

Foundations of 'Social Contract' Theory:

Introduction:

The concept of "Social Contract" has been the central theme of political philosophy with thinkers like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau, contributing significantly to its development.

The "Social Contract" theory highlights that individuals in a society agree to abide by certain rules and laws in exchange for protection of their natural rights and the benefits of organized living.

However, the rise of populism in contemporary era poses challenges to the traditional foundations of the Social Contract.

Foundation of "Social Contract"

Thomas Hobbes in his work "Leviathan" argued that in a state of nature, life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short". He believed that individuals willingly surrendered some of their freedom to a sovereign authority in exchange for security and order.

"During that time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that conditions called war; such a war, as if every man, against every other man." (Leviathan)

Hobbes basically draws a pessimistic and dark picture of human nature. Then he describes the State of nature, as state of endless struggle and continuous war. There were natural laws those are unwritten, therefore had subjective interpretation. Furthermore, he says that due to two factors men left state of nature and entered into a social contract.

These two factors inherent in man are the "reason" and the "fear of violent death." In order to escape and end this ceaseless struggle, all men decided to enter into a contract. According to Hobbes each man said "I authorize and give up my right of myself to this man or his assembly of men on the condition that he will authorize all his action in right manner".

Hobbes Social Contract was a unilateral, irrevocable contract that negates all kind of revolutions because the people surrendered all their rights to Sovereign. It creates an absolute ruler.

Society according to Hobbes is not at growth but an artifice. It states that, state is artificial made by human and it is not the result of evolution. According to Social Contract of Hobbes, people need it so they made it. State was pre-political and pre-social.

Secondly, John Locke in his "Second Treatise of Government" proposed a more optimistic view of State of nature, asserting that individuals have natural rights to life, liberty and property. The Social Contract for Locke is a mutual agreement among free individuals to form a government that protect these rights. As he mentions in his "Second Treatise of Government" that, "The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom."

His theory of 'Social Contract' begins with "Human nature" which he expressed in his book "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding".

According to Locke, every human being wants to get rid of pain and to substitute pain with pleasure. Man has been endowed with the power of reason. The spark of Divine nature. He says that men's state of nature was social as well as rational, sympathetic towards fellow being.

This state of nature had two characteristics, one is "Complete freedom or perfect freedom" and second one is "equality for its inhabitants". Thus, Locke's state of nature was an ideal moral order. In Locke's view point, the reason for social contract was that peace was disturbed due to three main defects:

Firstly, law of nature was not defined, as there was no legislative body to make and define certain laws. Secondly, absence of authority to enforce law of nature. Thirdly, absence of judges to interpret those laws. In simple word Locke means that there was no legislature, executive and judiciary.

Therefore, the difference in intellect of people gave the nature different interpretations of law of nature. Therefore, in order to get rid of state of nature, men made a contract and entered into a civil society. This is a political contract because it established a civil society.

Locke's contract is two folded: In 1st step, people established mutual trust after forming society that they must institute a government too. Secondly, (Government is the trustee of the people,) function for them and responsible for security, right to life, liberty and property.

If it fails to ensure these rights, it would be a breach of trust and would call for "revolution". Locke's contract was a conditional contract. It was bilateral and revocable contract. Locke gave all the power to human society. State of nature is artificial for Locke as men made it for protection of their rights to lives, freedom and property.

Thirdly, Jean Jacques Rousseau argued for the concept of "General will" in "Social Contract" where in individuals come together to create a collective sovereignty that reflects the common good and the general will of people. Rousseau's Social Contract is different from Hobbes and Locke. In Rousseau's Contract, the rights are social rather than natural. His contract requires "surrendering of right by each member to the community's general will". It was to avoid the selfishness of individuals which may destroy the community. It is necessary for the body politics to operate on "General will", it is an expression of public's mind, it emerges from all and directed to all. It is an expression of common interest. This social contract established a civil society and the body of politics, "a majority vote is binding on all". Rousseau has thematically constructed the constitution of the community of general will and the institution best suited the community. According to Rousseau, by nature human is neither good nor bad. Naive and innocent, fulfilling his fundamental instincts. "Man is a noble savage".

State of nature was peaceful, self-centred, no concept of society at all. The reason for Social Contract according to Rousseau is a "Serpent" that entered into their lives for "poverty". When the first man said, "this land is mine and that's thine", that established the sense of society and the concept of good and bad developed.

Relevance to Populism:

Hobbes emphasis on a strong, centralized authority resonates with the concerns of populist leaders who advocate for a strong governance to address perceived threats to national identity and security. While Locke emphasizes individual rights align with populist sentiments that often emphasize protecting the rights and interests of the common people against perceived elites. Moreover, Rousseau's ideas resonate with populist ideals of direct democracy and the notion that political decisions should reflect the will of people rather than a distant elite.

Evaluation of Social Contract in The Era of Populism:

The foundational ideas of Social Contract remain influential in the era of populism. However, the era of populism challenges them in several ways.

- ① Centralized Authority VS populist Decentralized

Populist movements often reject the authority of centralized governments, favoring a more direct relationship between leaders and the people.

2) Individual Right vs Collective Will.

Populism may prioritize individual rights, especially against perceived external threats, potentially undermining the Rousseauian emphasis on the general will.

3) Nationalism and Identity: Populism often centers on national identity, which may conflict with the more cosmopolitan views of some of social contract theorists.

4) Erosion of Trust Institutions: Populism movement may exhibit skepticism towards traditional institutions, challenging the idea of willingly entering into a social contract established by authorities.

Conclusion: ~~In~~ Conclusion

In conclusion, while the foundational ideas of social contract proposed by Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau remain relevant, the era of populism introduces complexities and challenges to these concepts. The tensions between individual rights, collective will and the role of centralized authority underscore the need for ongoing discourse and adaptation of political philosophy in response to contemporary challenges.

Q no 11
3(A)

Political Dynamics of Pressure Group.

Pressure groups also known as interest groups, play a significant role in shaping political dynamics. These organizations aim to influence public policy, legislation, and decision making processes by exerting pressure on governments and other influential bodies. There are certain positive and negative aspects of pressure groups.

Positive Aspects:

1) Representation of Diverse Interest:

Pluralist theories of democracy, such as by Robert Dahl emphasizes the importance of diverse interests in a functioning democracy.

For example: The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) advocates for the protection of individual rights.

2) Expertise and Information: The idea of "epistemic Communities" by Peter Haas suggests that certain pressure groups possess specialized knowledge and experience.

Example: Environmental Organizations like Green Peace provide expert knowledge on ~~ecology~~ ecological issues.

3) Citizen Engagement: Participatory democracy theories argue for increased citizen involvement in decision-making.

Example: The Tea Party movement in the US mobilized citizens to advocate for fiscal responsibility.

4) Check and Balances: The concept of check and balances is foundational to democratic governance.

e.g. Transparency International works to combat corruption globally, serving as a check on governmental powers.

Negative Aspects: 1) Influences Imbalance: Critics argue that some pressure groups, particularly those with significant resources, may unduly influence political outcomes. e.g. Corporate lobbying in US has been criticized for potentially influencing policy decisions.

2) Exclusivity and Elitism: Neo-Marxist perspectives highlight how certain groups may disproportionately influence decision making. e.g. Lobbying by powerful industries might exclude the voices of marginalized and economically disadvantaged people.

3) Fragmentation and Gridlock: Critics argue that the proliferation of pressure groups can lead to policy gridlock and the prioritization of narrow interests over the common good.

Example: In multi-interest democracies, conflicting pressure group agendas may impede effective decision making.

Evolving Dynamics: 1) Digital Advocacy: The rise of digital platforms has transformed how pressure groups operate. Examples: Online movements like #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo leverage social media to advocate social and political change.

2) Transnational Advocacy: Globalization has facilitated the rise of transnational pressure groups. Example: Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch operate globally to address human rights issues.

3) **Impact on Policy Innovation:** Some critics argue that pressure groups contribute to policy innovation and responsiveness. It prevents the government from being passive by constant observation and criticism.
Example: The environmental movement has been instrumental in pushing for policies addressing climate change.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the political dynamics of pressure groups are complex with both positive and negative aspects. The evolving nature of pressure groups impact the national and global governance highlighting the need for scrutiny and evaluation.

Q No # 5(B)

Marx's Theory of Class Struggle:

Karl Marx theory of class struggle is a foundational element of his broader theoretical framework, often referred to as historical materialism. This theory states that throughout history, societal developments are characterized by the conflict between different social classes and their struggle for control over economic means.

Key Components of Marx's Theory of class struggle:

① **Historical Materialism:**

Marx's "The Communist Manifesto" and "The Capital" (Das Kapital) provide the theoretical foundation for historical materialism.

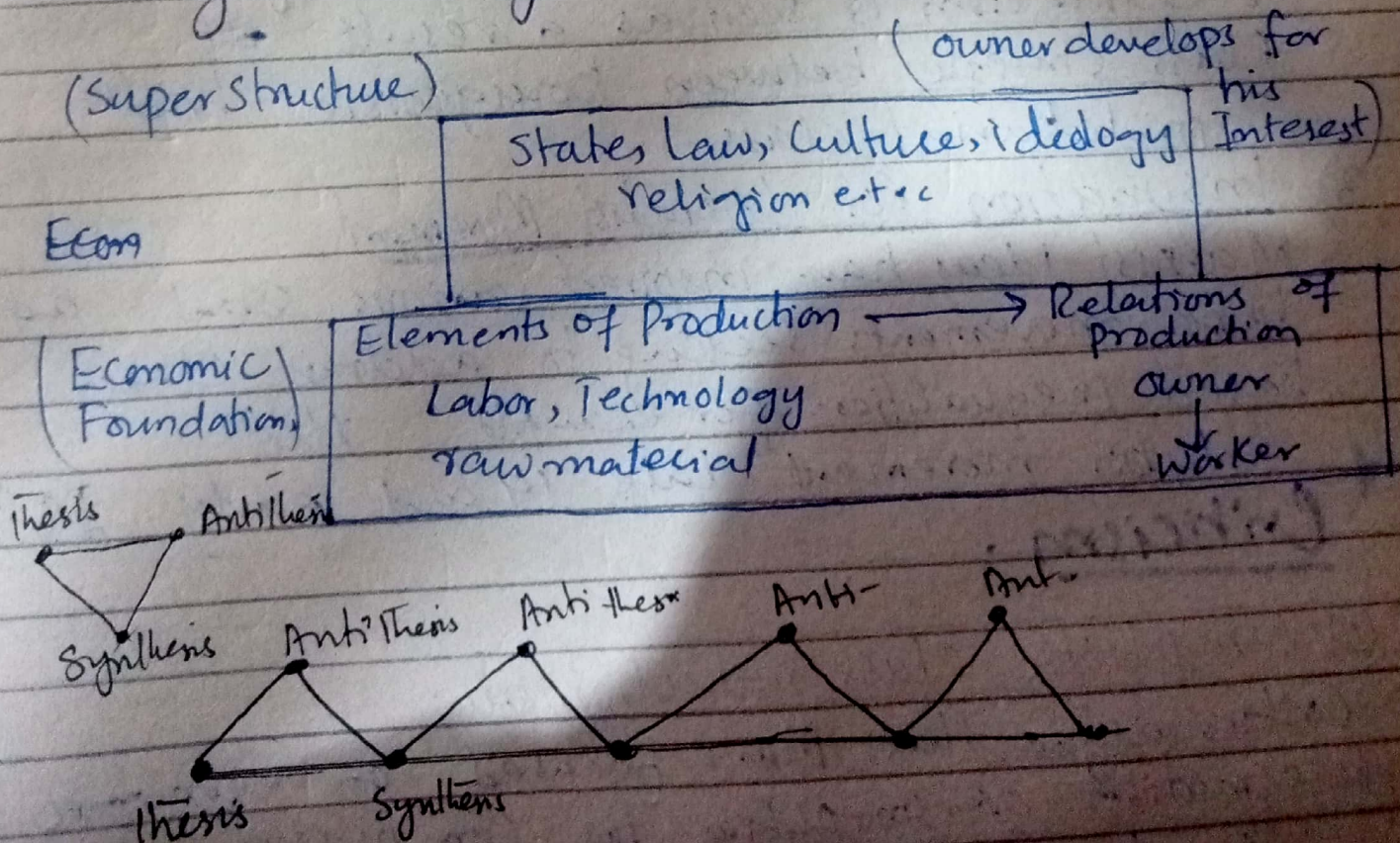
Marx traces the evolution of societies from primitive Communism to feudalism, capitalism

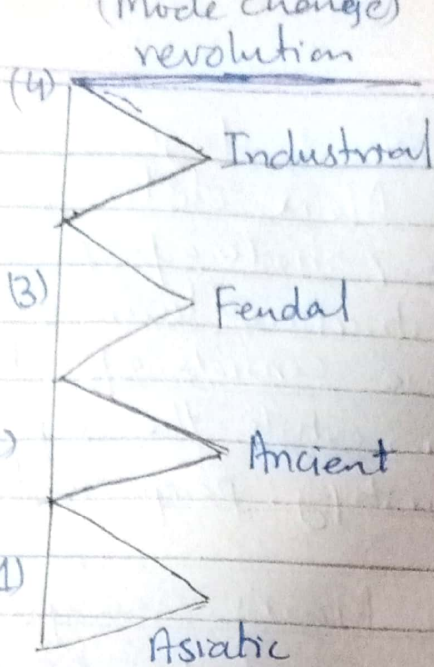
and anticipates future Communist stage.

② Base and Superstructure: Marx distinguishes between the economic base (mode of production) and the ideological superstructure (law, culture, ideology). In the capitalist theory base consists of the Capital relations of production, while the Superstructure includes ideologies that justify perpetuate Capitalist structures.

③ Class struggle: Central to Marx's analysis is the concept of class struggle against the bourgeoisie (Capitalist class) for control over the means of production.

④ Dialectical Materialism: Marx's method of analysis involve dialectical materialism, combining historical development and material conditions. The "Thesis" (existing social order) clashes with "anti-thesis" (emerging contradictions), leading to a "Synthesis" (new social order).





According to Marx, through historical and dialectical materialism societies have kept evolving through out history

Strength of Marxist Theory:

- 1) Critical Analysis of Capitalism
It highlights issues like surplus value, extraction and alienation in capitalist production as mentioned in "Das Kapital".
- 2) Historical Perspectives:
Marx provides a historical lens for understanding societal change. Transition from feudalism to capitalism is seen as a result of class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletarian class.
- 3) Inspiration for Socialist Movement
Marxist ideas have inspired various social and labor movements seeking to address class-based inequalities. For example the labor movement late 19 and early 20th

Criticism:

- ① Simplistic class reductionism:
Critics argue that Marx focused on economic determinism oversimplifies the complexities of social structures.

② Failure of the Communist Revolution:

The historical failures of the communist revolutions have led to criticism of Marx prediction. e.g

The Soviet Union descent into authoritarianism and economic insufficiencies challenges Marx vision of classless, stateless society.

③ Evolution of Capitalism:

Critics argue that Marx did not anticipate the adaptability and transformative nature of capitalism.

As capitalism has undergone changes and reforms, adapting to challenges and co-opting certain aspects of working-class movement.

Conclusion:

Therefore, we can conclude that Marx theory regardless of its criticism provides a powerful lens for understanding historical and contemporary social dynamics. It offers valuable insight into economic exploitation and societal change.