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1: Augustine took the concept of ‘human self’ from Plato who put forth his view that human being is a living entity who have the thinking and reasoning faculty. Plato emphasized the perfecting things which are evil and then following them, while Augustine believed in the ability to choose from good and evil, which is an inbuilt capability of humans bestowed by God. Augustine further explained his theory of human nature by suggesting that now humans are more inclined towards bad and evil instead of the right path. He also gave reasons for this postulation that humans had developed this habit of fulfilling unjustified demands and they are unable to control their desires due to attractions around them. The worldly and material things blind their view of good and bad. He believed that choosing evil over good was inherited to man because their first parents Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Moreover, he said that we could only escape from this inheritance if God showed some mercy and grace upon us. Augustine’s view of human nature is that humans are sinful by nature, as they were given this as heritage, and God has chosen few people to whom he showers his blessings and grace and he had given them the sense of repentance. Rest of mankind has no sense to repent and they will remain peccable and be punished for their wrong doings after death (Garett).

Thomas Aquinas's concept of human nature was inspired by Aristotle’s view of perception, reasoning and free will. Unlike Augustine, who believed that God loves his creation and he showers his blessings on them. He also believed in the immortality of mankind by resurrecting of man. He emphasized on reasoning and said that people can differentiate between good and evil whereas Augustine believed that God has chosen few people for repentance and the rest of them have no thinking faculty.

According to Machiavelli, as he discussed in ‘The Prince’, human nature is extremely dark by which he meant that humans are selfish and they only care about themselves. Humans are full of ego and their ego is more important than other humans and they can go to any extent to fulfill their desires. He described humans as evil, self-conceit and selfish. He discussed humans as corrupt and he can cross all the ethical limits as well, to finish his motive. He further elaborates the human psyche by saying that humans can manipulate anyone if they found it beneficial for themselves. A man can even forgive the murderer of his father or any close relative to gain worldly benefits (UK essays). Augustine and Aquinas had the opposite view about human nature. They did not label the man as a corrupt being, but they said that the thinking and reasoning faculty of man is weak and strong, respectively. Machiavelli rejected the theories of Aristotle and Plato which were the basis of Augustine and Aquinas's theory of nature.

Political Nature of man:

According to Augustine, the state has the power to punish the fallen with its army and all authorities. He saw this perspective with an insight of religion that it is the process of punishing and segregating the wrong doers from the righteous. This is the process that God separates human kind into good and evil categories. He tried to find out the link between the eternal certainty of his beliefs and mind with the political and social world to which he was exposed. When his both concepts united, he questioned the existence of faithful subjects in the unfaithful world where evil people are mingled with good and virtuous ones. According to him, God has given power to the states to punish the sinful, and to make them fearful of eternal punishment. He said that evil people in a society make the society unjust and faithful subjects of that society suffer, and according to him, these kinds of societies are not worthy of being called states but are just mere gangs of criminals who have power and authority (Mattox 4).

The ideas of Augustine and Aquinas are different from each other. According to Aquinas, man has the ability and drive to live in a society. He believes that a political society emerges from the needs and demands of man. It is not given by nature but it forms from the perspectives of man. Man tries to co-relate with religion, but he aspires to live in a political society as well. If a person cuts himself off from society, then he is either sub-human or super-human. Human beings live in societies as evil and good people and are punished by the state incase of disobeying the law. Although Augustine stresses upon the point that societies are naturally made and humans living in those societies are subjected to God and are punished by God for their deeds and God guides the state’s decision of punishing and sparing man through his divine powers. Machiavelli views regarding politics were that human nature and religion were totally opposite of later philosophers. According to him, religion is a driving force in a society that can excite people’s emotions and a good and intellectual leader can use religion as a shield for his political career. This view of Machiavelli also highlighted the evil nature of man that he could violate anything for his personal gain. He supported this view but he never withdrew from his own opinion of religion.

2: Just war is said to be mutually agreed rules of combat and is applied when two parties share some common values which allow them to limit their warfare activities. In case of great difference between enemies, then these rules are rarely applied. St. Augustine provided his just war theory from the perspective of Christian religion that creating small acts of violence can lead up to war. But the exposition which was given by Saint Thomas Aquinas is considered more valid till date.

Augustine gave his theory consisting of guidelines for when it is justified for the nation to wage war on its enemies. He also gave few moral conducts during the time of war. He provided two aspects of war: the right to go to war and the right sorts of conduct in war. The right to go to war was based on the justification of one nation to rage war upon the other and he gave four main points in this category which are just authority, just cause, right authority and last resort. The conduct in war was linked with moral concerns of both parties.

This criteria of war was revised and expanded by St. Aquinas in the 13th century. He further elaborated that the cause of war must be just, acquiring wealth and power should not be the purpose of war. The war must be controlled by an authentic power and it should be fought on the basis to avoid evil or to spread well among the two states. Apart from these reasons given by Augustine and Aquinas, all the reasons for raging war are unjust. Machiavelli considers politics comparable to war and according to him, war is not separable from political power and if one has to ensure his power over his subjects he needs to rage war to expand his power and fear. Machiavelli sees war as an adequate capacity of ‘good arms’ and only nations with audacity of using all weapons can survive warfare. Unlike Augustine and Aquinas, he emphasized on military’s autonomy.

# Works Cited

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