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**MODERN POLITICAL  
PHILOSOPHY**

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**MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

**Enlightenment**

**Modernity Discourses**

BA HONS. POLITICAL SCIENCE EXAM HELP

# WHAT IS IN STORE?

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Modernity: meaning, features

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Enlightenment: meaning, features,

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Situating Enlightenment in the project of  
modernity

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Critical evaluation of role of Enlightenment  
in bringing modernity

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Critical evaluation of discourse on  
modernity.

# Books and resources for Western Political thoughts

- **Books**

- History of Political Philosophy by L. Strauss and J. Cropsey, 2nd edition. Chicago: Chicago University Press( available online Free)
- A history of political thought: Plato to Marx by Subrata Mukherjee and Sushila Ramaswamy (On Amazon, Kindle version)
- D. Boucher, and P. Kelly, (eds.) Political Thinkers: From Socrates to the Present. New York: Oxford University Press ( available online Free)
- Western Political Thought by O P Gauba

- **Online Resources**

- Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/mill/>)
- IGNOU online materials (e Gyankosh): Free online
- Encyclopaedia Britannica (<https://www.britannica.com/>)
- J STOR online free Journal ( 100 article free with google account)
- You Tube Videos, of course the Pol Sc Videos

# What is Modernity?

- It comes from the Latin **modernus**, meaning “**just recently**.” Most of the time, **modern** simply refers to something related to the present or recent past, as opposed to the past or the distant past.
- **Break from past**
- **Up-to-date**
- **Opposite of traditional**
- **Interestingly**, when used first time in 16<sup>th</sup> century, it had negative connotations, someone/something not conforming to established tradition. Only after few centuries it acquired positive connotations.
- Thus, discourse on modernity itself changed in modern period!

# Characteristic features of modernity-1/2

- **Individualism**

- Free will of an individual, autonomous self
- Society- individual construction for furthering individual's rights, interests, and preferences; aggregate of wills of individuals
- Universalism: equal worth of each individual, universal human nature

- **Humanism**

- human agency, informed by **enlightened self-knowledge**, can master both natural and social world

- **Secularism**

- Reason NOT religion as basis of understanding natural and social phenomena
- Nature as machine, can be mastered by science & reason- no divine intervention needed
- Society is human creation, not divine; no divine rights to rule
- Universal moral values can be understood and applied separate from religion

- **Primacy to science, reason, rationality, critical thinking**

- In place of religious dogma, superstition, ritualism, fatalism

# Characteristic features of modernity-2/2

- **Materialism**

- Empiricism: observation and experience derived from senses as base of knowledge
- Conceiving everything as matter in motion
- Derive happiness from material possession
- Capitalism- market relationships

- **Industrialization and urbanization**

- **Universal normative values**

- Justice, liberty, equality, rights

- **Progress and development**

- Conditions of natural and social worlds can be continuously improved by human agencies, with application of science and reason to make human life better
- Economic prosperity, political freedom, individual dignity, social equality, justice.

# Modernity in politics: modern political philosophy

- Politics separate from Religion
- State/govt as outcome of social contract
- Sovereign, equal nation-states
- Concept of citizenship
- Liberal democracy
- Political rights- freedom, equality, justice
- Modern political Thinkers:
  - Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Mills, Bentham, Rawls



# Enlightenment: Meaning

- A European intellectual movement of the 17th and 18th centuries in which ideas concerning God, reason, nature, and humanity were synthesized in entirely new way, breaking from past, which helped revolutionary developments in all walks of life-art, philosophy, and politics.
- It gave new framework of ideas about man. society and nature, which challenged existing conceptions rooted in a traditional world-view, dominated by religion
- Centered in France( Paris); Scotland(Edinburg), England, and Germany
- Led by intellectuals and free thinkers, who were called **philosophes**( French).
  - **Baron de Montesquieu** (1689-1755), **Vol tarre** 1694- 1788), **David Hume** (1711- 76), **Adam Ferguson** (1723-1816), Emmanuel **Kant**( 1724-1804), **Rousseau**(1712-78)
  - Political thoughts of Hobbes, Locke and Philosophy of **René Descartes** influenced above **philosophes**
- 'Light of reason', shining brightly into all the dark recess of, ignorance, superstition, prejudice and intolerance
- René Descartes- “ ***I think, therefore I am***” and Emmanuel Kant’s “ ***dare to know***”( ***Sapere Aude!***) summed up the spirit of Enlightenment

# What is Enlightenment ? By Immanuel Kant

- Enlightenment is man's emergence from his **self-imposed immaturity**. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another.
- **Sapere Aude!** [dare to know] "Have courage to use your own understanding!"—that is the motto of enlightenment.
- 'man **realizing his potential** through the **use of his mind**'
- Thinking rationally, with reason, independently, without being bound by ritualistic and dogmatic rules/regulations ; everyone free to use his own reason in all matters of conscience.
- The freedom to **use reason publicly** in all matters.
- **Change in political order** : based on reason/rationality, human dignity, equality, freedom of thought/expression; which will end despotisms, oppression, and tyranny.

# Situating Enlightenment in the Modernity project

- **Renaissance**

- **14th-15th** in Italy; 16-17th rest of Europe ; re-awakening in arts, crafts, literature, thinking, attitude by reinventing classical ancient Greek/Roman knowledge.
- Leonardo da Vinci', Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, Sandro Botticelli, Machiavelli in politics
- Great innovations-paper, printing press, the mariner's compass, and gunpowder

- **Protestant reformation movement**

- Revolution that took place in the Western church in the **16th century**. Its greatest leaders were Martin Luther and John Calvin.
- Protestant ethics and capitalism.

- **Scientific Revolution**

- Replacing common sense by abstract reasoning
- **16th-17th century**: science had replaced Christianity as the focal point of European civilization.
- Copernicus- 15th century- sun at the centre of the universe; Galileo Galilei , Kepler
- French philosopher René Descartes, 17th century- matter & motion ; Blaise Pascal- numerical calculator, Newton, late 17th century

- **Enlightenment**

- **18th century** Intellectual movement centered in France
- Modernity share many paradigm with Enlightenment tradition

- **Industrial revolution**

- **18-19th century** ; great invention and application of science for making life better.
- James Watt, James Hargreaves, Richard Arkwright, Samuel Crompton, Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, Wright Brothers

# Paradigm of Enlightenment- 1/2

- **Reason** -the philosophes stressed the primacy of reason and rationality as way of organizing knowledge, tempered by experience and experiment.
- **Empiricism** - the idea that all thought and knowledge about the natural and social world is based upon empirical facts, things that all human beings can apprehend through their sense organs.
- **Science** - the notion that scientific knowledge, based upon the experimental method as developed in the scientific revolution of the 17th century was the key to expanding all human knowledge. Science was the epitome of reason
- **Universalism**- the concept that reason and science could be applied to any and every situation, and that their principles were the same and hence applicable in every situation. Science produces general laws which govern the entire universe, without exception.
- **Progress** : the idea that the natural and social condition of human beings could be improved, by the application of science and reason, and would result in an ever-increasing level of happiness and well-being.

# Paradigm of Enlightenment-2/2

- **Individualism** - the concept that the individual is the starting point for all knowledge and action, and that individual reason cannot be subjected to a higher authority. Society is thus the sum or product of the thought and action of a large number of individuals.
- **Toleration** - the notion that all human beings are essentially the same, despite their religious or moral convictions, and that the beliefs of other races or civilizations are not inherently inferior to those of European Christianity. But this is debatable.
- **Freedom** - an opposition to feudal and traditional constraints on beliefs, trade, communication, social interaction, sexuality, and ownership of property. Free will of individual. Freedom to think, understand and use knowledge.
- **Uniformity of human nature** - the belief that the principal characteristics of human nature were always and everywhere the same.
- **Secularism** – Shifting knowledge from religious to secular domain; non-religious foundation of morality and ethics; separation of politics from religion

# Enlightenment and Modernity

- The discourse on Modernity has distinct imprint of Enlightenment traditions
- Primacy to Science, reason, rationality, critical thinking, idea of progress, individuality, humanism, secularism, materialism, etc are part of the modernity discourse which came from Enlightenment movement
- Using science and technology to solve social problems, integral modern belief, came from Enlightenment.
- A belief in the preeminence of empirical, scientific method of enquiry and knowledge of both natural and social phenomena, hallmark of modern approach, originated from Enlightenment traditions
- An enthusiasm for technological and medical progress: scientists, inventors, doctors- to make life better is integral Enlightenment thought.
- A desire for legal and constitutional reform: which resulted into spread of liberal democracy, constitutional Govt, citizenship rights, political equality and rights, etc are also originated from Enlightenment movement.
- Enlightenment help emancipation of man from the ties of superstition, ignorance, ideology and feudal hierarchical social relationships; this became important aspect of modernity.
- Enlightenment's concept of progress, the idea that through the application of reason and empirically based knowledge social institution could be created which will make man happier and free them from injustice, oppression, despotisms, etc define progress and development in modern period.

# Critical review of contribution of Enlightenment in bringing modernity

- Its contribution is perhaps overemphasized
- It is also overtly Eurocentric and ethnocentric.
  - **Modernization theory**- a definite European path to modernity
- Enlightenment was new way of thinking, with reason/rationality, than bringing new socio-political order
- The philosophes themselves came from privileged class, were status quoist about socio-political order
- They supported absolutist Monarchies, and limited political rights to landed classes
- They excluded women, landless masses, and slaves from socio-political equality and rights
- Its most visible outcome- French revolution- brought reign of terror, more despotisms( Napoleon era), more violence, oppression, tyranny.
- Beyond Enlightenment many other new ideas, such as democracy, republicanism, de-colonization, liberty, socio-political equality & justice, rights, etc. brought modernity.

# Negative Aspects of Modernity

- **Excess individualism**
  - Possessive individualism
  - Society as mere aggregate of atomistic individuals- methodological individualism
  - Anomie (Durkheim ) - breakdown of social traditions and moral values ( family, kinship, social bond, marriage), lack of purpose or ideals, alienation, and disenchantment
- **Excess reason/rationality**
  - Undermined feeling, emotions, empathy, common sense
  - Belief in objective, universal truth, separate from the subject is highly contended
- **Excess materialism**
  - Private property, capitalism, socio-economic inequality
- **Competition, vanity, egoism, jealousy, enmity**
  - *Amour Propre*( living in opinion of other)- Rousseau
  - Rise in Suicide
- **Violence, Oppression and Exclusion**
  - Colonialism, Imperialism
  - Wars- two world wars, nuclear war
  - Oppressions- class, caste, race, gender



# Critique of Modernity Discourse by Some Modern Thinkers

- ***'The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity'***- Jürgen Habermas( born 1929)
  - project of modernity can be redeemed through his theory of communicative action.
  - Criticized subject-centred reason
- ***'The political theory of Possessive Individualism'*** – C.B.Macpherson (1911–1987)
  - liberty is equivalent to freedom of possession and society as merely an aggregation of atomistic individuals having their own interests and preferences.
- ***'Philosophy of Right'*** – Friedrich Hegel ( 1770-1831)
  - Organic society vs excessive individualism
- ***'The Gay Science'*** : Friedrich Nietzsche ( 1844-1900):
  - He criticized modernity for its apparent lack of culture, and modern values. To him, modern culture was "barbaric"
  - He criticized the excessive rationalism, egotistical individualism, shallow optimism, homogenization, and fragmentation that he saw as characteristic of modern culture.
  - Modernity as Trauma, as loss, as death- 'God is dead'.
- **J.S.Mill (1806–73)** : Mass society as threat to Liberty ; reformulated Classic utilitarianism to make it moral/ethical, more humane- due importance to feeling, emotion, aesthetic- Romanticism
- **Post modernist thinkers**
  - Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard, Heidegger

## **PAST YEAR'S QUESTIONS**

**2019.** Critically analyze the discourse on modernity and impact of enlightenment tradition on modern political philosophy.

**2018:** Explain the concept of modernity. How was it influenced by the enlightenment traditions?

**2017:** write a critical essay on contribution of the enlightenment traditions to modern political philosophy.

**2016:** Discuss various factors which contributed towards formation of modernity in the west.

# Sum up

- Enlightenment was an intellectual movement in Western Europe, centered in France, during 18th century which brought fundamental changes in socio-political and scientific fields, most of which we associate with modernity.
- Enlightenment movement gave primacy to science, reason, rationality, empiricism, critical thinking, free will of individual.
- Paradigm of modernity has definite imprint of Enlightenment; individuality, secularism, scientific temper, self-governance, progress, etc whatever we associate with modernity originated from the Enlightenment movement.
- In political philosophy, the concepts of sovereign nation-states, secular and autonomous political actions, liberal democracy, normative political values-liberty, rights, equality, justice-, citizenship, etc were part of Enlightenment tradition.
- Despite this, discourse on modernity and prime role of Enlightenment in its evolution is overtly Eurocentric and ethnocentric.
- European conception of modernity was not universal, neither superior to other parallel traditions in same era. Also, the outcome of so called modernity on social and natural life has brought social unrest, violence, natural/ecological destruction, and overall loss of values, social well being and happiness.

# References

- Recommended reading list of DU on this topic
  - I. Kant. (1784) 'What is Enlightenment?,' available at <http://theliterarylink.com/kant.html>
  - Hall (1992) 'Introduction', in Formations of Modernity UK: Polity Press pages 1-16

## •Online Resources:

- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernity>
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Enlightenment-European-history>
- <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-greatest-artists-of-the-renaissance-period.html>
- <https://www.britannica.com/science/Scientific-Revolution/Optics>
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Renaissance>
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Reformation>
- <https://www.britannica.com/summary/Industrial-Revolution-Timeline>

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# **MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHTS**

## **Jean Jacques Rousseau (Hindi)**

**Origin of Inequality, General Will, Social Contract**

**BA HONS. POLITICAL SCIENCE EXAM HELP**

## PAST YEAR'S QUESTIONS

**Syllabus: Modern Political Thought: Romantics: Jean Jacques Rousseau : General Will; local or direct democracy; self-government; origin of inequality.**

**2019.** Rousseau's theory of general will is an attempt to differentiate real wills from actual wills. Explain

**2018:** "Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains"; discuss this quote of Rousseau.

**2017:** Discuss Rousseau theory of General Will

**2016:** Rousseau idea of General Will has inspired both Democrats and Authoritarians; Do you agree? Give reasons

Notes: Rousseau on inequality

# Life and Time of Rousseau

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau(1712-1778)- born in **Geneva**(Switzerland) as son of watchmaker
- His mother died due to complication of his birth, this made his childhood lonely and relation bit estranged with his father
- In 1742, he moved to Paris as widely travelled and read but not formally educated men ; there he became part of the 'Enlightenment' 'philosophes' group- wrote articles for 'Encyclopedia' of Diderot, 'Discourse on political economy' being most important
- Two essays changed his life
  - 1. 1749: *"whether restoration of science and arts contributed to the purification of morals?"*
  - 2.1754: *what is the origin of inequality and is it authenticated by nature?*
  - His two essays called "**discourse on science and arts** " and "**discourse on origin of inequality** "
- 1762: he published '***Social Contract***' ; same year ***Emile, or On Education*** published
- His autobiography "***The Confessions***" *was published after his death in 1782*
- Lived life of fugitive and loneliness in last years, abandoned by friends, haunted by 'the powers', he became paranoid.
- Paradox surround his life & writings
- Immensely talented, hugely influential, but very controversial and largely misunderstood



# ‘Progress’ from State of nature- ‘noble savage; to civil society

- Isolated living of human without speech, language, society, and private property
- Savage man is having **two innate feeling**- 1. **self love** (*Amour De Soi*) and **Pity** (compassion) for others
- Life was self-sufficient( neither plenty nor scarcity), neither happy nor unhappy, amoral (neither moral nor immoral), no reason, and asocial (not anti social)- **life is frugal, lazy, contented, peaceful**
- As speech and language develop, settled life, agriculture production and metal use started, civilization grew
- **Civil Society**: Private property, division of labour, laws to protect property rights, unequal resources and inequality, power to few resourceful over resource-less many, social classes, competition, vanity, egoism, jealousy, enmity- ***Amour Propre***( living in opinion of other)
- Thus, civilization corrupted ‘noble savage’ and de-based human nature- it robbed both political and personal Liberty of the man

# Rousseau on Inequality

- Inequality in resources (socio-economic inequality) is feature of modern civil society, not known in the 'State of Nature'
- Root cause of inequality is institution of **Private Property**
- Individuals possessing superior natural abilities acquired more resources causing inequality, development of social classes
- Wealth, rank, power, personal merit –**dimensions of inequality**
- Resourceful persons gained power over resource-less masses
- Powerful/resourceful framed **law legitimizing private property**- *"Ownership of property is the performance of inequality and protection of private property rights is enshrinement of inequality by the state"*
- Instead of '**self-love**' **people started living in the opinion of others**, developed ego, passion, desire, jealousy, enmity- corrupting effects of civilization
- Conception of **State based on individual rights and negative freedom** is immoral, unjust, and unequal State.

Pre-civil society age- state  
of nature- 'Noble Savage '

Modern civilization  
corrupted humanity,  
debased human nature

How to reform society and political  
order to reconcile Freedom and  
Authority, reason and feeling,  
Justice with Utility, modern life with  
nobility and virtuosity of past

Solution- His **Social  
Contract**

**The Social Contract**

People as equal enter into contract with others  
and with all to form '**Community**' –**Republic** or  
**Body Politic**

**Individuals subsume their power, rights,**  
possessions, identity to the community, become  
its indivisible part

**They gain:** Common force for protection, equal  
citizenship, sovereignty, civil liberty, moral  
freedom, identity, forum for just & moral act

The community and each of its members are directed by  
'**General Will**' – '**Common Good**'

By obeying laws flowing from General Will, members are  
obeying themselves as they gave themselves those laws,  
which are just, moral and serve common good- they gain  
**moral freedom**

# Features of the ‘Social Contract’ of Rousseau

- A ‘**Logical Imagination**’ and ‘**Imaginative Construct**’
- Not a one time event but a continuous process
- **Popular Sovereignty**: The community is sovereign, each of its member(citizen) own equal fraction of that sovereignty
- As citizen of the community, one get back both **Political** and **Personal** Liberty
- **Political Liberty**: not dominated by any other’s power; obeys only himself
- **Personal Liberty**: as Citizen develop love for other, community, guided by his higher self-self mastery- inner moral freedom
- Thus social contract is a device to unite liberty with authority, reason with feeling, morality with rationality, public interest( justice) with self-interest( utility)

# Will and its Types

- **Meaning:**

- Inner mechanism to choose among desires, want, wish, craving, 'will power'
- Positive force for controlling and using one's instinctual drives; motivating factors in human behaviour

- **Types:**

- **Real or true Will:** will of our higher self- rational, authentic or virtuous ; 'true' self
- **Actual Will :** will of our lower self: irrational, impulsive, lustful, empirical belief and desire
- **Private or Individual Will:** reflect self-interest of one individual
- **Corporate Will:** reflect self-interest of a group
- **General Will:** Represent collective will of a political community. It is 'always right' -just, moral, and for the purpose of Common Good
- General Will is the synthesis of real wills. embodiment of altruism. It represent sovereignty of the community formed by social contract

# Features of General Will

- Represent collective will of the community. It is just, moral, and for the purpose of Common Good
- Citizens acting just and moral arrive at General will, which is 'always right' and reflect 'Common or Public Good'- 'voice of all' for the 'good of all'
- General Will is Not aggregation of 'particular' or 'Private' wills of community members. It represent 'Real' will of community members.
- The General Will is not determined on the basis of number of voters, but is determined on the basis of common interest uniting all
- General will is political expression of 'noble savage'- self love and natural pity for others
- Hence, moral freedom is conformity(obedience) to the general will because one is obeying to its real(higher) self by obeying general will
- Thus, obeying Laws flowing from General will is real freedom in moral sense as one is obeying himself as the author of the law

# Pros and Cons of Rousseau's Social Contract

## Pluses

- Brilliant attempt to reconcile liberty with authority, reason with feeling, morality with rationality, public interest( justice) with self-interest( utility)
- Popular Sovereignty
- Direct democracy- citizen as author of law and master of the Govt
- General Will as moral/ethical ideal
- Truly egalitarian- disregard to pvt property, equal citizen

## Minuses

- **Utopic**- not feasible for large, complex modern nation-states
- **Vague** and ambiguous concept of **general Will** as ethical ideal
- His conception of **positive liberty** and general will may be misused for totalitarian purpose
- Idea of **homogenous community** as organic whole of which individuals is an indivisible part undermine individual autonomy
- Choosing '**elective aristocracy**' over direct democratic government
- Too much importance to **emotion & feeling** over reason and rationality
- **Paternalistic** view of state

# References

- Recommended reading list of DU on this topic
  - B. Nelson, (2008) Western Political Thought. New York: Pearson Longman, pp. 221-255.
  - M. Keens-Soper, (2003) 'Jean Jacques Rousseau: The Social Contract', in M. Forsyth and M. Keens-Soper, (eds) A Guide to the Political Classics: Plato to Rousseau. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 171-202. Material available on You Tube, and World Wide Web on this topic
- Online Resources:
  - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/will-psychology-and-philosophy>
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will\\_\(philosophy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_(philosophy))
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Jacques\\_Rousseau#Fugitive](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Jacques_Rousseau#Fugitive)
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discourse\\_on\\_the\\_Arts\\_and\\_Sciences](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discourse_on_the_Arts_and_Sciences)
  - [https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/1349/9/09\\_chapter4.pdf](https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/1349/9/09_chapter4.pdf)
  - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/general-will>
- IGNOU Study material on this topic :  
<http://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/24545/1/Unit-8.pdf>



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**Moral & Political Thoughts  
of  
MARY  
WOLLSTONECRAFT**

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# WHAT IS IN STORE?

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Brief of her life and time

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Her views on Women's condition in her class and context

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Her Arguments to bring 'revolution in female manners'

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Her vision of women's Education and 'Private-Public' dichotomy

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Her critique of Rousseau's 'Emile' ; critical evaluation of her thoughts

# PAST YEAR'S QUESTIONS

**Syllabus:** Women and paternalism; critique of Rousseau's idea of education; legal rights

**2019.** According to Mary Wollstonecraft what were the main factors responsible for women's subordination? Discuss.

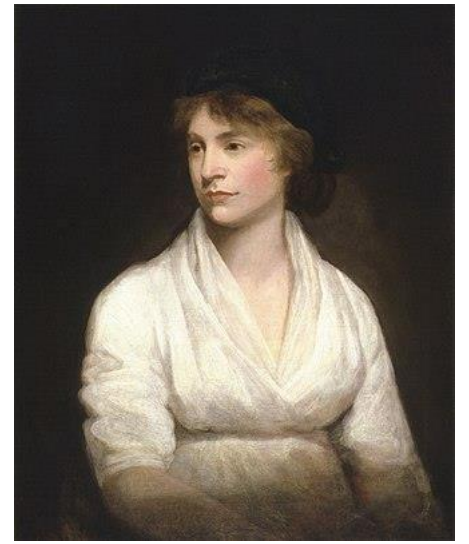
**Notes:** Mary Wollstonecraft on women's education.

**2018** According to Mary Wollstonecraft, liberation of women is to be found within the home and family, Critically examine the statement.

**2017:** Analyze Mary Wollstonecraft's critique of the private-public dichotomy.

# Life and Time of Mary Wollstonecraft

- Was born in **London** in lower middle class farmer's family.
- **Her Time:** French and American Revolution; Rational Dissenters, Enlightenment, Romanticism, capitalism, modernity
- Since her early age, she worked as lady's companion, a schoolteacher, a governess, editorial assistant; wrote critical reviews, translations, pamphlets, novels, travelogues
- **People in her life:** Fanny Blood- friend; Henry Fuseli (Swiss painter), Gilbert Imlay(American merchant and author), William Godwin( French socialist philosopher) – Lovers/partners; Joseph Johnson- Patron/guide ; 2 daughters- Fanny from Imlay and Shelly from Godwin
- Not able to cope up with Gilbert Imlay abandoning her and their child, she twice attempted suicide in 1795. In 1797, married William Godwin, died same year due to post delivery complications.
- Had **influence** of John Locke, Richard Price; and Catharine Macaulay; argued against Edmund Burke and Rousseau; contemporaries: Wordsworth, Milton, Kant, Paine
- For most of the 18th and 19th century, she was derided by many, for advocating breaking traditional norms/values and a scandalous personal life ; but beginning 1970s, her writing were accepted as pathbreaking reflections on sex and gender, women's manners, subjection, their education and rights.
- **Her main creations:**
  - *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787) ; 'A Vindication of the Rights of Men'(1790) ; **A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792)**
  - *An Historical and Moral View of Origin and Progress of the French Revolution*(1794) ; *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796)
  - **Maria**; or, *The Wrongs of Woman* (1798) (**posthumously published unfinished work**)



**Mary Wollstonecraft 1759 – 1797)**

English Enlightenment and romantic moral and political thinker, and **mother of feminist movement**

**Radical rationalist** and egalitarian: overturning aristocracy, church, army, and institutions denying liberty and equality to women, weaker sections

## How Mary saw **Women's condition** in her time and class?

- Deliberate faulty **socio-cultural conditioning** and **wrong education** made a weak, frivolous, dependent, servile( submissive) women out of the female
- Marriage became master-servant relation between male and female.
- In marriage and family, women had no liberty, equality and property, legal, inheritance, custody rights
- Were confined to 'Private'- considered unfit for 'Public' duties; no citizenship, civil, political, legal, voting rights
- Women were denied developing their God gifted **Sense of Reason**. This made them 'faulty person', false consciousness/identity, seeking wrong roles, needs and goals, false expectations, and unfit to fulfil their duties to themselves, 'women's duties' in family, and societal expectations.
- Women developed artificial '**feminine manners**', false sense of power of beauty, attractiveness, sensuality, 'women's follies'; all these helped maintain their subordination and subjection.
- Women's deplorable(miserable) condition was maintained through the institutions of Patriarchy, Aristocracy, Church, Education system, prevailing social norms, habits.

# How She Argued for ‘Revolution in Female Manners’?

- Human creation of God. God has given sense of reason to both sexes in equal measures. But faculties of reason need cultivation by learning, training, socialisation. women were denied this. Men monopolised learning/education.
- This didn't allow Women developing as autonomous, spiritual, rational being
- To deny women to develop their faculties of reason is a public waste of moral, intellectual and economic resources of half the human race ( remember Mill?)
- Notion of masculinity and femininity are socially constructed; an artefact of hierarchical institutions and the system of artificial manners they foster
- Denial of proper education and wrong social norms, and not lack of reason & virtue, made women develop feminine manners which made them unfit for both ‘Private’ and ‘public’ duties.
- None could be expected to perform duties whose natural rights were not respected
- 'Liberty is the mother of virtue; No dependent person can develop virtue. Virtue is sex neutral. It is perfection of human character through reason.
- if men were to treat women rationally, and not as slaves they would be better mother, wives sisters and daughter; will make family abode of love & virtue, society harmonious, political life just.

# How she advocated 'Revolution in Female Manners'?

- 'Revolution in female manners' by **unlearning and re-learning** through revamped education system, re-constitution of social norms and social orders, breaking institutions and hierarchies stopping women develop as rational human being
- **National education plan**- intellectual and rational education preferably in coeducational schools- fit body and mind, develop rational being, prepare them to face physical and emotional challenges of life
- **Marriage as friendship**, equal partnership of two independent rational human beings, equal sharing of parental duties.
- **Family**: where virtue through right values and education are imparted to future generation. Training ground to prepare citizen fulfil public duty. Equal parents fulfil their prime duty of being good citizen- parental duties; equality, liberty, property, inheritance rights to women.
- **Women to develop 'Manliness'**- Industriousness, fitness of mind and body, being alert, reasoned, and rational and developing virtues based on reason
- **Dismantle Aristocracy, despotisms, irrational authority** of Church, even Army, class hierarchy, and every vestige of social order which deny liberty and right to people based on gender, class, identity. ( note the radicalism in her ideas)



# Her Vision of Education

- Wrong education developed faulty ‘female manners’, false subjectivity, false identity, wrong needs, roles, and goals, and all these made women feeble, frivolous, servile, dependent, subordinated.
- **Aims of Education:**
  - Well balanced and fit minds in strong and healthy bodies
  - Develop ‘inner resources’, Self-mastery, self-realization
  - Cultivation of reason to develop rational human being
  - Prepare to face the inevitable hardships of life
- Society, especially women, **need to unlearn and then re-learn** through right education to bring social changes and reforms both in ‘Private’ and ‘Public’ affairs.
- **Pessimistic view:** unless social norms and social orders are re-formulated, society is re-constituted, even right education system can achieve little

# Features of her Vision of Education System

- **National Education plan:** Govt should undertake responsibility of universal education
- **Co-educational** education; Same dress, same discipline, same teacher, same curriculum
- **Compulsory**, free education for all **class up to 9 years**; selection process to separate mechanically minded from those with logical abilities; thereafter, poor class students may pursue education with work/trade
- Students to play, go to gym after a hour of sitting learnings- **fitness of body & mind**
- Interesting stories, explanations, examples in primary classes; Socratic method of dialogue, questions in secondary classes.
- Emphasize thinking, formation of character to enable children develop into good citizen-prepare them to fulfil their 'private' and 'public' duties.
- History, politics, morality, spirituality, sex education ; 3 R – Reading, Writing, Arithmetic
- Personalized attention based on individual talent, abilities, and aptitude.
- Students could choose their punishments for non-performance.
- Committee to choose teachers who would be accountable for their performance

# Mary's Critique of Rousseau's 'Emile'

- **How Rousseau viewed men women relation, and women's education?**
  - Natural difference in men and women's abilities, qualities, needs, and desires
  - Men and women- one moral unit; complementary relationship
  - Men- physically strong ; women- emotionally strong- can control her passions
  - Women hold power over men by controlling his pleasure, through her beauty, sensuality ; women has power over men's heart but subjecting herself to men's power over her person !
- **Aim of Education- personal autonomy by perfection of self-control**
  - Education create **natural perfect man** in 'Emile' and **natural perfect women** in 'Sophie' ; hence, different education to men and women; same education to both sexes would be morally degrading and disturb social order.
  - Sophie's natural role in life is to be object of Emile's pleasure and the faithful mother of his children.

## Her Arguments against Rousseau's 'Emile'

- No natural difference in quality, capabilities, reason, and morality between sexes
- Rousseau mixed natural with artificial
- Women have false sense of power of beauty, tenderness, sensuality; artificially created to keep them in golden cage !
- Such false identity, consciousness, roles, needs, desire of women were created and maintained by writing and thoughts such as of Rousseau.
- Uses Rousseau against himself, He told '*it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason*'. She extended it to women!
- No perfect men and perfect women- only one perfect human being- perfection of reason
- To deny liberty, equality and rights to women is morally degrading, and yes existing social order need to be disturbed for civilisational progress.

# How She Broke Public-Private Dichotomy?- 1/2

- **Public- Private Dichotomy:**

- Since Aristotle's separated household from the affairs of the Polis
- Liberalism is premised on public-private dichotomy. Both the family and capitalist economy are private in which state should not interfere.

- **How 'Private' affect 'Public?'**

- Inequality, dominance, subjection in marriage and family corrupt nature & character of both men and women and stop them developing their civic virtues and duties as citizen
- Only those fulfilling their private duties can fulfil their public duties.
- Tyranny in private, especially in marriage, undermines political virtue and active citizenship
- Wrong values in next generation of citizen who may emulate subordinated mother or tyrant father- both lacking in virtuosity
- Both the idea of democracy as political association of free citizen based on liberty, equality, fraternity and Republicanism as independence and self-rule are undermined by inequality, injustice, and tyranny in family.
- Civil and political rights meaningless if no liberty and independence in marriage/family

# How She Broke Public-Private Dichotomy?- 2/2

- **How 'Public' affect 'Private'?**

- Public education, training, and socialisation determine gender identity, role, responsibilities, rights & privileges in marriage & family
- Laws on marriages, property, inheritance, suffrage, civil & political rights, etc affect the 'private'-marriage & family
- 2<sup>nd</sup> dimension of liberal conception of 'Rights'- right of men to subordinate women in 'private'.
- Public institutions- Aristocracy, Church, Public schools, and Army- all help perpetuate master-subordinate relation of men and women in marriage/family
- Public education, job market, social norms, habits, and social discourse determine structure, function, and features of the marriage/family

- **Her Prescription:**

- Only a equal, just, and virtuous 'Private' can make equal, just, and virtuous 'Public'
- Reforming education, especially women's education, re- constituting and re-ordering social norms, values, habits to allow women inculcate her reason and develop as autonomous, spiritual, rational being, as strong, independent equal partner and friend to the men in marriage/family.
- Protection of civil laws, right to property, inheritance, custody of child, civil & political rights, voting rights, right to have separate representation, career rights, economic independence

## Criticism or Minuses of her Thoughts

- **Narrow focus on 'Private' affairs** - Marriage and family; very less about civil, political, legal, and career rights to women
- Accepting **Manliness** as superior qualities- urged women to develop manliness.  
( remember Aristotle viewing women as imperfect man!)-
- Accepting household duties- rearing child, domestic management- as natural 'women's duties'- **essentialism**
- Too much importance to reason/rationality ( undermined sensibilities, feelings, emotions, passions.) - **Masculine nature of morality based on reason.**
- **Limited to her own class and contexts**- middle class women in emerging modern world in European society.
- Too much **radicalism**- changing all existing social norms and orders.

# Sum up

- By nature, men and women have equal moral and intellectual capabilities- **equal God's gift of reason**
- Wrong social conditioning and faulty education hindered women cultivating reason, they developed false consciousness, identity, role, need, and goal in women;
- Socially constructed 'female manners'- tenderness, delicacy, beauty, sensuality, etc- have made women feeble, frivolous, mean, dependent, subordinated.
- Marriage and family, 'private arena', where women are denied liberty, equality, rights; treated as servant, children, minor; subordinated, subjected.
- Revolution in female manners is required to develop women as autonomous, spiritual, rational being, equal partner to men in marriage and family, active citizen having equal legal, political, economic rights.
- Liberty and equality in 'Private' will translate into rights and equality in 'Public'
- For this, society need to re-constituted, social norms/order re-formulated, and education system reformed.



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  - C. Jones, (2002) 'Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindications and their Political Tradition' in C. Johnson, (ed.) The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 42-58.
  - S. Ferguson, (1999) 'The Radical Ideas of Mary Wollstonecraft', in Canadian Journal of Political Science XXXII (3), pp. 427-50,

## Online Resources:

- <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/wollstonecraft/>
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mary-Wollstonecraft>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary\\_Wollstonecraft](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Wollstonecraft)
- **J STORE article : Mary Wollstonecraft and the "vindication of the rights ow woman": postmodern feminism vs. masculine enlightenment by Matilde Martín González**  
[https://www.jstor.org/stable/41055470?read-now=1&seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41055470?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)
- **IGNOU Study material: E gyankosh**
  - <http://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/3296/1/Unit-1.pdf>
  - <http://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/22670/1/Unit-2.pdf>
- **BBC radio discussion on Mary Wollstonecraft : available on You Tube Video**  
[:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqX-ML1DMiE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqX-ML1DMiE)

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# J.S. MILL

(Part One)

## Liberty and Representative Democracy

BA HONS. POLITICAL SCIENCE EXAM HELP

# WHAT IS IN STORE?

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Brief of life and time of J.S.Mill

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Mill's defence of Liberty- 'Harm Principle'

---

Critical evaluation of Mill's principles of Liberty

---

Mill's ideas on Representative Democracy- suffrage, voting system, participation

---

Mill as reluctant Democrat- Critical evaluation of his Representative Democracy

## PAST YEAR'S QUESTIONS

**Syllabus:** Liberal socialist- John Stuart Mill: **Liberty, suffrage** and subjection of **women**, right of **minorities**; **utility** principle.

2019. Do you see J.S. Mills champion of minority rights? Give your views.

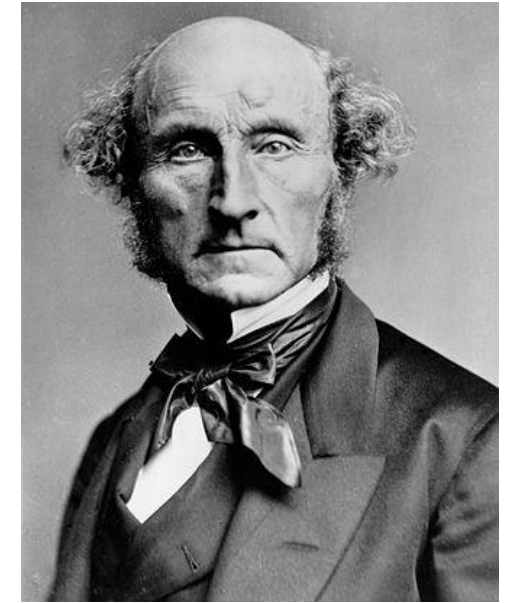
2018 discuss J.S. Mills idea on Liberty

2017: Critically analyze J.S. Mills defense of Liberty

2016: Discuss J.S. Mills views on representative Government

# Life and Time of J.S.Mills

- **James Stuart Mill** (1806–73)- born in **London**, England
- His father, James Mills, was a close associate of Jeremy Bentham, the father of Utilitarianism. James Mill worked for East India Company in India. He wrote 'History of British India'
- J S Mill was child prodigy, was taught by his father and Bentham. He mastered Greek and Latin literature, history, and philosophy, political economy, and the sciences before he reached the age of 15.
- But suffered depression at the age of 20; this 'mental crisis' changed his outlook fundamentally. '*feeling and aesthetic sentiments must temper reason, science, logic*'; Happiness vs Pleasure; Higher vs Lower Pleasure, Value of Liberty- free thinking, etc
- Like his father, he worked for East India Company from 1836 to 1856
- Had influence of Coleridge, Carlyle, Saint Simon, Auguste Comte, Tocqueville, Ricardo, Newton
- **His main creations:**
  - *A System of Logic* (1843), *Principles of Political Economy* (1848)
  - *The essay On Liberty* (1859), *Utilitarianism* (1863)
  - *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861),
  - *The Subjection of Women* (1869)
- Liberal utilitarian, champion of Liberty, reluctant democrat, liberal feminist, cooperative socialist



**James Stuart Mill (1806–73)**  
Political philosopher,  
economist, Logician, Civil  
Servant, Parliamentarian

One of the greatest Political Philosophers of 19<sup>th</sup> century, is compared with Nietzsche for range of intellectual thoughts and principles which agitate and inspire successive generations

# Mill's Defense of Liberty

HIS ESSAYS 'ON LIBERTY' (1859)

# How Mill defended Liberty?

- To him, **liberty** and **individual autonomy** are vital human interests, no body is entitled to harm them. Both are vital for individual **dignity** and **civilisational progress**
  - **Liberty** creates condition in which human beings flourish and may lead a happy, fulfilled life.
  - Liberty allows individual to discover his/her innate power and cultivation and exercise of intelligence and creativity while exercising human abilities of autonomous thought and expressions
  - **Individuality** - means to personal growth and self-culture, '**experiments in life**', and as a means of discovering the nature of the good life- freedom to chose one's own conception of good life.
- **3 Liberties:** Liberty of thought/opinion/expression, action, and self-realization( individuality-person of one's own making)
- **2 sources of threat:** State/govt and Society ( mass society)
  - The transformation of society from aristocratic to increasingly democratic brought with it opportunities. But it also presented dangers- mass society, tyranny of majority, homogenization, stifling of new ideas, conformity
  - *In mass society, curtain-twitching judgmentalism and whispered smear-campaigns can be more dangerously controlling than formal acts of tyranny, "penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself"*
- **One simple principle: the Harm Principle**
  - *"the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their member, is **self-protection**. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to **prevent harm to others**."*



# Liberty of thought, opinion, expression

- Civilization progress only when new ideas arrive regularly at the ‘**marketplace of ideas**’ and compete with other ideas freely and fairly.
- ***How he defended Liberty of thought/opinion?***
- **for any opinion  $P$  which is a candidate for suppression,  $P$  must be either: (i) true, (ii) false, or (iii) partially true.**
- **If  $P$  is true, society’s interest are harmed by suppressing it**
  - *“If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.”*
- **If  $P$  is false, it help maintain the vitality of existing truth**
  - *“however true the existing idea/opinion may be, if it is not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth.”*
- **If  $P$  is partially true, it help develop the whole truth**
  - *“the truth is “many-sided”, multi-dimensional. Most well-thought-out views/opinions contain part of the truth. Individuals are rarely in the position to see the “whole truth” for themselves, and the only way for it to emerge is by therefore by “the reconciling and combining of opposites”*
- Whichever is the case, Mill argues, allowing  $P$  to enter the ‘marketplace of ideas’ will be useful for discovering and maintaining the truth—and hence, help social progress

# Liberty of Action: the Harm Principle

- **Harm principle:** the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others
- **Self-regarding vs other-regarding Actions**
  - Individual's self-regarding conduct/actions, impact of which is only on him, and which does not violate his obligation to anyone need not be interfered with
- **Condition:** mental/intellectual maturity to decide what is good for oneself
- **Examples:**
  - Drinking in private vs drunken driving, choosing mode of entertainment, food, relaxation
- **Contradictions:**
  - Boundary of self-regarding action
    - “*Your Liberty To Swing Your Fist Ends Just Where My Nose Begins*” (Oliver Wendell )
  - Definition of ‘Harm’
    - we harm an individual only when we violate an obligation to that individual; mere criticism, ridicule, negative opinions, minor discomforts, irritation etc. are not ‘harm’
  - GHP vs HP : clashes with his utilitarian morality

# Freedom of character, individuality

- Each one is entitled to personal liberty expressed through '**experiments in living**'.  
Developing unique personality, character, and self-culture
  - *“Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing.”*
- Each individual is entitled to decide his/her own conception of good life.
- A “diversity of character and culture” provides the engine of productive tension that drives a society/community/nation forward.
- It is same as genetic diversity protect survival of the species.
- Idiosyncratic, non-conforming, unique, and strong personality are defense against the wave of conformation and homogenization by the mass society
- Hence, individuality and liberty to develop one's own person/character is good for the individual and for the society.

# Freedom from Mass Society: Minority Rights

- Mill's concern, throughout *On Liberty*, is to preserve the rights of minority, those who think freely and hold opinion different from the mainstream opinion.
- Of course we may extend his concerns for minority to religious, ethnic, and cultural minorities.
- **Threats to Minority Rights:**
  - State and its formal institutions, formal laws/rules/regulation
  - Mass society: prevailing social norms, traditions, customs; its attempt towards conformity and homogenization
  - Ailments of democracy: Populism, Majoritarianism, tyranny of Majority
- **His suggestions to protect Minority rights:**
  - 2 stage shifted representative democracy
  - PR STV electoral system
  - Plural voting- more voting rights to educated and intellectual class
  - Second chamber of virtuous, meritorious, experienced leaders and professionals

# Critical Evaluation of Mill's Defense of Liberty

- **His Liberty principle ( HP) seems to cut the Hedonism and Utilitarian principle(GHP)**
  - *"best life will involve the cultivation and exercise of our intelligence and creativity in the arts, literature, science, philosophy, ethics, and politics"* undermine hedonism
  - liberal values, such as rights and freedom are undermined by judgements of utility
- **Moral totalitarianism:** Commitment to liberty of thought, expression, and 'experiments in living' underpin his ideal of 'individuality', this ideal is simply one 'particular' moral view that is to be imposed on everyone else
  - Mill's conception of liberty is based on an **illiberal or perfectionist moral ideal** which undermines a genuine tolerance of different choices and beliefs
- Vague boundary of self-regarding actions. Similar vagueness in meaning of 'Harm'.
- **Class bias, Ethnocentrism:** Such Liberty is limited to Bourgeois class of developed nation. Not lower/working class and 'uncivilised people/nation'
  - *"Mill envisaged a superior moral elite capturing the levers of political power and exercising a tyranny over the morally inferior majority."*
- **Illiberal Liberal:** For Maurice **Cowling** (*'Mill and Liberalism'*), Mill is not really a liberal at all, for he does not believe in letting people alone; instead he is a **moral perfectionist**, trying to remake man in his own image
- **Joseph Hamburger**, (*'John Stuart Mill on Liberty and Control'*) , also charge him for **moral totalitarianism** and being illiberal liberal. He viewed Mill's Liberty principle as an assault on Christian morality

# MILL AS RELUCTANT DEMOCRAT

HIS 'CONSIDERATIONS ON  
REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT' (1861)

# Mill's Views on Representative Democracy

- Happiness and human excellence is best achieved in a free society governed by the principle of Liberty.
- State not only should protect but also promote liberty and intellectual and moral excellence in its citizen
- Popular(direct) democracy is best in doing so. Whereas Despotisms is worse because it demand obedience, compliance, and passivity from the subjects.
- But direct democracy require small states, whereas larger states are required for civilizational progress.
- Also, direct democracy may turn into rule by unskilled and non-experts and tyranny of the majority
- Hence, the best compromise is representative Democracy, in which people chose their representative who govern and control the govt.
- Participation in politics and public affair help free thinking, moral and intellectual development in individuals and hence useful for moral and intellectual progress of society.

# Features of Mill's version of Representative Democracy/Govt

- **2 stage shifted democracy**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> shift: people don't rule directly, their representatives rule
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> shifting: only select few of the representatives govern, remaining control Govt by asking questions, debate, holding Govt accountable.
- **Governing vs controlling**
  - For Mill, governing is specialized activity requiring skill and expertise
  - Govt. should be run by expert Bureaucracy under the control and guidance of political leaders, who are select few from the representatives.
- Representatives are not merely people's delegate. They are entitled independent opinion in the general interest of people, not limited to their constituency.
- Ethnocentric: Democracy is suitable to 'civilized' people, who have attained a level of intellectual maturity, and NOT for 'uncivilized' or 'barbaric' people/nation, who require benevolent despotism till they become 'civilized'( ?)



# Mill's views on Suffrage and Electoral system

- Protecting rights of educated intellectual minority( Bourgeois) and protection against populism and majoritarianism of democracy
- He advocated **extension of voting rights** to working class and women.
- Hated First Past The Post(FPTP) system, which in his view, mis represent and dis-enfranchise the voters
  - **Mis-representation**: voter's favourite candidates not nominated by party
  - **Dis-enfranchisement**: those voters who vote for losing candidate
- Favoured **Proportional representation( PR) by single transferable vote( STV)**, also called Hare system of P. R.
- Suggested **plural voting system** in which educated and meritorious voters are given more voting rights- they have more than one vote!
- His concept of **Second Chamber**
  - If one House represents popular feeling, the other should represent personal merit, tested and guaranteed by actual public service, and fortified by practical experience
  - If one is the People's Chamber, the other should be the Chamber of Statesmen; a council composed of all living public men who have passed through important political offices or employments.
  - Second chamber composed of experienced leaders, ex. Judges, Civil servants, Army commanders, ex-legislatures, cabinet ministers, distinguished intellectuals
  - Check and balance on popular representative body by a prudent and wise body ; modelled on Roman Senate

# Mill a Reluctant Democrat?

- He favoured 2 stage shifted indirect democracy; governing vs controlling.
- More voting rights to educated and meritorious citizen
- Second chamber of prudent experienced bureaucrats/leaders to check the populism, majoritarianism, and imperfectness of opinion of mass society
- His defense to Liberty and individuality was to protect rights of minority class of intellectuals and professionals against the conforming opinions of mass society.
- Hence, Mill was concerned with ailments of democracy- populism, majoritarianism, tyranny of majority and stifling impact of these on intellectual capital and civilizational progress.
- Hence, yes, Mill may be called a reluctant democrat in a sense that he was concerned of adverse impact on societal moral and intellectual progress because of too much of democracy.

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# J.S. MILL

**(Part Two)**

## **Utilitarianism and Subjection of Women**

BA HONS. POLITICAL SCIENCE EXAM HELP

# Mill's Liberal Utilitarianism

HIS 'UTILITARIANISM'(1863)

# Utilitarianism-Principle of Utility

- Utilitarianism is normative moral/ethical theory, developed by late 18<sup>th</sup> century English political Philosopher **Jeremy Bentham**, according to which an act is right if it tends to promote happiness or pleasure and wrong if it tends to produce unhappiness or pain—not just for the performer of the action but **also for everyone else affected by it.**
- Socio-economic and political decisions should be taken on the principle of **greatest happiness of the greatest number**(GHP Principle)
- Utilitarianism is a type of **consequentialism** or **teleological** ( reverse deontological) principle- that actions should be judged on the basis of their consequences/result/outcome.
- Utilitarianism has evolved from '**Hedonism**'- a general term for all theories of conduct based on 'pleasure'
- **Examples:**
  - Deciding menu in a restaurant by the head of the family for the family
  - In public policy making, in making new laws- where to build an airport?
- **Dilemmas** in Utilitarianism:
  - Should we kill one to save many lives?
  - Are all pleasures equal? Do we live only for pleasure? Then are we different from other animals?
  - Can we equate pleasure/pain of one person with other?

# Utilitarianism of J.S.Mills

- Mills claimed ***“happiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct”***
- **Mill’s ‘proof’ of the principle of utility.**
  - He argued by way of three subclaims.
  - **desirability:** happiness is desirable as an end/goal of all human actions.
  - **exhaustiveness:** nothing but happiness is desirable as an end
  - **impartiality:** each person’s happiness is equally desirable.
- Mill claimed that all desirable things are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain
- **His proportionality principle:** ***“Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness”***
- Is happiness same as pleasure? We discuss next...



# How Mill's Utilitarianism differed?

- Mill started with the position that Happiness is same as pleasure
  - *“By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure”*
- However, Mill departed from the Benthamite account, which holds that if two experiences/acts contain equal quantities( intensity and time) of pleasure, then they are thereby equally valuable.
  - *“It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.”*
- Mill held that pleasures “of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments”- **mental/intellectual pleasures**- are amongst the higher pleasures ; For physical pleasures, pleasures gained in activity are of a higher quality than those gained passively
- He insisted that human beings were capable of intellectual and moral pleasures which was superior to the physical one that they shared with animals.
  - *“it is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied, it is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied and if the fool or the Pig is of a different opinion it is because they only know their own side of the question the other party in comparison knows both side.”*
- **Sabine's view** : Mill's transformative criticism of classical utilitarianism was his greatest contribution to political thought. He differentiated between happiness and pleasure. He replaced the Quantitative approach of Bentham by a qualitative, moral, ethical and human approach. He differentiated the public sphere regulated by law and the private sphere regulated by morality.

# Critical evaluation of Mill's Utilitarianism

- He seemed to have **abandoned hedonism** and therefore **weakened** the very **foundation of Utilitarianism**?
  - Many critics claimed that Mill moves towards a *Eudaimonistic or perfectionist* account of **happiness as given by Aristotle**
  - By ‘**happiness**’, they claim, Mill does not mean sensual pleasure, but rather the **flourishing** that is **achieved in the realization of a ideal human character- virtuous, flourishing, good life**
- **Moral experts** ; Who to decide which is higher pleasure?
  - **Preferences of competent judges**, the moral experts—**those who have experienced, and appreciated, both the types of pleasures being compared.**
- **Contradict with his Liberty principle( harm principle):**
  - How liberty and individual autonomy is not infringed by dictate of higher pleasure?
  - How absolute liberty in the sphere of self-regarding actions not dilute GHP?
- Why liberty & individuality such vital human interests that none should harm it? Do they give utmost pleasure? Doesn't it contradict his basic tenet of utilitarianism?
- Nudging individuals towards ‘higher’ pleasure is paternalistic, undermine autonomy/choice, and may lead to slippery slope of state/society guiding individuals to attain self-mastery, enjoy higher pleasure, guided by their higher-self- totalitarian tendencies

# MILL AS LIBERAL FEMINIST

‘SUBJECTION OF WOMEN’-Essay by Harriet Taylor Mill and John Stuart Mill  
(1869)

# Mill's Views on Subjection Of Women

- **Subjection, subordination, oppression:** defining people by virtue of their membership in a group, and the limiting of their life options on the basis of group 'identity', most often stereotypical and inaccurate
- **Mill's views on women's subjections:**
- Women's subjection by men has its origin in physical superiority of men. Thereafter it became a tradition, custom, and universal/mainstream social practice
- There is no logical or rational basis of women's subjection.
- Subjection was mainstreamed and maintained through manufacturing consent of the women by education, training, and socialisation
- **Marriage- the chief institution of Subjection.**
  - By law, no right to property, inheritance, legal personhood, custody of children
  - Vicious power-relationship, legalised bondage, worse than slave- assigned unvalued domestic chores, were denied opportunity outside family life
  - No identity, social standing, economic security outside marriage
  - Domestic oppression, physical violence
  - preparation for and participation in such unequal partnerships caused women to develop constrained, artificial, and submissive personalities
- No voting rights, inequal opportunity for education and employment, no legal rights in socio-economic public life, no liberty to think freely, self-development, and freedom of choice

# His Arguments Against the Subjection

- Subjection is not only morally degrading, it is also not based on reason and rationality
- No difference in nature, moral goodness/qualities, and capabilities of men and women- excellence is gender neutral
- Gender attributes are socially created, hence artificial. Perception of women's nature, ability, role, etc. are grounded in social habit, not on reason or facts.
- **Utility loss:** Against the efficient working of liberal society, since the brainpower and talents of half the human race is under-utilized- huge utility loss to society
- Has forced both men and women to over play their artificially created gender attributes- men- masculine; women-feminine
- It corrupted society's moral fiber; harmed men in many ways- debased men's nature and intellectual attainments, hindered his flourishing in unequal partnership, even diluted his 'manliness'.
- Thus, women's subjection hindered the moral, social, and intellectual development of the society

# His Suggestions to End Subjections

- **‘Perfect equality’ between men and women**, admitting no power or privilege on one side, nor disability on the other.
- Marriage- **‘spousal friendship’**, equal partner, legal rights to property/inheritance/custody of children, free choice between domesticity and career
- Voting rights, equal and fair opportunities in education, profession, employment, political participation, access to public life.
- Total liberty for intellectual flourishing, self-development, freedom of choice- live life as per their conception of Good.
- Subjection of women to be ended not only by law but also by proper education, training, opinion, habits, and change in family life

# Pluses of his Liberal Feminism

- It was certainly one of the earliest, and at that, a powerful and highly visible manifesto of liberal feminism.
- “The Subjection” was a radical, indeed scandalous, document for its day, advocating as it did a condition of 'perfect equality' between men and women.
- His advocacy of 'perfect equality', 'spousal friendship' and marriage as equal partnership.
- Mill was the first political theorist since Plato to argue that moral goodness and excellence are same in a woman as in a man.
- In that conviction he dared to challenge the prevailing wisdom, upheld by Western political philosophers from Aristotle to Rousseau, that the moral qualities required in women are different from those required in men.
- Not only in his thought but also in his action he furthered women's cause:
  - Mills, as an MP, presented a petition to the House of Commons in favour of women's suffrage, signed by nearly 1,500 women.
  - He advocated changing the wording in Disraeli's Reform Bill of 1867 to read 'person' instead of 'man',
  - At his death in 1873 left half of his estate to the cause of women's education

# Critical evaluation of Mill's Liberal Feminism-1/2

- Contemporary feminists, such as **Susan Okin** and **Jean Bethke Elstain**, question Mill's liberal utilitarian methodology, mis-understanding, lack of radical vision, political incompleteness, and class biases in his feminist views.
- **His acceptance of traditional role of women:**
  - Women have choice of wage earning but household management and bringing up family are their prime duty:
    - *"Like a man when he chooses a profession, so, when a woman marries, it may in general be understood that she makes choice of the management of a household, and the bringing up of a family, as the first call upon her exertions, during as many years of her life as may be required for the purpose; and that she renounces, not all other objects and occupations, but all which are not consistent with the requirements of this."*
- Hence, working women take double responsibilities, may overload them. By this he virtually confined women to private domain.
- Above assertions of Mill became the rallying point of criticism of his liberal feminism
- He was accused of taking 'conventional' as natural, despite his original stand that women's subjection is based on social convention, habit, stereotype and not natural.
- Thus, as **Susan Okin** said *"His refusal to question the traditional family and its demands on women set the limits of his liberal feminism"*
- **Mary Lyndon Shanley** and **Carole Pateman** ( in *"Feminist Interpretations and Political Theory"*) felt that accepting conventional role of women in family contradicted his advocacy of 'Spousal Friendship'



# Critical evaluation of Mill's Liberal Feminism-2/2

- **Susan Okin** question his empiricist methodology, which didn't allow him to defend the potential of women's capabilities.
- She also point out his utilitarian approach in viewing equality and liberty of women as benefiting societal interests
- He could not maintain the empirical utility of freeing women and letting them define the terms of both their own needs and the needs of society. Instead Mill seems to change their role according to specifications of his own choosing, for the benefit of society in men's term
- Thus, Mill's Liberal feminism views equality for women in terms of a male-defined model: women can, and should, achieve all the public benefits and privileges of men's world at men's terms & conditions
- His thought , though radical for his time, couldn't transcend the societal conventions of women as homemaker, mother and wife.
- Hence, Mill's liberal feminism was certainly inadequate as a vehicle for liberating women from their traditional subjection to the institutionalized patriarchy of liberal democratic society.
- Mill's didn't propose any affirmative action. He simply proposed eliminating laws that restrict women's choices in life.
- **Jean Bethke Elstain** regards the discrepancy between Mill's treatment of women in public and private life as more damaging to the coherence of his theory
- Overlooked the concerns of single women, outside marriage- daughter, sisters, unmarried women, single mother
- **Class bias:** his views were only for middle and upper class women( bourgeois family), not for lower/working class, and certainly not for women of 'undeveloped civilization'.

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# KARL MARX

(Part One)

## Historical Materialism and Alienation

BA HONS. POLITICAL SCIENCE EXAM HELP

# PAST YEAR'S QUESTIONS

**Syllabus: Radicals : Karl Marx :** Alienation; difference with other kinds of materialism; class struggle

**2019.**

1. Define Alienation. Discuss different types of Alienation as outlined by Marx.
2. How Karl Marx's materialism is different from other types of materialism? Elaborate.

**2018**

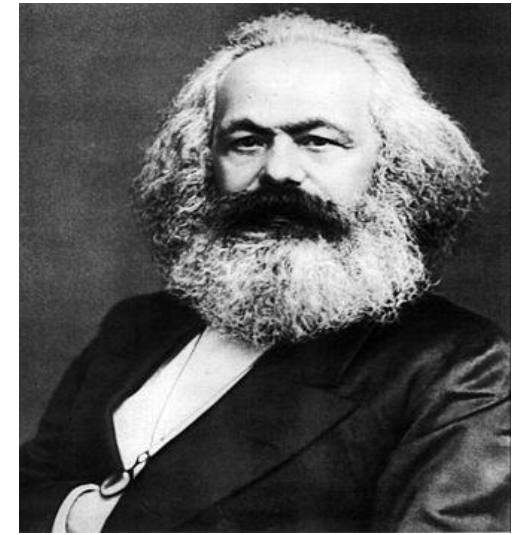
1. Critically examine Marx theory of historical materialism
2. Analyze Marx view on the State.

**2017 :**

1. Examine the Marxist theory of freedom and alienation
2. Discuss Marxist theory of Revolution

# Life and Time of Karl Marx

- Was born into a middle class family in Trier in Germany in 1818
- **His Time:** 1848-Revolutions in Germany and France, Industrial revolution, poor life of workers in industrial town, democracy and socialism on rise.
- In Germany, intense philosophical debate on Hegel's idealism, young Hegelians, Utopian Socialism of Saint Simon, Charles Fourier, and Robert Owen
- During his studies in Bonn and Berlin universities he became part of the Young Hegelian, developed radical views, and talked about communism through revolution
- **Life in exile:** He had to leave Germany in 1843, moved to Paris, expelled from there, moved to Brussels, and finally took shelter in England, where he lived in exile till his death
- Lifelong friendship and partnership with **Frederick Engels**, a German Philosopher settled in England.
- **Had influence** of German Philosopher Friedrich Hegel, Economists Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Ludwig Feuerbach( a young Hegelian)
- played a leading role in the International Working Men's Association from 1864 to 1872
- **His main creations:**
  - **Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts** (1844)- Early Marx- Theory of Alienation
  - **The German Ideology (1845)**, with Engels- materialistic conception of history; published only in 1932
  - **The Manifesto of the Communist Party(1848)** : with Engels- class struggle, conflict in capitalist society, social revolution *"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles"*
  - **Das Kapital( Capital)- 1967**, later volumes published by Engels after death of Marx.- Dissection of Capitalism, its contradiction, destructive tendencies



**Karl Marx (1818 – 1883)**  
German philosopher,  
economist, sociologist,  
historian, journalist, and  
revolutionary socialist

**His other creations:** 'The Poverty of Philosophy' ; 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte' ; 'The Civil War in France' ; 'the Grundrisse'; 'Theories of Surplus Value' ; 'the critique of political economy', 'The Class Struggles in France', 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', and 'The Critique of the Gotha Program of 1875'



# Dialectical and Historical Materialism

**‘Das Kapital ( Capital)- 1967) ; ‘Theses on Feuerbach’ (1845),  
‘The Holy Family’(1844)**

# Marx's Materialism: Dialectical and Historical

- **Materialism:**

- Matter over idea/mind, body over soul, matter is prior to idea/thought
- matter independent variable, idea/thought dependent variable
- Our (bodily or physical) existence determines our consciousness
- Also denote deriving happiness from material possession, passion/desire for material possession, giving more value and preference to materials over feeling/emotions
- Opposite doctrine is Idealism: idea/thought/consciousness prior to our matter and our material existence ; our consciousness determines our existence- 'I think, therefore I am'
- **Idealist philosophers:** Plato, Rene Descartes, Kant, Hegel
- **Realist/materialistic Thinkers:** Aristotle, Kautilya, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Feuerbach, Marx

- **How Materialism of Marx was different from other materialism?**

- His materialism denotes empiricism, the use of scientific methods, realism, Naturalism, and the denial of Soul-body dualism
- Dialectical Conception of matter/object/entity
- History as stages of different modes of material production



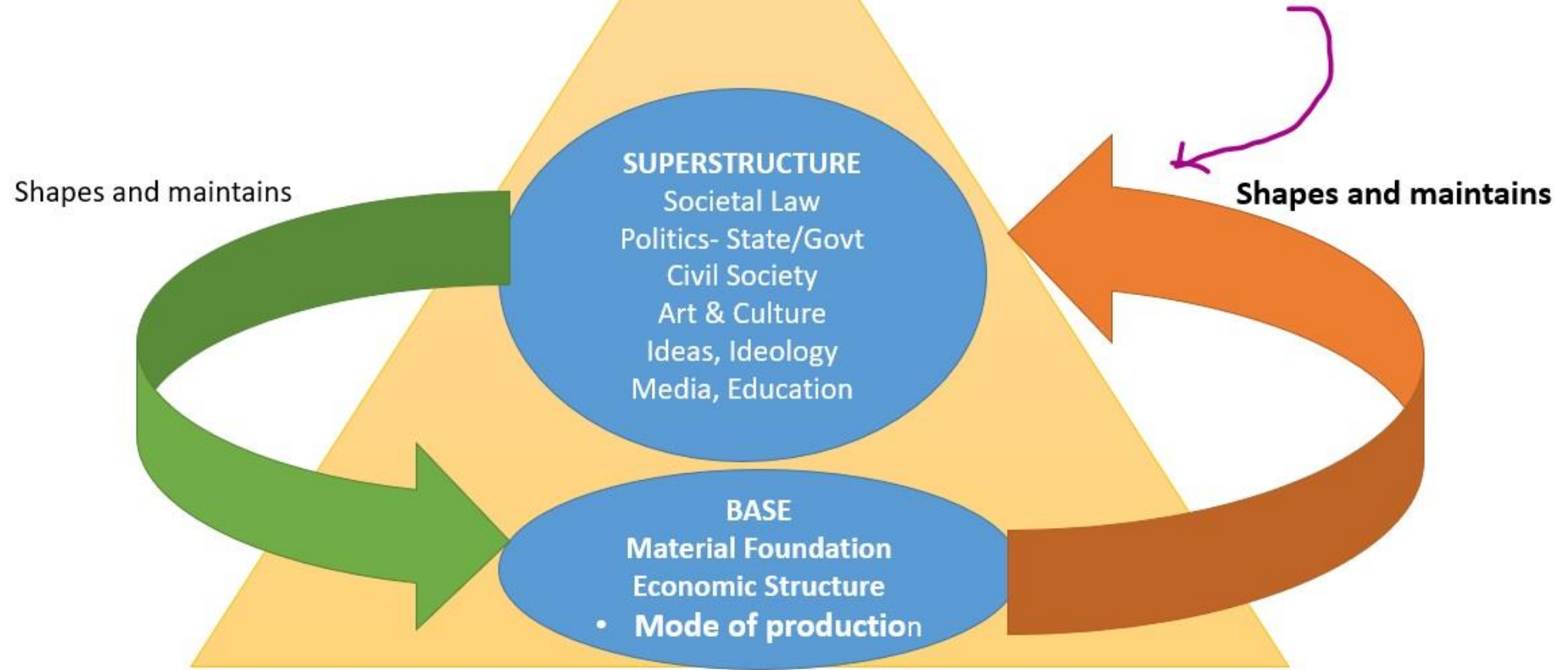
# Dialectical Conception of matter/object/entity

- Everything exists and defined in contradictory relation to something else
  - Example: servant gets its meaning only in relation to master; employee-employer; poor-rich, etc.
- Everything in constant flux/motion- appear, develop/change, decay
- Progression( change towards better/higher) dialectically- by constant struggle between two contradictory element( अन्तरविरोध) present in the thing
  - Example: Seed destroyed to give plant which destroys to give many seeds
- **'affirmation'- 'negation'- 'negation of negation'**
  - Thesis-antithesis-synthesis( at higher level)
  - A, multiplied by -1 (negation)= -a ; multiplied by -a(negation of negation)=a<sup>2</sup>
- Dialectic - the universal law of nature, history, and thought. All development occurs on this pattern

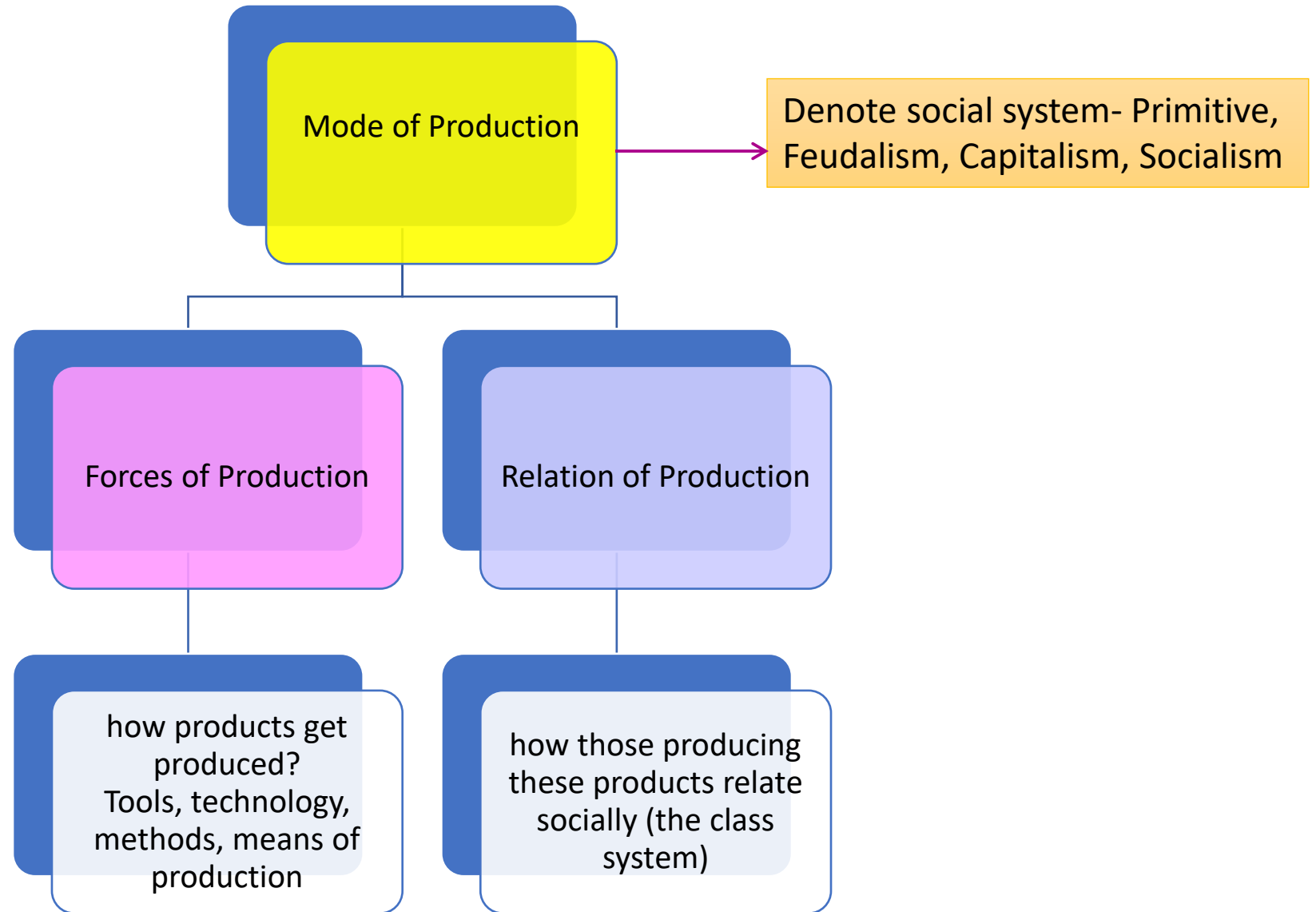
## Base and Superstructure: Marxist View of Societal structure

**Idealism** : people's thoughts( superstructure) shape the material world around them.

**Marx View** : Each mode of production brings its own 'superstructure' which protects the 'ruling class' interests



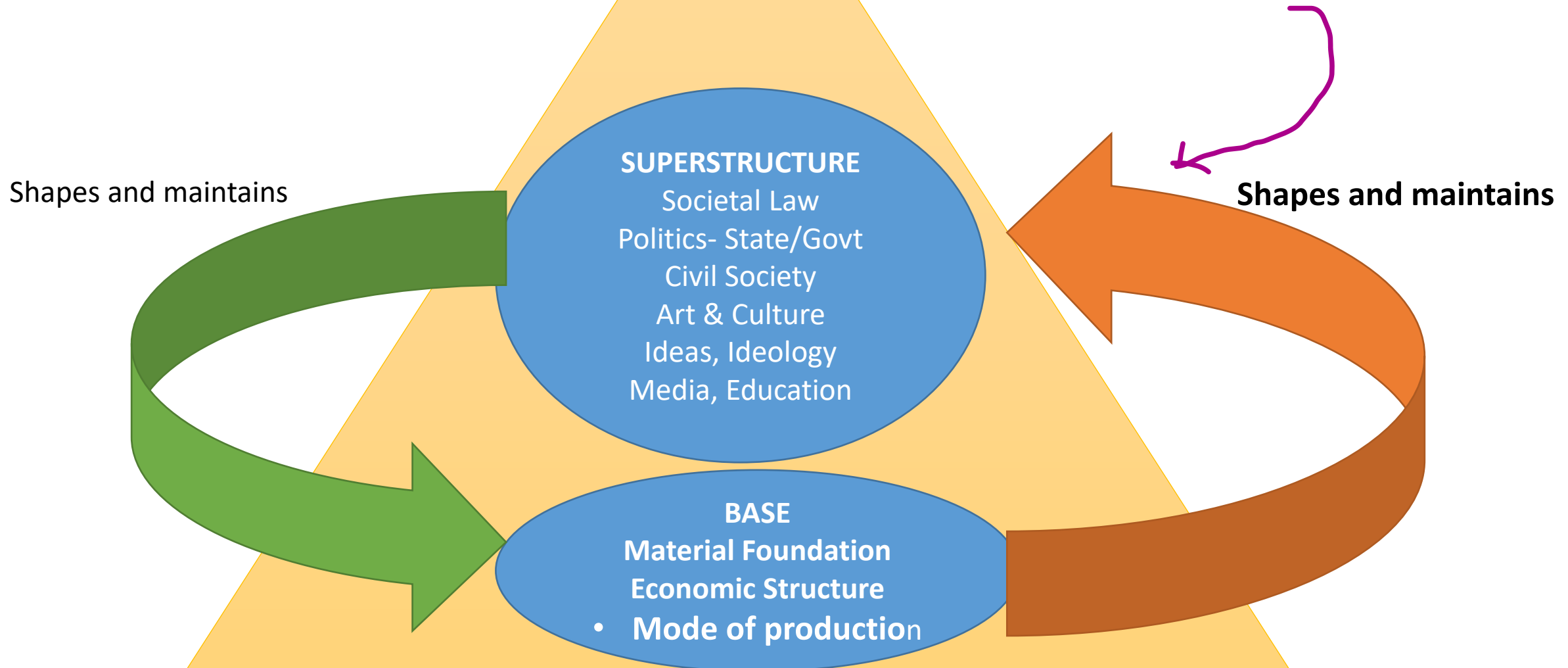
# Mode of production: Forces of Production and relation of Production



# Base and Superstructure: Marxist View of Societal structure

**Idealism** : people's thoughts( superstructure) shape the material world around them.

**Marx View** : Each mode of production brings its own 'superstructure' which protects the 'ruling class' interests



# Theory of Alienation

‘Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (1844)’

# Marx's Theory of Alienation

- **Reflect Radical humanism of early Marx** : contained mainly in his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844
- **Alienation**: disaffection, estrangement, viewing anything as alien, विलगाव, विमुखता
- Alienation: a condition of oppression arising from loss of control over productive activity
- Human are human only due to ability of conscious production; product as extension of man's existence, his flourishing, release of energy, cultivation of reason
- In his product, man see himself; as his extension
- Also man is social animal; socially produce; develop production relation
- Capitalist mode of production rob all these from the worker/labourer- How?

# How Capitalist Mode of Production Alienate Working Class?

- In pre-capitalist mode of production, producer owned and controlled the produce; dominant class used to take away his produce by force/violence
- Also, he had social bond of obligation and rights with the dominant class
- In capitalism, labourer has no social bond of obligation with the capitalist class ; he is free to sell his labour to anyone; except wage, capitalist class has no obligation to labour class
- Labourer sell his labour power at market rate- exchange value of labour- labour becomes commodity
- Capitalist own the labour, extract more value from it than he paid ( use value of labour more than its exchange value), do not pay part of the labour and keep them as profit- exploitation of labour
- Division of labour, specialisation- producer loses sense of his product
- Producing for someone else, on other's terms & condition, methods- becomes like machine- de-humanized- cog in the wheel
- Labour becomes commodity, exchangeable, easily displaced, compete with fellow workers to get job

# 4 Types of Alienation

- **Alienation from product of labour**

- Product belongs not to the worker but to the employer.
- Produces small part of product, cannot relate with the whole product
- Cannot afford to own the product made by him

- **Alienation from the act of production, labour process**

- worker feeling free only in eating, drinking, sleeping- animal function
- Productive work is forced labour, bondage and is experienced as suffering

- **Alienation from species-being (Gattungswesen)**

- De-humanization of the worker- man becoming machine
- production system denies them something which is their due as human beings

- **Alienation of man from man**

- Market mediated Human relation
- All relation for instrumental value, people as object, as means



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# KARL MARX

**(Part two)**

**Labour Value, Freedom,  
Revolution, State, Critique**

BA HONS. POLITICAL SCIENCE EXAM HELP

# PAST YEAR'S QUESTIONS

**Syllabus: Radicals : Karl Marx :** Alienation; difference with other kinds of materialism; class struggle

**2019.**

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# Theory of Surplus labour

‘A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859)’

# 'Use value' and 'exchange value' and Commodity Fetishism

- **Use value** - intrinsic capability of the product to satisfy human need.
- **Exchange value** - a purely socially created attribute of a commodity, displaced from its use value
- Anything having exchange value must also have use value, otherwise it would be unsaleable. But the reverse is not the case; exchange value may complement and add to its use value
- Use value- universal concept in any mode of production; exchange value characterizes capitalist mode of production
  - **Examples:** Money, no use value only exchange value; same with any financial product- share, MF
- **Commodification:** products produced Not for their use value But for their exchange value
- **Fetishism of commodities:** In a society where people produce goods for their exchange value, commodities take on a life of their own and constrain those who produce them. Capitalist manifest Commodity Fetishism
- Under capitalism, Commodity Fetishism shows as '*material relations between persons*' and '*social relations between things*' !

# Theory of Surplus Labour Value-1/2

- Labour alone generate value in any product; all other means of production- land, building, factory, capital- are passive
- A capitalist purchases labour-power( not labour) at commodity at its exchange value but takes out more values from the labour which is added as value in the product owned by the capitalist
- Suppose capitalist purchases 8 hours of labour-power (at market rate) to produce a product- say chair
- Suppose the labourer, for his subsistence, need to put in 6 hours of labour- this is use-value of his labour- as human being
  - 8 hrs of exchange value of labour= 6 hrs of use value( or value) of labour
- The capitalist pay him equivalent to 6 hours of labour for his subsistence by purchasing 8 hrs of labour power at market exchange rate
- This 2 hours of extra labour is surplus labour, which capitalist keep as his profit; hence profit is surplus value of labour
- Thus accumulated capital is nothing but accumulated surplus labour, not paid to the labourer.

# Theory of Surplus Labour value-2/2

- Another way to see the surplus value of labour: Value added( in the product) by labour minus exchange value of labour power
- Example:
  - A capitalist purchase 8 hrs of labour-power (at market rate) to produce chair
  - Means of production: Wood, nails, glue, tools, some money(working capital), land(space), and **labour**
  - **Suppose total value of means of production(except labour)= 1000 Rs**
  - Labour makes 4 chairs in 8 hours ; capitalist sell each chair for 1000 Rs ; he pays labour 2000 Rs. For 8 hours of labour-power
  - Surplus labour value=  $4000 - 1000 - 2000 = 1000$  is the profit
- Why so? Exchange and use value of labour is displaced. Less exchange value, purchased at market rate, squeeze more use value of labour by the capitalist
- Capitalist call it profit, for Marx, it is theft!
- Thus, by his own expansion of labour, labourer creates condition for his exploitation!



# Theory of Revolution, Freedom, State

# Conception of Freedom for Marx

- Human emancipation is the goal of Marx's political philosophy
- True freedom is social production in which each individual contribute freely as per his ability, without any compulsion, constrain, coercion and relate to fellow man as equal-
- Fraternity and Solidarity : free development of each is the condition of the free development of all
- Regaining human essence of social creativity : Man working to realise essence of being human, act of self-realization
  - *"it will be possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, doing just that which gives me pleasure without ever becoming a hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic. This will be the real state of freedom for man from alienation and exploitation"*
- Political vs Human emancipation:
  - Politics/state part of superstructure, political freedom not human freedom, democracy itself offers only political emancipation
  - Human emancipation only by changing the economic base-mode of production
  - No liberty in liberalism: based on private property and civil society- liberty in political life beneath subjugation, exploitation in private life- civil society
  - working class as the agent of universal human emancipation

# His Theory of Revolution

- Human emancipation not possible in capitalist mode of production
- Not possible to modify the system to make it better; only it would have to be replaced
- The change in mode of production would be brought by a social revolution by the working class
- Such social revolution is a natural Dialectic process- contradiction within the existing mode of production
- At a certain stage of development in mode of production the forces of production come into conflict with existing relations of production
- The relation of production, which at one time was the engine for development in forces of production, becomes the chain and constrain further development.
- Then comes the period of social revolution which changes the economic foundation or the base of the society to re-balance the forces of production to relation of production.
- Once the 'base' changes, the entire superstructure- state, civil society, law, politics, culture –are rapidly changed.
- Outcome of the revolution: Transitional 'dictatorship of proletariat' leading to stateless, class-less society, in which human essence of social creativity/production shall be regained

# His theory of State

- **State is part of the society's superstructure corresponding to specific mode of production of that society.**
  - Entire superstructure, including State, further (promote) the interest of the dominant class - state is the organ of class dominance
- **The instrument of the state like law, government, police and bureaucracy serve the interest of the dominant economic class and not the whole society**
  - "the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the bourgeoisie""
  - "Political power, represented by state, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another."
- **Thus, state have no autonomy, not free to act.**
- **State may have relative autonomy due to class antagonism; and complete autonomy if each class exactly balance each other**
- **In another model, the capitalist class may abstain or withdraw from directly controlling the state, in order to better promote their economic interests.**
- **A true democratic society representing the socialized humanity would have to be both classless and stateless**

# Critiques of Political Thoughts of Marx

# Minuses/critique of his thoughts

- **Karl Popper** ( in his '*Open Society and Its Enemies*') criticized Marx on several counts
  - His theories not scientific as they couldn't be falsified- they were like ideologies
  - No universal grand theory can explain and predict human history
  - His social engineering by revolution negated natural social progression
  - His ideas of socialism/communism undermined individual autonomy
- **Isiah Berlin**- multiple conception of good life and multiple values may co-exist in society- Marx negated this by superimposing his way of societal Good and universal value
- **Most of his predictions failed**; couldn't foresee totalitarianism in Socialism/communism, resilience of capitalism, power of democracy and welfare state
- Couldn't provide finer details of his communist society- like a good physician to diagnose the illness but poor in prescribing medicines
- To many critics, he dissected the deficiencies and contradictions of 19<sup>th</sup> century capitalism; those are of little relevance in today's globalized world.
- **Other charges**: Economic determinism, undermining the 'superstructure'- politics, art, culture, utopic radical ideas, excessive focus on class- Undermined other identities- race, Gender, caste, disability, sexuality ; Eurocentrism

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**Marxist Feminism**  
**Alexandra Kollontai**  
**Winged & Wingless Eros**

PDF at <https://polschelp.in>

## PAST YEAR'S QUESTIONS

**Syllabus:** Alexandra Kollontai: Winged and wingless Eros; proletarian woman; socialization of housework; disagreement with Lenin

**2019:** What are Alexandra Kollontai main disagreements with Lenin on Women's Issue?

**2018 :** Discuss Feminism of Alexandra Kollontai.

# Life and Time of Alexandra Kollontai

- **Was born** in 1872, as **Alexandra Mikhailovna Domontovich** at Saint Petersburg, Russia in a aristocratic but liberal landowning family.
- Her **father** was army general; **mother** belonged to landowning class of Finland.
- **Education:** good education in history, politics, economics. Knew Russian, English, German, French, Finnish, and many other languages
- **Influence:** Marx, Engles and August Bebel ( German socialist thinker)
- **1993** married **Vladimir Kollontai**, her cousin. 1998, left him and later on married **Pavel Dybenko**, a fellow Bolshevik revolutionary and military officer
- **Revolutionary phase: 1899-1917**
  - 1899: returned Russia, joined RSDLP ; 1906: joined Menshevik faction of RSDLP
  - 1908 : exiled to Germany, 1915: she broke with the Mensheviks and joined the Bolsheviks
  - 1917: returned to Russia, had a short but very inflential political career in Soviet Govt.
- **Political Career: 1917-21**
  - 1917: Central Committee member, 1917-18 **Commissar** of social welfare, 1920: **director** of **Zhenotdel**
- **Political outcast, Diplomatic career: 1922-45**
  - 1922: sent on diplomatic 'exile' after falling out with Lenin on many issues
  - 1925-26: briefly returned to Russia in 1925-26 to oppose new marriage code
  - From 1923 to 1945 served as diplomat and ambassador to Norway, Mexico, Sweden; died in 1952
- **Books:**
  - *Social bases of women's question ; Sexual relation and the class struggle ;*
  - *The family and the Communist State,*
  - *Free Love; A Great Love; Love of the Worker's Bee*
  - *The Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Communist Woman.*



**Alexandra Mikhailovna Domontovich(1872 –1952)**

- Revolutionary socialist,
- Marxist Feminist,
- Novelist,
- Diplomat, Politician

Instrumental in publication of **Robotnitsa**- women's magazine and setting up **Zhenotdel**(1919)- Women's Department of the communist Party

# FEMINISM OF KOLLONTAI

Marxist vs Bourgeois Feminism

# Radical Socialist Feminism of Kollontai

- Was **Marxist Feminist**; but went much ahead of Marxism in her feminist thoughts
- Marxism in her Feminism
  - **Class dimension to Feminism**: Not men but class structure is the main culprit for Women's misery
  - Triple burden of working class women as worker, housewife, and mother
  - Working class women share more of her problems with working class men than the Bourgeoisie feminism
    - *"For the majority of women of the proletariat, equal rights with men would mean only an equal share in inequality."*
  - **Bourgeoisie Feminism**: fighting for political rights( voting) and socio-economic rights in capitalist social order
  - Doubted liberal feminist will raise issues of working class women once their limited purpose of getting equality within the capital social order is achieved
  - Working class women fighting both against class exploitation( with male) in public domain and unequal rights( against men) in private domains.
  - *" There can be no socialism without women's liberation and no women's liberation without socialism"( Inessa Armand)*
  - **Her Solution**: Socialization or collectivization of Motherhood, Child rearing, and household duties ; Psychological and emotional freedom to women- not dependent of marriage, family, husband

# Workplace Rights, Motherhood, Domestic Work

- Not only **perfect equality at workplace** but also **special facilities for women workers**
  - no night shift, less surveillance, rest periods, rest rooms, maternity relief, crèche, communal canteen
- **Public facility to lessen Domestic chores**
  - State providing communal housing, public laundry, canteen, communal kitchen, crèche, nurseries, etc
- As '**commissar of social welfare**' she did a lot in this respect:
  - Single women was given equal facility as married woman. Divorce and Abortion rights, homosexuality de-criminalized, protection to children out of marriage, etc.
  - The state had the responsibility to set up crèches, milk kitchens, Maternity provisions at workplace, consultation centers for pregnant women
- **Motherhood:**
  - Marriage and sex were personal affairs; but motherhood was a social concern
  - State/community should take care of proper welfare of prospective mothers and child rearing
  - **Separated child bearing from child rearing:** not necessary that mother only should rear the child
- **Liberating women from marriage, family, domestic chores:**
  - No domestic bondage, No burden of child rearing, no fear of being left out and separated from children, no dependence on husband- Society/state will take care of women's issue
  - Socialization of maternity & child care, collectivising domestic burden ; actually collectivisation or nationalisation of nucleus family- communal facilities for eating, laundry, maternity, child care!

# Class dimension of love, sex, relationships

- Monogamous marriage is feature of capitalist society. It is **egoistic**, **inequal**, and **possessive** - wife as male's property
- Bourgeoise 'Marriage-love' is hypocrisy- sham (false, bogus)
- Women should have psychological freedom to develop mutually respectful and equal relationship with all members of the collective
- Women should free from relations based on economic considerations/calculations
- Relationship between men & women should have **3 conditions**
  1. **Equality** : an end to masculine egoism and the slavish suppression of the female personality
  2. **Mutual recognition of the rights of the other**, of the fact that one does not own the heart and soul of the other
  3. **Comradely sensitivity**, the ability to listen and understand the inner feelings of the loved person
- Men-women love relationship is subordinate to the more powerful emotion of **love-duty to the collective - Love-comradeship**
  - *"Bourgeois morality demanded all for the loved one. The morality of the proletariat demands all for the collective."*

# Winged and Wingless Eros

Psychology and Sociology of Love



# Winged and Wingless Eros- Introduction



**EROS: GREEK GOD OF LOVE**

- **KAMADEVA: INDIAN GOD OF LOVE**



# Historical and Class Account of Winged and Wingless Eros

- Tribal Society:
  - love was seen as a **kinship attachment** (love between sisters and brothers, love for parents).
- The Ancient Society (pre-Christian period )
  - Placed **love-friendship** above all else.
- Feudal Society:
  - Love in marriage- wingless Eros
  - Idealized **platonic love** between members of the opposite sex outside marriage- **Winged Eros**; example: **Knight and his lady love**
- Capitalist Society:
  - Mixed winged & wingless eros into **marriage-love**
  - **monogamous marital love** as an ideal to solve atomistic society, inner loneliness, have stable family, protect capital.

# Winged Eros in Communist Social Order

- **Love-comradeship**

- The ideal of **love-comradeship** – multi faceted love relationship among equal members of the collective
- involves the recognition of the rights and integrity of the other's personality, a solid mutual support and sensitive sympathy, and responsiveness to the other's needs.
- The aim of proletarian ideology is that men and women should develop these qualities not only in relation to the chosen one but in relation to all the members of the collective.
- The proletarian class is not concerned as to which shades and nuances( finer varieties) of feeling predominate in winged Eros.
- The many threads bringing men and women into close emotional and intellectual contact will develop and feelings will emerge from the private into the public sphere.
- **love-solidarity** will become the lever that competition and self-love were in the bourgeois system.
- Reformed winged eros in proletarian society will eliminate(remove) male egoism, inequality, possessiveness, complacency of male partner, and self-renunciation of the woman
- The only stipulation is that these emotions facilitate the development and strengthening of comradeship and social-solidarity
- **In a nutshell, directing the emotional energy of Winged Eros away from couples towards strengthening the community/collective.**

# HER DIFFERENCES WITH LENIN

Two Shades of Kollontai

# Positive Phase of her relationship with Lenin

- Since **she joined RSDLP in 1899**, she had to fight the powers in the party on putting women's question at the center-stage of socialist revolution.
- For the party, feminism would weaken class struggle
- Without any support from the party, In 1905, she established 'society for mutual help of working women'
- Later on **RSDLP divided into Menshevik and Bolshevik**; she first sided with Menshevik.
- But due to Lenin's support for women's question, she joined Bolshevik in 1915
- Lenin, in 1917, from Switzerland sent 4 letters, '*Letters from Afar*', to Kollontai, to be published in 'Pravada'
- In 1917, she was the only supporter of Lenin on his April Thesis, not working with the provisional Govt, and early revolution.
- With support on women's question from Lenin, she was Instrumental in publication of '**Robotnitsa**' - magazine for working women by the party and setting up **Zhenotdel** - women's department in the party
- She became member of central committee of the Party, and in 1917 was made **People's Commissar of social welfare** ; in 1920 she became director of Zhenotdel

# Her differences with Lenin

- by 1921 she was standing against Lenin on many issues.
- **New Economic Policy-1921**, which, she believed, diluted socialist agenda, disillusioned workers, favoured peasants, promoted private property, petty Bourgeois
- She questioned socialist commitment, social responsibilities of household duties, women's question, NEP, inner-party democracy ; before that in she also opposed **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk-1918**
- Dilution in Party's commitment to collective care of household duties; freeing women from dependence on men
- **Worker's opposition movement**-1921: for genuine control of proletarian of the communist state, right to dissent in the party
  - Kollontai became the movement's mentor and advocate.
- She also supported the '**left opposition**' - a faction within the Russian Communist Party de-facto headed by Leon Trotsky.
- The Left Opposition opposed New Economic Policy by contending that it had weakened the Soviet Union by allowing the private sector to achieve an increasingly important position in the Soviet economy while the centrally planned, socialized sector of the economy languished
- Her association with **Worker's opposition and left opposition directly put her opposite Lenin**, who believed that a country torn by civil war required less idealism and more control over from above
- **After falling out with Lenin, she** narrowly escaped expulsion from the party for factionalism **and later on sent on Diplomatic 'Exile'**

# Her survival during Stalin Era

- After Lenin died in 1924 and Stalin rose to power within even more abusive and regimented system of party leadership she was sidelined from mainstream communist politics.
- She was sent on diplomatic mission to Norway
- She returned to Moscow in 1925-26 to agitate against repressive changes in marriage laws
- But she was questioned for her role in '**workers opposition**' as part of Stalin's purge movement of the old Bolshevik
- Luckily for her she escaped from a full trial and possible death but her life as a central figure in Soviet politics was over
- In fact, it is still at question how she could save her life from Stalin's purge movement where most of the other supporters and leaders of '**workers opposition**' were executed.
- 1929: Stalin abolished Zhenotdel, all pro women's decrees were reversed; to him, women's question was solved!
- Thereafter she had a very quiet life as diplomat and novelist.
- She served as Ambassador to Soviet state in Sweden and before that diplomat in Norway and Mexico
- Her later writings in support of Stalin's views and program were not of her own it seemed to the have compromised for her diplomatic carrier and possibly her life.



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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ES6XGkANYhU&t=64s>
  - **A Rebel's Guide to Alexandra Kollontai - Emma Davis** : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRIFLAZ7S2s&t=2243s>



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**Email : [DUPOLSCHELP2018@GMAIL.COM](mailto:DUPOLSCHELP2018@GMAIL.COM)**

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