

# Political Science -

## A political order

Characteristics of political regime of Greek world:

*Independent* system of city-states

*Power* is used to further one's own interests or the interests of the group to which one belonged.

*Infantry* of 'government' in power relations and administration.

*'Nothing to rule it with'* - cities could not afford

*Class struggle* was always a central issue of politics:

“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”.

The ancient Greeks had three broad classes of legitimate regimes in mind:

Despite popular and mainstream claim of democracy in ancient Greece, it was not such a homogenous *polis*.

Aristotle had recorded over '158 different political constitutions in the Greek *polis*, and all of them were different'.

Only in Athens they had laid down their arms at the time of peace.

In nature, whatever 'model' was applied, all regimes, prior to the Middle age's absolutism, which itself was a variant of it, were *Despotic*.

Politics 'concerns States, governments, and rulers'

According to characteristics of *despotism*, in Machiavellian terms the 'effective truth' of politics was merely what is relevant to the *activist* - to whom who '*makes*' politics. (Either kings are god, or the people were a flock of animals)

Being such, Politics is largely concerned with justification, criticism and analysis of the bases for division of '*Private and Public life*' - and naturally rises the issue of *LEGITIMACY*.

In the classic *despotism* - everything in society is a private property of the despot.

Such division has *dynamic* nature.

What is public and what is private are always changing in essence.

*Despotism*, apparently, is about concentrating power over *public and private* life indefinitely of one another for there is *no distinction* as such.

*Freedom* - the notion and philosophic idea which fuels the *dynamism* of such relations.

G.W.F. Hegel: '...the History of the World is nothing but the development of the Idea of Freedom'.

Legal society - a society of necessary

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

As a 'natural' urge for freedom, private and public, society enters dialectical class war against rulers and demands for regime which respects the will and freedom of people.

*Legitimacy of despotism* comes *concealed* in an appealing form of and *Ideal* where rests the *Ideology* of despotism in form of mainstream political agenda for values and norms.

There are all kinds of contrasting generalisations of what is going on throughout history, mainly in form of ideological competition

- Majority overruling minorities
  - Elitism Vs. social justice
  - Rich Vs. Poor
  - Bourgeoisie Vs. Proletariat
  - Imperialists Vs. Subject peoples
  - White people Vs. Coloured people
  - Men oppressing Women,
- etc.



*What do they have in common?*

1. Point out relevant factors (pick at least two from the list or add one of your's).

2. What is your criticism of the definition of *'regime'*?

3. Why order becomes so vital when speaking about justice and democracy?

4. Why *despotism* was so inherent to ancient political order?

Does despotism provide legitimacy for the ruler?

In Ancient Greece, the ruler serving the 'common good' of the society was legitimate.

In classical political philosophy political *Legitimacy* is of a *subjective* issue.

Aristotle's legitimacy resides in *morality* of the ruler.

“The desire of society for the statesman’s advice *is taken for granted*, Plato in the Republic says that a good constitution is only possible when the ruler does not want to rule; where men contend for power, where they have not learnt to distinguish between the art of getting hold of the helm of state and the art of steering, which alone is statesmanship, true politics is impossible” .

**CONSERVATIVE** social thought puts Individual as Incapable of affecting social and political change.

Only with Enlightenment the ideal of Individual freedom puts the social change into the scope of Individual activism - People can change order, 'Regimes' and 'political orders' are social constructs which evolve only due to the activism of society itself, and are not imposed by some higher authority, reason or God.

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