

Rousseau

Introduction of Rousseau as a thinker.

- He is considered as 'Father of French Revolution'
Father of Liberal Nationalism.
- First person to talk about fraternity.
(Liberty, equality & fraternity).
- He is known as greatest champion of direct democracy.
- According to him Englishmen are free only once
in a 5 year.
- He is the father of the concept of popular sovereignty.
- He has given the concept of general will.
- First person to criticise the -ve impact of right to property.
- Hence he becomes the source of inspiration for
socialist scholars also.
- Rousseau is known as thinker of paradoxes.
- He inspires liberals as well as socialist, democrats as
well as totalitarians. His
- His language is very paradoxical. For ex he says that
 - 'Man is born free but is everywhere in chains'
 - Thinking man is depraved animal.
 - Man can be forced to be free.
- He is the first person to suggest that problem does not
lie in human nature but in social institutions. We don't
need to change human beings we need to change the system.
- Man is born free but everywhere in chains
- Above statement is the opening statement of his famous
book 'The Social Contract'. It sums up his political philosophy.

reconciliation

Objective of Rousseau was how to achieve the ~~reconciliation~~ betⁿ liberty & authority.

- According to him god has created free man but social institutions have put him under the chains. What we think as freedom is mere the p appearance of freedom.
- Hence he wanted to create a system where man can enjoy true freedom. For that he suggests to create a system where man lives under those laws which he has created in participation with others.

Rousseau's views on human nature.

- He takes a very positive view of human nature.
- For him man is essentially good. Man has both self love & sympathy for others. He calls man as "Noble Savage".

State of Nature

- State of nature is a state of bliss, a state of perfect freedom & happiness. Man is acting as per his true nature.
- In the state of nature man was savaged/uncivilized but he was noble.
- As society has advanced, reason came to dominate man. Reason has spoiled man. Reason has taught man the feeling of mine & thine. He calls thinking man a depraved animal.
- Science has not resulted into human advancement. Rather created more problems. It is taken away human freedom. He is a critic of science, modernity & civilization.
- The most imp. factor of spoiling the state of nature was the institution of private property. It made man selfish.

constitution.
general will

law in parliament
majority.

Social Contract

Going back to the state of nature is not an option.
We have to devise a system in the present that can
give us freedom.

Social Contract result into emergence of general will.

Man has 2 types of wills.

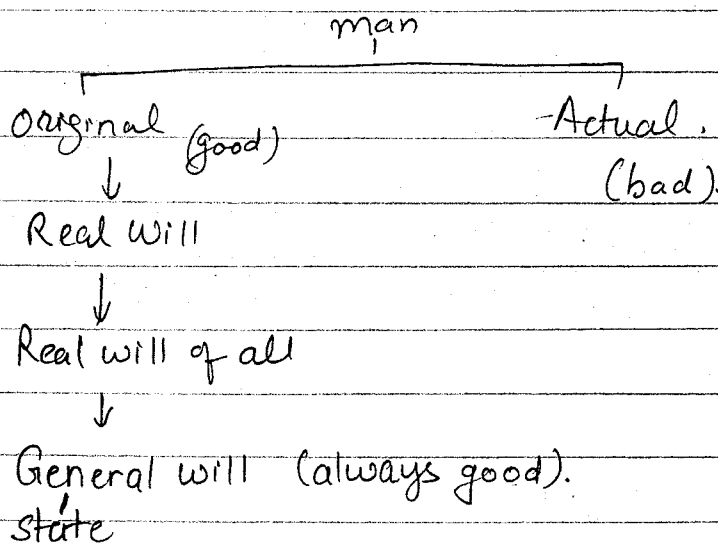
- Original will / Real will
- Actual will

Original will is good will. Actual will is bad will.

original is natural / spontaneous will.

Actual will is shaped by society, custom, laws.

- Man is free only when he acts as per his real will,
not as per his actual will.



What is General Will?

General will is a myth created by Rousseau, which provides
a strong basis to the sovereignty of the state. According to
Rousseau in a social contract people entered into a contract
by which they agreed to act as per their original will. Original wills

of all combine together to produce general will. State represent the general will. General will is the good will of all. General will is not will of majority, it is the will of all. Majority represent political sovereignty. General will represents popular sovereignty. By obeying the laws of state man achieves real freedom. However for Rousseau it is necessary that man should have direct participation in the formation of laws. He was critic of representative democracy. According to Rousseau man should be forced to be free. Man should be forced to obey general will.

Criticism of Rousseau's theory of general will.

- His theory was misused by totalitarian thinkers & politicians.
- It resulted into creation of a metaphysical classification betⁿ types of wills & types of freedoms.
- Misused by fascist rulers demanding complete obligation towards the state & forcing people to observe the laws & suggesting that they are obeying their original will when they obey the laws of the state.
- It is said that there is not much difference between Rousseau's general will & Hobbes' Leviathan. It is said that general will is nothing but Hobbes' Leviathan with his head chopped off.
- However we should not overlook that Rousseau was the champion of liberty. He made strong advocacy for direct democracy. His intention was not to justify state absolutism.

- Soci in general, & marxist in particular
criticise Rousseau for creating this myth that
a state presents general will. For Karl Marx, state
& represents only the will of propertied class.

(Tue)