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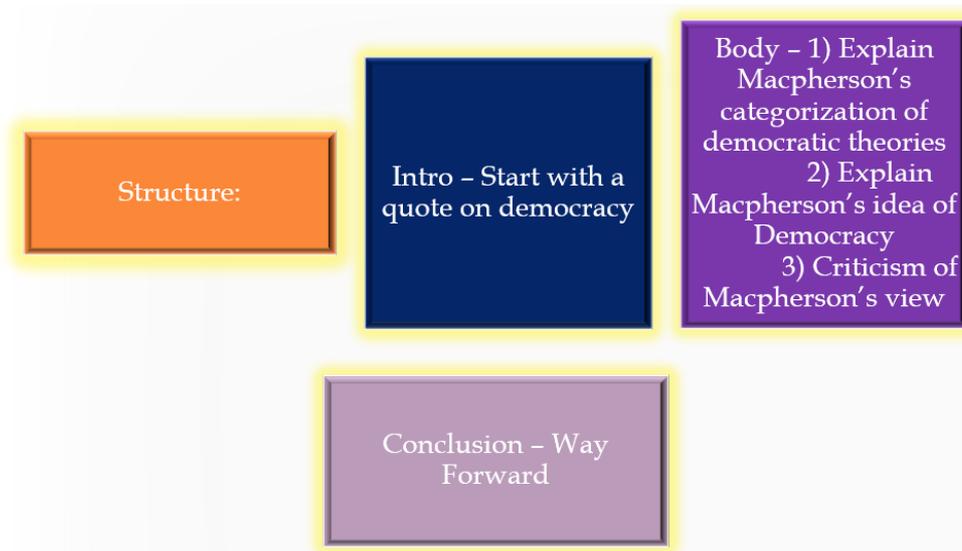
# Political Science & International Relations Crash Course

*Lecture - 18*

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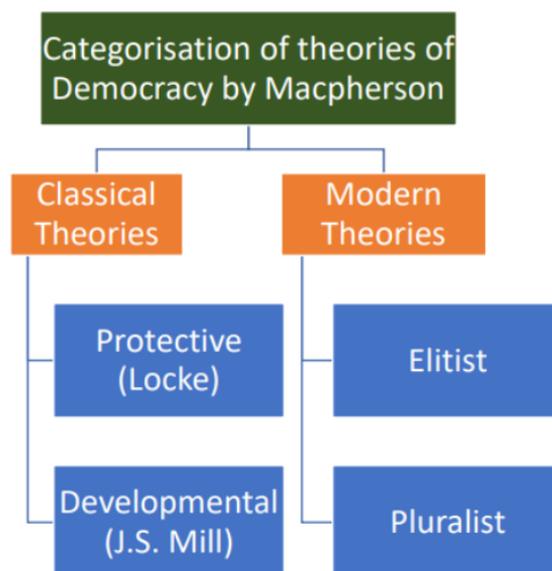
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1) Critically examine Macpherson 's views on democracy. 15m-[2018]



- "Democracy is not a spectator sport, it is a participatory event. If we don't participate in it, it ceases to be a democracy." - Michael Moore
- Macpherson's work may be regarded as one of the most extensive on democracy. He belongs to the critical liberal, egalitarian school of thought. He categorizes theories of democracy as Classical and Modern theories.

Macpherson's categorization of democratic theories:



- Classical theories are further divided into Protective and Developmental. Protective democracy was meant to protect the rights of citizens and safeguard the citizens from tyranny of state power. Its main exponents are **John Locke and Bentham**.
- Developmental democracy created a system which creates maximum space for people to take part in the functioning of the govt. and not restrict their involvement by merely allowing them to vote. Its main exponents are **J.S. Mill**.
- Modern Theories are further classified into elitist and pluralist theories. The elitist theory looks democracy merely as competition among elites and is called market model of democracy. Its main exponents are **Anthony Down and Schumpeter**.
- Pluralist theory on the other hand looks at the bargaining power among contending associations as propounded by Laski, Dahl and MacIver.

### Macpherson's idea of Democracy

- According to Macpherson both the models offer a procedural theory of justice. On the basis of the same, Macpherson formulates the Schumpeter- Dahl Axis- wherein both the models while diverging in content are both concerned with a set of procedures that when fulfilled qualify for a system to be called democratic-mechanism designed to maintain an equilibrium. Macpherson counters the existing models and believes that democracy can't be reduced to its procedural aspect only.
- Macpherson identifies **three variants of democracy** which are equally valid if they fulfill certain conditions:
  - The first variant is, of course, **liberal democracy** which needs a more humane touch.
  - Secondly, **Communist countries** might qualify as democracies if they granted full intra-party democracy and opened up their closed bureaucratic systems.
  - Finally, **Third World countries**, which have no experience of Western individualism, could also conform to the ideals of some historical theories of democracy as far as their governments are legitimized by mass enthusiasm.
- Thus, in Macpherson's view different types of systems which undertake to fulfill the aspirations of the masses, enjoy support of the masses and provide for an opportunity for the amelioration of the condition of the masses, qualify as democracies irrespective of the structures and procedures adopted by them for serving these purposes.
- Instead of the empirical modern variants, Macpherson hopes to create a humanist theory of democracy which will promote '**creative freedom**'.

## Macpherson draws a distinction between two types of power

- **Developmental power** - signifies man's ability to use his own capacities creatively, for the fulfilment of his self - appointed goals.
- **Extractive power** - stands for power over others - man's ability to use other men's capacities to extract benefits for himself.
- Capitalist models which are based on extractive power reduce labour to commodity and all relations to economic models- rots creativity and therefore, antithetical to substantive democracy.
- He advocates to combine a system of socialist ownership with the institutions of liberal democracy in order to prevent the use of extractive power and to promote developmental powers of all human beings for ideal democracy.

## Criticism of Macpherson's idea of democracy

- **Ideological:** According to Marxists like Michael Weinstein, Macpherson has retained so many liberal assumptions that he is unable to generate the revolutionary theory essential to the development of the classless society. Also Ellen Wood argues that Macpherson implicitly rejected the class struggle in the foundations of the theoretical enterprise.
- **Role of Extractive Power:** Kenneth Minogue criticizes Macpherson's logic for loading the employer-employee relationship with responsibility for the social structure.
- **Role of Developmental power:** John Dunn claims that the idea of maximizing a value (Developmental Power) which is not in any way measurable, or even linear is a notion which wears an air of slightly bogus imprecision at the best of times.
- **Analysis of Third World Countries:** Dunn criticizes Macpherson's acceptance at face value of the claims of moral superiority of Third-World countries and the argument that they do not have capitalist social relations. Macpherson, he argues, ignores the realities of Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Uganda in the maximization of human potential. Dunn specifically points out that many Third-World societies are in fact capitalist.

## Conclusion

- It is not unfair to criticize Macpherson for gliding over that tension in his efforts to "retrieve" and reinvigorate the developmental ideals of liberal democracy. However, his work underlines that emergence of liberal democracy is not 'end of history' but has a long way to go to ensure an ideal political system.

## 2) Examine Gandhi's critique of modernisation.15m- [2016]

### Structure:

Intro – Brief statement on Gandhi and his idea of modernity

Body – Explain his criticism of modernity along with its critique

Conclusion - Contemporary Relevance

- Gandhiji was one of the tallest leader of Indian Freedom Struggle whose ideas influenced the whole world. One of the recurrent themes in his book: **Hind Swaraj**, is the criticism of modern civilisation. He uses this criticism to question the basis of British colonialism. It was an attempt to anticipate and apprehend the disastrous consequences flowing from the modern civilization not only for India but also for the entire humankind.

### Critique of Modernity

- Gandhi is one of the most resolute critics of modernity in the twentieth century. He sees modernity, unless unchecked, sweeping away everything that stands in its way as it tries to take 'charge of the world'.
- **Modernity and Colonialism:** From this emerges his criticism of industrial capitalism, which he regards as the dynamic behind colonialism. So much so, Gandhi declared machinery to be the "great sin" of modern civilization. (Can compare with Lenin's criticism of Imperialism as highest stage of capitalism).
- **Colonised Mentality-** Ashish Nandy in his analysis of Gandhi argues that he was the first to realise that colonialism is something to be overcome in our consciousness first. Unless this 'intimate enemy' was exorcised the Indian people would stay enslaved, either by foreign or native. Opposite to Bankim Chatterjee, instead of blaming Indian cultural development and lack of modernization for colonization, he blames "seduction by modern civilisation" as the cause for India's subjection.

- **Criticism of hollow rationality:** At the heart of modernity is a questioning of and dissatisfaction with the present and a faith that the reason and the changes it fosters will lead to a progressively better future. In mounting his challenges, Gandhi confronts the foundational principles of the modern world and, in their place, he offers an idealised conception of traditional life in rural India, which he sees, providing an alternative to the complexity, materialism, and poverty he detects in modern society.
- **Gandhi as a anti modernist-Ramashray Roy** argues that “Gandhi’s critique of modern civilization is total, which means that Gandhi is a relentlessly anti-modernist. However, not only does he write about the ways it can be part of the good society, but also his theory is also closely tied to such modern concepts as autonomy which often put individual and society at opposition with one another.
- **Destruction of Indian industry-**Gandhi argued that not only does **industrialism undermine the foundation of India’s village economy**, it ‘will also lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in’. Mass production and industrialization was seen as a bane to nature and environment recognised by leading activists like Vandana Shiva today.
- For Gandhi, India’s economic future lay in charkha (spinning wheel) and khadi (homespun cotton textile). In addition to these, cooperative farming or dairying was to be promoted in the national interest.
- **Anti capitalism and socialism:** Gandhiji was critical of the path both capitalist and socialist economies had taken, America harbours massive poverty amidst abundant wealth while socialism and its violent centralisation had snatched away a human’s individuality turning them into a cog in a wheel.
- **Criticism of industrial tools:** In Hindi Swaraj Gandhi is also critical of railways because of its uncalled-for speed and movement, mainly for 3 reasons: 1. Enabled British grip over India, 2. Spread of communicable diseases like bubonic plague, 3. Destroyed local self-sufficiency.
- Gandhi was also a huge critic of modern professions like physicians and lawyers. In Hind Swaraj, Gandhi **criticized doctors** and said that a rise in disease was the result of negligence and over-reliance on doctors. In the context of the commercialization of medical services, the above observation of Gandhi is still appropriate to contemporary India and world witnessed at height during Covid19 pandemic.
- Gandhi views modern civilisation as a product of last few centuries, while India has been a **“nation” since ancient times**. He is critical of modern civilisation as he views it to be based on idleness, greed, violence, excessively materialist and exploitative. He regarded India to be a **‘true civilisation’** which focuses on performance of duty and observation of morality. This ensures good conduct- a mastery over our minds and passions (**swaraj**).

## Criticism:

Bhiku Parekh points out three major limitations of Gandhi's critique of modern civilization:

1. Gandhi concentrated more on its darker side than on its positive contributions like non-hierarchical social order, its stress on the autonomy and liberty of individuals and its basic faith in human rationality.

2. Failed to see that industrialism need not be necessarily accompanied by colonialism and imperialism. Therefore, he could not provide any intellectually viable theory of imperialism.

3. Gandhi looked at the positive side of the modern civilization as being accidental rather than being its integral and inalienable part. And his attempt to appropriate some of its positive side, while rejecting its intellectual foundation and institutional set-up, put him in the pitfalls of contradiction.

- **Romain Rolland** criticizes Gandhi's Hind Swaraj calling it 'negation of progress and European science.' **Partha Chatterjee** reads Gandhi's thought as a critique of Civil society wherein leading sections of the Indian society accept modern civilisation's idea of progress keeping their bodies and minds colonized.

## Conclusion

- Gandhiji wanted a humanized society with restoration of moral values which he deems to be antithetical to modernization. Gandhiji visualized that mechanization will not only lead to industrialization, to massive urbanization, to unemployment, but will also lead to the destruction of environment, which we are witnessing in contemporary times. Yogendra Kumar in his book Geopolitics in the era of globalization talks about the importance of Gandhian philosophy to resolve the contemporary problems of the world, thereby asserting its importance.



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