

**Introduction to Political Theory**  
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**Lecture – 17**  
**Power - II: Legitimacy and Hegemony**

Hello and welcome friends. In this lecture today, we are going to discuss power. This is the second lecture on power, where we are going to focus on the idea of legitimacy and hegemony. About how the two is connected, we have discussed in our previous lecture on power, while discussing about different conceptions of power particularly, on Talcott Parsons, and Steven Lukes understanding of power. (Refer Time: 01:02) Also, we have discussed about the relationship between power and authority.

In this lecture, we have three sections. We will start with the idea of legitimacy and how a legitimate power is different from a brute or absolute use of power through force or coercion. From there, we will also discuss the inter-relationship between legitimacy, authority, and power. How these three are separate and yet overlapping in many ways? Finally, in the last part of our lecture, we will focus on the idea of hegemony and how Gramsci, argued, about the exercise of power without using coercive means or coercive apparatus of state and only by gaining the consent of people for the ruling.

So, people willingly, give the consent. In a way, the ideology or culture of that society or stage of history is used in such a way, where the ideology or interest of the dominant becomes neutral or common sensical ideology of that time. That we will discuss in the final part of our discussion.

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**Legitimacy**

- The term legitimacy basically suggests acceptance of or compliance to the authority in a state by the people. In other words, an authority is seen as legitimate when it does not have to resort to coercive means or physical force to ensure the compliance of its order by the larger population. It legalizes the authority of the state and ensure people's obedience.
- Unlike power, legitimacy does not apply coercion or physical repression or force to make people obey the authority. Thus, it does not compel or coerce the people to act in certain ways. The very legitimacy of the authority rests on the perception of people. They willingly obey the authority.
- Therefore, in order to justify the political power or authority to rule over the people or to seek political obligations, legitimacy works on the basis of the consent of the people.

2

To begin, with the idea of legitimacy is basically about the acceptance or compliance to the authority by people. This idea of consent, compliance or acceptance to the authority in a state by the people is something, which defines what we call legitimacy. It talks about whether certain orders or kinds of power and institution is willingly, accepted.

People are willingly, giving consent to the exercise of power by a particular institution of the state or not is a reflection of the legitimacy that the institution or authority exercises in the eyes of people. It is basically, about that acceptance and compliance or willing acceptance or compliance without using coercive apparatus or physical force. That is something, which constitutes legitimacy for an authority.

In other words, an authority is seen as legitimate, when it does not have to resort to the coercive means or physical force to ensure the compliance of its order by the larger population. In daily life, we may come across many institutions of state, where we willingly accept the orders, instructions or guidelines as given by that particular authority. So, that willing acceptance or compliance to that order or guidelines or to that authority is a reflection of legitimacy of that authority. It does not have to resort to violence or coercive means, in order to ensure the compliance or acceptance on the part of the population. Thus, in other words, legitimacy legalizes the authority of state and it ensures people's obedience.

Unlike power, legitimacy does not apply coercion or physical repression. In power, if we remember, we began with the idea of getting another person to do something, which that person would not have done otherwise. In other words, power is seen as a kind of domination of one over the other. It also, requires some kind of coercion or compulsion which one agent exercises over another agent. Power is hence, seen more like a kind of domination with the exercise of physical or coercive elements.

Unlike power, legitimacy, does not apply coercion or physical repression or force to make people obey the authority. So, the existence of authority rests on this part. As we have discussed, authority is legitimate power. It also, exercises certain power. The exercise of that power depends on the legitimacy of that authority in the eyes of the people.

So, power, what we see as the exercise of coercion or physical repression and it does compel or coerce the people to act in certain ways. In a society or organization, if there is hierarchy, then hierarchy operates through the power-relation, where a particular agent may get other people or sections to behave or act in a certain way, using the power which he or she may exercise.

In legitimacy, on the other hand, what we see, there is legitimacy of a particular institution on authority, which is raised on the basis of its perception in the eyes of people. So, any authority or institution is most effective, when it ensures, the willing acceptance or compliance of the people. Therefore, authority, always try to be effective by ensuring or acquiring the legitimacy in the eyes of people. The people's perception about the legality or legitimacy of the institution, we see state institutions such as police, army, educational institutions etc. So, all these institutions may have the coercive element to it, but its durability or effectiveness rests on the idea of, whether it is seen as legitimate force or not in the eyes of larger population. Thus, the idea of legitimacy makes realize whether a government is a legitimate government or not.

Now, how, one can assess or examine the legitimacy of the government, if it is elected by the people, and elections are held in the free and fair manner. All these things add up to this perception among the people about the legitimacy of the organ of state or government. So, authority, in other words, always try to acquire more and more legitimacy in the eyes of people. Legitimacy, in that sense is about the perception of the

people. And once, they perceive an institution and authority as the legitimate authority and situation, they willingly, obey the order or comply to the order of that authority and institution.

Therefore, in order to justify, the political power or authority, to rule over the people or to seek political obligations, legitimacy works on the basis of the consent of people. So, people allow certain institutions and authority to exercise power over them or to rule them or govern them only, on the basis of this idea that they have given themselves consent to that authority or institution.

Suppose, in modern democracy, question arises, why we should consider or obey the government which we have in the state. The legitimacy of the government in a democracy rests on the idea that people themselves have voted that party to power. This exercise of voting is the source of legitimacy for that party to govern the state. The legitimacy, thus, for a government in a democracy rests on the idea of consent of the people.

The rest of the institutions or authority of the state, therefore, are regarded as legitimate because they are overall supervised or controlled by an elected government, whom people themselves have elected. The consent becomes the legitimizing factor for the government in a democracy.

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- So, if there is no authority, which is legitimate then it leads to instability or unstable governments which are often confronted with the disobedience of the people or communities.
- Thus, legitimacy upholds two specific things. One, it upholds the right to rule by a political authority. Another, it ensures political obligation or obedience from people without applying physical force.
- In Hobbes, a legitimate political authority is understood as the sovereign which protects people's lives in the 'state of nature'. According to Rousseau, the French political thinker, power of authority is appropriate only if it is legitimate and people have consented to it.
- If there is no legitimate authority, then the authority prevails through coercion and makes the proliferation of brute force and coercive power in the society. It is not an authority in the real sense.

3

If there is no authority, which is legitimate then, it leads to instability or unstable government which is often confronted with the disobedience of people or communities. So, what happens, in some territory or parts of a nation is we may find people are openly, defying the institution of state or authority of the state and they run some kind of parallel government. This we can understand about the exercise of power and the idea of legitimacy with this conception which we discussed in our previous lecture about the de facto or de jure authority.

So, de jure authority is the legal representation, but de facto is some institution which is not de jure. That means, it is not legal, but in real sense, it exercise all power. In some reason, we may have the presence of legal or de jure authority, yet the actual control or power exercised is not by such institutions and there we have the people and community openly, defying the institution and authority of the state. Thus, it happens, when there is a kind of crisis of legitimacy or lack of legitimacy which leads to a confrontation.

Thus legitimacy, upholds two specific things. One, it upholds the right to rule by a political authority. So, who gets to rule is something, which is determined by the idea of legitimacy, whether a party in a democracy has the mandate to rule. This is something, which we see through the legitimacy or not only, on the basis of whether that party had the legitimate mandate in a free or fair election or not.

Another, it ensures, political obligations or obedience from the people without applying physical force. This is the most crucial part of authority and institution of a state in modern democracy or a modern nation-state, whether legitimacy is ensured or the obligation or obedience of state and its authority is ensured without recourse to violence or coercive means. Of course, those are not exceptions, and the modern states are in a way, uses monopoly of legitimate violence. It can unleashes (Refer Time: 12:48) violence, but question arises, whether such violence is legitimate or not in unleashing that violence and whether the state follows their procedure which is established by the law or not.

Thus, even though violence is unleashed by the state which can be regarded as legitimate violence, it follows, certain procedures established by the law. So, the idea of legitimacy, then, insures two things. First, it upholds the right to rule by a political authority and

second, it ensures political obligation or obedience by the people without applying physical force.

In some of the thinkers like Hobbes, a legitimate political authority is understood as the sovereign who protects people's life in the 'state of nature'. In Hobbesian conception of the 'state of nature', there is a constant threat to individual's life, because everyone is competing with everyone else and everyone's life is at risk. Now, they come together through a contract and created the sovereign. The responsibility or task of this sovereign which he calls the 'leviathan' is thus, to protect the life of individuals which is the basic responsibility of the sovereign.

The legitimate authority in Hobbesian conception is a sovereign which protects individual life from the 'state of nature' or the risk present in the 'state of nature'. According to Rousseau, the French political thinker and philosopher, power of authority is appropriate, only if, it is legitimate and people have consented to it. The idea of consent for the legitimacy of political rule and political authorities is very central to the idea of Rousseau and his conception of legitimate authority.

So, if, there is no legitimate authority, then the authority prevails through coercion and makes the proliferation of brute force and coercive power in the society. It is not an authority in the real sense. Again, when there is a lack of legitimacy like in many societies or states, we may have military junta (Refer Time: 15:05), dictators and authoritarian of different kinds. Now, their rule or regime is based, by and large, on the coercive apparatus like the military, police, and army.

When the authority lacks the willing obligation of the people, then there is a kind of absolute use of brute force or the coercive power of state and it proliferates, in the society, also. It leads to instability, chaos, and it may also, lead to anarchy, and thus, that form of power is not really, a kind of authority, in the real sense.

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➤ It is believed that only a just state or a state having legitimate authority is morally acceptable to people. According to Pettit, "a state is just if it imposes social order that promotes freedom as non-domination for all its citizens. It is legitimate if it imposes a social order in an appropriate way". So, if state fails to create a social order then it is neither acceptable nor considered as legitimate political authority.

➤ For Locke, legitimacy reflects on the nature of a civil state. It emphasizes on whether the transfer of the administrators or political authority's is completed in an appropriate way or not with people's consent.

➤ Locke said that "no one can be put out of this estate and subjected to the political power of another without his own consent". Further, he said whosoever has given consent to the social contract and accepted political authority is bound to obey it or its law.

4

So, it is believed that only a just state or a state having legitimate authority is morally, acceptable to the people. But why people protest? Why people challenge or defy their own government? Or whether the protest, demonstration or criticism of the government is within the parameters of democracy or it transcend that boundary. It is a fine balance which gives the idea about how legitimacy of a government or an institution is about the perception of people, the institution and state.

According to Pettit, a state is just, if it imposes a social order which promotes freedom as non-domination for all of its citizens. It is legitimate, if it imposes a social order in an appropriate way. The idea of legitimacy, in this definition is first about creating a social order which people will accept willingly, without use of coercive apparatus or physical force, and people will willingly participate in that social order, where there is freedom for all and freedom is understood as non-domination. Everyone is free and equal member of that particular social order, where there is no domination of one over the other. If a state manages to impose such a social order which promotes freedom as non-domination of each member of that society or social order, then that state is considered as legitimate state.

If a state fails to create a social order, then, it is neither acceptable nor considered as legitimate political authority. The legitimate authority or state, its task is to create a social order, where citizens or members of that social order will have freedom which is

about non-domination and they have a kind of willing acceptance or compliance to the orders of that state and authority. However, when it fails to create such a social order, then people will neither accept it nor consider it as a legitimate political authority.

For Locke, another liberal thinker, legitimacy reflects on the nature of a civil state and not a kind of coercive military state. For Locke, legitimacy reflects on the nature of a civil state, it emphasizes on whether the transfer of administrators or political authorities is completed in an appropriate way or not with people's consent. This idea of people's consent in an appropriate way, or when it comes to transfer of power is something, which is very central to the idea of legitimacy. Locke goes on and said that no one can be put out of his state. State, here, means property and subjected to the political power of another without his own consent. Thus, the idea of consent is very central to the idea of legitimacy of the government or state.

Further, he said, whosoever has given the consent to the social contract and accepted political authority is bound to obey it or its laws. The idea, then, why we should obey the government or institutions of the state? Because, it is our responsibility, to obey the government or state institutions as we have given them the consent. So, the very existence of government is based on the consent of people and once, the people give consent to the government, then, it becomes the responsibility of the people to obey the government or state institutions. The idea of political obligation as to why we should obey the government or sovereign, also, rests on the idea of consent.

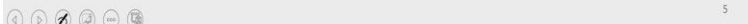
First, the very legitimacy of the state is based on the idea of consent of the people. People must obey the government or state institutions because they are legitimate, they are governing and that legitimacy or governing is based on their own consent. Therefore, they cannot defy, the laws or orders of the government.



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**Power, Authority and Legitimacy**

- There is a kind of continuum in the inter-relationships between power, authority and legitimacy. Often, the nature of power and authority gets overlapped and to separate them from each other is not that easy.
- However, ~~one~~ can make some conceptual distinction between them. Power is more about the relations of domination and subjugations. It refers to the ability or capacity to influence the behavior of others or making them do things which they would not do otherwise. It is ensured by applying coercion or force as we have discussed in the previous lecture.
- Authority, on the other hand does not forcibly influence individuals but it describes the very 'right to rule' over people or influence them in society through legitimate ways without applying coercion or physical pressure. Thus, legitimacy comes into picture to explain the appropriate or a desirable authority which seeks political obligation or obedience of people as moral.



Now, if we look at this power, authority and legitimacy, it is a kind of conundrum, where there is a kind of overlapping and yet conceptually, we can make some analytical distinctions between these three terms.

There is a kind of continuum in the inter-relationship between the power, authority and legitimacy. Often the nature of power and authority gets overlap. So, authority, enjoys or exercise certain power based on the legitimate perception of its existence in the eyes of people and yet authority do have some power to exercise over people. The nature of power and authority thus, gets overlapped and to separate them from each other is not that difficult, where power ends and authority begins or vice- versa.

However, one can make some conceptual distinctions between them. Despite such difficulties in separating them from each other, we can make some conceptual distinctions between them, where power is more about the relation of domination and subjugation, it refers to the ability or capacity to influence the behavior of others or making them do things, which they would not do otherwise. It is about the capacity and ability to influence the behavior of others. It is ensure often, by applying coercion or force as we have discussed in the previous lecture.

Authority, on the other hand, does not forcibly, influence individual but it describes, the very 'right to rule' over people or influence them in society through legitimate ways without applying coercion or physical pressure. The difference between power and

legitimacy, one can make is where, there is a kind of coercion or coercive element in the exercise of power or brute power, but authority as a legitimate power is about exercising the control or rule without taking recourse to coercive or physical pressure. Thus, legitimacy, comes into picture, to explain the appropriate or a desirable authority which seeks political obligation or obedience of people as moral.

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➤ Thus, authority is also a form of power but the way authority influences individuals in society and ensure obligation, is different from the way power functions and operates in a society.

➤ Authority guarantees a legitimate kind of power that keeps in mind the needs and demands of people while ruling over them. It is through legitimate power that makes people accept the conditions of power to be exercised in appropriate ways.

➤ Thus, authority generates a kind of willing compliance or acceptance from individuals to exercise power over them and thereby, it leads a stable government with willing people's obedience towards rule of law and governance.

Thus, authority is also a form of power, but the way, authority influences individuals in society and ensures obligation is different from the way power functions and operates in the society. So, authorities, like power is also, about controlling or influencing the behavior of others. But the way, it ensures such control and behavior is very different from the functions or the way power operates in the society.

Authority, guarantees in other words, a legitimate kind of power. So, authority guarantees legitimate kind of power that keeps in mind, the needs and demands of the people, while ruling over them. That is what makes the people believe or have the perception or perceive their government as a legitimate government. Because a) that government is based on their consent, and b) government functions and rule over them in their benefit. This is something, which is very particular to authority. It is through legitimate power that makes people accept the conditions of power to be exercised in appropriate ways by the government.

So, this authority guarantees a kind of willing compliance or acceptance from individuals to exercise power over them and thereby, it leads to a stable government with willing people's obedience towards the rule of law and governance. The stability of the government or state and authority comes from the willingness of the people to follow their orders or rules.

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**Hegemony**

- The term hegemony is attributed to the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. It is also a form of power. Where the consent of the people is attained by the ruling class without using the coercive apparatus of the state. Gramsci emphasized on the power relationship that exists in terms of ideological domination of superior or elite classes over the ruled. Unlike Marx, he did not focus specifically on the economic domination of capitalist class over the proletariat or working class in a capitalist society.
- He mainly focuses on how ideology or influence of ideas of the elite or dominating class in society can influence the minds and ideas of the lower or subjugated classes.
- Gramsci pointed out the influence of dominant culture in society. He focused on the society's super structure as its 'ideology producing institutions' through the concept of hegemony.

*Handwritten notes in red ink:*  
✓ elite  
✓ dominant  
✓ ruled

In the final part of today's lecture, we will discuss about the idea of hegemony. Hegemony is about the exercise of power, but unlike, legitimacy, hegemony works through a kind of persuasive, ideological, or cultural ways, where there is a absence of explicit use of the coercion or physical force and yet the ruling class acquires the consent of the ruled for the benefit of its class.

Hegemony is about the exercise of power in a way, where there is no use of coercive power like legitimacy. But here, the consent is acquired through the ideological and cultural ways, where the ideology of the dominant or the elite or ruling class is presented as the ideology of that time or the natural ideology or innocent kind of ideology without any kind of biasness. But actually, it represents the interest of a particular section. This is something, which we will discuss on the idea of hegemony which is about the exercise of a kind of power different than from the understanding of power, authority, and legitimacy as discussed before.

This term hegemony is attributed to the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci. It is a form of power, where the consent of people is attained by the ruling class without using the coercive apparatus of the state. In these forms or modes of the exercise of power, the consent of the people is important and it is acquired, without the use of coercive apparatus of the state. Gramsci, emphasized on the power relationships, which exists in terms of ideological domination of superior or elite classes over the ruled.

Now, in any historical point of the time, the dominant ideology of that society is often, the ideology of those who are the elites and the ruled or subordinate section often considered that dominant ideology as natural or a innocent kind of relation. They give their willing consent to that ideology.

Unlike Marx, he did not focus specifically, on the economic domination of the capitalist class over the proletariat or the working class in the capitalist society. In the Marxist understanding, the way power operates is through the means of production. So, those who control the means of production, also, control what Marx calls polity, and military. So, in Marxist understanding, the base is the economy which determines every sphere of individual and community life. It determines all the other spheres of life. Gramsci, moves beyond this kind of economic or pure economic domination to understand how ideology, culture and what Marx called the superstructures, helped in perpetuating the rule of one section over the other in the interest of one particular section.

He mainly, focused on the ideology or influences of ideas of the elites or dominating class in society, and how that can influence the mind and ideas of lower or the subjugated class. Gramsci, pointed out, the influence of dominant culture in society and he focused on the society's superstructure as its ideology which producing institutions through the concept of hegemony.

Hegemony is about the exercise of power through these ideological institutions which ensures the dominant ideology of the elites which becomes the ideology of that age or the common sense of the age. So, people willingly, give their consent and becomes the subject of that dominant ideology, considering which conceals their real interests and present the interest of a particular section.

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➤ Gramsci talked about 'ideological hegemony' or ideological representation of dominant culture prevalent in a society. The various institutions or private associations propagate or circulate cultural ideology of the elites are family, church, schools, etc. In modern times, mass media or print media is the perfect medium to circulate or influence the ideas of elites among economically and culturally subordinate classes to ensure the domination of former over the latter.

➤ Thus, hegemony explains exercise of power. However, it is about exercise of power not by applying force or coercion but by ascertaining the consent of ruled by using the dominant ideology of the elites.

➤ Hegemony, therefore is an effective tool for controlling and influencing the minds and thinking of people. It makes the ideas/ideologies of the ruling class appear as the 'natural' or 'common sense' of that age. And thereby the consent of the ruled is achieved without using the coercive apparatus by the state.

Gramsci, talked about the ideological hegemony or ideological representation of dominant culture prevalent in a society and the various institutions or private associations, such as family, church, and schools helps in propagating that ideology. In modern times, mass media or print media, through mass media and print is perfect medium to circulate or influence the ideas of elites, among the economically, and culturally, subordinate classes to ensure the domination of former over the later.

So, this business of ruling and ruled should be based on the consent of the ruled and is acquired through these ideological and cultural means to private institutions, such as church, family, and schools. And these institutions help in acquiring the consent of the ruled and the ruled itself is against the interest of the larger population. It is a kind of domination of the few over the many and yet the consent of the many is acquired through these ideological apparatuses or institutions, such as family, church, and schools.

Thus, this is how, power is exercised through hegemony as explained by Gramsci. Hegemony, hence, explains the exercise of power. However, it is about the exercise of power not by applying force or coercion. There is no use of coercive elements. So, like the mass media, family, church and schools, there is no real use of coercive apparatus of the state and yet it is in these realms, where the consent for the ruling ideology is acquired.

Hegemony, therefore, is an effective tool for controlling and influencing the minds and thinking of people. It makes the ideas or ideologies of the ruling class appear as natural and this is the way, how hegemony effectively, ensures the domination of one over the other without taking recourse to the coercive and physical force.

It ensures, the ideas and ideologies of the elites or dominance appear before the ruled or the large sections of the population as natural. There is no alternative or common sense of that particular age or a particular historical juncture. And this is how, ideology, helps in controlling and influencing the minds and thinking of people which ultimately, leads to acquire the consent of the ruled for the ruling classes in a society.

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➤ Gramsci focused on the actions of individuals belonging to dominant classes or economically superior classes and their ideas or thinking or perception in historical period that influence the subordinate classes including the working class.

➤ For him, both force and consent exists together because ruling elites or dominant classes needs to rule or maintain hegemony not only by applying coercion but also by achieving people's consent. To maintain social order it is thus, at the same time necessary to seek consent of the subordinate or subjugated lower classes.

➤ He widened the concept of base-superstructure model as argued by Karl Marx. He also included some other concepts into it like the political society, civil society and the state itself. He limited the economic determinism of 'base-superstructure' model and argued about the role of ideology and culture in bourgeoisie or capitalist society.

*Handwritten red annotations:*  
- A circle around "force and consent" with an arrow pointing to "force".  
- A circle around "ruling elites" with an arrow pointing to "ruling elites".  
- A circle around "people's consent" with an arrow pointing to "people's consent".  
- A circle around "base-superstructure" with an arrow pointing to "base-superstructure".  
- A circle around "political society, civil society and the state" with an arrow pointing to "political society".

Gramsci, focused on the actions of individuals belonging to the dominant classes or economically, superior classes and their ideas or thinking or perception in the historical period which influenced the subordinate classes, including the working class. So, Gramsci, moves beyond that economic determinism to understand how the ideas and ideologies of one class dominates or shapes their thinking or the ideas of subordinated class including, the working class.

For him, both the force and consent, and his conception of state is much more comprehensive and it includes, both the coercive and ideological dimensions of a state. So, the force and consent exists together because the ruling elites or dominant classes needs to rule or maintain hegemony not only, by applying coercion, but also, by

achieving people's consent and this concern ensures the durability or stability of their rule. So, to maintain social order, it is at the same time, necessary, to seek consent of the subordinated or subjugated classes.

He widened the concept of base-superstructure model as argued by Karl Marx. In this base-superstructure model, the economy is regarded as the base which determines the polity, civil society, religion, and society. So, Marx conception of the base-superstructure model determines the functioning of the superstructure.

Gramsci, widened that model of this superstructure and argued that the economic determinism is very reductionist or limited argument in terms of understanding the functioning of the superstructure which he considered as the civil society. And this, we can discuss as he also, included in his conception of state, some more concepts like the political society, civil society and the state itself.

And he, limited the economic determinism, that is, it is the economy which determines everything else. He saw a kind of dialectic relationship existed between the base and superstructure and it gives the sphere a superstructure, a degree of autonomy, where the ideas and ideology of the ruling class or the dominant class is legitimized and that becomes the ruling ideology of that time. So, he widened that scope of the base-superstructure model and talked about the role of ideological and cultural institutions in making the ideology of ruling class as the ruling ideology of that time.

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➤ According to Gramsci, 'the state which is usually thought of as political society, that is, a dictatorship or some other coercive apparatus used to control the masses in conformity with a given type of production and economy is a balance between political society and civil society, by which I mean the hegemony of one social group over the entire nation exercised through so called private organization like church, trade unions or schools'.

➤ For Gramsci, the state is not only a coercive apparatus as Marx put it but it is an institutions which has a wider organic meaning to it. He argued that state is a combination or an equilibrium of both 'political society' (coercive apparatus) and 'civil society' (private associations or institutions). So, civil society constantly create and re-create the 'hegemony' of dominant class ideas or ideology as the 'natural' and 'common sensical' ideas or ideology of that age.

➤ In summary, one can argue that through hegemony ruling class in the society acquire the consent of the people over whom it rules without taking recourse to the coercive apparatuses of the state.

10

According to Gramsci, the state is usually, thought of as the political society which is a dictatorship or some other coercive apparatus is used to control the masses in conformity with a given type of production and economy that is a balance between the political and civil society. By which, I mean the hegemony of one social group over the entire nation is exercised through the so called private organizations, like the church, trade unions or school.

So, for Gramsci, the state is not only a coercive apparatus as Marx put it. For Marx, state manages the common affair of the bourgeoisie and ensures its ruling over their proletariat. For Gramsci, the state is not merely, a coercive apparatus, but it is an institution which has a wider organic meaning to it. He argued the definition of a state can further, understood by this idea that for him, the state is not merely, a coercive apparatus but it has a wider organic meaning to it, and he also argued that a state is a combination or equilibrium of both the political and civil society.

Now, what does he mean by political society? Political society, he meant as a coercive apparatus, such as military, army and economy. By the civil society, he meant the private associations or institutions which legitimize and gives durability, or that is the sphere, where the new forms or possibilities or alternatives can be created and it is not in the sphere of political society.

For him, the state is the combination of both or the equilibrium of both civil society which is the realm of culture, ideology and the political society which is the realm of the coercive apparatus, like military and economy. So, the civil society, constantly, creates and recreates hegemony. It is the sphere, where the real battle of ideas and ideologies are actually debated, discussed and fought over. The civil society, constantly, creates and recreates the hegemony of dominant class ideas or ideology as natural and common sensical ideas or ideology. Thus, the making of the ideology of ruling class as their natural or the common sensical ideas or ideology of the time is a battle which is fought in the sphere of civil society and not in the political society.

In summary, one can argue, through hegemony a ruling class in this society acquires the consent of the people over whom it rules. The hegemony is an exercise of power through which the ruling class in society acquires the consent of the people, over whom it rules, without taking recourse to the coercive apparatus of the state.



We have seen in this lecture, how, legitimacy is about an authority, which exercises power without taking recourse to the coercive apparatus of the state. And then, we have discussed the relationship between power, authority and legitimacy.

Finally, in the last section of our lecture, we have discussed about the idea of hegemony as an exercise of power through the Gramscian conception of hegemony as an exercise of power, where the ruling class uses the institutions in civil society, such as family, church, and trade unions, to make its ideas or ideology appears as the ruling ideology of that time or natural or common sensical ideology of the time. It exercises through hegemony, and it acquires that hegemony without taking recourse to the coercive apparatus. So, it acquires the consent of the ruled without taking recourse to the coercive elements of the state. These are some of the things which we have discussed today.

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1. Bhargava Rajeev and Ashok Acharya. (2008). *Political Theory: An Introduction*. Delhi: Pearson Longman.
2. Hoffman John. (2008). *A Glossary of Political Theory*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
3. Lears Jackson T. J. (1985). "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony : Problems and Possibilities". *The American Historical Review*. Vol.90, No.3:567-593
4. Lull. James. (1992). "Hegemony". *Media, Communications and Culture: A Global Approach*. Columbia University Press.

For this lecture, you can refer to some of these books like Rajeev Bhargav and Ashok Acharya's, *Political Theory: An Introduction*. In John Hoffman, you can also, read the ideas on power and authority and you can also, refer to these two writings on the idea of hegemony and power as mentioned in the above slide. That is all for today's lecture.

Thanks for listening.