

Ethics_SS Class 15

7th July, 2024 at 1:00 PM

REVISION OF THE PREVIOUS CLASS (01:01 PM)

TELEOLOGY (01:07 PM)

THOMAS HOBBS

- He was an English philosopher.
- According to him- Humans by very nature are selfish, Brutish, and unkind.
- If given freedom, they will indulge in a fierce battle for scarce resources to fulfill their self-interest.
- Hence, the prescription is that people should come together through a social contract to form a state known as the **Leviathan state**.

Leviathan State:

- 1. The state will have absolute power to govern.
- 2. People will not have absolute rights.
- 3. The state will focus on education to induce obedience among people.
- 4. However, there exists an exception to absolute obedience which is self-preservation.
- If the state fails to protect citizen's life and security then individuals may have the right to defend themselves even if it means resisting the authority of the state.
- For Example, North Korea.

UTILITARISNISM (01:22 PM)

JEREMY BENTHAM

- The moral worth of an action is determined by the dictum **Greater Happiness for a Greater Number**.
- For example, if in the process of establishing a power plant, some tribal families are getting displaced, Bentham will not pay attention to it.
- His theory was based on the principle of **Pleasure and Pain** that is maximising the benefits for the majority.
- Secondly, for him happiness is not about quality but how much one is happy which he justified by saying **Push-pin is the same as poetry**.

Criticism:

- 1. Overlooking the interest of minorities.
- 2. Defining happiness only in materialistic terms.

REVISITED UTILITARIANISM BY JS MILL (01:40 PM)

- 1. He supported the theory but in such a way that individual actions should not bring harm to society that is pleasure for some should not bring displeasure for others.
- 2. He distinguished between higher and lower-order pleasure where intellect-based pleasure is considered more important.
- 3. According to Mill, "it is better to be a Socrates Dissatisfied rather than a fool satisfied".
- 4. He also put forward the idea of liberty where he mentions that in the process of serving the majority, minority interest should not be compromised because the liberty of every individual is non-negotiable.
- 5. In the process of defending utilitarianism, Mill ended up overturning it.
- Hence, he was known as a "Peter who denied his master".

CONCEPT OF COMMON GOOD (01:49 PM)

| Utilitarianism Common Good | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Unit | Individual | Unit = Society |
| Aim | To maximize benefits for the maximum number of people | Maximize the benefit for society as a whole |
| Example | CCT, DBT, Subsidies | Investment in social Infrastructure (Schools, Colleges, hospitals, Roads, etc) |

DEONTOLOGY (01:57 PM)

- Focus on the process rather than the outcome.
- One of the chief propounders is **Immanuel Kant**.
- The moral worth of an action is determined by the "act".
- He gave the principle of "**Categorical Imperative**".
- According to Kant, an action is morally right, if it fulfills the principles of the Categorical Imperative is Universal, rational, Impartial, etc.
- **There are four principles of Categorical Imperative:**
 1. Principle of Universality;
 2. Principle of Equality;
 3. Humanism Principle;
 4. Duty Principle.

Principle of Universality:

- Acting in such a way that it can be made into a **universal law**.
- For example, the act of stealing, or cheating cannot be justified under any circumstances.

Principle of Equality:

- These universal laws should apply to all including self.
- If there are exceptions and anyone is excluded then it is not based on **Categorical imperative**.
- For example, "You show me the man, I show you the rule" defies this principle.

Principle of humanism:

- People should never be treated as means but as an end in themselves.
- Hence, duty is done for the welfare of the people rather than using them in the process of fulfilling other interests.
- For example, surrogacy.
- Objectification, commodification, child labour, false advertisements, adulteration, Greenwashing, use of humans in clinical trials, etc, are unethical.

Duty-based principle:

- Acting in the right manner because it is the right thing to do and not because of any reward or fear of punishment.
- For example, **Nishkam Karma**, Promoting, professing, and propagating your religious values is right but mobilising the vote bank on religious lines goes against the duty principle.

VIRTUE-BASED ETHICS (02:28 PM)

- "WHO" is performing the action is more important than "WHAT" action is performed.
- It is not an "**Evaluationary**" approach.
- It focuses on shaping the **moral fabric** of society.
- It is a **character-based** approach.
- The moral worth of an action is determined by "**If virtuous person will perform same action in a same situation**".
- According to Aristotle "**Virtuous person when confronted with ethical dilemma will always make right-choice**".
- Hence, it established the significance of **socialization** in a desirable manner.

The perspective was criticised on the following grounds:

- 1. It fails to provide a definite model to arrive at moral decisions.
- 2. There is too much **subjectivity** in defining what constitutes virtues as they vary with respect to context.

Socrates: "Knowledge is Virtue":

-

True Knowledge **Ethical** **Happiness**
====> Life====>

- 1. Scientific temper;
- 2. Critical thinking;
- 3. Anti-thesis for your thesis.
- According to Socrates, "An unexamined life is not worth living that is one should question, fact check and develop critical thinking".
- For example, the recent trend of fake news often tends to create conflict between communities in India.
- Socrates has emphasised on courage that is the freedom to speak one's mind, the ability to speak the truth, etc.
- For example, a major chunk of the world believes in Chinese aggression but they fail to speak up due to financial dependency on China.
- According to him, in case of conflicting promises, one should follow a promise that has higher moral worth.
- For example, during the pandemic Indian government prioritised the welfare of the people over its economic objectives.
- According to him, happiness does not flow from external conditions such as wealth, power, etc but by living a life that is examined.
- A thought similar to Socrates is also found in other philosophies.
- For example, according to Bhagwad Geeta, Gyan Marg is the means to achieve Moksha.
- In Buddhism, Nirvana is achieved through meditation and introspection.
- In Jainism, the path of right knowledge is to achieve Kaivalya.
- Just as a seed requires soil, water, and Sunlight for its germination, human life requires introspection and examination for its growth.

Plato:

According to Plato, there are four cardinal Values:

- 1. Wisdom;
- 2. Courage;
- 3. Temperance;
- 4. Justice.

Wisdom:

- Wisdom = Knowledge + Morality.
- It is defined as the application of knowledge in the right direction.
- **Wise people have the following traits:**
- **1. Prudence:**
- Ability to make sound decisions by considering the consequences and weighing various factors before acting.
- **2. Humility:**
- Wise individuals recognize the limit of their knowledge and are open to learning from others.
- **3. Empathy:**
- A vice-person tends to understand the perspective and emotions of others.
- **4. Resilience:**
- They have the ability to bounce back and use failure as an opportunity for growth and learning.
- **5. Self-awareness:**
- Wise people have a deep understanding of themselves which enables them to make choices aligned with their values and goals.
- Dr Rajendra Bharud, Collector of Nandurbar District, the role of Sam Manekshaw in Bangladesh liberation war.
- **6. Courage:**
- Bravery to do justice.
- For example, physical courage: firefighters, soldiers, frontline health workers during COVID-19.
- Intellectual courage: researchers, innovators, activists.
- Moral Courage: Whistleblower, etc.

Courageous people have the following attributes:

- 1. They take decisive action when needed.
- 2. They are flexible and able to navigate the circumstances with determination.
- 3. Walk the talk.
- 4. Selflessness.
- **7. Temperance:**
- This virtue is a strength because it protects us against any excess we commit and it includes **self-regulation**.
- **Current relevance:** road rage, gaming disorder, credit card culture, trolling, breakdown of relations on petty things, mob violence, increased incidences of radicalisation in society, etc.

THE TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE NEXT CLASS- Aristotle.