

POLITICAL THEORY

LIBERALISM

- Liberalism is a modern ideology emerged against the following tendencies:
- **(1) Mercantalism:-** They believe that economy should be controlled by state and government. State should promote export and discourage import thus, it is a form of protectionism
- **(2) Religious dominance over state:-** Initially, church maintain supremacy in Europe and state was controlled by church.
- **(3) Conservatism:-** Feudal society was regulated by custom traditions faith and religion. Community like family village became more important than individual

BASIC ELEMENTS OF LIBERALISM

- **Individual-centric:-** For liberals individual is occupying the central roles.
- **Liberty is paramount:-** Individual knows his best interest and he/she is master of his/her mind and body.
- **Rationality is key:-** Only way to accept anything which is based on argument and observation.
- **Toleration and respect of diversity:-** Nobody is entitled to force others for accepting their ideas and views.
- **Limited constitutional government:-** Government is limited with rules and regulations of the constitution. without consent nobody can rule over the other.
- **Secularism:-** Materialistic world is more important than Spiritual world.
- **Capitalist market economy:-** state is a necessary evil. State is like invisible hand.

PHASES OF LIBERALISM

- **CLASSICAL LIBERALISM**
- (1) **Laissez-faire state**:- It is a French term which means leave alone. The function of state is like night watchman (Locke) which is responsible for maintaining law and order. It is also known as a 'Police state'.
- (2) **Atomistic society**:- Hobbes is first modern scholar who said that society is only aggregation of individuals. Bentham said that society is sum of free floating individuals.
- (3) **Social Contract**:- Liberals believe that state and government is merely a machine or instrument for serving the interest of individuals. Although Bentham justified the mechanistic state on the basis of Utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is a variety of liberalism.

- **(4) Capitalism:-** the economic dimension of liberalism is capitalism. **Adam Smith** wrote wealth of nations and said that economy work best when it is left alone by government and market is the best mechanism for regulating the economy.
- **(5) Rights:-** Liberal believes in rights and liberties. Locke propounded the concept of natural rights which was changed into legal right by Bentham. Liberty and rights minimize the functioning of the government and maintains limited and constitutional government.

SECOND PHASE OF LIBERALISM

- It is known as 'Revised' liberalism (Sabine). It is also recognized as positive liberalism, modern liberalism too which includes the following features:-
- **(1)Welfare state:-** Now the functioning of state is to manage health care facilities, education, providing employment and abolition of property. Beveridge report (1942) identified five giants namely want, diseases, ignorance, squalor, idleness. Green says the function of state is to hindering the hindrances.
- **(2)Social Liberalism:-** positive liberalism provides social security USA president Roosevelt announced new deal programme for the relief of children, widows, old and unemployed. John Kennedy announce new frontier programme. President Lynden Johnson propounded the great society programme for the benefit of marginalized sections of society. Green says that community became more important in liberalism than centrality of individualism.

- (3) **keynesianism**:- night watchman state is changed into a nanny state. John Maynard Keynes in his book *General Theory of Employment Interest and Money* (1936). He rejected the notion that market economy is the best mechanism for managing the economy.
- (4) **Positive Freedom**:- thinkers like TH Green, LT Hobhouse, JA Hobson, individual is not looking for maximizing of profit but individuals ability to realize his/her own skill knowledge development and self-realization is equally important. State becomes enabling state or cradle to grave to welfare state.

CONTEMPORARY PHASE OF LIBERALISM (NEO-LIBERALISM)

(1) **Criticism of welfare state:-** In the book *The Road to Serfdom* (1944), Hayek said that collectivism or socialism and totalitarianism are the two sides of same coin. Both disregard liberty and autonomy of individuals. He said that monopoly of state over economic activities is harmful for liberty of individuals.

(2) **Rolling back of state:-** Nozick (state anarchy and Eutopia) is neo-liberal or libertarian who said that powerful state goes against the basic concept of liberty. Hayek also wrote in the *Constitution of Liberty*, welfare state curtails the autonomy, self-reliance, independence and risk taking capability of individuals.

- **(3) Minimal and neutral state:-** Neo-liberals believe in a minimal state. Hayek said that idea of progressive taxation violates the concept of equal pay for equal work. He also said that there is a difference between misfortune and injustice. Free market unlike justice does not presuppose a distributor. On the name of welfare state bureaucracy becomes powerful which ultimately end liberty.
- **(4) Rejection of social justice:-** the idea of social justice presupposes that among the various values it should receive priority over some others which kills idea of free and liberal society. Too much power leads not only corruption but also impotence. The preferences of people are different in society, therefore state planning welfare schemes is against the liberty of individuals.

- **(5) Individualism with market economy:-** Thomas friedman said that capitalism and freedom is complementary with each other because liberty is not available in non-capitalist economy. Nozick believes in the concept of atomistic individualism.
- **THATCHERISM AND REAGANISM**
- Neo-liberal political policies were implemented by the former prime minister of Britain and the former US President Ronald Reagan. Therefore, it is known as Thatcherism and Reaganism too. British prime minister implemented the policies propounded by Hayek.

COMMUNITARIANISM

- The term Communitarianism was first used in 1841 by **John Goodwyn Barnby** but the theory of communitarianism was propounded by Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, Michael Walzer. They believe in the following principles:
- **(1) Rejection of unencumbered self:-** Michael Sandel argued against the notion of a historical and a person without social context in short communitarians refuted the concept of atomistic individualism.
- **(2) Centrality of community (Social Thesis):-** Charles Taylor is considered as neo-hegalian who wrote a book Sources of the self. For Taylor self is **embeded self**. Simply it means without understanding historical social context we cannot understand individual. Taylor believes in social thesis therefore liberty right is available within the community.

- (3) **End is prior to self:-** Michael Sandel wrote a book *Liberalism and Limits of Justice* (1982). Sandel criticize the fundamental kantian ethics which believes in **man is in itself**. Rawls also support Kantian ethics and said about **self is prior to its end**. Sandel refuted the concept of Rawlsin justice because it is based on the concept of a historical individual which is empty self.
- (4) **Rejection of universalism:-** Neo-liberals and liberals too propound universal concept of equality and justice and therefore ignore the social and historical concept. Walzer says that **self is situated self** and the value of goods can be understood within a social context therefore believe in **complex equality**. Michael Walzer wrote *Spheres of Justice*

- **(5) Rejection of neutral state:-** Neo-liberals believe in liberty therefore, allow individual to choose their goals and objectives in life but communitarians said that every choice may not be correct choice. For example same sex marriage may not be a correct choice therefore, state should promote the moral and right choices. Sandel wrote, there is a limitation of market.

MULTICULTURALISM

- **Community-centric concept** multiculturalist also believed that individual is not an atom but individual is member of community and community refers society, state, church, neighbourhood and nation. Thus, they reject the atomistic individualism of neo-liberalism. Bhikhu Parekh in his book *Rethinking Multiculturalism-Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* said that multiculturalism as way of viewing human life increasing cultural diversity focuses on promotion of rights for different religion and cultural groups. The rights of cultural groups from the basis of multiculturalism.

DRAWBACK OF LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC STATE

- **Kymlicka** in his book **Multicultural Citizenship** said that citizens are members of two types of communities:-
- **(a) Political community:** where every citizen is considered as equal
- **(b) Cultural community:** every citizen having their own language and culture and no culture is superior to other. Democratic state directly or indirectly promotes culture of majority.
- **Kymlicka** said that welfare state provides social security for maintaining unity and integrity of the nation and it discourage the culture belongs to minority groups.

RIGHTS FOR MINORITIES

- Multiculturalism emerged in plural and diversified societies like Canada, Australia in 1980's. since every culture is having the same worth or value therefore, special rights should be given for minorities in order to preserve their culture and language. Protection of liberty requires preserving of culture.
- **POLITICS OF RECOGNITION**
- Equality among different cultural communities is essential for sustaining equality. Rajeev Bhargav said that every member should have recognition in the society and a member of a community cannot be subordinate to other members in community.

- **POLITICS OF IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE**
- Multiculturalist talk about the culture of minorities and the minorities can be categorized in the following groups:-
 - (a) Indigenous group
 - (b) Subnational group
 - (c) Immigrants or migrants
- The politics based on language, culture and religion is known as identity politics and the politics of equal citizenship of liberals do not address the unique identity of minorities and multiculturalist reject the claim of universality of liberals.

- **KYMLICKA'S CONCEPT OF MULTICULTURALISM**

- Kymlicka is known as liberal multiculturalist and said that liberal values accommodate the cultural rights of minorities. There is no paradox between rights of minorities and liberalism. He said that cultural membership of a citizen is more important and individual is free to choose his cultural membership and **good multiculturalist** will not coerce their own member to follow any particular culture or language and bad multiculturalist or the people who suppress freedom of choice and autonomy on the name of protecting culture.
- Kymlicka said that there are two types of minorities cultural groups
- (a) Indigenous cultural groups
- (b) Immigrant cultural groups
- Kymlicka said that immigrant cultural groups are not entitled to enjoy the cultural rights because they have chosen other goals are more important in life than preserving culture.

● **THE VIEWS OF BHIKHU PAREKH**

- He deals with issues like arranged marriage, polygamy, rituals slaughters of animals, and customary dresses.
- Parekh rejected idea of Rawls and said that the Kymlicka's liberal multiculturalism is not appropriate. He believes that immigrants should also be given the minority rights.
- He believed in the pluralist universalism humankind are culturally embeded and the rights of culture are primary collective right.
- Thus maintaining hierarchy among minority group is not sustainable and culture is a primary good for individuals.

END OF HISTORY

- **Francis Fukuyama** says that disintegration of Soviet Union is considered as a victory of liberal democracy.
- He rejected the explanation of history carried out by Hegel, which makes nationalism as a final phase of history.
- He rejected economic interpretation of history which is done by the Marxist.
- For Fukuyama, two elements are important for understanding the civilization:-
 - (a) Development of modern science
 - (b) Struggle for recognition.
- He said that reason capitalism and democracy are the basic element for understanding the history. In Fukuyama the historic process leads to recognition that democratic institutions are only possible template for the political life of an advanced society.
- **Anderson** also said that the liberal democracy is the most successful ideology of the world.