

---

## UNIT 2 THEORISING THE POLITICAL

---

### Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 The Historical Approach
- 2.3 The Sociological Approach
- 2.4 The Philosophical Approach
- 2.5 An Integrated Approach
- 2.6 Autonomous Character of Political Science
- 2.7 Empirical Vs Normative Theory
- 2.8 Contemporary Relevance of Classics
- 2.9 Continuity of Traditional Political Thought
- 2.10 The New Science of Politics
  - 2.10.1 Views of Eric Voegelin
  - 2.10.2 Views of Christian Bay
- 2.11 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.12 Some Useful References
- 2.13 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

---

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

---

This Unit deals with the various relevant concerns of political philosophising/theorising. After going through the unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the various approaches to studying political phenomena
- Distinguish between empirical and political theory
- Examine as to how far political science is an autonomous discipline
- Comment on the relevance of traditional political thought including classics and finally,
- Discuss the new science of politics

---

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

---

Without trying to attempt a precise definition of the nature and scope of political science, one might say that there is a “broad” view and a “narrow” view of politics and political phenomena – the one placing its main emphasis on political functions and treating politics as a process or a type of activity, and the other on political structures and orienting itself towards various types of political institutions. Aristotle was clearly taking a broad view of politics, when he searched for it not only in the state, but also in the family, the corporation, the association or the church, whereas the discussion of politics in the subsequent centuries was limited, by and large, to its narrow view, which interpreted politics as the study of the political and the governmental sub-systems of society. We find the contemporary writers, like Catin, once again breaking away from this narrow view and emphasising the phenomenal struggle for control as their central concern. With the emergence of this view, political scientists are no longer satisfied with merely descriptive categories, though accurate description is a necessary first step to other steps, but would like to take up more refined and sophisticated techniques of analysis. They would like to convert, in other words, what

was regarded as political philosophy or political thought or political theory into political science. Catlin, for example, would think of political science as “indistinguishable – on any intellectually respectable grounds from sociology”, and maintain that the sociologists’ study of “myriads of individual acts and thousands of relations between groups” afforded the basis “for authentic comparisons and, in the best tradition of Aristotle and Machiavelli, for the observation of constants”. One might, however, wonder whether a concept of politics which included the family control system and the ecclesiastical polity was not so broad as to be meaningless and think that it might perhaps be better to strike a balance between the two extreme views.

---

## 2.2 THE HISTORICAL APPROACH

---

The traditional or the historical approach to political science is best represented by George H. Sabine. Sabine proceeds with his definition of political science in a very practical manner. He suggests that we include in political science all those subjects which have been the major themes of discussion in the writings of well-known political philosophers – Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Bentham, Mill, Green, Hegel, Marx, and others. In the writings of these philosophers, we may try to search out those questions which they have raised about the truth or the validity of political theories. Questions concerning goods or ideals to be realised in or through the state, meaning of freedom, why men obey the government, the sphere of government activities, meaning of equality – these are some of the questions which have agitated the minds of political philosophers throughout the ages. In addition, we may also make an inventory of questions regarding the state, the relationship between state and society and between the individual and the state, and discuss them at length if they have not been fully discussed by these political philosophers. These form the bases of political theory, according to the traditionalist thinkers. Sabine and other traditional writers have attached a great deal of importance to the historical approach. A political theory, according to Sabine, is always advanced in “reference to a pretty specific situation” and, therefore, reconstruction of “the time, place and the circumstances in which it was produced” is essential to understand it. The fact, that a political theory is always rooted in a “pretty specific situation” does not mean that it does not have significance for the future. Great political theory excels both in the “analysis of a present situation and in suggestiveness for other situations”. As such, a good political theory, even though it is the outcome of a peculiar set of historical circumstances, has a significance for all times to come. It is exactly this universal character of political theory which makes it respectable.

A typical political theory includes, according to Sabine, (a) “factual statements about the postures of affairs that gave rise to it”, (b) statements of “what may be roughly called a causal nature”, and (c) statements that “something ought to happen or is the right and desirable thing to have happened”. Political theories, thus, constitute, according to Sabine, three elements – the factual, the causal and the valuationary. Political theories of great significance have generally been evolved during periods of stress and strain. In the known history of more than twenty-five hundred years, there have been two periods of about fifty years each in two places of quite restricted areas where political philosophy has thrived most – (1) in Athens, in the second and the third quarters of the fourth century B.C., when Plato and Aristotle wrote their great works, and (2) in England, between 1640 and 1690, when Hobbes, Locke and others evolved their political theories. Both these periods have been periods of great changes in the social and intellectual history of Europe. Great political theories are, thus, “secreted”, as Sabine would put it, “in the interstices of political and social crises”. They are produced, not by the crises as such, but by the reaction they leave on the minds of the thinkers. In order, therefore, to understand political theory, it is necessary to understand clearly, the time, the place and the circumstances in which it has evolved. The political philosopher may not actually take part in the politics of his

times, but he is affected by it and, in his own turn, he tries vigorously to affect it. Political theories, according to Sabine, “play a double role”, in the sense that while they belong to the abstract world of thought, they also influence beliefs which become causes and serve as causal events in historical situations. It is also necessary to understand whether a political theory is true or false, sound or silly, valid or unreliable. This involves the question of values. It is, therefore, necessary that in the understanding of political theory we should try to bring in the factual, the causal as well as the valuational factors.

---

### **2.3 THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**

---

The historical approach has been generally criticised as one which is much too deferential to tradition. It is also pointed out by many of the modern writers that this approach takes a narrow view of politics and restricts it to the domain of the state. Several contemporary writers have tried to widen the scope of political science so as to include not only the state but the society as well, a point of view which is very clearly brought out by Catlin. Catlin would like to use politics in the Aristotlean sense, in the sense in which it includes all those activities which are carried out within the auspices of society. Catlin regards political science as indistinguishable from sociology, and has pointed out a number of advantages of this approach: (1) It allows the student to deal with the relations and structure of society as a whole and not with a segment of it artificially created between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century in a part of Europe and now described as the “modern state”. (2) It links up his studies with a general theory of society which the political scientists can ignore only at their peril, something which most modern political scientists have not done. (3) If the political scientist deals with the state as his unit of analysis, he is likely to neglect the trivial and the common details regarding political events taking place from day to day, which he cannot understand unless he relates them to happenings in society. A large number of states exist today, but they cannot all be treated as individual units for the purposes of political analysis. One has to go to their basic characteristics. (4) If the political scientist decides to go beyond the study of institutions and undertakes the study of functions and processes he would find it easier to pick up a unit of analysis. Catlin, on his part, has opted for the study of the phenomenon of control as the central concern for the study of politics. By the act of control, he means “the act of individuals”. Catlin would have no objection to define politics, as V.O. Key has done as “the study of government”, provided we accept “government” as a synonym for ‘control’ and not institutions, like that of President or Cabinet. One could also call politics “the study of power and influence”, if we clearly understood that “influence is not government”, or in Max Weber’s words, “the struggle for power or the influencing of those in power”, and embracing “the struggle between states as such and between organised groups within the state”.

#### **Check Your Progress 1**

**Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) What are the ‘broad’ and the ‘narrow’ view of politics/political phenomenon?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Enumerate and describe the salient features of either the historical or the sociological approach to studying politics.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

---

## 2.4 THE PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

---

Besides the traditional and the contemporary view-points regarding political science, there is a third view point advanced by Leo Strauss, which may be described as the philosophical approach. Leo Strauss makes a distinction between political theory and political philosophy and believes that they are both parts of political thought. Political theory, according to Strauss, is “the attempt truly to know the nature of political things”. Philosophy being the “quest for wisdom” “or quest for universal knowledge, for knowledge of the whole”, political philosophy is “the attempt truly to know both the nature of political things and the right, or the good, political order”. Political thought extends to both political theory and political philosophy. Political theory and political philosophy are complementary to each other, since “generally speaking, it is impossible to understand thought or action or work without evaluating it”. Strauss is critical of both “historicism” as advocated by Sabine and “social science positivism” for which Catlin has been pleading, the former being in his view “the serious antagonist of political philosophy”.

Values, Strauss believes, are an indispensable part of political philosophy, and cannot be excluded from the study of politics. All political action aims at either preservation or change, and is guided by some thought or evaluation of what is better and what is worse. A political scientist is expected to possess more than opinion. He must possess knowledge, knowledge of the good – of the good life or the good society. “If this directedness becomes explicit, if men make it their explicit goal to acquire knowledge of the good life and of the good society, political philosophy emerges”. “The assumptions concerning the nature of political things, which are implied in all knowledge of political things”, writes Strauss, “have the character of opinions. It is only when these assumptions are made the theme of critical and coherent analysis that a philosophic or scientific approach to politics emerges.” Political philosophy, according to him, is the “attempt to replace opinion about the nature of political things by knowledge of the nature of political things”, “the attempt truly to know both the nature of political things and the right, or the good, political order.” Political philosophy in the comprehensive form has been cultivated since its beginnings, almost without any interruption, till very recently when the behaviouralists started raising disputes about its subject-matter, methods as well as functions, and challenging its very possibility.

---

## 2.5 AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

---

If it is important not to allow political science to be lost in scientism or moralism, it is also important that both the scientific and the philosophic aspects of political theory should be properly understood and emphasised. But before we try to understand the scientific aspect of political theory, we should first understand what we mean by science, just as before we try to understand the philosophical aspect of political theory, we must understand what we mean by philosophy. Science has been variously

**What is Political Theory and Why Do We Need It?**

described as “a branch of knowledge or study dealing with a body of facts or truths systematically arranged and showing the operation of general laws”, “knowledge, as of facts of principles, gained by systematic study”, “a branch or body of organised knowledge”. A scientific approach to the study of a problem, therefore, involves two things: (a) the agreement on methods, and (b) the training of the human beings in scientific work. Taking these two aspects into consideration, Friedrich would define science as “a body of ordered knowledge, known to and progressively enlarged by the specialists in that field of knowledge through the use of methods which they as a group accept as workable ways for arriving at that particular kind of knowledge”. Science is, thus, “organised” knowledge and because there is a consistency of methods employed in the gathering of the particular knowledge of that science by various scholars, which gives it a logical coherence, scientific statements are capable of validation by other scholars. This definition of science, which it would be hardly possible to challenge, does not say that the same methods would be applicable to all the science. In fact, the method of one may not be applicable to another. Taking the simple matter of generalisation, no two sciences agree in the degree of generalisation which would make them true sciences. Methods which are highly successful in the study of physics and chemistry may not be equally applicable to astronomy, but that does not take away from the “scientific-ness” of astronomy. One might argue that they are similar at least in the sense that they both operate with precise quantitative data. Science, however, demands not only accuracy but also relevancy and adequacy of results. History has been made highly scientific during the last few decades. But the evolution of its “scientific” character has nothing to do with quantification – it is on the basis of a more scientific study of sources and a more critical use of the other types of evidence which has led to greater progress in the use of scientific methods in history. Friedrich makes it very clear that, “neither the degree of generalisation, nor the degree of quantification, are in themselves ‘absolute’ criteria of scientific progress, but must be evaluated in relation to the material in hand and to be assessed.” He quotes Aristotle with approval when he describes it as “the mark of an educated man” “to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the subject admits”.

**Check Your Progress 2**

**Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

- 1) Distinguish between the philosophical and the integrated approaches to studying politics.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

---

**2.6 AUTONOMOUS CHARACTER OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

---

The close identification of political science with either science or philosophy raises, in the opinion of Norman Jacobson, another kind of danger, the danger of political theory ending up in some kind of ‘scientism’ or ‘moralism’. Jacobson has tried to

make it clear that political science is neither scientism nor moralism – neither completely identified with science nor with morality – but separate from both of them and maintaining an identity of its own. Those who try to mould political science in the perfect image of science and try to apply methods and procedures of science to it do not always understand what science means. One may not deny the advantage of utilising the knowledge of one field for the better understanding of another, but one has to also understand the distinction between the two fields. Jacobson is of the view that contemporary political scientists are trying to make of political science anything but political science. “It would seem”, he writes, “that politics is psychology, or it is sociology, that it is moral philosophy or theology” – that it is “almost anything but politics”. Politics, in his view, is a special kind of intellectual activity. There is no harm in trying to pursue it more effectively by drawing upon the best that fields of enquiry in other disciplines have to offer, but this should be done only so far as it helps us in better understanding of politics. Politics, in fact, has got to be studied in its own right. If “science” is taken out of political theory, it might become a worthless “ethical” residue; if “philosophy” is taken out of it, it might be reduced to mere methodology. Those who emphasis either the scientific or the philosophical character of political science to the extent of identifying political science with one or the other, may be good advocates of “scientism” or “moralism”, but they certainly lack in a sense of commitment to political science itself.

---

## 2.7 EMPIRICAL VS NORMATIVE THEORY

---

While several approaches to political science have been advocated from time to time, and many of them have often co-existed simultaneously, they might be broadly divided into two categories – the **empirical-analytical** or the **scientific-behavioural** approach on one side and the **legal-historical** or the **normative-philosophical** approach on the other, and each of these two approaches has been mainly demarcated from the other by the emphasis it lays on facts as against values or on values as against facts. Two opposing positions are taken up in this respect by those who have been described by Robert Dahl as **Empirical Theorists** and **Trans-empirical Theorists**. The empirical theorists believe that an empirical science of politics based on facts alone is possible, whereas the others, the trans-empirical theorists, are of the opinion that the study of politics neither can nor should be purely scientific. The controversy mainly revolves a round two major issues:

- i) Can political analysis be neutral?
- ii) Should political analysis be neutral?

Regarding the first, the empirical theorists are certain that it is possible to isolate and to test the empirical aspect of our beliefs about politics without the necessity of going into the value-laden question of whether the empirical propositions are true or false. A ‘correct’ decision on what is empirically true is not the same as a ‘correct’ decision on what ought to be. Whether values are derived from God’s will, or natural laws, or are purely subjective in nature, as the existentialists believe. Facts are there for all to see and can be subjected to empirical tests, whereas values cannot be tested this way. Whether the stability of popular governments in general or in a particular country is in any way dependent on literacy, multi-party systems, proportional representation, a two-party system, whether it can best function under single-member constituencies, are questions which can be tested empirically, irrespective of the fact whether they are concerning the right or the wrong political systems. The trans-empiricists, on the other hand, believe that whatever be the situation in the natural sciences, facts and values are so closely inter-twined with each other that, in the study of politics, one can not separate them except in the most trivial instances. Whatever one might pretend, they would say, one is making value judgements all the time. Any comprehensive theory about politics, they argue, must inevitably contain

**What is Political Theory and Why Do We Need It?**

evaluations not merely of the empirical validity of the factual statements in the theory, but also of the moral quality of the political events, processes or systems described in the theory. It is, therefore, an illusion to think, according to the trans-empiricists, that there can be a completely objective theory of politics.

**Check Your Progress 3**

**Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) Comment on the autonomous character of political science.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2) Distinguish between normative and empirical political theory.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

---

**2.8 CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF CLASSICS**

---

While the empirical theorists, under the impressive, scientific garb of “behaviouralism”, seemed to be dominating the discipline of political science during the fifties and the sixties, the “uses” as well as the “relevance” of classical political philosophy continued to be widely recognised and a number of influential contemporary political thinkers continued to defend and uphold the traditional-classical political theory and severely criticise the empirical-analytical approaches. They may not be very large in numbers, but they belong to different countries and exercise a great deal of influence over a large number of their students and admirers. The names which immediately strike one’s mind in this connection are those of Michael Oakeshott, Hannah Arendt, Bertrand Jouvenel, Leo Strauss, Christian Bay and Eric Voegelin.

A classic has been defined as a work in a “class” by itself, a work “of the first rank and of acknowledged excellence”. Works like Plato’s *Republic* and *Laws*, Aristotle’s *Ethics* and *Politics*, Augustine’s *City of God*, Aquinas, *Treatise on Law* in the *Summa Theologica*, Machiavelli’s *Prince* and *Discourses*, Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, Locke’s *Second Treatise*, Rousseau’s *Social Contract*, Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* and Marx’s *Philosophic-and Economic Manuscripts of 1844* and *German Ideology* come under the category of ‘classics’. The very use of the word in plural involves a ‘conversation of many voices’, a dialogue between different perspectives and interpretations of reality as a whole. “A conversation”, as Dante Germino has pointed out, “is not a battle of voices, but rather a reflection of certain predominant lines of argument, which can be identified by those who will listen.” It is a “conversation of

mankind” which extends beyond the modern into the medieval and the ancient ages and the quality of which is not affected by the context of time or space in which a particular political philosopher was located. All that was necessary was that one taking part in this “conversation of mankind” was directly involved in the issues of the day which, whether in politics or in philosophy, are issues of all time, was capable of deep thinking, or contemplation, on these issues and could express himself in a language which would appeal to men in all ages.

---

## 2.9 CONTINUITY OF TRADITIONAL POLITICAL THOUGHT

---

Michael Oakeshott, who took over the chair of political science in the London School of Economics and Political Science from Harold Laski in 1951, has been identified with the resurgence of conservative thinking in England. But it would be wrong to regard Oakeshott as merely a conservative, though conservative he was in every sense of the term. His major contribution was to recover political theory as a tradition of enquiry and regain for political science, the possibility of a critical, theoretical analysis. As different from the behaviouralists, who were beginning to make a mark in the United States of America when he was enunciating a different kind of doctrine in his lectures and seminars to his students at the London School of Economics and through his publications. Oakeshott based his philosophical analysis on experience which seeks to rediscover the multi-dimensionality that had been denied to experience by the ideological and positivist writers. Oakeshott treats philosophy and science as basically two different kinds of activities and believes that it would be wrong to attempt to transfer the methods and concerns of the one to the other. “The notion that philosophy has anything to learn from the methods of scientific thought,” he writes, “is altogether false.” Philosophy, according to him, must be pursued for its own sake, and must “maintain its independence from all extraneous interests, and in particular from the practical interest”.

Oakeshott believes that political philosophy – or, as he would like to call it, *philosophising about politics* – is a limited activity within the context of the larger role of philosophising – the attempt “to see one particular mode of experience – practical experience – from the standpoint of the totality of experience”. Reflection about political life, as he mentions in his introduction to Hobbes’ *Leviathan*, can be at a variety of levels, and was apt to flow from one level to another, but in political philosophy we have in our mind, the world of political activity and also “another world” and our endeavour is to explore “the coherence of the two worlds together”. Political philosophy for him is “the consideration of the relation between politics and eternity”. “Politics is contributory to the fulfilment of an end which it cannot itself bring about”. Political philosophy for Oakeshott is not, what it is to the behaviouralist, a “progressive” science which accumulates solid results and reaches conclusions upon which further research may be based. It is, on the other hand, closely integrated to history – “indeed, in a sense it is nothing but a history, which is a history of the problems philosophers have detected and the manner of solution they have proposed, rather than a history of doctrines. . . .”

Hannah Arendt is a more prolific writer. A person of enormous erudition, she has published extensively on the major problems of political theory and established her reputation as a thinker of exceptional originality. Believing in the uniqueness and responsibility of the individual human person, she is not only opposed to totalitarianism of all kinds, but also to the behaviouralist approach in social sciences, which, according to her, prepares the ground for totalitarianism. In its search for uniformity in human behaviour, she warns, it will itself contribute to the making of a uniform stereotyped “man”.



**What is Political Theory and Why Do We Need It?**

The name of Bertrand de Jouvenel may perhaps be mentioned along with that of Hannah Arendt. Both believe that politics has a potentiality for creative activity and should not be transformed into the dead uniformity of administration. Both are against totalitarianism, which threatens to become the predominant phenomenon of the twentieth century, and have tried to examine its intellectual and moral roots.

Leo Strauss, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, whose death in October 1973 was a great loss to political philosophy, is one of the most outstanding contemporary theorists and a staunch critic of the behaviouralist approach. His impact on American philosophy and political science has been very great. In Chicago, there are a large number of political scientists who regard it their privilege to be considered his disciples.

**Check Your Progress 4**

**Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

- 1) Comment on the contemporary relevance of classics of politics.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

- 2) Discuss the views of either Michael Oakeshott or Hannah Arendt.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

---

**2.10 THE NEW SCIENCE OF POLITICS**

---

**2.10.1 Views of Eric Voegelin**

Among the modern political thinkers who have taken flights into the heights of political philosophising, the name of Eric Voegelin stands out as the most prominent. He is a prolific writer, though his style is somewhat complicated and it is not always easy to follow him. He does not make a distinction between political theory and political science –to him political theory would mean a critical reflection on politics, without which there can be no political science. Voegelin is strongly of the view that we never had the materials available and the intellectual climate suitable for great advances in theoretical analysis, as now. Voegelin is against system building in modern philosophy and believes that the system-constructors are ignorant of the basic experience of existence.

It is the duty of the political theorist, according to Voegelin, to empirically examine, and critically evaluate, man’s experiences through history with a view to seeking the

light which they shed upon his own search for truth about order in human society, a task which was superbly done by the Greek philosophers and the Christian theologians. Voegelin sharply disagrees with the modern political theorists who would treat political theory as essentially methodology and its task as merely acting “as the hand-maiden of research into behavioural regularities on the phenomenological level”. He would rather regard political theory as “an experimental science of right order, based on the total experience of the existing human person”. The task of political theory, according to Voegelin, is to elaborate “empirically and critically, the problems of order which derive from philosophical anthropology as part of a general ontology”.

### 2.10.2 Views of Christian Bay

At a time when the behaviouralists were trying to rationalise and justify the elitist concept of democracy through their “applied” studies and collection of statistical data, Christian Bay, in the best tradition of classical political philosophers, was questioning their “wisdom” and raising some fundamental questions regarding problems and perspectives of enquiry, which seem to have been neglected by them. He agreed with David Easton’s definition of politics as consisting of “all the processes by which public values are promoted and distributed by means of power and authority”, but objected to a virtual absence in such a definition of any reference to the *relatedness* of politics to human needs and problems. The mass of behavioural research in political science today, he writes, “deals with voting and with opinions and attitudes on social, political and economic issues. But we should not mistake the political horizon we encounter in this research for the whole realm of the political. There is too much that gets lost when attention is focussed on what we can readily measure by the standard kinds of sociological techniques – individual meanings of political commitments, for example”. He was critical of the prevailing tendency in current research of not trying to relate behavioural data meaningfully to normative theories of democracy. He quoted in this connection the “painstaking analysis of political behaviour with an astonishingly superficial attempt at bringing their data to bear on democratic theory” that Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee had made when they concluded that the American system of democracy “does meet certain requirements for a going political organisation” and that “it often works with distinction”. “With a more adequate conception of politics”, he wrote, “It will become clear, I believe, that what these and many other authors of books on political behaviour are looking at is only a limited range of data, which badly needs to be supplemented by a more intensive scientific inquiry, and also by a much larger canvas of political theory that includes a place for concepts such as needs, growth, and the common good, to name a few only.” It was even more shocking for Bay to find a “highly respected writer” like S.M. Lipset cheerfully claiming that democracy “is the good society itself in operation”, or that “the give-and-take of a free society’s internal struggles” was the best man could hope for on this earth. Quoting a few more examples, he wrote, “Determined to utilise the available arsenals of sociological techniques, this line of research has stressed the phenomena that can be weighed and counted to the exclusion of more diffuse and elusive aspects of politics. In their desire to be scientific, these investigators have shied away from normative inquiry to such an extent that they unblushingly relate their fine empirical work to the crudest notions of, and assumptions about, democracy – either as an end in itself or as a means to even vaguer conceptions of human wants”.

#### Check Your Progress 5

**Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) Discuss the views of either Eric Voegelin or Christian Bay.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

---

## 2.11 LET US SUM UP

---

Political science was treated as distinct from other social sciences in as much as it dealt with the phenomenon of control of power within society. Max Weber regarded an organisation or association as political “if and in so far as the enforcement of its order is carried out continually within a given territorial area by the application and threat of physical force on the part of the administrative staff”. Institutions, however, continued to be regarded as the primary units of analysis, though the focus of interest had shifted from institutions themselves to the accumulation and exercise of power. “The focus of interest”, of the political scientist, writes Robson, “is clear and unambiguous, it centres on the struggle to gain and retain power, to exercise power or influence over others, or to resist that exercise”. In more recent years, the centre of interest has shifted more particularly to the relations and patterns of interaction among individuals, politics being now regarded as “an aspect of human behaviour in an environment”. Within the broad frame-work of the concept of politics as the authoritative allocation of values, emphasis has varied from (1) the making and execution of decisions with decisionmaking as the unit of analysis, to (2) policymaking, involving a discussion of both policy content and political process, and, finally, to (3) the determination, and attainment of society’s goals, the principal difference between the second and third aspect being that while the second focuses primarily on the precise nature of political processes as they are carried on within the state, the last one is concerned with goals and teleology.

---

## 2.12 SOME USEFUL REFERENCES

---

Bellany R., *Theories and Concepts of Politics: An Introduction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993)

Blondel, J., *The Discipline of Politics* (London: Butter-worths, 1981)

Leftwich, A., (ed), *What is Politics?* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984)

Mouffe, C., *The Return of the Political* (London: Verso, 1993)

Plan, R., *Modern Political Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991)

---

## 2.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

---

### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See Section 2.1
- 2) See Sections 2.2 and 2.3

**Check Your Progress 2**

- 1) See Section 2.4 and 2.5

**Check Your Progress 3**

- 1) See Section 2.6
- 2) See Section 2.7

**Check Your Progress 4**

- 1) See Section 2.8
- 2) See Section 2.9

**Check Your Progress 5**

- 1) See sub-sections 2.10.1 and 2.10.2