

Political Science



Module # 1

HISTORY AND THEORY OF A STATE

Lecture # 1, Political science - why a discipline?

THE NATURE AND OBJECT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Political Science offers a *multi-disciplinary* and *methodologically comprehensive* theorisation for the most critical part of social relations, the Politics - all things concerning State, Power, Social Justice and Rule of Law.

Ultimately, Politics has vital connection to

- Philosophy
- Ethics
- Anthropology
- Jurisprudence
- Economics
- Natural Science (saying at least for environmental reasons, if not more)

This rational use of multidisciplinary approach provides a methodology which combines separate attitudes to the object and subject of Politics - descriptive of behaviour and descriptive of 'Politics' itself

General objects of political science

- Political relations
- Political systems and institutions
- Social groups and individuals (though are also agents of the political process).
- Processes of Globalisation and Integration

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matters,

another

2. THE OBJECTIVE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Pericles, about
Athenians: 'We are free
and tolerant in our
private lives; but in *public
affairs* we keep to the
law'.

So, if Politics is manipulative and focused on *power* and gives relevance to *public over private*, to national interest over that of individual and so on (with certain implications for the 'Common Good')

Political Science has an objective of *critical and comprehensive* understanding of the interference of public and private in society.

Put in historical perspective

‘Political science’ was a knowledge
and general philosophy about

‘Politics’, the term has roots in

Greek ‘*Politica*’ - an area of activity

exclusively ascribed to the State

and Government, and public

affairs

the subject of political science

‘Agency’ in Politics ensures the dynamism of political process, dialectically separating ‘poles’ of power.

Who has got ‘agency’?

- ⑩ Individuals
- ⑩ Identities
- ⑩ Classes
- ⑩ Social groups (minorities, majorities)
- ⑩ States, Political institutions
- ⑩ Ethnic groups
- ⑩ Religious and demographic groups, etc.

It is critical to note that all subjects, even those having only a small degree of agency have got their own private interests (relevantly political and economic interests)

Conflictual essence of relations.

“The ancients were well aware of the class nature of politics. *Oligarchy* was a conspiracy of the rich to rob the poor and *democracy* a conspiracy of the poor to rob the rich”. McClelland (2008).

Dialectics of social relations dictate constant change of political platform.

Theory of Recurrent circles:

Monarchies degenerate to Tyranny

Tyrannies are toppled down by Aristocracies

Aristocracies degenerate to Oligarchies

exploiting population

Oligarchies are overthrown by Democracies

Democracies themselves become corrupted and degenerate into intolerable and unstable rule of mob

Political Science finds:

- Ideas
- Operative Structure and Component parts
- Functions
- Relations

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

□ Ideological

(Political Science creates and also expresses the views, ideas, ideals of certain classes and social groups)

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

□ Methodological

(Methodological function of PS is to develop the theory and methodology of the study of political phenomena and processes, development of laws and categories of the science)

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

□ Epistemological

(Epistemology – теория познания/гносеология)

Epistemology - a study of the 'knowledge' as 'justified true belief', and of limits of knowledge.

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

□ Regulatory

The regulatory function comes bare when it has definite implications for regulating the political process.

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

□ Predictive (прогностическая)

Rational speculation with empirical data for acquiring of short and long term political forecasts

Functions of Political science

□ Informative

Information about the nature of political power and its formation, politics and the political system, the subject of politics, political institutions, etc.

Goals of Political science:

- ensuring the integrity and stability of a social community;
- implementation of all relevant social need and claims;
- mobilisation and efficiency of public activity;
- management and regulation of certain social community;

Goals of Political science:

- rationalisation of conflicts, contradictions and alerts, civilised solutions;
- just and equal representation of individual and group interests;
- ensuring the experiences and skills in socially beneficent activism

Political Science

- Political science studies politics as an independent social discipline
- Political science provides critical analysis of Politics in activist position toward Society
- Political science covers the whole area of political relations: ideational, systemic, and institutional

REFERENCES



Questions, Seminar I

- Characterise an ancient political order (Egypt, Greece and Rome of antiquity)
- What is 'Common Good'?
- Bring examples of legitimate political orders of ancient time.

Questions, Seminar II

- Genesis and meaning of the concepts of 'State', 'Power', 'Order', and 'Legitimacy'
- Democracy in Greece: Was it a democracy 'for real'?
- What is ...? (say a few words about something related to politics of which you have become aware of recently during lectures and preparations, give 'it' an original description of your own)

Reading for Seminar II

1. Meaning of the notions of 'Power', and 'Legitimacy' -
 - Maxwell (2010) 'A Brief History of Political Legitimacy: Demotic Ideology and the Spread of Democracy', *Nebula*, 2010, pp. 95-102).
 - G.W. Sheldon (2001) - *Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (Look for key concepts here, please use it as dictionary)

2. Democracy in Greece: Was it a democracy 'for real'? -
 - Minogue (2000) *Politics - A very short introduction* (2nd chapter)
 - Abbo (1960) *Political thought: men and ideas*, pp.

3. What is ...? (say a few words about something related to politics of which you have become aware of recently during lectures and preparations, give 'it' an original description of your own).