



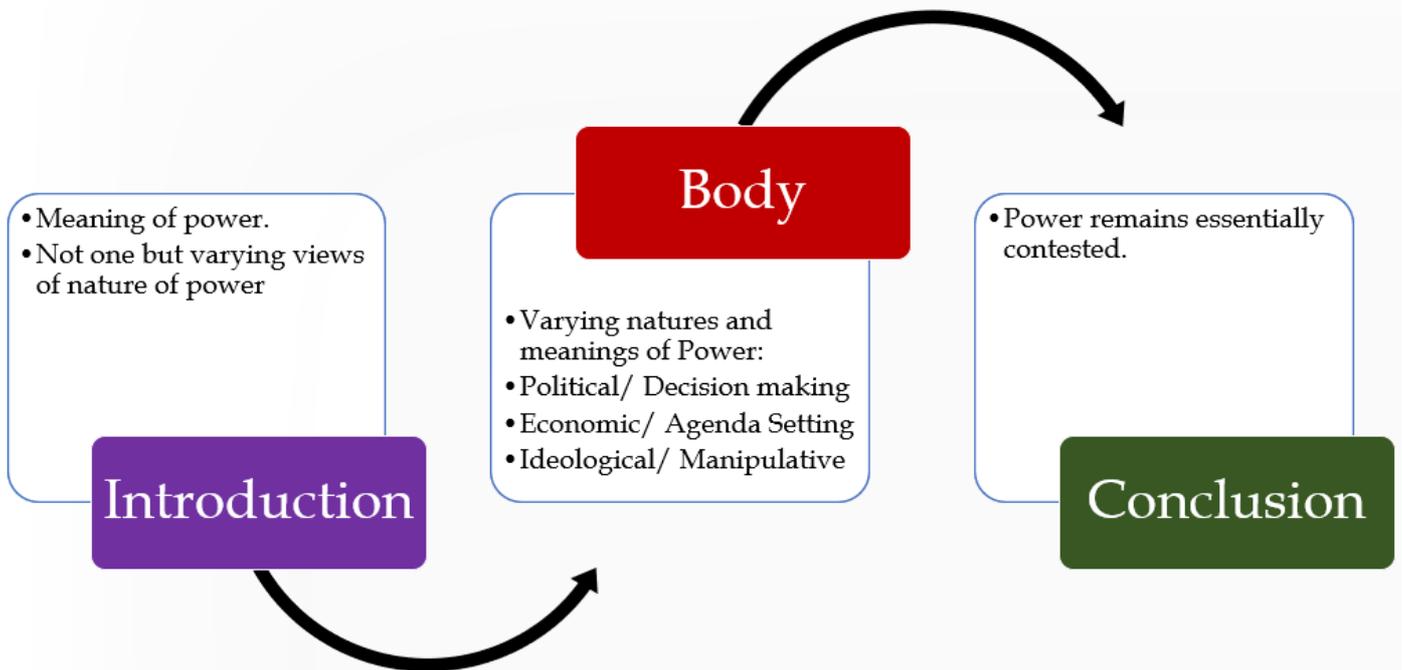
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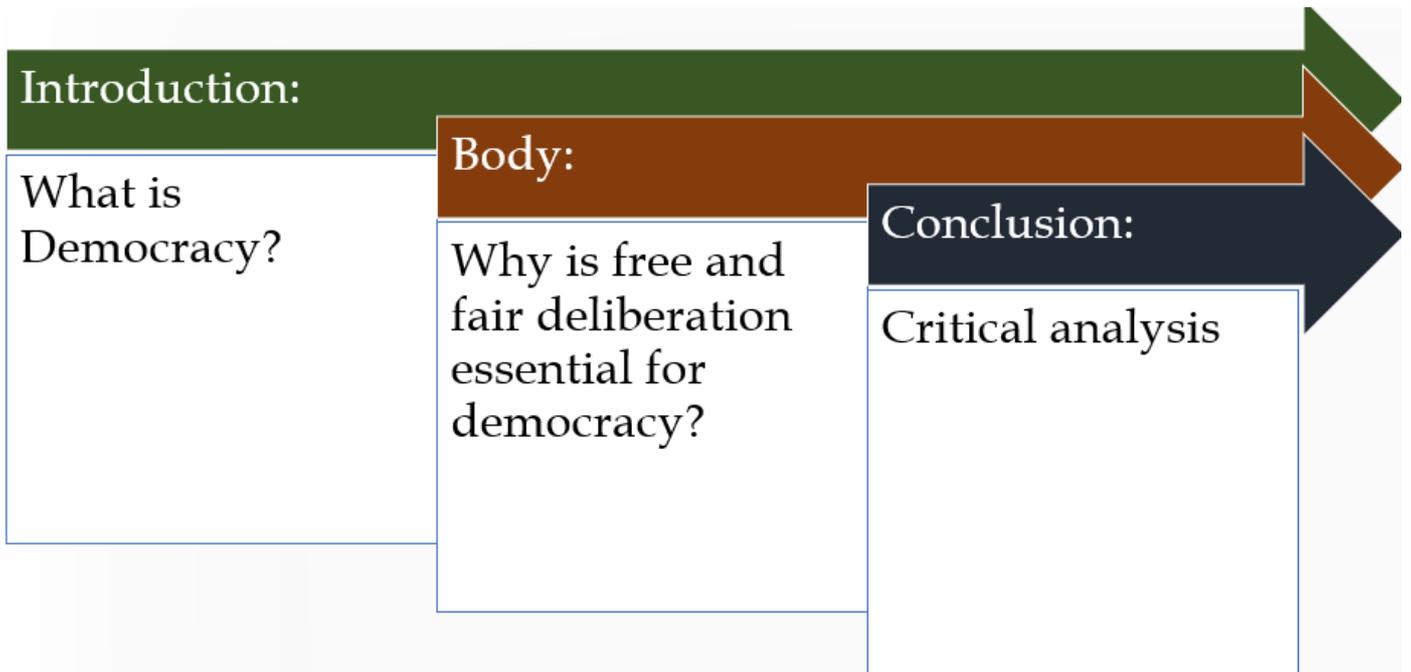
Examine the nature and meaning of Power. (15) (UPSC 2020)



- Steven Lukes argues that there are multiple debates regarding meaning of Power. Steven Lukes in 'Power: A Radical View' distinguishes between three 'faces' or 'dimensions' of power:
 - First, it can involve the ability to influence the making of decisions;
 - Second, it may be reflected in the capacity to shape the political agenda; and
 - Third, it may take the form of controlling people's thoughts by the manipulation of their perceptions and preferences.
- **Political Power/ Decision Making-** Lukes' first dimension of power finds multiple variations in the form of who exerts power and controls decision making for the larger masses and society. The first expression of a theory on power came in 'Leviathan' of Thomas Hobbes as complete power to political authority. Later, through Locke's work evolved the the idea of legitimacy and power based on the consent of the governed. This idea of authority came to further developed by Weber through his ideal types of traditional, charismatic and rational-legal authorities.
- The proponents of elitist theory of power including scholars like Pareto, Mosca and Michels believe the ruling group to be composed of an elite few- the talented or those with organisational skills or professional experts. This idea of power ultimately being held by an 'inner circle' was further supported by C.W. Mills in his power elite theory.

- On the other hand, the Pluralist notion of political power argues that modern forms of government and decision making are influenced by a number of groups. Pluralists believe power to be dispersed and fragmented, with decision making through bargaining and compromise. Robert Dahl defined this as 'polyarchy'. Scholars like Charles Lindblom, however, exemplify how even in this pluralism there are certain groups that exert more control leading this system to become 'deformed polyarchy.'
- Economic Power/ Agenda setting: Here power is looked at as an exploitative concept by Marxists. In the Marxist understanding of history, society develops through several modes of production based on exploitation of one class by the economically dominant one. N. Menon argues that in Marxist analysis capitalism differs from other non-capitalist modes of production in that exploitation can take place without the direct intervention of force, through the help of State and law which are seen as the 'hand maiden of bourgeoisie' and creating the myth of juridical equality.
- Ideological Power/ Preference shaping: This type of power may be exercised to legitimize existing structures for political stability or as a productive force that shapes its very subjects. Gramsci gave the concept of hegemony to underline the spiritual and cultural supremacy of the ruling class maintained through the structures of civil society.
- Michel Foucault radically reconceptualized the notion of power considering it not repressive, but productive- that is shaping identity and subjectivity. Further rather than flowing from a single force, Foucault looks at power as capillary –flowing throughout the system like blood in the capillaries of our body. This sort of power came to be epitomised in Foucault's concept
- Apart from these ideas of power, there are two further variations that are important in analysis of nature and meaning of power:
 - The first is structural power as developed by feminist scholars like Simone de Beauvoir, Iris Marion Young etc. Patriarchy is a key category in feminist analyses of power and refers to an overarching system of male dominance operating at every level –economic, political, and cultural. An understanding of patriarchy enables us to see that power or powerlessness cannot be explained in terms of individuals alone.
 - Secondly, Hannah Arendt's notion of power who views it as the capacity to act in concert for a public-political purpose.
- Thus, power remains one of the 'essentially contested concepts' with multiple meanings and perspectives on its nature depending the school of thought. However, despite this debate power continues to be the central concept in the study of politics.

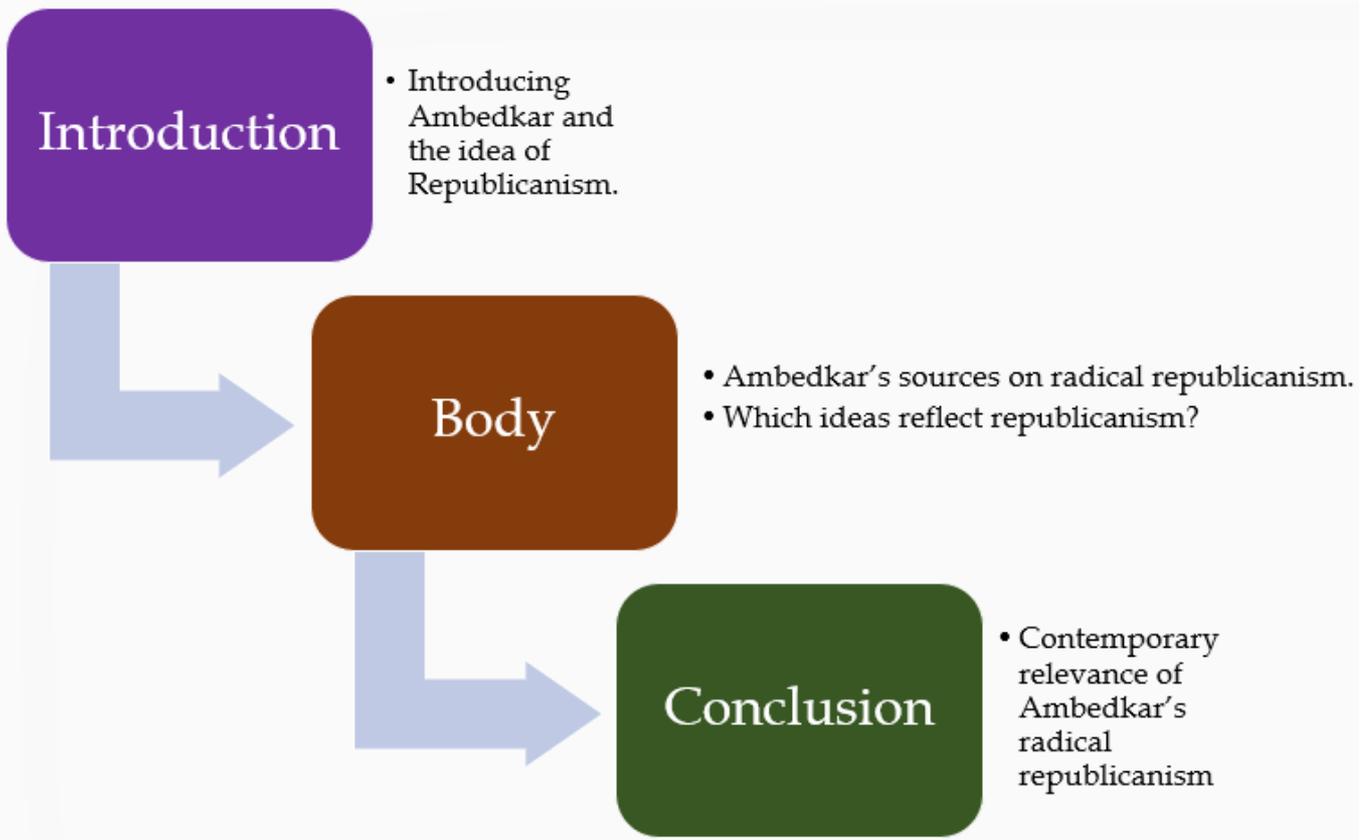
Free and fair deliberation is key to the foundation of democracy. Explain [15] (UPSC 2021)



- Democracy according to Sartori is one in which **no one enjoys unlimited and unconditional power**. At the heart of all democratic theories is the concept of popular power, and this is derived from two important concepts- human dignity and equality. Free and fair deliberation may be seen as key to democracy for a number of reasons:
 - **Curtail Mobocracy:** Deliberative democracy underlines that political decisions should be the product of fair and reasonable discussion and debate among citizens. It should not become a mobocracy or tyranny of majority. The earliest idea of deliberative democracy may be taken back to Aristotle's polis which was governed through the active participation and deliberation of all its citizens.
 - **Respect for Pluralism:** One of the pioneering works on deliberative democracy is by Joseph Bessette who published his "Deliberative Democracy" in 1980, when there was decline in deliberation worldwide. Deliberative democracy is different from Aggregate Democracy given by Bentham. While the latter may lead to majoritarianism, the former involves deliberation on rational dialogue and respect for pluralism.
 - **Source of legitimacy:** Joshua Cohen argues that citizens consider deliberative procedure as the source of legitimacy, and prefer the causal history of legitimation for each law to be transparent and easily traceable to the deliberative process. Further this ensures that member recognizes and respects other members' deliberative capacity.

- Removal of inequalities: Nancy Frazer develops the concept of 'subaltern counter-republics'. This idea pushed forth the dimensions of deliberative democracy to focus on inequalities in deliberation as well as move towards plurality of contesting publics. The need to give stakeholders including marginalised groups like tribals, indigenous populations, dalits an opportunity to contribute can be seen as an example.
- Deterring emergence of totalitarianism: Hannah Arendt in her concept of 'acting in concert' emphasises on the active participation in civic affairs based on citizens deliberations through the act of speech. This deliberative aspect is seen by Arendt as imperative to deter rise of totalitarian regimes like Nazism, Fascism and Stalinism again.
- Ensures mutual understanding and agreement: Jürgen Habermas refers to his democratic theory as a "discourse theory of democracy" and is aimed at mutual understanding and agreement rather than at the achievement of the self-interested goals of individuals. The principles of the public sphere involved an open discussion of all issues of general concern in which discursive argumentation was employed to ascertain general interests and the public good.
- However, this model of democracy is also criticised on number of grounds written below.
 - The first major criticism of deliberation is that it fails to guarantee equality for all participants. In her piece, *Against Deliberation*, Lynn Sanders argues that egalitarianism is an unrealistic pursuit.
 - Another major criticism claims that citizens lack the capacity to engage in intelligent and respectful debate.
 - Deliberation requires an extensive list of conditions, such as as to have free and equal discussion, to exchange mutually respectful dialogue, adequately educate oneself on an issue etc. Deliberative democrats claim these conditions must be in order for deliberation to succeed.
 - Critics also challenge that deliberative democracy fails to foster a highly participatory citizenry. Most people choose to live among politically like-minded people. Mutz refers to these relationships as political networks. Living among like-minded people tend to intensify people's original positions.

Examine Ambedkar as a theorist of 'radical republicanism'. [10].



- **Appadorai** calls Ambedkar 'an eminent constitutionalist, distinguished parliamentarian, scholar and jurist, and, above all, the leader of the Depressed Classes'. Yogendra Yadav regards Dr. Ambedkar, the theorist of radical republicanism, someone who can guide our search for the foundations of a new equitable republic.
- **Stuart White** argues that radical republicanism's conception of freedom rejects social, political, and economic structures subordinating citizens to any uncontrolled power—casteism, patriarchy, imperialism etc. Ambedkar takes recourse to deep resources of republicanism, drawn both from the western and the Indian intellectual traditions, going beyond its text book definition of an elected head.
- Firstly, Yadav argues that Ambedkar looks at indigenous tradition of radicalism which goes back to the Buddha, incorporates social and religious reformers through the ages and includes Jyotiba Phule, Narayana Guru and E.V.S. Periyar.
- Next, like many modern Indian political thinkers, Ambedkar was inspired by the slogan of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity", emphasising on the need for social and economic democracy to ensure Fraternity, similar to the Buddhist ideal of *maitree*.

- Ambedkar stressed upon the autonomy of the state to transcend the parochial interests galore in society which often tend to reduce the state as an instrument of their purpose. For Ambedkar, a republic presupposes a political community that is not fractured, and not based on domination and oppression.
- According to Bidyut Chakrabarty, Ambedkar was a protagonist of the idea of social justice as an in- alienable part of the constitutional democratic framework in India. his uncompromising insistence on annihilation, no less, of any form of inequality within a political community makes him a radical republican.
- He advanced a scheme of safeguards to ensure removal of these structural inequalities:
 - He demanded an autonomous political representation to the disadvantaged groups not merely to ensure their political presence.
 - He sought reservation/ affirmative action for the disadvantaged groups in public employment.
 - He sought extensive supportive policy measures towards these groups so as to extend to them the benefits of various developmental and welfare measures that a state undertakes.
- These safeguards were further connected to the republicanist emphasis on civic virtues. Ambedkar saw that democratic order would not function unless it is backed by popular acceptance of constitutional morality. He identified widespread public conscience and the upholding of moral order in society as some of the pre-conditions of democracy.
- Ambedkar's idea of radical republicanism continues to hold significance today.
- The upholding of constitutional morality by Supreme Court in cases like Navtej Johar judgment underlines the need to set examples to overcome prevailing prejudices in public morality.
- Similarly the increased cases of violence against Dalits and minorities in India points towards the lack of cultivation of civic virtues among masses at large as well as the limited ability of institutions of Indian State to work autonomously in ensuring social justice to the vulnerable.
- Chintan Chandrachud underlines Dr. Ambedkar's republican rootings through his firm belief that Indians "must now play by the rules and not resort to revolutions" and social reform should be achieved legally. Thus, Christopher Jaffrelot rightly describes Dr. Ambedkar as the 'quintessential liberal' whose ideas and contributions to the fundamental law of the land continue to ensure India's journey towards becoming Prabudhha (Enlightened) Bharat.

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