

Principal of Political Science

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Political science: nature, scope and purpose of study with particular reference to Islam: sub divisions namely international relations, comparative politics; local government approaches such as disciplinary and behavioral.

Nature and Scope of Political Science

Man is by nature a political animal. Owing to his many needs, such as for food, shelter, warmth, sex, defence and the like, he has to live with others. While trying to satisfy these needs, men and women have to work and cooperate, compete and may even come into conflict with each other. All this creates problems of various kinds. One of the most important problems is to organise human activities and relations to satisfy the basic needs and to promote co-operation and prevent conflicts among people, to settle disputes as and when they arise, so that human life and society may be better, happier and more productive. *The* problem is, indeed, very important. If it is not tackled properly, human life and society will suffer many kinds of troubles, such as endless disputes, anarchy, misery, poverty and even the end of all social life. But if it is solved properly, peace, plenty and progress will be the result. Accordingly, every society needs to have such institutions, laws and men and women of authority or power as to regulate all activities, value relations, and interests of all persons and groups living in it. Now such a society which is regulated by laws and by men and women of authority or power is a politically organised society, *i.e.*, a political system or state. Political Science is a science or study of such a *politically organised society, political system or state*. It is a study of *political process*, or of men and women in the process of governing themselves. It is the application of scientific method to the study of political affairs and events.

Definition of Political Defence

In a learned discourse, definition of a subject of study comes after it has been first properly explained. But in a textbook it is customary to begin with the definition of the

discipline, so that its students may have some idea of what they are going to study. It is especially necessary for beginners. This is the reason why we shall first define Political Science before we explain its nature, scope, importance and other problems.

Political Science was defined in two different but interrelated ways, namely as a study of the political institutions, the state or government, and as a study of the phenomenon of power or force in human society.

In the beginning, Political Science has been defined as a systematic study of the political institution of the state or government. Dr. Stephen Leacock says simply that Political Science deals with government. Professor G.W. Garner says: "Political science begins and ends with the state." A French author, Paul Janet, writes that Political Science is that "part of social sciences which treats of the foundations of the state and the principles of government." The Swiss writer, Bluntschli, defines Political Science as "the science which is concerned with the state and endeavors to understand and comprehend the state in its fundamental condition, in its essential nature, its various forms of manifestations, its development." Later on, Professor G.E.G. Catlin approached the study of political science from the standpoint of power. "All politics," he writes, "is by its nature power politics."

Accordingly, he *defines* Political Science as "the science of organised power in all communities". Again he says, Politics is a study of all the mutual relations of human beings and wills." He adds further, "Social activities, such as free play and art, not involving control, lie outside the primary ambit of politics."

Political Science consists of two terms; politics and science. While leaving the term "science" for later discussion, we shall explain what we mean by the term "politics". Politics is used in a variety of meanings. It may mean (i) an activity, an event, a process or a conflict or struggle among groups of people; (ii) an occupation or public career; and (iii) a systematic study and a theory or philosophy of the political activities, struggles or conflicts, etc. It is with the first two meanings of politics that we are concerned here, while the third meaning is the basis of Political Science, Political Theory and Political Philosophy, which are all derived from and dependent upon the activities and processes, called politics.

Politics is a universal phenomenon in human life and society. Every man, woman and child has a need, desire or a want, which makes him or her to do something. When a need or want is shared by two or more persons, a relation is established and a group comes into being. Now the need or want or idea of an individual or a group of individuals may be opposed by some other individual or group. Thus a conflict arises and a struggle ensues between the two opposing persons or groups, whom we shall call "actors". One of the actors may so exercise his or its influence or power as to compel the other actor to do what he or it wants and to behave accordingly and not in the manner as the first actor wanted. This is the basis and essence of politics. It is a situation, process or phenomenon in which influence or power, coercion or domination is used to compel one or more individuals to do something according to the decision or order of the other individual or group. In other words, politics means a conflict, a dispute between the opinions or choices of two persons or parties. (It may be mentioned that at this stage we are not concerned with such questions as the reason or purpose of the use of influence, power or coercion, or whether such relations are for the good of the controlled or controlling

individuals or groups or not? Such questions will lead us to the theory, philosophy or science of politics, which are discussed later on in this book.) This kind of "politics is found everywhere, in the family life, among groups of friends, in schools, colleges, universities and hostels, in clubs and associations of all types, in bazars and shops, in offices, farms and factories, in business organisations and corporations, and, of course, in political parties, government and international life and relations between two or more governments and states.

Examples are countless. In family life, a father may tell his son to do what he wants and not what the son wants. It is so because the father has influence over his son. Or take the case of two children in a nursery school quarrelling over a toy. The teacher would settle this dispute by giving or allocating the toy to one of the children. Similarly, in a college, a dispute between two students or groups of students is decided by the principal in favour of one or the other student or students, because he has authority to do so.

The revelation of the first surah of the Holy Quran delivered by Malaikat Jibril A.S. to the Prophet S.A.W. is concerning education. The significance, variety and benefit of education were mentioned directly and indirectly in many surahs. The readers of the Qur'an are frequently requested to use their senses to learn, study and understand truly the meanings. They need to generate dynamically their mind, sight, aural, oral capabilities and deed in order to acquire the gist. These were practiced and manifested during the life of the beloved Prophet S.A.W., the Companions and early generation of Muslim scholars during the glorious era of Islamic Civilization. This is to show that Islam is very meticulous in this vital aspect of the development, progress and accomplishment of human being in the present world and akhirat.

The meaning of education in its totality in the context of Islam is fundamentally in the combination of the terms *Tarbiyyah*, *Ta'lim* and *Ta'dib*. Literally, *Tarbiyyah* means 'educate', *Ta'lim* means 'knowledgeable' and *Ta'dib* derived from the word 'adaba' means 'moral'. These terms comprehensively are concerning the multilateral relationship of human and their society; human and environment; society and environment; and in relation to Allah. These cross-sectional relations are all together represent the scope of education in Islam of both 'formal' and 'non-formal', comprising the Fardhu Ain and Fardhu Kifayah..

This is a great versatility that the Qur'an and the Prophet S.A.W. mention repeatedly the paramount importance of education and the supremacy. It is stated in the Qur'an, "Allah will exalt those who believe among you, and those who have knowledge, to high ranks. Allah is informed of what they do." (Al-Mujadalah: 11). In this verse Allah grants high ranks to those who obtain knowledge and if a human being wants to rise, he should attain knowledge. Intuitively, the Prophet S.A.W. has clearly told that those who walk in path seeking knowledge, Allah will thereby make easy to them the path of paradise (Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah). It had been proved in history that the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. were truthful, honest, sincere, generous, brave, willing to sacrifice their lives for Allah's cause, *jihad fisabilillah*. They love Allah and His Messenger much more than they love their own selves.

Sub-Divisions of Political Science

Political Science is a vast discipline and is constantly expanding. It can be subdivided into several specialised areas and subdivisions. They are, to mention the important ones, national politics, comparative politics, public administration, political dynamics, local government, and international relations. Moreover, Political Science depends upon and derives much of its knowledge and information from other social sciences. However, we shall discuss its relations with other social sciences in a later chapter. In this chapter we shall consider its various subdivisions. Following Alfred de Grazia, we may present the whole field or conspectus of Political Science in the form of a diagram as thus

Political Policy is a sub-division of Political Science. However, as a policy of government or of its departments, it is not something new. All governments and states in the past had their policies, howsoever crude or ineffective they might have been. Moreover, government policy differs from state to state and government to government. The reason is that the amount of knowledge and know-how available to any government at any particular time varies in volume and efficacy. Some governments are, indeed, reluctant to formulate their policies on the knowledge and know-how actually available at the time due to their political or ideological pre-conceptions. For instance, the political policy of an autocratic state or a dictatorship is different from that of a democratic state. The policy of the democracy is a more complex, more comprehensive and more protracted affair than is the case in an undemocratic state. In a dictatorship, only the dictator and his close associates formulate a policy, while in a democratic state, leaders of public opinion and mass media as well social scientists and other experts will contribute their knowledge and knowhow at each arena-stage of policy formulation, decision, implementation and ultimate evaluation. Lastly, the final assessment of a policy, which has been already implemented, becomes a new source of knowledge and know-how or feed-back, for a new policy. Thus the postarena stage becomes the feed-backstage for later policies.

National Politics:

National politics is the study of the politics of a nation or country. It is the main field of Political Science. Formerly, it dealt with the various organs of the government, such as the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. But since the behavioral revolution in Political Science, it studies these institutions in a dynamic or generic manner of change and development. It also studies political leadership and political elites in the country, as well as political parties, public opinion, pressure groups, and administrative system. Moreover, it studies the role of personality of the rulers and the ruled which greatly determines the nature of political participation in the varying institutional setting of national politics. As a matter of fact, the study of national politics is closely related to and influenced by other sub-divisions of Political Science.

Comparative Politics:

Broadly speaking, we may say that all Political science begins as comparative politics. It means that whenever a person notes that another country is not governed in the same way as his own country, he has undertaken comparative study of politics. He then asks; why is it so? Which is better? This kind of comparison is the basis of Comparative Politics. Interestingly enough, it was how

22 POLITICAL SCIENCE

the ancient Greeks began the study of politics more than two thousand and five hundred years ago. They compared the political life in their city-states with that of the ancient Persians, Egyptians and other peoples around their country. Thus the comparative method became the foundation of Political Science.

However, Comparative Politics, which is also known as *Comparative Government*, is a recent development. For more than four centuries, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth, Political Science was mainly, even exclusively, the study of national politics of the various European countries, U.S.A. and of the "white" Dominions of the British Commonwealth. But, from the middle of the twentieth century, two factors led to the growth of comparative politics. They are (i) the behavioral movement and (ii) the rise of independent national states in the Third World, especially after the Second World War (1939-1945). Comparative Politics may be defined as the comparative study of the variations and differences in the political institutions and activities of various countries of the world for the purpose of discovering causal factors which account for these variations. For the proper understanding of politics, it is necessary to study the political institutions and activities in all kinds of states or governments in the whole world. The principal concept of Comparative Politics is the *political system*. It means it is a study of political culture, political socialization, inputs, like interest articulation and aggregation, decision making or rule and policy making as outputs, and feedback. It is a comparative study of the political systems in order to identify uniformities and differences in them. In other words, Comparative Politics is the structural-functional analysis of the political systems, the classification of their types, the study of the forms of their development and the observation of the many variations of actual political systems. It builds models of their essential elements and functions.

It provides us with the laws or uniformities in political behavior and process.

However, this method has its limitations, for comparisons may be misunderstood or superficial. Later on, we shall discuss the concept of political systems and their various types in greater details.

Public Administration:

Administration means management of the affairs, public or private, of the government or of private company or corporation. Hence administration is divided into two kinds: Public Administration and Private Administration, also known as business Administration. (The term 'administration' is derived from the Latin words 'ad' and 'ministrare' which means to serve) Wherever there is a need to

manage men and materials, there is administration, whether it is a house, a business organisation, a university or the government bodies. In fact, where there is a need to govern, there is also the need to administer. In other words, government and administration go together.

The term 'Public administration' is used in two meanings: as a science of administration and as a process of administration. A student of Political Science would understand it in the first sense, but the common man understands it in the second. Accordingly, Waldo defines public administration as "the art and science of management as applied to the affairs of state." L.D. White says, "Public Administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy." J.M. Pfiffner defines it as thus: "it would seem that administration consists of getting the work of government done by coordinating the efforts of the people so that they can work together to accomplish their set tasks." In other words, Public administration is *government in action*. We may define it as the art and science of the non-political machinery of the Government carrying on its work for the welfare of the people according to the laws adopted by the State.