view their world, thus requiring contextual understanding rather than engaging in abstractions that have little or nothing in common with reality.

Communitarian philosophers also challenge the idea that the individual can sustain himself outside the society. They maintain that the self is

defined by various communal attachments (e.g., ties to the family or a religious tradition) and that it is through them that it finds not only expression but meaning and fulfilment (Oyekan 2015). For Taylor, not only is man a political animal in the Aristotelian sense, but he is also a social animal to the extent that he is not self-sufficient alone, and in an important sense is not self-sufficient outside a polis (Taylor 1985, 190).

Of course, John Rawls in his idea of justice portrays individuals as participants in a scheme of mutual cooperation which offers advantages that self-efforts cannot attain, but not grounded with fellow individuals by bond whose severance or alteration would change their identity as persons. Libertarians defend this reasoning by pointing out that there exist a plurality of individual ends and notions of the good life. Grounding all of them in a communal *telos* amounts to a failure to recognize these differences and the rights of individuals to hold them.

This challenge receives the tacit support of some communitarians. They have sought to find a middle ground which accommodates individual rights while retaining the salience of the community. Corroborating this stand, Philip Selznick, in *The Idea of a Communitarian Morality* (1987), contends that there is room for individual rights within a communitarian morality. He contends that communitarian philosophy's central value is *belonging* and he interprets this claim to mean that "personhood is best served in and through social participation." The result in communitarianism is the priority of duty over right (Etzioni, 1990: 221). "Duty is what roles are about and what membership is about." Thus, as he points out, when we accept membership in, for example, the academic community, we think first of our responsibilities, not our rights. Surely, a moral community must recognize natural rights, which derive from our understanding of what personhood requires. Yet rights are not central to the communitarian project, for "rights do not define the community," nor do they provide reasons for acting. Duties, to the contrary, "stimulate us to action".

4.0   CONCLUSION

The ideas of both communism and communitarianism as presented in this unit and the positions of scholars and philosophers generally leaves us to understand the two concepts as twin concepts. Both shared salient issues revolving the community and the individual. No doubt, many issues arising from the communal position were not exhaustively discussed. Such a task is nigh impossible, especially when it is considered that the contentious issues between libertarians on one hand and communalists/communitarians on the other revolve around the most important question in political philosophy, which is the nature of the relationship between the individual and the society.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have been examining the idea of communalism and communitarianism. We have also pointed out the similarities between communalism and communitarianism by showing how they both embody values that defend the importance of the community in relation to the individuals.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is communalism?
2. Are there any similarities or differences between communalism and communitarianism?

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UNIT 2   SOCIALISM

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   The idea of Socialism
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses socialism. Thus, you shall learn about the meaning or definition of socialism, its aims and why it is considered the best socio-political *cum* economic system as opposed to other systems, such as capitalism. At the end of the unit, you would have had a clearer knowledge about socialism and all that it stands for.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define Socialism as a political ideology
- discuss the aims and objectives of socialism as a political concept
- explain the values and features of Socialism
- identify the reasons why Socialism is a preferred political ideology in some society
- identify the various brands of Socialism in human political history
- explain the limitations of Socialism as a concept in the human political history of any society.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Meaning of Socialism

There are various perceptions and definitions of the term socialism as there are various thinkers and schools of thought who have with keen interest understudy the term and probably because of the perceived good values of the term. The Oxford English Dictionary defines socialism as "a theory or policy which aims at or advocates the ownership of control of the means of production- capital, land property, etc. – by the community as a whole and their administration in the interests of all". This definition, though not very comprehensive, indicates the chief

method and goal of socialism. It has also been defined as "that organization of society in which the means of production are controlled, and the decisions on how and what to produce and on who is to get what, are made by public authority instead of privately-owned and privately-managed firms" (Gauba, 1995:361). According to Gauba, many other definitions and descriptions of socialism more or less embrace these and similar ideas. He (Gauba, 1995:361) stresses further that socialism aims at that economic organization and social recognition, by suitable political means, under which the major instruments of production are under the ownership and control of the public authority in order to ensure that they are properly utilized to secure the public interest. It is based on the view that liberty and equality granted to citizens in the political sphere will be empty unless they are accompanied by a reorganization of the economic life of the society, to convert them into substantive rights for citizens.

It is also a condition of group-living in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the state (Azikwe, 1980:18). To Elliott and Summerskill, (1957:56) it is "a political and economic theory according to which the means of production, distribution and exchange should be owned and controlled by the people, in which everyone should be given an equal opportunity to develop his or her talents, and the wealth of the community should be fairly distributed.

The case for socialism
Socialism is characterised by four major principles, which are: promotion of public welfare, fair distribution of wealth, nationalization of public utilities, and the need for scientific planning.
Let us attempt an explanation of each of these principles.

Promotion of public welfare
This principle presents socialism as a system in which the society is organised in such a way that no individual member of the society can own private property. It also stands for a condition of group-living in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the state.

Fair distribution of wealth
This principle of the socialists regard the state as a fraternal, co-operative commonwealth and not a paternal and patronising source of power. Thus, socialism hopes to remedy the injustice and wastefulness that feature in the capitalist system. It is believed that under scientific and rational control, the economic needs of society could be accurately estimated, and the available land and capital fairly apportioned. Its advocates argue that unnecessary competition and duplication could be prevented under a socialist system. It is also argued, that, inequalities of wealth are a source of grievances that gives rise to a sense of injustice, because it is one of the root causes of poverty.

Nationalisation of public utilities
One fundamental merit of socialism is the focus on the need to reform the capitalist system. In this regard nationalisation of public utilities and municipality of transport services and other services is a major goal of the socialist. Today, many capitalist states have nationalised and enacted laws vesting the state with ownership of mineral rights.

Need for scientific planning
One other important aspect of socialism that should not be overlooked is economic planning. Any country that adopts socialism needs scientific planning to enable the success of the principles of such socialized economy, otherwise, such a socialist state would fail.

Types or brands of socialism
Socialism is of different types and these are, evolutionary, revolutionary, utopian, scientific, fabian, guild and democratic socialism. These brands of socialism shall now be briefly explained.

Evolutionary and revolutionary socialism
Generally speaking, the term socialism is usually applied to indicate 'evolutionary socialism', that is the kind of socialism achieved by the evolutionary process, not by one swoop transformation of society in a single stroke. Evolutionary socialism is not the same thing as revolutionary socialism. Unlike evolutionary, revolutionary socialism seeks to introduce socialism in its totality so as to replace the capitalist system with the socialist system. In other words, revolutionary socialism seeks to transform the social system thoroughly instead of accepting small concessions for the underprivileged sections. In fact, evolutionary socialism admits an attitude of 'compromise' – a compromise between capitalism and socialism, so that the capitalist system is allowed to continue with some changes here and there in the socialist direction; it, therefore, belongs to the liberal tradition. On the other hand, revolutionary socialism makes a direct attack on the prevailing contradictions of the social order; it belongs to the Marxist tradition.

Utopian socialism
In the first decades of the 18th century, numerous philosophers and humanitarians proceeded to draw pictures of an ideal commonwealth which needed to be perceived to become acceptable to society. They are called 'utopian' because they created extremely fascinating pictures of an ideal social and political order, far removed from the hard realities of life.

Scientific socialism

Here it must be pointed out that the Marxian approach to socialism is based on a scientific understanding of the process of history and the role of the working class in bringing about socialism.

Fabian socialism

The term 'Fabian' was adopted after the name of a great Roman General, Quintus Fabius, whose tactics in the fight against Hannibal served as a guide for the society. Thus, its motto read: 'For the right moment you must wait, as Fabius did, most patiently, when warring against Hannibal, though many censured his delays; but when the time comes you must strike hard, as Fabius did, or your waiting will be in vain and fruitless'. As a matter of fact, the Fabian socialists addressed themselves to the task of making the democratic state an instrument of systematic social reform (Adefarasin 2015).

Guild socialism

Guild socialism originated as a trend in the British labour movement which enjoyed great ideological success in the period from 1916 to 1926. It tries to combine the good points of socialism with those of the ancient guild system. In short, it upheld the Marxian emphasis on class struggle, it stood for the abolition of the wage system and demanded representation of the workers in industrial control, it sought to modify syndicalism by introducing the importance of consumer side by side with the worker and it sought to abolish the old state which was an instrument of exploitation.

Democratic socialism

Democratic socialism is a modern version of Fabian socialism. The supporters of democratic socialism pay equal importance to democracy and socialism. They believe that the goals of democracy and socialism are not separable from each other; both stand for the amelioration of the ordinary man. In effect, democratic socialism signifies the use of the democratic method for achieving the socialist goal. It seeks to modify Marxian socialism in some important details (Adefarasin 2015).

Features of Socialism

The features of socialism can be analysed as follows:

The first feature of socialism is 'Altruistic'. Socialism strives to cater for the welfare of everybody in society rather than the welfare of just a few as in the capitalist system. According to Awolowo (1968:190), it may be said that the overriding aim of socialism is to bring about an economic commonwealth in which the needs of all, regardless of birth and station in life, as opposed to and distinct from the profit-making desires of some, will be satisfied. In other words, under socialism, the aim is that capacity shall have its adequate reward, but also that those who, for any cause, are

incapacitated from, or have not yet grown up enough to participate in productive activities shall not, on that account, suffer misery.

The second feature of socialism is 'Labour'. Human dignity stems from man's obedience to God's command at creation to subjugate and explore the earth and use it for its good. Hence, for Awolowo, socialism emphasizes the value of human labour. This is against the feature of capitalism, which puts a premium on the individual accumulation of capital through the exploitation and manipulation of the law of supply and demand. Socialism, as a corrective system, recognizes the necessity of capital for the continuous survival of economic production and development in society. But it emphasises the indispensable role of human labour as the only mechanism of economic wealth as well as social justice in the distribution and sharing of profits.

Another vital feature of socialism is 'public ownership'. Socialism obtains its full meaning from the mechanism through which it works. For the welfare and good of all, it becomes necessary that the means of economic production, distribution, exchange, among others be transferred from the hands of individuals to those of the public. Awolowo (1981:187) maintains that negatively, socialism is opposed to capitalism. But positively, it is firmly rooted in the principles of public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange and economic planning. The state, through its government, becomes the sole employer of labour in society, and all citizens, employees" (Ogunmodode 1986:199).

Economic planning and social discipline are two other features of the socialist system. The onus is on the socialists to plan meticulously in order to obtain efficiency in the execution of the state's economic policies. In short, Awolowo (1976:65), says "it is difficult to affect public ownership of the means of production. But it requires meticulous planning to operate them efficiently".

Production, being under government, is controlled and not just left to the capricious hand of the blind forces of supply and demand. Labour, unlike in the capitalist system, becomes a joint enterprise and venture between the employer and the employed. Since it is the objective of the state to cater for the welfare of all, the salary structure to be given by it cannot but be such that will be just and adequate to live a normal life.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It can be agreed that the goal of socialism is the welfare and happiness of every person in the state. Socialism is altruistic in its content in that it desires expansion of state activities not for aggrandizement, but in order to ensure freedom and justice to the individual, it seeks to eliminate injustice by eliminating social inequality which is the root of poverty. When one looks at it critically, the basic problem we are facing in Africa is leadership. Some of our leaders are selfish and extremely corrupt. Their attitudes to governance is a total reflection of the *cum* political system and economic ideology – capitalism that is in operation, which makes the leaders pursue private interest at the detriment of the lives of the citizens. However, if the principles of socialism can be embraced, African countries will develop and join the comity of Nations, since we have all it takes to develop our natural and human resources. But the irony of it all is that Africa has remained a "sleeping giant" because of the nature of our leaders that has been characterized by egoism and corrupt practices. They would rather want the *status quo* under capitalism to endure.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have been exposed to the meaning of socialism. Different definitions were discussed as well as the various principles of socialism. Also, the various types or brands of socialism were explained and the features of socialism discussed. The unit in a way also attempts some basic differences between socialism and capitalism. The unit concluded by pointing out the aims of socialism at ensuring collective benefits to all members of the society and that the African society is suffering today because the system of administration both politically and economically is capitalism and not socialism.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the term socialism.
2. Outline the bands of socialism that you have studied.
3. What are the features of socialism known to you?

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UNIT 3   DEMOCRACY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
        3.1   Origin and Meaning of Democracy
        3.2   Forms of Democracy
        3.3   The Values of Democracy
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Democracy as a political ideology and system of government has over the years become the most heralded, most spoken about and acceptable and that perhaps, turns out to be a household terminology in the political space. It was once noted by Kukah (2000:1) "so much has been written about democracy that it really may not be necessary for us to start a process of seeking definitions". However, in this unit, we shall consider some definitions to arrive at the meaning of the concept. We shall discuss the origin of democracy, the forms of democracy and also examine its values. Efforts shall be made in this unit to examine the merits and demerits of democracy.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define democracy
- explain democracy as a system of governance
- trace the origin of democracy
- discuss the values democracy
- identify the various forms of democracy that there are in human society
- explain the merits and demerits of democracy.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Origin and Meaning of Democracy

The term democracy originated in Greek writings around the fifth century B.C. The word is comprised of two Greek words – 'Demos' which refers to the common people, the masses; and the 'Kratos' that stands for rule, power or government. Thus, democracy literally means the rule of the people. Democracy was designed to allow all citizens (excluding women and slaves) to have a voice in decisions that would have an impact on all. This right was often exercised at a mass meeting or what can be called a town hall meeting.

Since the days of ancient Greek, the concept of democracy has been variously subjected to re-definition by philosophers, scholars, politicians, students and practitioners of democratic governance. For instance, the most popular and common definition of the term was the one credited to Abraham Lincoln, which made most people conceive democracy as the "government of the people, for the people and by the people". Interestingly, this definition has generated a lot of debates amongst students of politics. This is on the ground of content analysis particularly on the phrases –"for the people" and "by the people". Upon critical analysis, it is observed that the claim "for the people" in the definition actually represents the bourgeoises and the elite rather than the popular rule and mass participation. Similarly, "by the people" also reflects the elite who govern, rule, and some select individuals who are in positions of power to define or redefine and shape the policies of the state in such a way to favour them and their cronies.

Democracy according to Schumpeter (1976), is an institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's votes, by this definition, an elite emerges inevitably to organise and run the state. This may be practicable where a large number of people are illiterate and indifferent to political practice. Schumpeter used the definition to attack what he called the classical theory of democracy or the classical theory of collective action by which he meant a theory of how the people could act collectively so as to be sovereign, a theory that had, itself motivated collective political action (Weingast 1997).

In Robert Dahl's (1956:131) understanding, the majority rarely rule and democracy itself are characterised by the rule of minorities in a state, though membership to the governing minority changes periodically. In Michel's (1959) thinking, it is an inescapable social fact that a ruling minority exists in society so that the majority cannot rule. Michel's thought would, therefore, implies that in the fast-moving and advancing democracies, size, time and complexity tend to combine to make elitism inevitable. In order words, the volume of decisions which modern states have to grapple with, coupled with their complex and technical nature is

not such that the unorganised masses would have the knowledge to withstand (Grahams 1986).

To Appadorai (1968), democracy is a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by themselves. It suffices to say, however, that in the context of advanced democracies such as Western Europe, the British Commonwealth and the United States, democracy is based on the theory of the separation of power. This implies that legislation is being carried out by a freely elected parliament and executive power being vested either in a government responsible to the legislature (as in the United Kingdom) or in a President responsible to the people (as in the United States of America).

In a dimension different to various definitions discussed above, Janda *et al* (1992:40-41), identified two major schools of thought as constituents of democracy. The first school of thought conceives democracy as a form of government which stresses the procedures that enable the people to govern, meeting to discuss issues, voting in elections and running for public offices.

The second school expresses its understanding of democracy from the prism of the substance of government policies expressed in freedom of religion and providing for human needs. Thus, for this school of thought, every democratic government must exhibit certain principles that must be seen in government policies and must operate on basic criterion such as guaranteeing civil liberties.

Furthermore, Andrain and Apter (1995:155-156) noted Huntington's, understanding of democracy as, "a political system in which voters choose key decision-makers in competitive free and honest elections". This to him, will not only depend largely on extensive electoral participation, procedural guarantee, and elite accommodation of conflicting interests, but also by extension facilitate in security beneficial outcomes: stability of the polity, minimal violence, individual liberty, gradual social change, and international peace.

Dye and Zeigler (1975:2) hold that the irony of democracy is that it is the government 'by the people', but the responsibility for the survival of such democracy rest on the shoulders of the elite. The elite must govern wisely if the government 'by the people' is to survive. Drawing instances from the American political system, Dye and Ziegler contend that the American masses do not lead, rather they follow and respond to the sentiments, attitudes, proposals and behaviour of the elite. Dye and Zeigler's position was properly captured by Key (1961:558) when he asserts,

The critical elements for the health of the democratic order consist of the beliefs, standards, and competence of those who constitute the influential, the political activists, in the order. That group, as has been made plain, refuses to define itself with great clarity in the American system; yet, analysis after analysis points to its existence. If democracy tends indecision and disaster, the responsibility rests with the elite, not with the mass of people.

Democracy is a political ideology that is celebrated as a method of giving all citizens an equal share in political decision making. The phenomenon can be applied in numerous senses. For instance, it emphasizes the need for members of the population to have an opportunity to participate in the government of the state through voting. Democracy also stresses the need for a democratic state to reflect the true interests of the people even though, sometimes, the people may be ignorant of where their true interest lie. This, in turn, makes many of them succumb to the whims and caprices of the elite.

The point we attempt to make is that democracy prescribes that government be: responsive to the people – ready, able, and willing to listen to and meet their needs and reasonable demands, and again, be responsible to the people, that is, be formally accountable to their authoritative judgments of its performance. In turn, the responsive and responsible government does not necessarily require or suggest that the people must rule, but that they exercise a relatively high degree of control over their rulers (Christenson *et al*, 1972:199).

3.2   Forms of Democracy

There are different forms of democracy, however, we shall identify and discuss a few of them. They include:

  i.   Classical or direct democracy
  ii.   Indirect or representative democracy
  iii. Social-democratic democracy
  iv.   Constitutional democracy
  v.   Liberal democracy

Classical/ direct democracy
This was the very first kind of democracy in ancient Greece. It occurs where all the citizens can meet together in an open place to deliberate on issues that bother on the collective interest. In this form of democracy, the people as a whole vote directly on issues that are under consideration. This was practised in the ancient Greek city-states and it was made possible because the population was not so large. In Athens, citizens were entitled to participate directly in the government of the city by voting in

the assembly of all citizens or serving on a jury. Selection for office was very democratic. Perhaps, it should be noted here that although, the Athenians valued their democracy and citizenship highly, yet, only a minority of the inhabitants were bonafide citizens, women and slaves were accepted as natural (Winter and Bellows, 1992).

Classical democracy has been criticised on the ground that the citizens then had a low level of political knowledge, interest and participation (Medeans 1997). In view of this, Schumpeter adopted what he termed "a democratic method" that embodies the ways that elite groups and parties may be able to preside over a formally democratic institutional arrangement, providing some measure of political competition, but certainly not fulfilling the values of equality and participation (cited in Medearis 1997). Pateman corroborated the argument when he contends, low levels of knowledge, interest, and participation among voters plausibly could be explained as a product of the undemocratic organization of certain formative institutions and hence, they could be incorporated into a critical participatory theory of democracy (cited in Medearis 1997:820).

Indirect/ representative democracy
This is the modern or contemporary notion of democracy. It developed as a result of the increase in population and the size of the area to be governed. In the contemporary time, government activities have become so complex, and much more than what used to be in the ancient Greek city-states. To this effect, the people are better governed through representatives who are periodically elected by the society. It is indirectly democratic when people vote for representatives who decide on their behalf.

Example of countries that practice representative democracy are; the United States, the United Kingdom and Nigeria. However, occasionally, the United Kingdom holds a referendum on a particular issue, where the matter is felt to be sufficiently important or controversial to require a direct mandate from the people as a whole for the decision to be legitimate. Decisions made by a referendum where the people's will is expressed directly are in an obvious sense more "democratic" than those made by representatives, though, that is not, of course, to say that such step is better in any way (Swift 2006:184-185).

The indirectness of a decision lessens the extent to which the present will of the majority of the voters controls political outcomes. In other words, the more levels of mediation between the people themselves and the decisions that emerge, the less directly democratic, and the less democratic the system (Swift, 2006). One major process of actualising representative democracy is through the periodic election. It is a method

of selecting a few individuals from a large group to represent various segments of the population. The few elected are seen as the mirror image of their electors in terms of political programmes, policies and beliefs. This is pertinent because the representatives are believed to have the mandate of the people, and the mandate is both the authorization of representation and also the kernel of responsive and responsible governance (Ayoade, 1999; Kurfi, 1989).

An examination of the Nigerian society shows that representative democracy is not yielding enough good fruits because those elected by the masses to represent them in varying political spheres are rather pursuing their private interest and not the public interest or the common good. This has led to various agitations, such as resource control, restructuring among others and at various levels.

Social democracy
Although, the term social democracy various interpretations. However, we need to recall that the concept was developed in the late 19th century in reaction to the excesses of the industrial revolutionary Marxism. Social democracy always aims at the attainment of, in addition to political democracy, a high defence of economic and social equality (Winter and Bellows, 1992). Sweden can serve as a good example of a social democratic state. Social democracy emphasizes humanistic values and aimed at improving the conditions of the working class which is found lacking in capitalism. According to Gombert (2013:79), "though, a specific social-democratic conception of humanity is rather elusive, it, however, refers to the freedom of the individual, like liberalism and in common with a Marxist approach, analyses the social obstacles hindering the realization of basic rights."

Social democracy attempts to strike a balance of legitimate interests to bring self-interest and the common good into accord. A social democrat emphasizes not government by the people, nor government by the people, but essentially whether any policy is carried out in the interest of the people, in the interest of the overwhelming majority or minority. Freedom, equality/justice and solidarity are core values of social democracy. It rejects, both in theory and practice, the legitimacy of a violent assumption of power by a minority. Social democracy does share some theoretical conceptions commonly associated with commission. While it supports public ownership of major national industries, it has a long history of distaste and hatred for the profit system and for the competitive spirit which underlies capitalism (Christenson, *et al.* 1972).

Liberal democracy
The proponents of liberal democracy were John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith. Their ideas laid the base for liberal and

Western democracy particularly in Britain and the United States. Specifically, Locke's theoretical underpinning centres on government by consent of the citizenry and government by the constitution. He argues that the government has an obligation to protect the natural rights and the property of citizens. To Rousseau, the 'general will' of the community should prevail. That is, the individual agrees to be ruled as well as to rule, all are made free. Though the general will is an expression of what the common requires, it is the expression of the private interests and the minority views underplayed (Winter and Bellows 1992:66)

Adam Smith, who was a political economist believed that a laissez-faire type of economy, where individuals pursue their economic interests freely, unhampered and unencumbered by governmental regulations would be the best system to, promoting wealth for individuals as well as that country. In other words, free competition would enhance and promote a high level of economic and social harmony (Winter and Bellow, 1992). Typically, the principles of liberal democracy include provisions of broad-based citizen involvement in the public decision-making process; the significance of a high degree of freedom or liberty (freedom of the press, religion, speech, movement, and from arbitrary treatment by the government).

Liberal democracy characterised the political life of the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Western European, voluntary associations, individuals operate independently from direct state control. It operates on certain principles and mechanisms. These include government by consent, public accountability, majority rule, recognition of minority rights, and constitutional government.

Democracy is government by the consent of the people. Rational consent can be got by persuasion for which an atmosphere of free discussion is essential. Any regime where the consent of the people is sought to be got without freedom of expression of divergent opinions does not qualify to be called a democracy even if it maintains certain democratic institutions. Similarly, liberal democracy based on the consent of the people must remain answerable to the people who ensure that rule of the land prevail in accordance with the constitution (Garuba, 2003).

Constitutional democracy
'Constitution' is a document that has a special legal sanctity and which spells out the purpose or framework of government in a given country, organisational body etc. It also serves as a collection of norms or set standards by which a country is governed. It contains statements intended to define the relations between the rulers and the ruled, the basic institutional guidelines of the government, the rights and duties of citizens and many other important procedures to be followed in streamlining the

affairs of the state. It, therefore, follows that in a democracy, a government is popularly elected under a constitution. The concept of constitutional democracy expresses the notion of limited government, that is, the government limited by the constitution in relation to its powers and the method of exercising them (International IDEPS, 2000: 15).

Constitutional democracy does not only underscore the significance of ensuring that individuals fundamental rights and separation of the powers are sacrosanct, but also that it is a democratic culture that regards the constitution as an inviolable element and above the political struggle for power, a culture that values fair playing, mutual tolerance and rules which promote acceptance and respect for the wishes of the people as the ultimate authority for the government (International IDEA, 2000:16).

3.3   The Values of Democracy

At the beginning of this unit, it was mentioned that there are so many values of democracy, thus, we shall identify and explain some of the salient values of democracy. The values of democracy may vary from one society to another or from one individual to another, but, those that appeal to many societies include: freedom, self-realisation, equality, good or correct decisions, and the intellectual and moral development of citizens.

1.   **Freedom**
       People living under laws that they have made for themselves enjoy a kind of freedom – the kind one can refer to as 'autonomy', 'self-rule' which is quite different from laws made by others.

       Today, the Nigerian citizens are clamouring for a new brand of the constitution that will be made by themselves (Civilian and not the 1999 constitution that was hurriedly put together by the military). In other words, democracy is valued as a means to the end of freedom – as – non-interference. That is where the general will propagated by Rousseau finds expression.

2.   **Self-realisation**
       Self-realisation consists, in parts, the involvement in the life of one's polity. The capacity of people attempting to put their acts together in order to decide the law they want to address a social problem that threatens the collective interesting of the society is a good sign of self-realization. It is mainly in a democratic environment do many citizens get to participate fully in such political activity, realising creature capable of political creation.

3.   **Equality**
Equality in relation to democracy emphasizes giving equal opportunity *cum* condition to everyone in any given circumstance. In any decision-making process, there is bound to be disagreements amongst the stakeholders but the spirit of democracy makes provision for everyone to express one's feeling and sentiment even though such opinions may be unpopular. Democracy is all about collective deliberation. Though, the process of democratic debate, argument, reflection, hearing other people's point of views and responding to objections, democracy can be a very good platform for changing and improving people's views, that is, if a level playing ground is provided for the parties.

4.   **Good or correct decisions**
This suggests that democracy is instrumental to and also a good procedure for making good decisions. For instance, policy formulation requires wide consultation in order to arrive at a better policy that can stand the test of time. Thus, democracy is good just because the laws of large numbers mean that many good headers are better than one or few. Democracy is a deliberative procedure, hence, through discussion, reflection and debate, citizens who are initially uninformed and possibly holding selfish views are made to change for the better.

5.   **The intellectual and moral development of citizens**
The analysis of good or correct decisions dove-tails into the intellectual and moral development of citizens. The former crystallizes and streamlines the latter. In a system where some citizens are denied the privilege of participating in decision making, such citizens are being directly or indirectly denied mental or intellectual development as well as achieving their self-realization. This takes us to the various forms of political cultural-parochial, subject and participant that exist in the society. Parochial and subject culture citizens experience a low level of awareness and expectation while the participant culture citizen experiences a high level of both awareness and expectation because he involves himself in a participatory democracy which in turn, widens his intellectual horizon and moral development.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The various values that democracy entails makes it to be adorable by most societies. These values place it at a better advantage when compared to other political ideology. More importantly, the mode of transition from one government to another in any democratic system of government is always devoid of crisis if the set rules for the process is strictly adhered to.   However, this is not to say that the system is devoid of some disadvantages, but it still remains a preferred system of government given the benefits accruable to society that practice it. The legitimacy comes from an acceptance of the fairness and transparency of its procedure for arriving at any socio-political activity such as policy formulation and implementation. Democracy reveals the extent to which actual political power to determine people's social destiny lies in the hand of the vast majority of citizens who constitute the people as opposed to a ruling oligarchy or class.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, you have been exposed to the evolution of democracy, but placing premium or importance on its forms (natures, degrees) and values. As a matter of fact, there is no way the concept of democracy can be exhausted in a piece of this nature, given its complexity and degree of interpretations and analysis.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify the forms of democracy that you have studied.
2.   Explain the values of democracy.
3.   Define and explain the term democracy.

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UNIT 4   ANARCHISM

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to the conceptual analysis of the idea of anarchism as a political ideology that can enhance the utopian state. In the unit, you shall be exposed to the conceptual clarification of anarchism, the purpose of the anarchist as well as the various schools of thought in anarchism. And at the end of the unit, an analysis of the various forms and objectives of anarchism shall be discussed and attempt shall also be made to examine some arguments against the anarchist's position.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define anarchism
- explain the features of anarchism as a political ideology
- discuss the objectives and purpose of the anarchist
- identify the various forms of anarchism that we have in human society
- provide arguments for and against anarchism as a political concept.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Anarchism: Conceptual Clarification

The word anarchy is as old as the world. It is derived from two Greek words: *'av'* (an) and *'apxn'* (arkhe), meaning the absence of authority or government, but, it has come to be understood in a pejorative sense as a synonym for disorder, chaos and disorganization (Guerin, 1970).

Anarchy refers to a society without a central political authority and it is also used to refer to disorder or chaos, but, this is not the true reflection of anarchism. Anarchism is a term that is used to "describe the political and socio-political doctrines which have the purpose of establishing justice, equality and fraternity in the society" (lrele, 1998: 89). It achieves this by abolishing the state and other social forms of authority which they believe destroy any form of governmental organization. According to Irele, "Anarchism detests all forms of authority which they believe destroy individual freedom. They contend that all forms of authority are detrimental to social and economic equality. The position here is that anarchist denies any claim to legitimate authority by one man over another" (Ibid).

Anarchism has developed as a result of social and current issues, which aimed at freedom and happiness during the 19th century. The word anarchism literally means without rulers, without masters or leaders. Anarchism, according to Berkman, is a "liberation front. A liberation front is a group of people determined to help others attain a life of freedom" (Berkman, 1929:23).

In defending anarchism, Rudolph Rocker posits:
 Anarchism is not a fixed, self-enclosed social system but rather a definite trend in the historic development of mankind, which, in contrast with the intellectual guardianship of all clerical and government institutions, strive for the free unhindered unfolding of all the individual and social forces in life. Even freedom is only a relative, not an absolute concept since it tends constantly to become broader and to affect a wider circle in a more manifold way. For the anarchist, freedom is not an abstract philosophical concept, but the vital concrete possibility for every human being to bring to full development all the powers capacities and talents with which nature has endowed him, and turn them to social account. The less this natural development of man is influenced by ecclesiastical or political guardianship, the more efficient and harmonious will human personality become; the more will it become the measure of the intellectual culture of the society in which it has grown (Rudolf, 1938:71).

 Resulting from this is the view that any form of authority and oppression should be dismantled. Freedom is also a necessary impetus for achieving this goal but not absolute because of its likely negative effect on the wider society). Anarchism literally means "no rule". Its central thesis is establishing any organized institution with the authority to use force is evil (or less morally inefficient).

According to Onigbinde (2009: 225), the anarchists base their argument on the idea that each person is a free, rational, morally responsible agent, thus it is immoral for anyone to order anyone else to do anything.

Submitting to the authority itself is wrong. To do so is to try to renounce namely, one's moral autonomy (Onigbinde 2009 225). It is to choose to be what one is not, that is, a subservient, dependent creature. "To delegate (to the government) the responsibility for defending oneself against aggressors is impossible. One cannot make another person one's moral agent" (Onigbinde 2009: 225). To the anarchist, government exists by unjustified force and it is responsible for the disorderliness in the society. The anarchists also hold that only a society without a government could restore the natural order and re-create social harmony(Onigbinde 2009).

3.2   Purpose and Objectives of the Anarchists

The anarchist regard the state as the most deadly of the preconceptions which have blinded men through the ages. Government, according to Proudhon, "has always presented itself to man's mind as the natural organ of justice and the protocol of the weak" (Proudhon, 1963:91). The argument of anarchism, therefore, is the rejection of all forms of authority. The anarchist argues that the state is evil because its activities restrict or limits the freedom of the individuals. According to Godwin (1793: 24),

Government lays its hands upon the spring that is in the society and puts a stop to its motion. It gives substance and permanence to our errors. It reverses the genuine propensities of mind and instead of suffering to look forward, teaches it to look backwards for perfection.

What can be inferred from Godwin's assertion is that, the state applies pressure on the individual and that political, social and economic interests only serve to keep a man in ignorance of his true interests and perpetuate his vices. But then, you must note that Godwin's position is only corroborating Proudhon's initial attack on the government in support of anarchism when he asserts:

To be governed is to be watched over, inspected, spied on, directed, legislated, regimented, closed in, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, asserted, evaluated, censored, commanded; all by creatures that have neither the right, nor wisdom, nor virtue…. To be governed means that every move, operation, or transaction one is noted, registered, entered in a consensus, taxed, stamped, priced, assessed, patented, licensed, authorized, recommended… all in the name of public utility and the general good. Then at the first sign of resistance or complaint, one is repressed, fined, despised, vexed, pursued, hustled, beaten up, judged, sentenced, deported, sold, betrayed and to cap it all ridiculed, mocked outraged and dishonoured (Proudhon, 1970:23).

From Proudhon's assertion, therefore, the simple meaning we can deduce from Anarchism is freedom. In other words, it stands against being

enslaved, coerced by the so-called authority or against any form of imposition upon man. It means that one should be free to do the things one wishes to do. It means a condition or society where all men and women are free and where all enjoy equally the benefits of an ordered and sensible life. According to Berkman (1929: 20),

> Law and government stand for robbery and murder. It permits and helps this robbery by ruling that the land which no man created belongs to the landlords; the railroads which the workers built belong to railroad magnates; the warehouse, grain elevators and storehouses erected by the workers belong to the capitalist, while the police and soldiers who are also poor men are paid to protect the very system that keeps them poor.

The view of the anarchists is that man should be able to live in a society where there is no compulsion of any kind. It, therefore, seeks for the abolishing of government wage slavery and capitalism because they cannot exist without the support and protection of the government. The anarchist then conceives of a society in which all the mutual relations of the members are regulated not by law but by mutual agreements between members. Kropotkin (1912:64) substantiate this thus:

The anarchist concerns of the society in which all the mutual relations of its members are regulated not by laws, not by authorities whether self-imposed or elected but by mutual agreements between members of that society and by a sum of social customs and habits-not petrified by law… no ruling authorities, then, no government of man by man; no crystallisation and immobility brought about by state authority.

Every state is a tyranny, be it the tyranny of a single man or a group. Every state is necessarily what we call totalitarian. Kropotkin further corroborates this position when he posits:

the state has always one purpose; to limit, control, subordinate the individual and subject him to the general-purpose.., through its censorship, its supervision and its police, the state tries to obstruct all free authorizes and sees this repression as its duty because its instincts of sole preservation demand it (Stirner 2006: 64).

Thus to him and for other anarchists, all forms of state authority are inimical to individual freedom. The anarchist sees the state as an abstraction that devours people's lives and on the basis of which the real aspirations and living forces of a country generously and blissfully allow themselves to be buried. According to Guerin (1974: 24). "Far from creating energy, government by its method, wastes, paralyses and destroys enormous potentials".

Democracy is seen by the anarchist as tyranny. The people are tricked to declare their sovereign. The people rule but do not govern and delegate their sovereignty through the periodic exercise of universal suffrage. The very theory of sovereignty of the people contains its own negation. If the entire people were truly sovereign,

there would no longer be either government or governed; the sovereign would be reduced to nothing; the state would have no r*ansom d'tre*, would be identical with society and disappear into the industrial organisation" (Guerin 1974: 24).

The implication of the above is that representative democracy only creates and safeguards the continued existence of governmental aristocracy against the people. To this end, the anarchist frowns at any form of government.

3.3   Schools of Thought in Anarchism

Anarchist schools of thought differ fundamentally from extreme individualism to complete collectivism. These strains of anarchism have often been divided into categories of social and individual anarchism. We shall consider some of these schools of thought in anarchism:

-       **Philosophical Anarchism:** This was propounded by William Godwin. He developed what could be considered as Modern anarchist thought. Philosophical anarchism contends that the state lacks moral legitimacy; that there is no individual obligation or duty to obey the state and that the state has no right to command individuals, but it does not advocate revolution to abolish the state. According to Godwin (2014: 3), "Philosophical anarchism requires individuals to act in accordance with their own judgments and to allow every other individual the same liberty" The existence of a minimal state according to him, is a "necessary evil, that gradual spread of knowledge" (Godwin 2014: 3). He advocated extreme individualism, proposing that all cooperation on labour be eliminated.

-       **Mutualism Anarchism:** This began in the 18th century and associated with Pierre Joseph Proudhon in France. Mutualist anarchism is concerned with reciprocity, free association, voluntary contract, federation and credit and currency reform. As pointed out by Kelvin (1840: 241), "A market without government intervention drives prices down to labour theory of value; firms will be forced to compete over workers just as workers compete with firms, raising wages. Proudhon develops a concept of liberty

which is the dialectical synthesis of communism and property. Mutualism is the synthesis of three philosophies, namely, communism, capitalism and socialism.

- **Social Anarchism**: This is an umbrella term used to identify a broad category of anarchism independent of individualist anarchism. Where individual forms emphasize "personal autonomy and the rational nature of human beings, social anarchism sees individual freedom as conceptually connected with social equality and emphasize community mutual understanding (Judith, 2001: 627). Social anarchist includes collective anarchist, anarcho-communism and anarchist syndication.

i. Collective anarchism is propounded by Mikhail Bakunim and Johann Most. It opposes all private ownership of the means of production instead of advocating that ownership be collective.

ii. Anarcho-communism is a theory in anarchism which advocates the abolition of the state, markets, money, private properties (while retaining respect for personal property) and capitalism in favour of common ownership of the means of production.

iii. Anarcho-syndicalism: Led by Rudolph Rocker is a distinct school of thought within anarchism. It focused heavily on the labour movement than other forms of anarchism. Anarcho-syndicalists seek to abolish the wage system and private ownership of the means of production, which they believe lead to class division.

- **Individualist Anarchism:** This refers to several traditions of thoughts 'will' over any kinds of external determinants such as groups. It comprises of egoist anarchism and individual anarchism.
- **Egoist Anarchism**: This is a school of thought that originated in the philosophy of Max Stirner. Stirner's philosophy is usually called 'egoism'. He says that egoist rejects devotion to "a great idea, a good cause, a doctrine, a system, a lofty calling. The egoists have no political calling but rather live themselves out without regard to how well or ill humanity may fare thereby" (Stirner, 2006: 4). He proposes that most commonly accepted social institutions – including the notion of society-were mere spooks in the mind. He, therefore, wanted to abolish not only the state but also society as an institution responsible for its members (Ulirike, 1994: 90).

- **Individualist Anarchism:** Individualist anarchism advocated free love and women's right. Proudhon was an early pioneer of anarchism as well as individualist anarchism through the publication of his seminal work "The Ego and its Own" which is considered to be a founding text in the tradition of individualist anarchism (Stirner, 2006: 41).

-     **Religious Anarchism:** This refers to a set of related anarchist ideologies that are inspired by the teachings of organised religions. Many different religions have served as inspirations for religious forms of anarchism, most notably Christianity and Islam. Christian anarchists believe that biblical teachings give credence to anarchist philosophy while the Islamic anarchists also believe that Quranic teachings give credence to anarchist philosophy. Others include Buddhist, Jewish and most recently, Neopaganism anarchism.

-     **Green Anarchism:** This is also referred to as eco-anarchism (Pepper, 1990). It is a school of thought within anarchism which emphasises environmental issues. An early influence was the thought of the American anarchist, Henry David, as well as Leo Tolstoy.

-     **Anarcho - Feminism**: is a form of anarchism that synthesizes radical feminism and anarchism that views patriarch (male domination over women) as a fundamental manifestation of involuntary hierarchy which anarchists often oppose. Anarcho-feminism was inspired in the late 19th century by the writings of feminist anarchists such as Lucy Parsons, Emma Goldman and Voltairine de Cleyre. Anarcho-feminists criticize and advocate the abolition of traditional conceptions of family, education and gender roles. They frown at marriage. For instance, Goldman (2014: 205) argues that "Marriage is a purely economic arrangement … (woman) pays for it with her name, her privacy, her self-respect and her very life".

-     **Left-Wing Market Anarchism:** This is associated with scholars like Kelvin Carson, Roderick, T Long, Charles Johnson, Bray Spangler, etc. They stress the value of the radically free market, termed free markets to distinguish them from the common understanding.

Despite the differences in the positions of the various forms of anarchism that we have discussed, it is imperative to say, there are common denominators that unite all kinds of anarchist opposition to authority, opposition to states, and opposition to any form of conceptualism. Apart from syndicalism, anarchism is marked by a very middle-class focus on the freedom and authority of individuals which the libertarians believe to be riddled with the statist and capitalist privileges (William, 2011:19-21). Those who move this approach strongly affirm the classical liberal ideas of self-ownership and free markets.

3.4   A Critical Evaluation of Anarchism

It has been argued that one way of bringing order to a society is to give to some people in the society the exclusive power to create and coercively enforce rules, which all members of society must follow; that is, to create a government. Another way to ensure order in society is, to allow people to follow rules that spontaneously evolve through human interaction with no guiding intelligence. Although, anarchist contended that government is not a necessity in the state because it is evil and so must be abolished. However, some defenders of government have also argued that certain goods and services that are essential to human life in society can be supplied only by the government. They contend that without government to create the rule of law, human beings will be unable to banish violence and coordinate their actions sufficiently. Aside, to ensure a peaceful and prosperous society will not only be impossible but it will also lead to Hobbesian existence of the state of nature. In Leviathan, Thomas Hobbes argues, "Social order in the absence of an effective government would devolve into a war of all against all and life would be nasty, solitary, brutish and short" (Hobbes, 1839: 57). In the same vein, John Locke argues in favour of government when he opines, "A society without a state would not be as effectively organised as a society governed" (Locke, 1690:21). Adam Smith further strengthens this position when he says, "Commerce and manufacturing could not flourish outside a state of just government" (Adam, 1976: 17).

There is no doubt that government structure matters for economic interaction. A state structure which aligns incentives to minimize predation economically outperforms one that provides incentives for the predation by the powerful over the weak. But it is also the case that government by its very nature is predatory and thus will be used by some to exploit others wherever and whenever the coercive power of the government is established. Fundamentally, the government can only be constrained if the people, the government is established to govern can coordinate around the norms of governance
which are self-enforcing (Harden, 1999:112).

Defenders of the government claim that government is necessary to produce public goods;   goods that are important for human well-being that may either be produced or will be under-produced by the market. This position could be derived by the anarchist that government has lost grip on the provision of public goods since private people are now more involved in the provision of public goods. The question is where does the private get the money used in setting up private institutions for public consumption?

The anarchist largely believe that social order could be maintained if all sources of social disruption and all temptations to disobedience are removed. To the anarchist, the major cause of social evil is private property which induces all sorts of destructive sentiments and desires. They contend that private property brings about social, economic and political inequalities and if an egalitarian society is to be achieved; all social inequalities must be removed (Dipo, 1980: 99).

4.0   CONCLUSION

Man was conceived by Aristotle as a rational animal. He identifies human being's ability to reason as their essential defining characteristics. Truly, human beings not only have the ability to reason but they also have the ability to imagine that the world is different from what it is and this is a far more powerful force than the latter. However, human nature is an important factor to consider as man is ambivalent in nature, thereby making an egalitarian society difficult to attain. The cry of the anarchists must be commented but they have failed to understand that a state without government is a lawless state. In this state of anarchy, the stronger will overpower the weaker and take over his possession but the government still protects this misuse of power, though the government itself is anarchy.

5.0   SUMMARY

So far in the unit, you have been introduced to the philosophical thought of the anarchist. You have studied the various schools of thought in anarchism and the anarchist conception of democracy. The unit concludes with some argument against the anarchist philosophical thought.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Outline the various schools of thought in anarchism.
2.   Define anarchism and explain their main objectives.
3.   Do you think anarchism as a philosophy can be defended?

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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