

**Introduction to Western Political Thought**  
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**Lecture No. 15**  
**Locke – I: Intro, State of Nature and Natural Rights**

Hello and welcome everyone. In this lecture today, we are going to start with a new thinker John Locke. And John Locke is in the social contract tradition. They argued for a form of authority or state sovereignty that was based on consent. In that sense, the state or its sovereign power was an artificial entity based on the contract among the equal man. When they came together to manage their common affairs to maintain order and peace in society, they constituted a civic or civil authority. That constitution of civil authority was based on their consent.

John Locke was part of that social contract tradition which argued that a state is an artificial entity. We are going to have three lectures. In the first lecture, today, we will focus on John Locke's personal life and his eventful pursuit of political philosophy. His influence in shaping the political discourse in England. And, in the second part of the lecture, today, we will focus on his idea of 'state of nature' and how that conception of a 'state of nature' was different from Hobbes that we have discussed in the previous lecture.

And we will conclude today's lecture, by discussing his views on natural rights particularly his views on the right to life, liberty, and property. In the second lecture, we will particularly focus on his text, *Two Treatises on Government*, and how he argued what is the limited form of government? What are the limits? Why do we need government in the first place? So, and how this limited government was constituted through the covenant? That we will discuss in this second lecture.

And in the final and concluding lecture on Locke, we will focus on his justification for the right to dissent. Locke in that sense is the first social contract theorist who provided the individual with the right to dissent from the rule. So, what is the justification for the right to dissent? We will discuss in the third and concluding lecture on John Locke. We will then discuss or critically assess the contribution of John Lock to the western political philosophy. Let us begin with Locke's views on a 'state of nature' and natural rights in today's lecture.

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➤ John Locke was the philosopher of modern liberalism. He extended the social contract tradition, which was started by Hobbes. Locke, like Hobbes, demolished any divine right theory of the state or the sovereign power. His compelling account of limited government and its legitimacy based on the consent of the governed, become the basis of the modern liberal democratic form of governments.

➤ Unlike Hobbes, Locke was a theorist of a limited government. His political philosophy became the basis for modern liberalism and its discourses on politics such as - individuals autonomy and their inalienable rights, state as necessary evils, that government is the best which governs the least, i.e., minimalist government, state's legitimacy rest on its capacity to maintain law and order and protect individuals rights. Thus Locke's justifications for an individual's inalienable right to life, liberty, and the property has now become the basis of any discourse on modern state and politics.

➤ Locke led a very eventful life and witnessed much of the epoch-defining events and scientific discoveries in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century England and Europe. He was rightly regarded as the most influential modern English political philosopher. He was against all forms of absolutism - temporal or spiritual. His arguments for liberty and equality among the men and religious tolerance was the basis of modern discourse on state and politics. However, Locke is also criticized for his justification for the extraction of resources from the colonies. Ironically, a theorist of individual autonomy and free will, Locke himself had an investment in the slave trade.

If you locate Locke in the intellectual tradition in western philosophy, he appeared to be a philosopher of modern liberalism. And liberalism has argued about certain rights of the individual as the autonomous, independent being, the state and its authority is based on the will or consent of this individual which is self-defining, individual autonomous subject and the existence of a state is to protect their rights.

So, Locke and his philosophy, you will find the reflection of these liberal ideas and he extended the social contract tradition that we have discussed while discussing Hobbes. Hobbes is the first modern philosopher in that sense who argued that a state and its sovereignty was the artificial construct and not a representative of divine ideas or divine rights of the king. That did not provide the legitimacy of the modern state and sovereignty. Legitimacy is derived from the consent of people. And in Locke also we have the extension of this kind of argument on state and sovereignty.

Locke like Hobbes demolished any divine right theory of the state or the sovereign power. So, the power of the state and its legitimacy were not derived or cannot be legitimized based on the divine right of the king or monarch. That was the basis of the theological discourse on the state. So, why we should obey the sovereign. We will discuss it in the next lecture while we study how Locke had distinguished between the governance of family or paternal government in the household from the political government. He made a clear distinction between these two forms of governments in the household or family or state in the political society.

In that sense in Locke is similar to the Hobbesian conception of the state as an artificial legal and corporate entity. Its legitimacy was not derived from the divine right of the king. But on the consent of the rule. His compelling account of the limited government and its legitimacy was based on the consent of the governed. All kinds of government or rulers derived their legitimacy, not from the religious discourse or theological discourse on the divine right of the king. But on the consent of the government and then become the basis of modern liberal democratic forms of government.

Today, in much modern liberal democracy, the frequent election where electorates or voters as the individual political-legal subject having an equal right that is of 'One man one vote', 'One vote one value'. So, this kind of procedure for electing the government is the source of legitimacy of the modern government. And this is practiced in modern liberal democracy across countries. This Lockean argument about the legitimacy of government based on the consent of people and the government is limited government. That is something radically different from the Hobbesian conception of absolutist monarch or power of the state.

Unlike Hobbes, Locke was a theorist of a limited government. His political philosophy became the basis for modern liberalism and its discourse on politics such as individual autonomy and their inalienable rights. The modern liberal discourse on politics is based on this fundamental premise that an individual as an autonomous subject has certain inalienable rights and the state as a necessary evil. So, the state is evil but a necessary evil. That means a state is required to maintain order and ensure the terms of the contract and peace among the citizens. But it is a kind of evil which prevents the exercise of freedom and liberty on the part of the individual.

The modern liberal discourse on the state as a necessary evil and that government is the best which governs the least. That means the idea of minimalistic government or state's legitimacy rests on its capacity, to maintain law and order and protect individual rights. These are some of the basic tenants of the modern liberal discourse on politics. That is individual has certain rights as an autonomous subject. The state is a necessary evil. But then, the state is best which governs the list. That means the minimalistic state and state's existence is for the protection of individual rights, for the maintenance of law and order.

The law is the primary function of a modern state even today is seen as in the maintenance of law and order. So, the coercive apparatus of the state like police and army is there to maintain law and order. And then leave the maximum areas of individual life, free from state

interference and that will lead to the pursuit of economic trade, business, commerce that will lead to prosperity in the society. These kinds of arguments or the tenants of these arguments you will find in Locke's philosophy. Thus, Locke's justification for the individual's inalienable rights, right to life, liberty, and the property has now become the basis of any discourse on modern state and politics.

When we discuss modern state and politics, we necessarily talk about certain inalienable or fundamental rights of the individual which a state must protect. Locke argued about these rights as the right to life, liberty, and property. Locke led a very eventful life and witnessed much of epoch-defining events and scientific discoveries in the seventieth and eightieth century England and Europe. It was a time when there was a kind of new search for the knowledge or source of political stability. As we have discussed in Hobbes and Locke is somewhat contemporary of Hobbes.

In England, there is a lot of political churning or factionalism among different groups: royalists, parliamentarians, representing the interest of the aristocrats, the Catholic Church, and the protestant ethics. There was a kind of instability in the political domain and search for a new source of order and stability, and also simultaneously, there were discoveries in the fields of knowledge, science, and discoveries. Locke was developing his political theorization in the context of these epoch-making events in the political field and the scientific discoveries.

He was rightly regarded as the most influential modern English political philosopher who was against all forms of absolutism and this is in contrast to Hobbesian justification for the absolute rule of the Monarch or the sovereign body. In contrast, Locke was critical of any form of absolutism whether it is temporal in the forms of political power or spiritual in terms of Church or religious authority. Thus, all forms of tyrannical authority Locke criticized, and his arguments for liberty and equality among the man and religious tolerance was the basis for the modern discourse on state and politics.

The fundamental premise of modern state and politics is that all individual that inhabits within the territory of that state or equal and have certain liberties or freedom. A state must protect those liberties and freedom. And also, his views on religious tolerance that means how the state should not interfere in the religious matters or matters of belief among its subjects. Whether the subject should follow one religion over the other or practice in that particular form or any other form, the state should not interfere in those matters. When we

talk about these things even today in the modern state, you have its roots in Locke's political philosophy.

However, Locke was criticized for justification of extraction of resources from the colonies and ironically a theorist of individual autonomy and free will, Locke himself had an investment in the slave trade. That we will discuss when we critically assess Locke's political philosophy.

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**John Locke (1632-1704): Brief Bio-Sketch**

- John Locke was born in 1632 in England. It was a turbulent time in England's political history. There were growing tensions between the royalists and parliamentary forces, which culminated in the Civil War (1642-49). Locke's father fought on the side of parliamentary forces in this war.
- After completing his schooling from prestigious Westminster School, Locke joined Christ Church College, University of Oxford. As a fellow of the College, Locke decided to study medicine. The study of medicine profoundly shaped his political philosophy. His preference for careful observation and application of past experiences in resolving the challenges of the present is derived from the methods he learns while studying medicine. He was equally influenced by the scientific developments of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Europe.
- The study of medicine had also influenced Locke's later professional life. He cured the Earl of Shaftesbury, the leader of the parliamentary faction, from the liver disease. Locke subsequently joined his household and also worked as his secretary. This association with the Earl profoundly shaped his political philosophy as well as his professional and political life.

Now, we briefly look at the personal life of Locke. His period was between 1632 to 1704. So, John Locke was born in 1632 in England. This period was a turbulent time politically in England's political history and this turbulence or instability or anxiety was a result of the tension that was growing between the royalists and parliamentary forces. It culminated in the civil war that led to the beheading of then Charles I and parliamentary forces controlling political authority or exercising the political authority.

There was the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Also, simultaneous tension was unfolding within the religious forces that supported the Catholic Church or those who were in favor of protestant ethics, among the parliamentarians and royalists. Locke was growing in that political context, where there was lots of tension or conflicts among different kinds of political authorities whether religious and political parliamentarians. The parliamentary forces were trying to limit the absolute power of the monarch. Thus, Locke further fought on the side of parliamentary forces in the English war.

Locke after completing his schooling from the prestigious West Minster School joined Christ Church College at the University of Oxford. As a fellow of the college, Locke decided to study medicine. So, this study of medicine profoundly shifted his political philosophy and his preference for careful observation and application of past experiences in resolving the challenge of the present. It was derived from the methods he learned while studying medicine. The study of medicine shifted the political philosophy of Locke particularly his focus on observation.

When developing a theory of knowledge of politics, the observation is the guide for such theorization and the precedent or past as a source for resolving the conflict of the present is something that he learned from medicine. He was equally influenced by the scientific developments of seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe. This you can connect with the previous lectures on Hobbes, where we have discussed that Hogg, Copernicus, Decades, Francis Bacon, Newton, and Galileo brought what a new discourse on knowledge, philosophy, mathematics, geometry, and astronomy.

Locke on the one hand was developing his thoughts in the context of political instability and discoveries in the field of knowledge and philosophy. The study of medicine had influenced Locke's later professional life or career. It occurred when he cured Earl of Shaftsbury who was the leader of the parliamentary fraction from the liver disease. So, he operated on him and cured his liver disease. Locke subsequently joined his household and worked as his secretary.

So, much of his political thinking and theorization developed out of this association with Earl of Shaftsbury who was the leader of the parliamentary fraction. And on many contentious issues, he advised the Shaftsbury. There was the belief that much of the liberal ideas or republican ideas that we had in Locke's philosophy was shaped or influenced by his association with the Earl of Shaftsbury. Thus, this association with Earl profoundly shifted his political philosophy as well as his professional and political life.

And he gradually came from the academic life of teaching and theorizing on politics, Locke played an influential role in legislating many laws or arguing in favor of certain contentious laws. So, this association with Earls of Shaftsbury allowed Locke to enter the public and political life of England.

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➤ In his young days as a fellow at Christ College, Locke was, like Hobbes, a supporter of the absolutist monarchy. He believed it to be a justifiable price to be paid for the maintenance of relative peace and order in society. He regarded human conditions as that of conflict and hostility, which require the existence of a strong authority for the peace and order to prevail. Such views are expressed in Locke's early writings, such as *Essays on the Law of Nature* (1660). However, such views of Locke changed after his association with the Earl and also his exile in Holland under the reign of James II. He realized the values of religious tolerance. He develops this idea in his *An Essay on Toleration* (1667).

➤ The year of the Glorious Revolution, 1688, was a turning point in the professional career of John Locke. His works brought him a considerable reputation in the intellectual as well the political life in England. He was a member of the Board of Trade and Commission of Appeals. His *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* made him a household name and perhaps the most influential political philosopher. Locke had very delicate health but eventful life filled with strains and controversies. He spent his last year quietly in Essex, where he died in 1704.

➤ His major works are *An Essay on Toleration* (1667), *Second Letter on Toleration* (1689), *Two Treatises of Government* (1689), *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), *Thoughts on Education* (1693), *On the Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695). However, his *Two Treatises of Government* is regarded as his *magnum opus*, and much of the discussion that follows over the course of three lectures on Locke is based on this treatise.

This you can find when you look at Locke's early writings and later matured works. So, in his young days as a fellow at Christ College, Locke was like Hobbes a supporter of absolutist monarchy. He believed it to be a justifiable price that one needed to pay for the maintenance of relative peace and order in society. He regarded the human condition as that of conflicts and hostility which required the existence of a strong authority for peace and order to prevail.

So, this was his young political speculation about the need for an absolutist monarch or the authority to maintain order and peace in a condition of conflict and tension that characterized human life. Such views were expressed in Locke's early writings such as *Essays on the Laws of Nature* which he wrote in 1616. However, these absolutist views particularly and he was known as the theorist of limited government. His change after association with Earl, when he lived a life in exile in Holland under the reign of James II.

In Holland, he realized the value of religious tolerance and there were political strife and tension. Because of the religious belief among Catholic or protestant ethics. So, the monarchy believing in the authority of the Catholic Church wanted to assert the superiority of Catholic over protestant ethics. Nonetheless, they were willing to give concession to the protestant, whereas the dissenters were arguing that the tolerance or expression of religious belief should be seen as a right of the individual rather than concession from the royalty.

Thus, much of the English civil war or political instability was the result of religious intolerance. So, the parliamentary forces or monarchy was constantly at the loggerhead also. Because of the religious belief or intolerance to accommodate or to interact with each other.

This value Locke learned when he went to Holland and realized that how religious tolerance would lead to prosperity in the society. These views, he expressed in *an Essay on Toleration* which he further wrote in 1689 as the second, later on, toleration. So, the idea of religious tolerance became the basis of Locke's political philosophy and much of his political treatise is set to be based on his religious premise.

The year of glorious revolution 1688 was a turning point in the professional career of John Locke. His work bought him a considerable reputation in the intellectual as well as political life in England. He was a member of the Board of Trade and Commission of Appeals. His 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding' and I will strongly recommend you to read this text to understand how human being learned something new. Is it something based on his or her innate capacity to reason or intellect or it is based on the human experience through sensation and based on those sensations human capacity to reflect or reason that leads to knowledge.

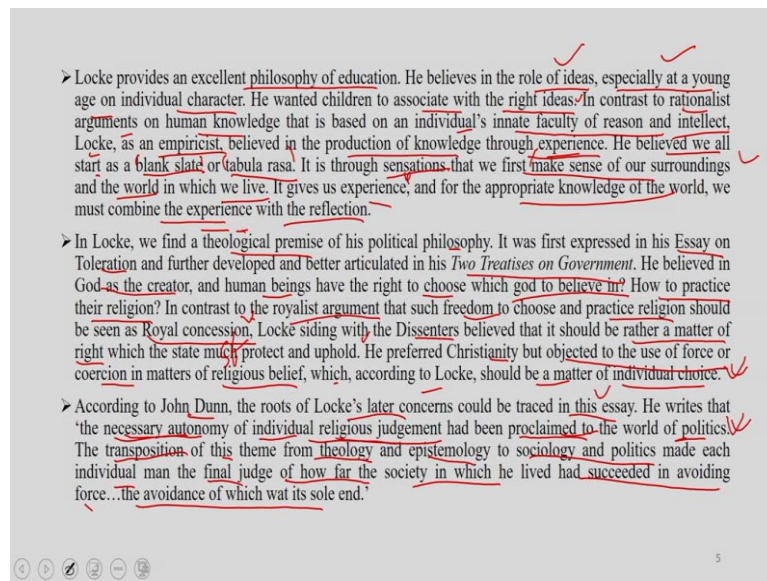
This particular essay I will strongly recommend you to read that is 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding' that made him a household name and perhaps, the most influential political philosopher in England and Europe. Locke had very delicate health. But the eventful life filled with strains and controversies. So, with Newton and many other scientists or certainly the political fractions, Locke had many differences of opinions. He spent his last years quietly in Essex, where he died in 1704.

His major works are an 'Essay on Toleration' in 1667, 'Second Letter on Toleration' which is more famous than the previous letters, and part of the 4 essays on toleration which he wrote in 1689. *Two Treatises of Government*, in 1689. An 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding' 1690, 'Thoughts on Education 1693', 'On the Reasonableness of Christianity, 1695', where he expressed similar opinions as that of Hobbes, where he talked about how Christian religion cannot provide the political stability or ensure the political obedience from the individual as an autonomous or equal member in the society.

However, his *Two Treatises of Government* was regarded as his magnum opus and much of the discussion that will have on the course of three lectures on Locke was based on these treatises on *Two Treatises of Government*.



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➤ Locke provides an excellent philosophy of education. He believes in the role of ideas, especially at a young age on individual character. He wanted children to associate with the right ideas. In contrast to rationalist arguments on human knowledge that is based on an individual's innate faculty of reason and intellect, Locke, as an empiricist, believed in the production of knowledge through experience. He believed we all start as a blank slate or tabula rasa. It is through sensations that we first make sense of our surroundings and the world in which we live. It gives us experience, and for the appropriate knowledge of the world, we must combine the experience with the reflection.

➤ In Locke, we find a theological premise of his political philosophy. It was first expressed in his Essay on Toleration and further developed and better articulated in his *Two Treatises on Government*. He believed in God as the creator, and human beings have the right to choose which god to believe in? How to practice their religion? In contrast to the royalist argument that such freedom to choose and practice religion should be seen as Royal concession, Locke siding with the Dissenters believed that it should be rather a matter of right which the state must protect and uphold. He preferred Christianity but objected to the use of force or coercion in matters of religious belief, which, according to Locke, should be a matter of individual choice.

➤ According to John Dunn, the roots of Locke's later concerns could be traced in this essay. He writes that 'the necessary autonomy of individual religious judgement had been proclaimed to the world of politics.' The transposition of this theme from theology and epistemology to sociology and politics made each individual man the final judge of how far the society in which he lived had succeeded in avoiding force...the avoidance of which was its sole end.'

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Locke provided an excellent philosophy of education. He believed in the role of ideas at a young age on individual character. He wanted children to associate with the right ideas and that shifted the character of an individual in later life. So, we focus on the political philosophy of Locke. But he was equally involved in theorizing about politics or understanding the source of human knowledge.

On education, he thought that the children should associate with the right ideas especially when they are young and in contrast to the rationalist argument on human knowledge based on an individual's innate faculty of reason. And intellects of many scholars or the rationalist will argue that human source of knowledge is the reason or the intellect. And this reason and intellect are innate to the human being.

In contrast to such arguments, Locke who an empiricist becomes another tradition of thinking about knowledge and production of correct knowledge in modern Europe. Locke as an empiricist argued in contrast to that rationalist argumentation believed the source of knowledge as human reason and intellect that is innate to the human being. Locked believed in the production of knowledge through experiences. And experiences are the true source of human knowledge or human understanding.

He believed that we all start as a blank slate. When we are a child, we are like a blank slate or what is also called the Tabula Rasa. We do have no prewritten values, understanding, or judgment. This we all develop through our experiences. It is through sensation. So, the sensation is the first thing that we as a human child use to make sense of our surroundings. It

is through sensation that we first make sense of our surroundings and the world in which we live and these sensations of the world give us experience and for the appropriate knowledge of the world, we must combine the experience with the reflection.

Then we use the reason and intellect for developing the appropriate knowledge of our surroundings and how to improve that surrounding. How to make life better? How to lead a more satisfying life? These are all that propels human beings, guided his conduct and this conduct or knowledge is based not on some innate human qualities. But human beings develop it through sensation, experience, and reflection.

In Locke, we also find a kind of the theological premise of his political philosophy that is to say his belief in the religious ideas shifts much of his political philosophy. This theological understanding is first expressed in his 'Essay on Toleration'. He further developed and better articulated in *Two Treatises on Government*. He believed in god as the creator of human beings and they have the right to choose which god to believe in. How to practice their religion? And in contrast, to royalist argument that such freedom to choose and practice religion should be seen as a royal concession.

Locke siding with the dissenters believed that it should be rather a matter of right which the state must protect and uphold. So, his argument about human belief or faith in a certain religion, and forms of practice is the individual right where a state should not interfere. In England, because of this argumentation, the royalist accommodated or excepted the difference of religious practices among its subjects. But such differences royalists argued should be seen as their concession. Whether as the dissenters were arguing that such differences are the rights of the individual and not the royal concession.

Locke while arguing about the toleration sided with the dissenters and wanted the monarch or the state to not interfere in the religious matter of the individuals. He preferred Christianity. But objecting to the use of force or coercion in the matter of religious beliefs which according to Locke should be a matter of individual choice or individual right, to choose which god to believe in and practices to follow.

In Locke, you have this argument about religious toleration based on this innate belief in the human capacity, according to the will of the god and in this pursuit of action of belief in certain gods and practices, a state should not interfere. A state should not use force to convert the individual or to force an individual in believing certain practices and gods. So, the force

cannot be the basis of religious authority or cannot be the basis or true religion. It should come out of individual choice. That is the basis of his limited government or the government based on the consent of people and not on the force or coercion as we have in Hobbes' justification for the absolutist monarchy.

According to John Dunne, the roots of Locke could be traced in his essay. Dunne wrote that the necessary autonomy of individual religious judgment had been proclaimed to the world of politics. This individual autonomy and religious judgment were for the first time expressed in the world of politics by Locke. The transposition of this theme from theology and epistemology to social and politics made each man the final judge of how far the society in which he lived had succeeded in avoiding force the avoidance of which was its sole end.

The purpose of human life or authority is to control or enable the individual maximum areas of life, where he or she can exercise his liberty or freedom without interference or limits. This theological premise was then we have in Locke's political treatises also. On religious tolerance, he argued that individuals should be free to choose any religion or practice any form of religion.

The state should not use the coercive apparatus for the individual in believing certain things or not believing in certain things becomes the basis of his ideas on the limited government which should be based on consent and not on coercion.

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➤ However, his theory of religious toleration was problematic on many counts. He did not extend it to the Catholic as, according to him, they are more loyal to a foreign authority in Rome. He also did not extend it to the atheists whom he regarded as without firm belief and, therefore, dishonest and could be a danger to the authority and security of the state.

**State of Nature**

➤ As a social contract theorist, Locke uses the similar ideas like Hobbes's such as state of nature and contract or consent to develop his theory of natural and inalienable rights of the individuals, limited government, and right to dissent. However, Locke's views on the state of nature are radically different from the Hobbesian state of nature.

➤ In contrast to the Hobbesian state of nature as a perpetual war of each against all, Lockean state of nature is the realm of perfect freedom and equality. It is 'a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions, and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man.' It is also a state of equality 'wherein all power and jurisdiction are reciprocal, no one having more than another.'

However, this theory of religious toleration was somewhat problematic in the sense that he did not extend this idea on religious toleration to Catholics as according to Locke. The

Catholics were more loyal to foreign authority in Rome. If you think about Christianity as the seat of the Catholic Church or Catholic religion, Catholic ideas on god or religion are based in Rome and all the temporal power or monarchs are loyal to the church there in Rome and the national loyalties became subordinated to this overall loyalty to the church seated in Rome.

So, this idea of religion in Locke was not extended to those who were Catholics and the monarch in England was their private life believer in that Catholic Church or Catholic religion. Secondly, he did not extend it to the atheist who does not believe in any god. According to Locke, those who are atheists do not have any firm belief. Therefore, those atheists could be a danger to the authority and security of the state and society.

There were problems in his account on religious toleration. Nonetheless, it becomes the basis for a plurality or diversity in society. How state should navigate that plurality and diversity? So, there were limits to his ideas on religious toleration. Nonetheless, it opens up new ways of doing politics by managing the religious pluralism and diversity that exist in any society or nation.

Now, we move onto his ideas on 'state of nature' and as a contract theorist, Locke uses similar ideas like Hobbes such as 'state of nature' and contract of consent to develop his theory of natural and inalienable rights of the individual, limited government and right to dissent. So, all these fundamental ideas in Locke are the inalienable rights of the individual, the limited government, and when an individual has a legitimate right to dissent against the government. All these ideas in Locke were based on the social contract tradition. The government was formed based on a contract among the free and equal members out of their voluntary participation in the contract with other equal and free members in the society.

However, Locke's views on the 'state of nature' were radically different from the Hobbesian 'state of nature'. So, the 'state of nature' is again as I have said in my lectures on Hobbes is not a real or historical state of life. It is a theoretical idea or hypothetical idea that how human beings would behave in a 'state of nature' that is the state of life, where there was no common authority, no civil authority, or arbitrate to execute the laws. Thus, life in such a state was defined differently by Hobbes and Locke.

In Hobbes, we have seen life in the sense of a civic authority or a sovereign would be nasty, brutish, and short. There would be a perpetual war of each against all and there would be a

constant threat to life. There could not be the opportunity for long-term pursuit in trade, agriculture, and business. So, the 'state of nature' for the social contract tradition became a theoretical premise to justify, to elaborate upon their understanding of government or the basis of legitimacy of such government and their power.

The 'state of nature' should be understood in that sense in contrast to the Hobbesian 'state of nature' as a perpetual war of each against all. Lockean 'state of nature' was the realm of perfect freedom and equality. So, there was no war. There was no tension. There was no threat to life and liberty in the 'state of nature' as Hobbes argued. In the Lockean 'state of nature', everyone was free and he or she enjoyed this freedom to the maximum level without any coercion. All of them were truly equal in the sense they could be the same legal and political rights.

It was a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit. They were the individuals who were free and equal members of society. So, these free and equal members in society, according to Locke, in a 'state of nature' would lead a life of perfect freedom. That means, they could do anything or dispose of their possessions or their persons in any manner they think fit. There was no interference. There was no coercion on their action or pursuit of their actions in terms of disposition of their possessions and wealth within the bounds of the law of nature or love of nature.

One condition, one limit that was there in the 'state of nature'. It was the idea of love of nature and without depending upon the will of any other man. So, except the laws of nature, there was no limit to human action, to the pursuit of his or her actions in the 'state of nature'. The only condition that Locke put before the human actions or individual freedom was the laws of nature except that there was no threat from other individuals. There was no coercion from other individuals and that made life in the 'state of nature', according to Locke as the state of perfect freedom and equality among the citizens or subjects.

It was also a state of equality, wherein all power and jurisdiction were reciprocal and no one having more than the other. That was also another conception or characteristic of Lockean 'state of nature', where there was a kind of mutual or reciprocal relationships between and among the free and equal members. They were all free to do what they think was fit without subjecting themselves or their action to any other man would and none of them possess their physical or intellectual power in greater number than that. In that sense, there was a kind of equality in the 'state of nature', where everyone was free to pursue what they think was fit or

desirable to them. There was no coercion and threat from others as we see in the Hobbesian 'state of nature'.

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➤ Thus the Lockean state of nature is peaceful, and the mutual trust in the laws of nature guides interactions between the autonomous and free individuals. The laws of nature thus teach everyone – being equal and independent not to harm 'another of his life, health, liberty, and possessions.' Therefore Locke describes the existence of family and society in the state of nature, the conduct of which is guided by their mutual assistance and duty as well as the right to self-preservation.

➤ However, due to the complexity of life and absence of established known law, an impartial judge, and authority to enforce or execute the laws and punish the transgressions, human beings come together to form a civil authority through contract. And, based on this, Locke develops a theory of limited government and individual's rights to dissent. These we shall discuss in the next lectures.

**Natural Rights**

➤ According to Locke, human beings have certain natural rights which precede both civil and political society. These rights are - right to life, liberty, and property. These rights individuals retain even after the formation of political society and the state. In fact, the primary responsibility of the state is to protect these rights. The right to life or self-preservation is the fundamental right of each individual. In preserving life, they fulfill the desire of their creator, i.e., God. Hence, Locke would not justify suicide or servitude to another human being.

Thus, the Lockean 'state of nature' was peaceful and the mutual trust in the laws of nature. So only thing that governed the conduct of free and equal individuals in the 'state of nature' was their mutual trust in the laws of nature that guided the interactions between the autonomous and free individuals. So, this idea of autonomous and free individuals was the basis of any discourse and discussion on politics and state in modern times. That was well articulated in Lockean political philosophy that individual as a self-defining autonomous subject with free will lived in the 'state of nature'. That was without any authority in perfect peace with this mutual trust in the laws of nature.

Now, the laws of nature thus taught everyone equal and independent not to harm another of his life, health, liberty, and possessions. So, these rights like the right to life, health, liberty, and possessions were the fundamental natural rights of the human being and the law of nature required everyone in the 'state of nature', to acknowledge these rights of other and not to harm their person, life, health, liberty, and possessions. Therefore, Locke described the existence of family and society in the 'state of nature'. The conduct of which was guided by their mutual assistance and duty as well as the right to self-preservation.

All the actions that governed the individual conduct in the 'state of nature' as they would respect these laws of nature, so long as it did not harm their self-preservation. It was not a threat to their own life or right to self-preservation. However, due to the complexity of life

and the absence of established known law. This we are going to discuss in any way in the next lecture, while we discuss the justification for the limited government. Lockean idea that why human being living the life of perfect freedom and equality, and relative peace and order in the 'state of nature' would create something like a limited government which posed a limit to their exercise of freedom and liberty.

So, what is the need for the justification of such a rule? There was the absence of established law, the power to legislate, and the law which should be known to everyone. So, this natural law that prevailed or guided the conduct of human beings in the 'state of nature' was based on mutual trust. There was no established law which should be explained to in clear unambiguous term. Thus, the laws of the state did that.

It explained clearly in the unambiguous term, to everyone what is the law of the state. Therefore, every inhabitant of that country residing within its territory must subject their activities to those laws that were well established. It meant passing by the legitimate authority in the state. So, in the absence of established known law and impartial judge who could adjudicate when the laws had been violated or course of action had violated the law. It should be the quantum of punishment for such violation.

So, an impartial judge was absent in the 'state of nature'. There was no authority to enforce or execute the laws and punish the transgression. In the absence of these three things that is the absence of established law, an impartial judge or absence of any executive authority could execute or implement these laws, and punish those who transgress. Human beings come together to form a civil authority through a contract. So, the formation of the government was based on the consent of this free and equal member, to institute the state with the power to legislate, execute, and adjudicate.

These three primary roles of the modern state are even shaping the practices in modern democracies or modern state in all the national states. It was based on this idea of the formation of the government based on the contract. Locke developed a theory of limited government and individual rights to dissent. This we shall discuss in the next lectures. Now, we move onto his ideas on natural rights. So, in the 'state of nature' which kind of rights Locke argued that human beings have and such rights are inalienable. That means even after the formation of political society in a state, these rights are not transferred to the government.

So, the very existence or the legitimacy of government was based on its ability to protect those rights of the individual which were natural or inalienable. According to Locke, human beings had certain natural rights, and these natural rights theories or the concept of natural law also shaped many traditions of law including the positivist tradition. The idea of natural justice or natural laws shaped the many positivist laws in different countries and societies. Similarly, the idea of an individual having certain rights must be protected. We call it fundamental rights in our constitution.

Similarly, it is the idea in other liberal democracies. According to Locke, a human being's certain natural rights which precede both civil and political society, and what is this civil and political society? We will discuss and how we could create the state out of that in the next lecture. These rights according to Locke were natural rights of the individual, the right to life, liberty, and property. So, these three rights are the basic premises of modern liberal government. The existence of modern government is based on the consent of the free and equal member and its exercise of power, and authority is justified, so long it is capable of protecting these three rights of the individual that is the right to life, liberty, and property.

This is the basic tenant of liberalism as well. So, these rights individual retains even after the formation of political society and the state. The primary responsibility of the state is to protect these rights. The right to life which is the first right as well as the duty of the individual and this he differentiated from the other two rights. Where the right to life is seen as the individual not just his or her right. But also, the command of his or her creator that is the god, so every individual must pursue those course of action which helps or her to preserve his life.

So, this right to life or self-preservation was the fundamental right or each individual in preserving life. They fulfilled the desire of their creator that is god. So, according to Locke, the child of god or that creator or god had certain expectations and one of the primary expectations was the preservation of that life. So, human beings should do or pursue those courses of action which would help in the protection of those life or preservation of that life.

Hence, Locke, would not justify the ideas like suicides or servitude of another human being that was beneath the dignity of man or expectation that god has from the man. That is, he should not do certain things that will harm himself. So, it is very contrast to the libertarian argument. So, the individual is free and is free to even harm himself, and when a state or other authority which is external to a human being is legitimate or right in interfering an



individual's life when an individual is going to harm himself. So like drugs or doing certain actions or pursuing a certain course in life that would be detrimental to their health that is harmful to their own life.

Those are something that Locke would not allow the individual in the grab or their right to life. The right to life means owning the body and owning the body is the individual right as well as the duty to preserve it. So, he would not give the individual right to harm himself or commit suicide or servitude to other human beings. That means, the right to life inherently expressed or explicitly argued that human beings as the individual autonomous subject should not submit to the will of other men. That is the fundamental premise of the modern government.

So, all individuals are equal and this equality is in the sense of political and legal terms. That means none of the individuals is subjected to another person will and it is the basis of prosperity, property, and growth in the society.

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➤ His conception of liberty is somewhat unique. He distinguishes it from the license. According to Locke, human beings could truly realize their freedom within the conditions set by natural laws. According to Locke, although the state of nature is 'a state of liberty, yet it is not a state of license: though a man in that state have uncontrollable liberty to dispose of his person or possessions, yet he has not the liberty to destroy himself, or so much as any creature in his possession...the state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges everyone.' Thus for Locke, liberty is not a license to do anything that one wants, as many libertarians would argue. But it is realizable within the framework set by the natural laws. This would later become the basis of the republican theory of liberty or freedom.

➤ Locke argued that the individual's right to own property is as dear as their right to life and liberty. This private property individuals own when they mix their labor – physical or intellectual with the common resources provided by God. Thus the equality that Locke argued exists in the state of nature was about political and legal equality. He justified economic inequalities that are the result of individuals' efforts or endeavors. However, this accumulation of private property is not limitless. He argued that individual must ensure that 'there is enough, and as good, left in common for others.' Thus Locke put three limits on the accumulation of private property – first, it should be the result of one's own labor; second, one should acquire only that much which he can use; and finally, he must leave as much or enough for others. However, his limits on the acquisition of property fall away with his ideas like owning or purchasing the labor power of the servants, productivity, and so on.

The next right that Locke's argued as the inalienable natural rights of the individual is liberty or right to liberty that is to pursue any course of action that we deem fit for our life and we should not be interfered with by external authority in the pursuit of that course. However, in Locke, we have a very unique definition of this liberty which he distinguished from the license. According to Locke, a human being could truly realize their freedom within the conditions set by the natural laws. That is when we regard similar rights to other individuals.

In our pursuit of liberty, we are not free to harm others or pursue those courses of action which would be detrimental to the life and health of others. The liberty one could enjoy, according to Locke, was within the limits. That is set by natural laws. According to Locke, although the 'state of nature' is a state of liberty yet it is not a state of license. That means human beings are free to do anything. Though a man in that 'state of nature' had uncontrollable liberty as there was no civil authority. Yet there was a limit that human action was their mutual trust in natural laws.

Beyond that, there was no civil authority or state to monitor their action or prevent them from harming. That was the basis for the construction of or constitution of government or the state. Although, the 'state of nature' was the state of liberty yet it was not a state of license though a man in that state had uncontrollable liberty to dispose of his person or possession. Yet he had not the liberty that destroyed himself or so much as any creature in his possession. So, even in the 'state of nature', where there was uncontrollable or limitless right to pursue any course of action to dispose of any possession of the individual, the individual did not have the right to destroy himself or any other creature that is under his possession.

So, the 'state of nature', a law of nature to govern it which obeys everyone and individual action must be subjected to that natural laws. Thus, for Locke, liberty was not a license to do anything that one wanted as many libertarians would argue today that human liberty, a license for the individual as a rational being, or as a self-defining subject to do anything. There should not be any limit or control to the freedom of individuals or the right of the individual. The liberty for many would be like a license to do anything and any areas of life, or any course of action that is limited by the government is a treat to liberty.

So, there is a kind of this extremist position while defining liberty which is seen as the license to do anything. Whereas for Locke, this liberty was possible or one could enjoy it only within the limits set by the natural law. But it's realizable within frameworks set by the natural laws, according to Locke. This would later become the basis of the republican theory of liberty or freedom. Thus, the freedom that an individual enjoyed was within the framework of the law. Thus, liberty cannot be said as the absence of law or any legal institutional framework. In that absence, there could not be a condition that is conducive to the pursuit of liberty or freedom for the individual.

The realization of liberty and freedom required the existence of the law, institution, and human beings who could truly realize his liberty or freedom within the limits set by laws and

institutions rather than the libertarian argument that human beings should be left free from any kind of interference or limit. The individual as the rational subject knows what is best for him. Therefore, he should not be interfered with. In contrast, then Locke argues that human liberty or individual natural right to liberty is realizable only within the framework of natural laws even in the 'state of nature'. So, human beings conduct in the 'state of nature' where there is no authority must subject to this natural law.

In the absence of this natural law or trust in the natural law, there would be chaos, conflict, and life would be then like Hobbesian 'state of nature', of conflict, tension, or perpetual war of each against the all. Whereas the 'state of nature' that Locke argued was the state of order, peace, where there was family or society that existed, and human interaction was guided by natural law. That means human beings should not interfere with the right to life, liberty, and property in the 'state of nature'. In that sense, the right to liberty was the natural right according to Locke. But it is realizable only in the framework of laws and constitution even in the 'state of nature'. It was based on these limits posed by the natural laws.

Then the third and perhaps, the most central in natural rights that we have in Locke is the right to own property or private property. In Locke, we have a very logical defense of private property. Locke argued that the individual right to own property is as dear as their right to life and liberty. This ownership of property makes it possible for a human being to lead a happy or true or dignified life. So, the right to life and liberty is not seen as different from the property right. The property right is very central for leading a meaningful or dignified life.

In Locke, you have this justification of private property based on this idea that it is as dear or as necessary for the individual being as their life or liberty. Now, his defense of private property on the idea that human beings in the 'state of nature' has given the common resources by god and each individual is free to use those common resources. Now, when it becomes possible and legitimate for the individuals to own something from that common resources provided by the god.

He considered this legitimate ownership of private property when an individual makes his labor that is both physical and intellectual with the common resources provided by god. So, there is an apple tree or other resources that are common to everyone. But, when human endeavors or use his physical or intellectual capacity to acquire certain apples or to acquire certain things in other words, when he mixed his labour physical or intellectual with the common resources then he or she can make legitimate claims to own that resources.

So, this justification of private property in Locke is the basis of again the modern liberal premises of defense of private property. The justification is this combination of human labour with the common resources. Thus, the equality that Locke argued existed in the 'state of nature'. It was political and legal equality. Certainly, the pursuit of private property will lead to economic inequality. In Locke, you have justification for such economic inequalities, so long as it exists as the result of human labor when it is mixed with the common resources that are available to everyone.

He justified the economic inequalities that are the result of individual efforts or endeavors that means human labours both physical and intellectual. However, this accumulation of private property was not limitless in Locke. He argued that an individual must ensure that there was enough left in common for others. So, in the pursuit of private property individuals should ensure the demand of natural law that resources or common resources equally available for others to combine their labours and their private property.

So, this pursuit of private property in Locke was not limitless. So, what we have here are three limits to the accumulation of private property: First, the justification of private properties not through inheritance or claiming resources through illegal means. The first set of limitations that he put on the pursuit of private property that this property should be the result of one's labour and this one individual involved his capability or endeavors, his physical or rational capacity to acquire the resources that ownership is legitimate ownership, according to Locke.

Second, the individual should acquire only that much which he could use. Suppose, the example of an apple, it needs 10 apples from the common resources, the individual should not acquire 100 or 1000 apples. So, the second limit to the pursuit of private property is that one should acquire only that much which one can use for himself. If he takes more than that it will not leave enough for others to acquire and the natural law requires individuals to leave enough for others in the 'state of nature'.

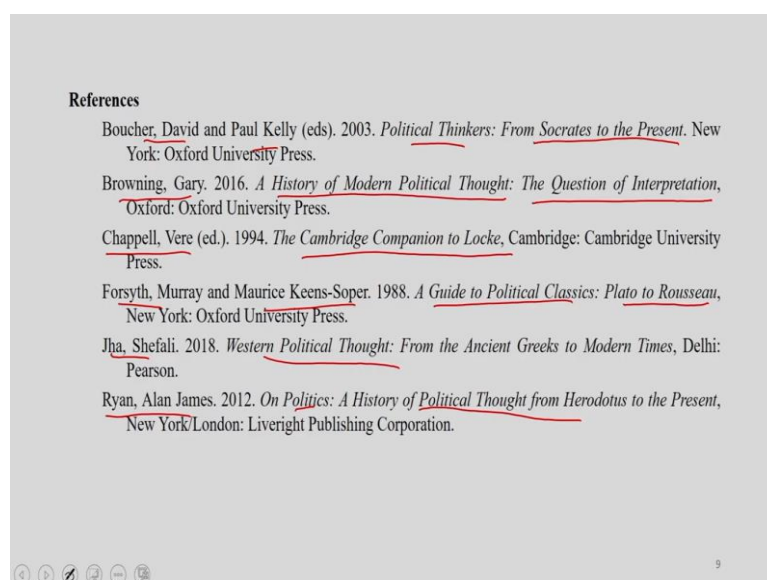
So, the third and final limits that he put for the rightful accumulation of private property that individuals must leave as much or enough for others. So, these are the three limits to private property. But according to Locke, human beings are free time acquire as much as he can provide, it is a result of his labor and he leaves for others. He should accumulate only that much which he can use.

However, the limits that he put on this acquisition of property fall away with his ideas like owning or purchasing the labor-power of the servant's productivity. With their use of money and productivity of the society, and his justification of the idea. So, the labor is not something which only individual possess. But he can purchase while paying the charge for others labor or labour of his servants. Thus, the result of the labour or one servant could be seen as a legitimate means to acquire private property.

In Locke, you have a very strong defense of private property and the result of that private property or accumulation of that private property that is economic is perfectly justified. So, in Locke, you do not have the justification of equality in all senses. The equality that he talked about existed in the 'state of nature'. It was only political and legal. So, all human beings are children of god and have similar or resources status. The differences that existed were the result of their endeavors that is physical or the intellectual endeavors of the individual. The result of such endeavors if it is equal that is perfectly justified, according to Locke.

However, there are certain limits that he posed on the individual right to own private property as well. So, these are some of the things that I wanted to discuss with you in today's lecture. In the next lecture, we will move onto his ideas on limited government. For the themes that we have discussed in this lecture, you can refer to these books.

(Slide Refer Time: 66:19)



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Thus, these are some of the texts you should refer to understand more on Locke, his times, and his views on the 'state of nature' and the natural rights of the individual. That is all for today. Thanks for listening. Do share your comments and feedback. We will be happy to hear and respond. Thank you all.