FREEDOM

INTRODUCTION :- Freedom is a complex concept, so complex that it serves as good example of what philosophers call an ‘essentially contested concept’. To be sure of that, Gallie (1956) in Adcock (2005:26) posited that, the concept is essentially contested among scholars. That Concept is a mental representation of individual cognition and complex structures of language based, meaning that are both shared and contested among group of individuals. To Adcock (2005), we should note that all conceptual descriptions in social sciences rest predominantly on the examination of examples of language-use. However, uses of the generalizing phrase of concepts are always potentially open to the complaint that exactly whose (individual or group of some sort) concept is being discussed (and whose is not) is ambiguous, or even completely unspecified. Thus, concept is multifaceted and powerfully flexible word. More to that, Sartori and Riggs (1975) in Adcock (2005), opined concept as mental images and unit of thinking, that concept within political science and political theory in particular scholars have sought to investigate concept as linguistic used and cultural artefacts whose features are to be ascertained through the study and understanding of linguistic used, and concept is independent of mind of any particular thinker (Freeden 1994; Gillet, 1992 in Adcock, 2005:23).In its classical model, concepts are cognition from sensory perception. This produces an account of mental symbols that represent external reality (Adcock, 2005:2). To be sure of that, Thomas Hobbes put it that, “there is no conception in a man’s mind, which had not first, totally or by part

been begotten upon the organs of sense” while John Locke on the other hand, supported Hobbes by saying that, “words functions as signs that allow us to talk about units of thought that have originated independently of language through our sense perception, and our mental treatment of those perceptions” (Adcock, 2005:7).By and large, concept is one’s mental picture or image of a given object with prior experience based on the contextual or circumstances to which the person that intend to conceptualised its lives, which the concept of freedom is not exception because it concerns us in political science and political theory in particular. Thus, we should not expect that there will be a single, unifying consistent rule that fits all cases in conceptualizing freedom. Particularly, because freedom is something we value so highly in political theorising, there is a constant debate over exactly what the word means. Hegel put it differently that, the concept of freedom is difficult one because, “no idea is so generally recognised as indefinite, ambiguous and open to the greatest misconceptions…as the idea of freedom”(philosophy of mind, 1971 in Kurian et al, 2011:616). These disputes are often politically charged, and they are not likely ever to be completely resolved mostly among the contemporary political theorists. Analysis of the idea of concept is also complicated because it is impossible to consider freedom without taking into account related concepts such as democracy and constitutionalism, problems such as majority rule and minority rights, and the tension between liberty and equality. To this effect, this paper will use liberalism as a framework and concept of “freedom” and “liberty” is used interchangeably throughout the paper.THE CONCEPT OF FREEDOMAs we have earlier stated that understanding the concept of freedom means understanding fundamentally different ways in which the concept has been used by various philosophers. Therefore, the concept of freedom is better described than defined. For instance, Harrison and Boyd (2003) are of the views that, “everyone is against ‘sin’ and everyone is in favour of ‘freedom’, although neither can be defined so as to ensure agreement on their meaning”. That, from its origin in the Ancient Greek city-states and their democracies, freedom has been usually been considered a political ‘good’, good for individuals, organizations and society. Freedom has great advantage as a rallying call in politics arising from it opaqueness in popular usage. Freedom seems to mean whatever the speaker wants it to be and can used to gloss over potential

conflicts about a course of policy (Harrison and Boyd 2003:83). Thus, one can easily agree that freedom is vague in defining. Freedom concerns human relationships and is clearly related to power in its many forms: financial, physical and political. Literally, freedom is necessary condition, of rationality, of action, or achievement. To be free is to be able to translate one’s ideals into reality to actualize one’s potentialities as a person. Freedom is chiefly freedom from ill-health, fear, want, arbitrary arrest and public opinion (Heywood, 1992). Plato’s Republic is an attempt to establish the meaning of the term ‘justice’ and identify the characteristics of the ‘good’ state. Plato believed that freedom was bound up with self-discipline and morality. He doubted that the law was able to establish meaningful moral conditions in society without their first being a moral impetus from within people themselves. Nevertheless, he had no objection to the principle of morality being enforced by the law. Without reason and self-discipline, individuals cannot attain freedom, Plato believed, while doubting whether most people possessed these requisite qualities. On the contrary, Plato was keenly aware that the emphasis placed on ‘freedom’, so called by the Athenian democracy, created an ill-disciplined people who, lacking self-control, general factions, which degenerated into disorder that, in turn, inevitably gave birth to tyrants and dictators (Harrison and Boyd, 2003:88). This classical approach to freedom does explained what freedom is today, this is because the classical was against democracy as for government and democracy and freedom in contemporary sense has a nexus. In contemporary political theory the idea of freedom or liberty is the most central issues. A helpful approach to defining freedom was put forward by Sir Isaiah Berlin (1859) in his work “Two Concept of Liberty” which divides liberty into negative and positive liberty. Negative freedom according to Berlin, is the individual freedom from some obstacles (slavery, bondage, and prison, legal, moral or cultural restraint) to free movement. Freedom here implies the absence of external control (Sheldon Ward, 2001; Collin Bird, 2006; Heywood, 1992). This conception of freedom is predominantly found in the liberal writers (like Hobbes, Bentham and John Stuart Mill) who take freedom to be a function of the degree to which agents are interfered or obstructed. Berlin described that freedom of a man manacled to a wall in a secure prison cell is in this sense severely curtailed. The liberty of movement, action, thought, impulse, passion and so on, without some one institution, culture or law saying “you cannot do that”. Such unrestricted freedom characterizes Hobbes vision of state of nature which leads to competition, conflict, and self- destruction.

Paradoxically, this conception of liberty by Berlin can create more problems, since there is no limitation to the right of individuals (Taylor, 1979:181). The negative liberty is inadequate which do not help in social context- that is a context of rule –governed action. It remained important as providing a final criterion for distinguishing between coerced and free action. It does not help much to clarify the different types of liberty which might be distinguished between political and social structure which is the conquest of modern political theory.Positive liberty on the other hand, to Berlin, is the individual freedom to some accomplishment or substantive achievement. This consists fundamentally the presence of something quite specific- namely a certain sort of self-direction, independence or autonomy. Positive freedom is the freedom to realise one’s deepest ambition to participate in one’s own governance, and to become who one truly is. Here, one is not free just because no one prevents him or her from speaking out in public or from getting a better education. It was at this premised Laski (2004:142) assert that, “I shall not feel that my liberty is endangered when I am refused permission to commit murder. I am not even deprived of freedom when the law ordains that I must educate my children”. Positive liberty could be found in the writings of Rousseau, Kant and Hegel whose premise is totalitarian in nature. Again, the agents who are brainwashed, enslaved, under the sway of addiction of overwhelming emotional impulse, or subject to manipulation are not free in this sense (Sheldon, 2001; Kurian et al, 2011, Collin Bird, 2006). Therefore, the freedom to be well educated or to have a job or wealth or medical care is positive freedom. An example of this contrasting view of liberty might be between the economic system of capitalism (or free enterprise) and socialism (planned economy). In the capitalist United States, anyone is free to start a business, but there is no guarantee he or she will succeed or become wealthy; no law prohibits you from trying but society does not provide substantive support. In the socialist states on the other hand, individuals are forbidden from starting private business (that is denied negative freedom) but were guaranteed employment, housing, health care and retirement by the state (so they had positive freedom).However, Berlin was not comfortable with the positive freedom because he was worried about risk of giving too much power to government or even fellow citizens. To him, positive freedom is the true freedom, and suggested that positive freedom more likely result on protagonist to confused liberty with the exercise of political control, and indulge Rousseau’s notorious

remarked that, the individual may be “forced to be free” by the community if the individuals fails to understand that his or her good is bound up with that of the whole (Kurian et al, 2011:616).Thomas Hobbes placed ‘order and ‘security’ as much higher political goals than ‘freedom’ in his Leviathan (1651). Men had freedom in the state of nature, a condition in which government did not exist, but this only led to an appalling state of permanent war of all against all in which only the freedom of the strongest had any reality. Hobbes argued that, the creation of the state was a rational response to the excess of freedom previously existing in the state of nature. Freedom was only possible within the order created by the powerful state. Once the state was established, freedom was to be found in the subsequent order and in those areas of life that were not prescribed by the law. To Hobbes, the area of private life that should remain outside some state involvement is remarkably small and, in his view, should remain so. Hobbes was highly resistant to the idea that, freedom was consequent on self-government and democracy: a democracy would swiftly slide into violence and chaos of the state of nature and with such a disaster freedom would be extinguished. Thus, Hobbes notion on freedom is negative in nature (Harrison and Boyd, 2003:89). In another development, John Locke (1632-1704) as the founder of liberalism as a political creed; was influenced with the idea of liberty. Liberalism here means leaving people free, within limits to pursue their individual conceptions of goods whose limit were defined by certain publicly enforced rules of rights, it could be economic liberalism (as the right of the individual to contract, trade and operate in a market free of constraints) or the social liberalism that emphasized on social justice (Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012:492).The liberal perspectives of liberty gives priority to supreme individualist value, which to the classical liberals support negative freedom, understand as the absence of constraints or freedom of choice while modern liberals advocate positive freedom in the sense of personal development and human flourishing (Heywood, 1992:26).Locke in his perception of freedom is of the view that individuals are not totally free to do whatever they like; rather it should be guide under the purview of laws. That is, liberty to Locke is not freedom to do what one chooses but to act with the bounds of the law of nature. He asserts that, “since life was a gift that God has given as a basic moral law of nature no one had the right

to kill himself, or destroy, rob or enslave others, as well as all were equal before God” (Locke, 1690 in Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012:217).This explains that to Locke, there is a relationship between right, equality and freedom, and the natural condition was one that freedom and equality regulated by the laws of nature. Locke further elucidated that, the state of nature was not one licence, for though individual was free from any superior power he was subject to laws of nature, from the law of nature, individual derived the natural rights to life, liberty and estate (property). To him, freedom presupposed order and is possible within framework of law. That in the absence of law, there is no freedom; law granted freedom as it keeps individual from being subject to the arbitrary will of another person. In other words, freedom is a personal independence and thus, ruled out slavery as it meant another person; liberty is to be free from restrain and violence by others, which cannot be, where there is no law (Harrison and Boyd, 2003 and Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012). Locke further asserts that, “freedom as the liberty to follow my own will in all things, where the rules prescribes not; and not to be subjects to the constant, uncertain, unknown and arbitrary will of another man” (Locke, 1960 in Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012:218).This means that, the freedom of man and liberty of acting according to his will, is grounded on his having reason, to instruct him by law he is govern with and to him freedom and independence is fundamental human rights which modern liberals usually emphasized in contemporary political theory. Indeed, Locke’s notions on liberty have really influence western democracies which have recorded a lot of achievements like the 1688 Universal Bill of Rights, the 1776 Declaration of American Independence and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, Lockean notions about property rights through liberty have been criticized being a supporter of capitalism and people pursue property than other important inalienable rights.Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) as a French liberalist also contributed to the concept of freedom. His notion of liberty is from the positive social sense of the concept. To him, freedom is “obeying laws one has had a part in making”. That collective “General Will”- freedom as obedience to the totality or state is the way out, which is freedom could be possible through individual general will and freedom lies in obedience to the laws we have worked out for ourselves (Sheldon Ward, 2001; Harrison and Boyd, 2003). To Rousseau, freedom is moral

self-determination or the ability of individual to exercise autonomy and submission to the general will ensure freedom to individuals.To renounce liberty is to renounce being a man, to surrender the rights of humanity and even their duty, for him who renounces everything no indemnity is possible. Such a renunciation is incomparable with man’s nature; to remove all liberty from his will is to remove all morality from his act (Rousseau, 1958 in Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012: 322). The above quotation simply means that without freedom man is without reasoning and morality, which is very central to the growth and development of man’s attempt to perfect his society. However, in spite of the contribution made by Rousseau towards notion of liberty, critics argued that his notion promote rationality of human beings and totalitarian state power. Also his notion of morality of human to be free is a threat of violence to those who do not subject their rights to General Will.John Stuart Mill, (1859) “On Liberty”, Mill defended the right of the individual to freedom. In it negative sense, it means that society have no right to coerce an unwilling individual, except for self-defence while in positive sense, it means the grant of the largest and the greatest amount of freedom for the pursuit of the individual’s creative impulses and energies and for self- development (Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012:411).According to Mill, freedom is the most important requirement in life of rational person. That positive freedom (autonomy and self-mastery) were inherently desirable and it is possible if individuals were allowed to develop their own talents and invent their own lifestyles that is a great deal of negative liberty. In On Liberty (1859) Mill argued that, “the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others” (Heywood, 1992). This explains that Mill’s position is Libertarian in nature in that it accept only the most minimal restrictions on individual freedom and then in order to prevent harm to others. He distinguished clearly between actions that are self-regarding, over which individuals should exercise. In fact, Mill is of the opinion that liberty means much more than

simply being free from outside constraints; it involved the capacity of human beings to develop and ultimately active in self-realization.Closely related to that, Mill applied British liberalism to the “freedom of mind”, where his argument focuses on “intellectual liberty” against customs and conventions which includes; A new or controversial view point may be true and suppressing it will rob humanity of useful truth, even if the obnoxious view is false and defeating of it by truth will strengthen the correct view. The best society for Mill will be full of such critical thinkers and tolerant social liberty of conscience and intellectual, thus, freedom of press and academic reasoning are premised to Millian perspective (Sheldon Ward, 2001:116).To sum up his idea on freedom, Mill sees freedom as chief end of the state (in democratic society as an intrinsic good itself) and this explains that his notion is the very “heart of liberalism”. Mill supported individuality, for great advances in society were made possible only by creative individuals because creativity could be effective only if allowed to function freely. Thus, freedom to him means not only absence of restrains but also an ability to cultivate some desirable qualities (Heywood, 1992:47).However, in spite of his great contributions to understanding the concept of freedom and liberal school in particular, his notion of ‘individuality’ has not been supported by other liberal scholars. Again, Mill strongly believed that individual liberty should be, and to be protected from society; this include the liberty of conscience, thought and feeling, the liberty of tastes and pursuit and freedom to unite; no society in which these liberties are not; on the whole respected, is free and none is completely free even in the liberal democracies where free society is premised.Other philosophers and thinkers mostly modern liberals also approached the subject of freedom in different ways. Like John Rawls defending social democracy in A Theory of Justice (1971), Rawls argued for liberty in an unequal society. He stated that every person has a right to the greatest possible liberty concomitant with the same degree of liberty allowed to others (Harrison and Boyd, 2003). Rawls sees freedom as ideal that is deeply rooted in human aspirations; freedom of thought and liberty of conscience, freedom to participate in political affairs. To Rawls, the principle of equal right and liberty is when applied to the political

procedure defined by the constitution is the principle of equal participation which would be realized within a constitutional democracy. This is according to Rawls is achieved through representative that is in form of legislature with law-making functions to determine policies and freedom that can be protected in the society and the principle of loyal opposition along with freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of assembly which are guaranteed in democracies (Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012). Rawls also stressed the importance of each person having adequate material resources to enjoy their liberty. He did not argue for material equality, only the existence of sufficient material resources for all. To Rawls, freedom, not equality is the paramount priority of politics. Freedom must not be sacrificed in order to achieve a higher degree of material equality. Nevertheless, Rawls argued for the existence of a welfare state to ensure that the poorest in society have the resources to attempt to achieve their greater freedom (Harrison and Boyd, 2003). Similarly, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), sees liberty as “absence of restraint and coercion”. His notion centred on civil and political liberty. To him, a legislator established a framework of security through law, within which the individual enjoyed liberty. Bentham offered examples with level of civil law, where a legislator secured right to property, prevented interference, simplified judicial proceeding and encourage healthy commercial competitiveness. This implies that his notion is taken from legalistic approach and constitutional law, where legislators make laws to guarantee against abuse and arbitrary exercise of power by state or politicians to curtailed individual freedom. This approach is very useful in our contemporary democracies because there is symbiotic relationship between law, freedom and politics which is quintessence of political theory (Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012: 332).From Kantian (1970) notion, freedom is taken to be natural right to man which must be developed and extended to individual by the state. Kant asserts that;It is not to be said that the individual in the state has sacrificed a part of his inborn external freedom for particular purpose, but he has abandoned his wild lawless freedom again, entire and unfinished, but in civil state regulated by laws of rights. This relation of dependence thus, arises out of his own

regulative law giving will (Kant, 1970:174 in Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012:274).The above assertion by Kant, means that the state as an entity has a role to play in protecting natural freedom of the subjects and as such the civil law protect unnecessary interference and regulate individuals on how to utilize their natural rights and freedom so that it would not harm or abuse others. In addition, Kant is of the view that laws were conditions by which the will of one particular individual would be harmonized and united with the wills of others within the framework of general law whose basis is on freedom. Kant supports Republican states where all human beings are free, equal, independence and autonomous which equates to the assertion of Isaiah Berlin on positive freedom. Logically, other contemporary liberals criticized Kantian notion of individual autonomy, human rational mind, which might likely contrast with the civil laws of the state.Machiavelli (1469-1527) on the other hand, sees liberty as “independence from external aggression and internal tyranny implying the right of people to be able to govern”. To be sure of that, he said that free societies or states were those which are far from all external servitude and are able to govern themselves according to their own will. In his book “Discourse”, he used Roman Government to elucidate the manifestation of freedom by introducing constitution that made liberty possible. That freedom produced not only powerful states but also individuals whose strength was not in dominating or influencing others but in the independence of spirit in their ability to think and decide for themselves. Freedom is the effective exercise of political rights that is possible among public-spirited and self-respecting individuals. He further explained that freedom could be threatened by human selfishness. That is, when one began to entertain a false notion that personal freedom could be maintained by evading one’s civic obligations (Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 2012:166). To this end, still Machiavelli is not different with others notion because to him, freedom is experienced within the framework of law. In other words, one can enjoy freedom with the existence of law. This is because laws ensured the enjoyment of liberty by all, for they prevented interference and curtailed the corrupt leader, but also liberated them from their natural self-destructive tendency like pursuit of self-interest. Therefore looking at the concept of freedom from this approach one can discern that it is from the positive side of the idea. Liberty rested on laws, which are the moral cores of integrity and responsibility. Thus liberty when accompanied with equality (laws) consisted of free will or free way of life, private right to citizens and free suffrage. From the Marxists perspective, Karl Marx and followers, freedom is not possible under capitalism. The highly exploitative capitalist system reduces both the working class and their capitalist exploiters to a level of servitude to the system. Those who control the means of production may have somewhat greater freedom than those who merely sell their labour to scrape a living, but bourgeoisie and proletariat alike possess a freedom reduced to mere work and consumption (Harrison and Boyd, 2003:91). Freedom is interpreted as bourgeois capitalist freedom as an illusion that enslaves the working class and trivializes true human liberty. Only, in communism will the individual be truly free from “Alienation”, meaningless labour and oppression of the contemporary tyranny of the dictatorship of the proletariats is worth this ultimate heaven of communist society. That is to the Marxist freedom is not real because is all about class domination, even today, capitalism is more inimical to freedom than it was in nineteenth century when Marx analyzed its workings (Sheldon Ward, 2001).Heywood (1992) identified and categorize the following as summary of above scholars notion on freedom as perspectives, these are;•Conservatives: they see freedom as the willing recognition of duties and responsibilities, negative freedom posing a threat to the fabric of the society. The new right, however, endorses negative freedom in the economic sphere, freedom of choice in the market place.•Socialists: the socialist generally understood freedom in positive terms to refer to self-fulfillment achieved through either free creative labour or cooperative social interaction; social democrats have drawn close to modern liberalism in treating freedom as the realization of individual potential.•Anarchists: they regard freedom as an absolute value, believing it to be irreconcilable will of any form of political authority. Freedom is understood to mean the achievement of personal autonomy, not merely being left alone but being rationally self-willed and self-directed.

•Fascists: they reject all form of individual liberty as a nonsense “true” freedom, in contrast means unquestioning submission to the will of the leader and the absorption of the individual into the national community.•Ecologists: they treat freedom as the achievement of oneness, self-realization through absorption of the personal ego into the universe. In contrast with political freedom, this is sometimes seen as inner freedom as self-actualization.•Religious fundamentalists see freedom as essentially in an inner or spirit quality. Freedom means conformity to the revealed will of God spiritual fulfillment being associated with submission to religious authority (Heywood, 1992:27).However, the concept of freedom in political theory has various philosophers theorizing, from the classical era (although the concept of freedom was relatively unimportant to classical thinkers) to the contemporary political theorists. This is because the concept of freedom will remain a prominent topic for political discussion and debate among philosophers because it touches the very essence of human nature and the society we live in.Therefore, from the above explanations and conceptualization of freedom the following could deduce as basic features of liberty;Liberty does not really mean total absence of restraints, it means acceptance of reasonable restrictions.Unrestrained freedom means law of jungle where individuals do as they like.Freedom is opposed to political subjection, it advocates independence of every individual.

It means freedom to do something positively.Laws of the state protect freedom of the weak especially liberal democracies.It is an essential condition for all-round development of human personality.Liberty and freedom are synonymous.Freedom is associated with responsibility between the state and citizens.It is the dynamic concept, its meaning changes with times, places and circumstances.It is the responsibility of the state to create required conditions for enjoyment of freedom to her citizens.TYPES OF LIBERTYNATURAL LIBERTY: It means total and complete freedom; it means lack of any restraints. This notion was put forward by Rousseau who said that “man is born free but everywhere he is in chains”. However, this notion of freedom is illusory and myth in nature (Collin Bird, 2006).PERSONAL LIBERTY: Individual freedom is the central element in western liberal political thought and has become part of the political discourse in most nations. This aspect of freedom includes freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to travel. This notion suggests that every human being desires to exercise his faculties and determine the general condition of his life. This provides justification of personal liberty which is championed by John Stuart Mill who said that, “the individual should be free to experiment with his life as

long as his actions do not affect others” (Heywood, 1992; Harrison and Boyd, 2003; Taylor, 1979).CIVIL LIBERTY: This exists in civil society; it means liberty in social life. This includes liberty to free action and immunity from interference. It composes rights and privileges that the state creates and enforces. Civil liberty also includes freedom of the person, physical freedom from injury or threat to life, health and movement of the body, intellectual freedom for the law, security of private property, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of conscience. According to Harold Laski (2004) civil liberty is the sum total of the rights, recognized in various degrees in different states. It is safeguard against physical and moral coercion exerted by either an individual or the state. It includes; the rights to life, personal safety and freedom, religious freedom, the right to reputation, the right to education, family right, association, the right to general advantage of social life, the right to property (Harold Laski, 2004:141).POLITICAL LIBERTY: This refers to the individuals roles, participation and share in the administration of the state. It connotes the opportunity of taking part in the process of government, and of having a say in the future development of the community. It is a liberty not of curbing; constituting it by a general of choice or election in which we all freely share on the basis of universal suffrage; controlling it by a general and continuous process of discussion, in which we all freely share according to our capabilities. Political freedom reinforces the duty of political obedience, political freedom is often equated with the right to vote, the liberties of holding views about political matters and of ventilating those views in public, the right of addressing those with whom the decision rest and the liberty of seeking and holding political offices. Political liberty is a guarantee to the whole community that it will not be governed by any outside power or by any individual or section of its own members. According to Laski, political liberty can be realized if a citizen is educated enough to express what he want and if he is well informed by honest and straight forward supply of news (Harold Laski, 2004). To Sartori, political freedom is protection against arbitrary and absolute power. It desires situation which permits the governed effective to oppose abuse of power by the governors.ECONOMIC LIBERTY: This implies economic freedom where in a labour is assured of a just reward. Economic freedom is the right of individuals and businesses to pursue their economic objectives in competition without undue state regulation and interference in the workings both of businesses and the free market (Harrison and Boyd, 2003). This freedom creates harmonious industrial system in which he is capable of producing and the community will have need for what he produces. It refers to the absence of economic inequalities which can become economic constraint. Laski sees economic liberty as “security and the opportunity to find reasonable significance in the earning of one’s daily bread”. It implies that the citizen must be free from the constant fear of unemployment and insufficiency which perhaps more than any other inadequacy takes away the whole strength of personality. The citizen must be safeguarded against the wants of tomorrow. The citizen must be able to make his personality flow through his effort as producer of services and find in that effort the capacity of enrichment (Harold Laski, 2004).NATIONAL LIBERTY: This implies achievement of complete independence and subsequent sovereignty of the nation from the dominance of foreign nation. Freedom from the bondage of other states is essential for realization of liberty in its fullest sense. This is the foundation of all liberties. National freedom is connected with the concepts of Nation- state. The doctrine of ‘national self-determination’, first enshrined in the Versailles Treaty (1919) as a fundamental principle of international society and international law, is the political manifestation of national freedom. According to this doctrine all nations have a right to govern themselves, and for national freedom to have a political reality a nation must be able to govern itself without being dominated or controlled by another nation. This concept of exclusive self-government is the key characteristic of ‘sovereignty’, the most important attributes of a state. Hence, the creation of its own state becomes a desirable goal for a nation seeking its freedom, since the state, once established, will exercise exclusive legal and political rights and powers within the national territory. National freedom, therefore, is expressed and given reality by the existence of the state (Harrison and Boyd, 2003).CHALLENGES, LIMITATIONS AND SAFEGUARDS OF LIBERTIESModern liberals are of the views that absolute freedom is dangerous. This is because it supports the dictum that “might is right”. Such unrestricted freedom is ultimately denial of equality along with freedom of others. Therefore, certain safeguards are necessary devised to check freedom. That is laws are very vital condition of freedom, although laws can destroy and upheld condition of liberties. From liberal perspective, democratic polity is prerequisite of liberty. This is because democracy widespread enjoyment of liberty independent on the respect for minority rights. It was at this premised that Laski (2004) posited that “without right there cannot be liberty because men are the subject of law unrelated to the needs of personality”. To be sure of that, an independent judiciary and a healthy development of local self-governing constitution further help liberty constitutional government, charter of fundamental rights, a tradition of constructive public opinion and external vigilance are other sure safeguards of freedom in the society as argued by libertarians.However, despite of the limitations and challenges posed by tyrant societies on the aspect of individual freedom as argued by Mill that, “the singular threat to individual liberty is from the tyranny and intolerance of the majority in its quest for extreme egalitarianism and social conformity”. Freedom is very important political value to society general and political theory in particular. Freedom remain an issue of contemporary relevance in spite of its area of controversy which includes the degree to which the state can legitimately curtail its citizens’ rights; how far the citizen can justifiably resist the commands of the state; and to what degree free society depends not on constitutional arrangement but on widely shared cultural values and moral principles. However, the twenty first century has already witnessed the decisive victory of freedom. Thus, freedom is one of the pillars of democracy (Harrison and Boyd, 2003). A democratic government is meaningful only if people enjoy liberty within the purview of laws. This is because love of liberty teaches individual to oppose injustice. Liberty is the most precious aspect of human life. It is only liberty that can bring about all-round development of human personality. Mill (1976) posited that liberty is good in itself, for it is beneficial both to society that permits it and to the individual that enjoys it and helps in the development of human civilization, and moral person (Sabine and Thorson; 1973:641).To this end, political theory describes all versions of civilizations and good life such as freedom being the ultimate objective of human existence. In other words, the concept of freedom is the quintessence of political theory because imperfect society can be perfected through freedom of individuals to obey certain rules and regulations thereby ensuring growth and development when individuals realized the very essence of living as human beings in a given political community. Thus, there is germane relationship between freedoms; rights, laws and political theory, and one cannot discuss normative issues in political theory without mentioning the concept of liberty.

CONCLUSIONAs stated in the introduction, freedom is an essentially contested concept on which there are some agreements at the general level, but which will be disputed when we move from the general to particular. Therefore, I will suggest that this paper allows an interrogation of the discursive and conceptual limits these ideas identified by various political theorists and philosophers, revealing their heterogeneities, paradoxes and contradictions, and thus, showing how they might be reinterpreted by contemporary political theorists.However, the paper adopted libertarian notions of the concept (freedom) in spite of their little differences of what is freedom. For instance, some liberal theorists criticized the notion of negative liberty of Berlin being inadequate to distinguish between political and social structure which is central in modern political theorizing. In spite of the various disagreements among thinkers, this paper premise that freedom consist of the possibility of action rather than the action itself and also of the opinion that the concept of freedom is a thing of mind and circumstances that live with. The paper conclude that, freedom as a concept is very important in the discourse of political theory and that laws (equality), liberty and rights are interrelated thereby valuable to political theory discourse. More importantly, the paper agrees with Berlin that in spite of the ideological differences in the society today between liberal democratic west and communist East, the ideals of freedom is very important.To this end, the paper do not claim to bring all conceptions of freedom to fore but rather attempt to discuss salient issues of few philosophers on freedom. Since most of the political issues throughout the world revolved around such contest, and we can be sure that debates will continue as long as politics is free and the issue of free and good society remained central in political theory discourse