

# *POLITICAL THEORY & CONCEPTS*

## **Sub. Pol. Science**

### **B.A SECOUND SEMSTER**

#### **The Nature Of Political Science Definition,Theory, And Scope**

##### **Meaning**

Man is a social animal. He cannot live in isolation because he is not self-sufficient, and the instinct to survive compels him to live a collective life. According to Aristotle, this collective life necessitates a political mechanism of rules, regulations, and leadership. An organized society needs some system to make and enforce rules for orderly behavior in society. This led to the evolution of a political system with elaborate governmental institutions & procedures in each society. Therefore, man is also a political animal. Political science is one of the oldest subjects of study of this political life of man.

##### **Nature**

Politics is not only a mere institution of governance but also a mechanism for achieving societal goals. Nature of Political Science is a social science concerned with the theory and practice of politics and the description and analysis of **political systems** and political behavior. It includes matters concerning the allocation and transfer of power in decision making, the roles, and governance systems

1. **Philosophical:** concerned with ends and purposes.
2. **Institutional:** concerned with a political organization.
3. **Behavioral:** concerned with motivations and mechanisms of human behavior.
4. **Pluralistic:** concerned with the interaction among groups and organizations.
5. **Structural:** concerned with the connection between the individual and the community.
6. **Developmental:** concerned with the process of growth, industrialization change, and the impact on **government forms and policies**.

##### **Politics as the study of power (in details)**

Though identifiable with terms like influence, coercion, force, domination, authority, control, and the like, the term power has its own meaning. Power is a relation. While power is coercive, influence is persuasive, authority is the legitimate aspect or power, and force is manifested power.

Power is "the ability to determine the behavior of others in accord with one's own wishes." The power theory of politics is as old as the Greeks, though it has assumed much importance. Power consists fundamentally of relationships, subordination, dominance and submission, the governors and the governed, and the study of politics involves studying these relationships.

In other words, the study of politics is concerned with the description and analysis of how power is obtained, exercised, and controlled, and the purpose for which it is used, how

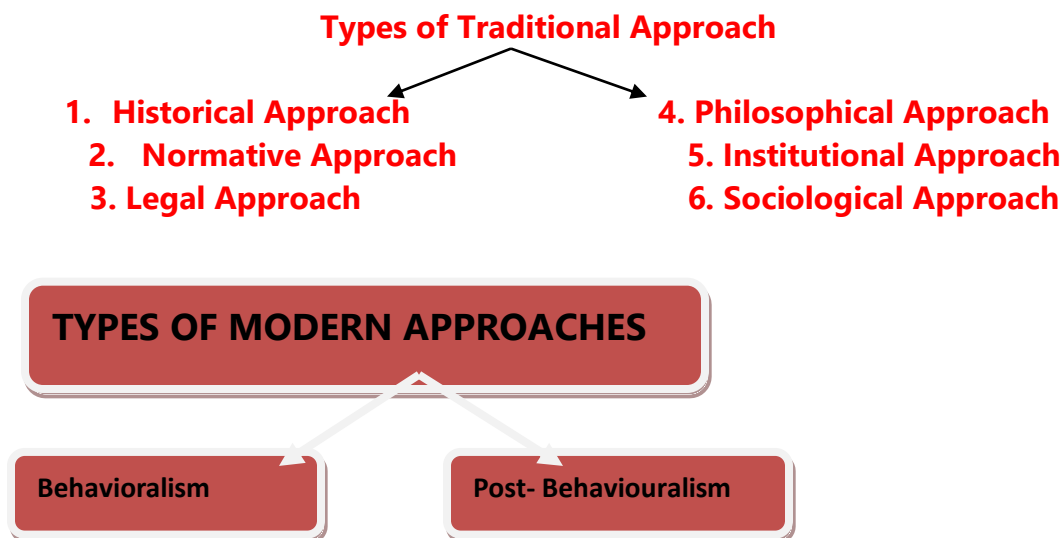
decisions are made, the factors which influence the making of these decisions, and the context in which these decisions are made.

**Economic power:** finds its place in the form of ownership and control of national wealth and means of production and distribution. Economic power and political power are mutually complementary.

Liberals say that it is diffused and hard work determines the degree of economic power one can gain. Marxists again believe that economic power is also concentrated in the hands of a few, and they manipulate it to gain political power.

**Ideological power:** resides in the prevailing ideas acceptable to the people. Ideology literally means a set of ideas in which people have unquestionable faith, and they also strive to put them into action. The dominant class will also try to propagate and implement congenial ideas to their interests, whether economic or political. They may use all available media, elites, intellectuals, religious institutions, educational systems, associations, and institutions to achieve this while oppressing counter ideologies.

**Authority:** Power with legitimacy. Max Weber classifies it into three: traditional, charismatic & legal-rational, or bureaucratic.



### Emphasized on:

- + Individual behavior instead of the political institution as the basic unit of analysis.
- + Scientific outlook and objectivity (observation, classification, and measurement of data).
- + Methodological revolution: use of scientific methods (survey, case study, interviews, socio psychoanalysis, etc.).
- + Interdisciplinary approach.

### David Easton's Assumptions and Objectives of Behaviorism

(Right Fold Path) (Intellectual Foundation Stones):

1. Regularities, there is a certain uniformity in political behavior that can be generalized in theories explaining and predicting political phenomena.
2. Verification knowledge, to be valid, should include only those things which have been empirically tested.
3. Technique researcher should be conscious of his methodology.

4. Quantification imprecise qualitative judgments have no place in political analysis,

- + Decision-making approach,
- + Communication framework model.

**Criticism:** As a result of the utilization of the behavioral approach, the scope of political science has widened, and the nature of the discipline improved in understanding and explaining the political reality. In limited and specialized fields, the behavioral movement achieved significant results. But with its overemphasis on quantification of data, the movement suffered from sterility and irrelevance. It evaded problems of large scale change.

### III. Post Behavioral Approach:

Towards the end of the 1960s, a powerful attack was made on the behaviorist position by David Easton out of deep dissatisfaction with its findings. Behaviorism was eager to develop new research methods and techniques about political phenomena. In political science, theories may be developed like natural sciences, but in the effort, they divorced political science from philosophy, history, law, etc. In a world of crisis, doubts were raised about the adequacy or relevance of political science's modern research methodology, especially when the political scientist was unable to cope with contemporary social and political problems. Behaviorism failed to solve any world problem, such as the threat of nuclear war, hunger, poverty, disease, cold war, arms race, etc.

#### **Traditional Behavioral Post behavioral**

Inter-relates facts and values Separate facts and values Facts and values tied to action and relevance

Prescriptive and normative Non-prescriptive, objective and empirical Humanistically problem-oriented

Qualitative Quantitative Quantitative and qualitative

Concerned with irregularities and regularities Concerned with uniformity and regularities

Concerned with regularities and irregularities

Focus on European countries Focus on Anglo American countries Focus on third world countries

### IV. Marxist Approach

The Marxist approach to political analysis is primarily associated with the contributions of Karl Marx. The Marxist approach's significance is due to its emphasis on the production and distribution of goods in assessing social changes and political revolutions. This is quite different from traditionalism and behaviorism. Marx said, "the mode of production of the material means of existence condition the whole process of social, political and intellectual life."

#### **The three primary aspects of Marxism are:**

- + Dialectical and materialistic concept of history.
- + Critique of capitalism (base & superstructure, surplus value & class struggle).
- + Advocacy of the proletarian revolution.

#### **Difference between behaviorism approach and post-behaviorism**

<u>ISSUES</u>	<b>Behavioralism</b>	<b>Post - Behavioralism</b>
<b>1. Nature of Inquiry</b>	1. It involves the search for knowledge and theory.	1. It involves the search for applied knowledge and practice.
<b>2. Purpose of Inquiry</b>	2. The purpose of the inquiry is for knowledge sake and not for the action.	2. The purpose here is the significance of knowledge to meet the social requirements and action for resolving problems.
<b>3. Focus of study</b>	3. It focuses on the decision-making process and small units, i.e., micro-level analysis.	3. It is a macro-level analysis, i.e., it focuses on role of large units and content of decision- making
<b>4. Attitude towards value</b>	4. It has an impartial attitude towards the values.	4. It has bias towards the choice of values.
<b>5. Attitude towards social change</b>	5. It ignores the social changes and is interested only in status quo.	5. It considers the social changes for solving problems.

### Unit 3

#### State and its functions

##### Meaning and Definition of State

Among all the social institutions, the State is the most powerful and universal. It is a natural institution. As per Aristotle "Man (Human) is a social animal and by nature s/he is a political being". To him, living in the State and being a man were the same things. The word 'Rajya' is the Hindi adaptation of the English word 'state'. The word 'state' is derived from the Latin word 'status' which literally means the social level of an individual but gradually its meaning changed and later it

##### Definition Of State:-

1. **According to Aristotle**, the State as a "union of families and villages having for its end a perfect and self sufficing life by which it meant a happy and honourable life".
2. **According to Holland**, the State is "a numerous assemblage of human beings generally occupying a certain territory amongst whom the will of the majority or class is made to prevail against any of their number who oppos it."
3. **According to Salmond** "a society of men established for the maintenance of order and justice within a determed territory, by way of force."
  1. **War making** – "eliminating or neutralizing their outside rivals"
  2. **State making** – "eliminating or neutralizing their rivals inside their own territory"
  3. **Protection** – "eliminating or neutralizing the enemies of their clients"
  4. **Production** – "control of the creation and transformation of goods and services produced by the population".

Importantly, Tilly makes the case that war is an essential part of state-making; that wars create states and vice versa.

### **Types of state:-**

Charles Tilly distinguished between empires, theocracies, city-states and nation-states. According to Michael Mann, the four persistent types of state activities are:

1. Maintenance of internal order
2. Military defence and aggression
3. Maintenance of communications infrastructure
4. Economic redistribution

Josep Colomer distinguished between empires and states in the following way:

1. Empires were vastly larger than states
2. Empires lacked fixed or permanent boundaries whereas a state had fixed boundaries
3. Empires had a "compound of diverse groups and territorial units with asymmetric links with the center" whereas a state had "supreme authority over a territory and population"
4. Empires had multi-level, overlapping jurisdictions whereas a state sought monopoly and homogenization

According to Michael Hechter and William Brustein, the modern state was differentiated from "leagues of independent cities, empires, federations held together by loose central control, and theocratic federations" by four characteristics:

1. The modern state sought and achieved territorial expansion and consolidation
2. The modern state achieved unprecedented control over social, economic, and cultural activities within its boundaries
3. The modern state established ruling institutions that were separate from other institutions
4. The ruler of the modern state was far better at monopolizing the means of violence

### **State and civil society**

In the classical thought, the state was identified with both political society and civil society as a form of political community, while the modern thought distinguished the nation state as a political society from civil society as a form of economic society.

Thus in the modern thought the state is contrasted with civil society.

*See also: National symbol*

- flag
- coat of arms or national emblem
- seal or stamp
- national motto
- national colors
- national anthem

### **History of Divine Theory**

The idea of the state being created by God may be traced all the way back to antiquity. The ancient people believe that the King is God's representation on earth, and that the state is a divine delight. As a result, the King possesses both a political and a religious existence. God is supposed to have founded the state in religious texts as well. The concept is explicit in certain faiths, while it is implicit in others.

The Old Testament of the Bible is the first source of information on the state's divine origins. There we find St. Paul saying- "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be, are ordained by God.

### **Social contract theory**

He frontispiece of [Thomas Hobbes' \*Leviathan\*](#) Main article: [Social contract](#)

Various social contract theories have been proffered to establish state legitimacy and to explain state formation. Common elements in these theories are a state of nature that incentivizes people to seek out the establishment of a state. Thomas Hobbes described the state of nature as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (*Leviathan*, Chapters XIII–XIV). Locke takes a more benign view of the state of nature and is unwilling to take as hard a stance on the degeneracy of the state of nature. He does agree that it is equally incapable of providing a high quality of life. Locke argues for inalienable human rights. One of the most significant rights for Locke was the right to property.

### **Pluralism**

#### [Polyarchy](#)

[Pluralists](#) view society as a collection of individuals and groups, who are competing for political power. They then view the state as a neutral body that simply enacts the will of whichever groups dominate the electoral process. Within the pluralist tradition, [Robert Dahl](#) developed the theory of the state as a neutral arena for contending interests or its agencies as simply another set of [interest groups](#). With power competitively arranged in society, state policy is a product of recurrent bargaining. Although pluralism recognizes the existence of inequality, it asserts that all groups have an opportunity to pressure the state. The pluralist approach suggests that the modern democratic state's actions are the result of pressures applied by a variety of organized interests. Dahl called this kind of state a [polyarchy](#).

### **Features of Divine Origin**

Theory Following are the features of divine origin theory:

1. State can be seen as a unit that was created by God. Betterment of the citizens was the main goal behind its creation.
2. God is represented by the King who has accountability and responsibility only towards the God.
3. Obeying the king is the religious duty of the citizens. Not obeying king is equivalent to disobeying God.

### **Causes of the Decline of the Divine Theory**

Following are the causes of the decline of the divine theory:

- 1) **The development of the theories:** That have greater acceptance such as the social contract theory. People rejected the divine theory when it was first proposed because they realized that the state is a construct of men and not a gift from God.
- 2) **Reforms for the Separation of the Church from the State:** The value of the divine theory was degraded due to this reformation. These initiatives resulted in the development of non-religious politics. Thus, the divine theory was completely rejected because of the secular outlook.
- 3) **Emergence of Democracy:** The doctrine of combining religion and politics was completely refuted due to the development of democracy and thus the concept of connecting God with the King was dulled. Democracy not only valued people, but also desecrated the glata's dining.