

Notes on Modern Political Thinkers-

In 18th century, Rousseau (1712-78) was a special kind of thinker whose vision not easy to summarise. His theory of social contract was just a tool but his actual motive was to establish freedom in the society. He was in line of Hobbes and Locke, but for Hobbes, Kings power was absolute, for Locke limited constitutional government is justified, but liberty was supreme for Rousseau. In other words, he favored direct democracy, community, and invented the concept of general will. Therefore, he is considered as romanticized, idealist and socialist political thinker in some way.

Against Modernity and rationality-

Natural liberty- moral will- "*man is born free but everywhere he is in chains*". Later Rousseau was followed by Marx and Mahtma Gandhi. What is chain for him was slavery, to be exploited, for Marx it was to be a worker and laborer. Rousseau was socialist in this regard when he says that Jean-Jacques Rousseau's statement, "No citizen should be so rich that he can buy another, and none so poor that he is forced to sell himself". He first time in Europe sought against economic inequality and there should civil liberty in the society which only can come after economic equality. In Discourses on Inequality, he talks about diversity between master and slave, ruler and ruled. They are in chains.

Therefore, he believes in civil liberty than natural liberty. He said, to back to nature which means not to go in forest but to back to human nature.

He famous says is that, "thinking *man is deprived animal*". He was against science and rationality that brought modernity in European society, people became slave and corrupt.

Real will and Actual will-

Actual will is for man self help, individual centric, animal instinct. But real will is moral and for community that brings liberty. "*Individual shall be forced to be free*". Sebine says, it is forced liberty, paradox of liberty, that is special base thing in Rousseau. For him morality is nothing other than the ability to see oneself through the eyes of others and act appropriately.

Hobbes considers might is right, Locke believed natural rights no can take, but Rousseau is in direct democracy and criticised representative and parliamentary democracy that was developing in England. He rediscovered civil society according to Sebine, and doesn't make differ it with state. It was popular sovereignty for Rousseau but Hobbes considers legal sovereignty. However, Rousseau's sovereignty is general will that is blend of community and civil common good. He thinks that people have religious duty to follow general will, a nation and state has to be moral for all community.

Rousseau's theory laid the groundwork for the 20th century most oppressive regimes and political doctrines. Rousseau had the political model of Sparta and the ancient world in mind while writing. His writing became source of French revolutionaries, who cried for liberty, equality and community. ...

-----to be continued ---- By Dr Ranjay Reddy.