

POLITICAL THEORY

- **MEANING AND APPROACHES**
- Theory means a **systematic set of ideas or rules** which can explain any social, political and economic phenomena.
- Theory helps us to **understand any political fact** which is happening around us.
- We use theory for justifying any political concept or we can **refute any political phenomena** with the help of theory.
- By utilising the theory, we are capable to forecast about any political facts.

RAJESH MISHRA

- We can understand the relation between the two political concepts like- relation between liberty and equality.
- Theory is also helpful for the development of any research project.
- Initially, political meant **the state and the government**, but later the meaning of political expanded, which includes the **pressure group, political parties, voting behaviour and the study of power**.
- **Garner**, very famously said that '**politics begins and ends with state**'.

RAJESH MISHRA

APPROACHES OF POLITICAL THEORY

- **Normative Political Theory:-**
- It is also known as **Traditional Theory-**
- **(a) Historical Approach:-** Sabine said that, political theory incorporates three elements:-
 - **(i) Political facts.**
 - **(ii) Cause behind that fact.**
 - **(iii) Evaluation.**
- Political theory originates due to the social circumstances like- the theory developed by **Plato** and **Aristotle** was evolved in the Greek city-state.
- Similarly, the situation of Europe between 16th to 18th century is important factor for the development of political theory by **Hobbes**, **Locke** and **Rousseau**.

- History impacts over the development of political theory but at the same time the ideas of political theories also change the historical circumstances.
- **(b) Philosophical Approach:-** Apart from the historical approach, philosophical approach is also incorporated within the ambit of traditional approach. Philosophical approach is as old as the thought of Plato and Aristotle because they deal with:-
 - **(i) An ideal state.**
 - **(ii) A virtuous, moral human being.**
 - **(iii) The relation between ideal state and virtuous human being.**

- Normative political theory deals with the political values- **liberty, equality, justice** etc.
- **Leo Strauss** is the modern propounder of the normative or philosophical political theory, who said that **the soul of political theory lies in the philosophy.**
- **Empirical Political Theory:-**
- It is also known as **Scientific/Positivist/Behavioural theory.**
- Empirical Political theory was developed by **Chicago School** and Chicago school was founded by **Charles Merriam** who said that **“Political Theorist should concentrate over the political facts rather than values”.**
- It is also known as **fact-value dichotomy.**

- **David Easton** laid down the intellectual foundation stone of behaviouralism:-
- **Regularity**
- **Verification**
- **Techniques**
- **Quantification**
- **Separation between facts and values**
- **Pure science**
- **Systematisation**
- **Integration**
- Behaviouralist were willing to develop a scientific and general theory like in natural sciences in physics and chemistry.
- They assumed that political theory is more like a theory in natural sciences.

RAJESH MISHRA

POSITIVIST THEORY-MAX WEBER

- They were looking for the development of a general theory. Therefore, their focus of study was on **voting-behaviour**, which was based on the observation and prediction.
- It is important to be noted that **sociologists, psychologists and anthropologist** first and foremost utilised scientific methods, therefore, behaviouralist detached the political theory from **history and philosophy** and they associated political theory with sociology and psychology.

RAJESH MISHRA

Ph : 09899156495

- Shortcomings



RAJESH MISHRA

Visit us at : www.saraswatiias.com