First axis: What is political science?

1. Definition of politics: Politics is a human/social activity

We encounter a great difficulty when we try to define the term "politics." There is not just one legally accepted definition of politics but a wide range of definitions; In other words the term has a great number of acceptable and legitimate meanings.

A state is a form of political association , and political association is itself only one of human association.

✓ The word "politics" comes from the Greek word "polis," meaning everything that concerns or belongs to the "polis," or city-state.

✓ Politics is the set of activities that are associated with making decisions in groups, or other forms of power relations among individuals, such as the distribution of status or resources.

✓ Britannica Dictionary definition of POLITICS « activities that relate to influencing the actions and policies of a government or getting and keeping power in a government »

✓ Cambridge Dictionary : « the activities of the government, members of law-making organizations, or people who try to influence the way a country is governed »

✓ The art or science of government

✓ The art or science concerned with guiding or influencing governmental policy

✓ The art or science concerned with winning and holding control over a government

2. Definition of Political Science: Is politics an art or a science

We encounter a great difficulty when we try to define the term "politics" ,Some political scientists define politics as the process by which scarce resources are allocated within a social unit for the purpose of providing for human needs and desires.

There is no universal definition of politics. Politics has been defined in many different ways: Politics as the art of government, politics as public affairs, politics as the study of conflict resolution, politics as the study of power.

➢ Politics as the art of government

Bismarck told "politics is not a science … but an art." He believed that politics was the art of government. politics can be defined as the study of the state, its aims and purposes – the institutions by which those are going to be realized, its relations with its individual members and with other states. Politics is also defined as the study of the government – a collection of officers who make, interpret and enforce rules for the whole community.

This means that politics is the matter of politicians, civil servants and lobbyists. According to this view the vast majority of the people are not involved in politics

This extremely narrow view of politics helps to explain why negative images have so often been attached to the world politics. Politics is often described as a negative phenomenon because only politicians are seen as decision-makers.

➢ **Politics as public affairs**

The distinction between "the political" and "the non-political" coincides with the division between an essentially public sphere of life and private sphere. How can we differentiate the public sphere from private sphere? The traditional division between the public realm and private realm conforms to the distinction between the state and civil society. The institutions of the state are considered as the part of the public sector, whereas the civil society belongs to private sector. Thus, public sector is regarded as "political", whereas the private sector is considered to be "non- political". Thus, politics is an essentially "public" activity and it does not take place in private sphere of life.

➢ **Politics as the study of conflict resolution**

Some political scientists see conflict as the essence of politics. Conflict is a necessary characteristic of society. Human beings differ from each other. People's wants are infinite and the resources possessed by societies are limited and therefore generally insufficient to satisfy everybody's desires fullyt. The conflict does not take place between individuals but also exists between larger groups – between countries, as well as within them. There is a competition for access to, or control over, a society's resources. Some political scientists see politics as a particular means of abolishing conflict by compromise, conciliation and negotiation, rather than through force, so that people can live in reasonable harmony with each other. Politics is the art of finding peaceful resolutions to conflict, through compromise and the building of consensus

➢ **Politics as the study of power**

According to the sociologists Dowse & Hughes (1972) politics is about power. They say: "politics occurs when there are differentials in power." This suggests that: "Any social relationship which involves power differentials is political. Power is the ability to make other people do whatever you want either by threat, sanctions or through manipulation. Politics is, in essence, power: the ability to achieve a desired outcome, through whatever means.

In the end we can tel that Political science is the study of politics and power from domestic, international, and comparative perspectives. It entails understanding political ideas, ideologies, institutions, policies, processes, and behavior, as well as groups, classes, government, diplomacy, law, strategy, and war.

3. The emergence and development of political science: from the science of the state to the science of power

Some have identified Plato whose ideal of a stable republic still yields insights and metaphors, as the first political scientist, though most consider

Aristotle who introduced empirical observation into the study of politics, to be the discipline's true founder. Plato and Aristotle focused on perfecting the polis (city-state), a tiny political entity, which for the Greeks meant both society and political system.

Early Christian thinkers, such as St. Augustine, emphasized the dual loyalty of Christians to both God and temporal rulers, with the clear implication that the "heavenly city" is more important and durable than the earthly one. With this came an otherworldly disdain for politics.

The first modern political scientist was the Italian writer Niccolò Machiavelli. His infamous work The Prince (1531), a treatise originally dedicated to Florence's ruler, Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici, presented amoral advice to actual and would-be princes on the best means of acquiring and holding on to political power. Machiavelli's political philosophy, which completed the secularization of politics begun by Marsilius, was based on reason rather than religion. An early Italian patriot, Machiavelli believed that Italy could be unified and its foreign occupiers expelled only by ruthless and single-minded princes who rejected any moral constraints on their power.

The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) also placed power at the centre of his political analysis. English philosopher John Locke, who also witnessed the turmoil of an English civil war, argued in his influential Two Treatises on Civil Government (1690) that people form governments through a social contract to preserve their inalienable natural rights to "life, liberty, and property.

If Hobbes was the conservative of the "contractualists" and Locke the liberal, then the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the radical. Rousseau's The Social Contract (1762) constructs a civil society in which the separate wills of individuals are combined to govern as the "general will" (volonté générale) of the collective that overrides individual wills, "forcing a man to be free." Rousseau's radical vision was embraced by French revolutionaries and later by totalitarians, who distorted many of his philosophical lessons.

Montesquieu contributed to modern comparative politics with his The Spirit of Laws (1748). Montesquieu's sojourn in England convinced him that English liberties were based on the separation and balance of power between Parliament and the monarchy. Montesquieu also produced an innovative analysis of governance that assigned to each form of government an animating principle—for example, republics are based on virtue, monarchies on honour, and despotisms on fear. Montesquieu's analysis concluded that a country's form of government is determined not by the locus of political power but by how the government enacts public policy.

The early development of political science was also influenced by law. The French political philosopher Jean Bodin articulated a theory of sovereignty that viewed the state as the ultimate source of law in a given territory.

The scientific approach to politics developed during the 19th century along two distinct lines that still divide the discipline. In the 1830s the French historian and politician Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–59) brilliantly analyzed democracy in America, concluding that it worked because Americans had developed "the art of association" and were egalitarian group formers.

The first separate school of political science was established in 1872 in France as the École Libre des Sciences Politiques (now the Institut d'Études Politiques). In 1895 the London School of Economics and Political Science was founded in England, and the first chair of politics was established at the University of Oxford in 1912.

Some of the most important developments in political science since it became a distinct academic discipline have occurred in the United States. Politics had long been studied in American universities, but usually as part of the curricula of law, philosophy, or economics. Political science as a separate discipline in universities in the United States dates from 1880

Political science in the United States in the last quarter of the 19th century was influenced by the experience of numerous scholars who had done graduate work at German universities, where the discipline was taught as science of the state in an ordered, structured, and analytic organization of concepts, definitions, comparisons, and inferences.

Arthur F. Bentley's The Process of Government, little noticed at the time of its publication in 1908, greatly influenced the development of political science from the 1930s to the 1950s. Bentley rejected statist abstractions in favour of observable facts and identified groups and their interactions as the basis of political life. Group activity, he argued, determined legislation, administration, and adjudication.

Harold Lasswell (1902–78), a member of the Chicago group, carried the psychological approach to Yale University, where he had a commanding influence. His Psychopathology and Politics (1930) and Power and Personality (1948) fused categories of Freudian psychology with considerations of power. Many political scientists attempted to use Freudian psychology to analyze politics, but none succeeded in establishing it as a firm basis of political science, because it depended too much on subjective insights and often could not be verified empirically.

Hans Morgenthau (1904–80), a German refugee and analyst of world politics, argued succinctly in Politics Among Nations (1948) that all politics is a struggle for power.

Perhaps the most important irreversible change in political science after World War II was that the scope of the discipline was expanded to include the study of politics in Asia, Africa, and Latin America—areas that had been largely ignored in favour of Europe and North America.

4. Topics of Political Science: The State / Authority / Power and Capability / Political Decision-Making

➢ **Authority**

✓ **Definition of authority**

- Weber defines authority as legitimate forms of domination, that is, forms of domination which followers or subordinates consider to be legitimate. Legitimate does not necessarily imply any sense of rationality, right, or natural justice. Rather, domination is legitimate when the subordinate accept, obey, and consider domination to be desirable, or at least bearable and not worth challenging. It is not so much the actions of the dominant that create this, but rather the willingness of those who subordinate to believe in the legitimacy of the claims of the dominant.

- Power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior.

- The power to give orders or make decisions : the power or right to direct or control someone or Something.

✓ **classification of authority**

The German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) distinguished three ideal types of legitimate political leadership/domination/authority. He wrote about these three types of domination both in his essay "The Three Types of Legitimate Rule", which was published in his 1921 masterwork Economy and Society.

Weber outline three major types of legitimate domination: traditional, charismatic, and legal or rational. These three forms do not constitute the totality of types of domination but they show how it is possible for some people to exercise power over others. Authority extends and maintains power and shows a study of its origins can show how people come to accept this domination as a regular and structured phenomenon. Also note that these are ideal types, with any actual use of power being likely to have aspects of more than one type of authority, and perhaps even other forms of power such as the use of force or coercion.

-Traditional Authority

According to Weber, the power of traditional authority is accepted because that has traditionally been the case; its legitimacy exists because it has been accepted for a long time. Britain's Queen Elizabeth, for instance, occupies a position that she inherited based on the traditional rules of succession for the monarchy. People adhere to traditional authority because they are invested in the past and feel obligated to perpetuate it. In this type of authority, a ruler typically has no real force to carry out their will, and their position depends primarily on a group's respect.

-Charismatic Authority

Followers accept the power of charismatic authority because they are drawn to the leader's personal qualities. The appeal of a charismatic leader can be extraordinary, and can inspire followers to make unusual sacrifices or to

persevere in the midst of great hardship and persecution. Charismatic leaders usually emerge in times of crisis and offer innovative or radical solutions. They may even offer a vision of a new world order.

-**Rational-Legal Authority**

According to Weber, power made legitimate by laws, written rules, and regulations is termed rational-legal authority. In this type of authority, power is vested in a particular rationale, system, or ideology and not necessarily in the person who implements the specifics of that doctrine. With rational-legal authority, the power to influence does not fall on individuals themselves, but instead falls on specific, structured, bureaucratic offices, and individuals holding specific positions have the authority to act in the name of such positions. A nation that follows a constitution applies this type of authority.

➢ **power and capability**

Weber defined power as the chance that an individual in a social relationship can achieve his or her own will even against the resistance of others. This is a very broad definition and includes a very wide range of types of power.

In international relations, power is defined in several different ways. Material definitions of state power emphasize economic and military power.Other definitions of power emphasize the ability to structure and constitute the nature of social relations between actors. Power is an attribute of particular actors in their interactions, as well as a social process that constitutes the social identities and capacities of actors.

Political scientists, historians, and diplomats have used the following concepts of political power:

- Power as a **goal** of states or leaders;
- Power as a measure of **influence** or control over outcomes, events, actors and issues;
- Power as victory in conflict and the attainment of **security**;
- Power as control over resources and **capabilities**;
- Power as **status**, which some states or actors possess and others do not.

➢ **Political decision**

Political decision means a decision made by an elected official or elected body of a policy nature and which has general application and for which the accountability is to the electorate.

Political Decision Making refers to the process of making choices and selecting courses of action by individuals in positions of authority, based on scientific data and information.