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RESEARCH ARTICLE

RESURGENCE OF POLITICAL THEORY

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ABSTRACT

Political theory as a subject is a source of criticism and appraisal concerning to the character and direction of the discipline. It is widely debated among the contemporary political scientist that the great tradition associated with the master of political philosophy seems to become closed. But it is not true. The resurgence of political theory means the revival of the normative or value-based (Philosophical) political theory in political science. In the middle of the 20th century, many thinkers like (David Easton, Alfred Cobban, Lasslett, Dahl) have written about the decline or dead of political theory. But it would not be right to conclude that political theory has become unimportant or has declined. It is in fact true that the nature, character, scope, area of study and the shape of political theory has been changed with the changing circumstances. Day by day the periphery, relevance, scope, the area of study of political theory is increasing according the need of the hour. According to some scholars, political theory now concentrating on issue like feminism, Opportunism, Cynicism, Existentialism, Environmentalism, Post behaviouralism, Fundamentalism, Post modernism, methodological revolution have changed the forms of political theory. Towards the second half of the Nineteenth and twentieth century, it has seen a new direction in the development of political theory and value-based political theory was revived (resurgence of political theory) in the writing of Leo Strauss, Isaiah Berlin, Hannah Ardent, Leo Strauss, Michael Oakeshott, Bertrand de Jouvenal, Sheldon Wolin, John Rawls, etc. Thus, Political theory is not dead. It still exists. So to say that the political theory is dead, it will be a great mistake. It is not declined but had transformed in to different aspect.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the acceptance of the tradition of political theory as a sub field of political science, it has remained the subject as well as the source of criticism and appraisal concerning to the character and direction of the discipline. The new science aimed at the autonomy of the discipline and at the same time to give it an empirical character and also sought to rescue political theory from the growth of identification with history. It is widely debated among the contemporary political scientist that the great tradition associated with the master of political philosophy seems to become closed. But it is not true. On the other hand, day by day the periphery, relevance, scope, the area of study of political theory is increasing according the need of the hour. With the changing perspectives political theory is also changing. Political theory in the past was composed of practical and philosophical level.

In the practical level they explained how the Govt. functioned and at philosophical level tried to lay down the goals and objectives of the state and suggested the line on which the state is to be organized in order to achieve its goal. According to some scholar, political theory now concentrating on issue like Feminism, Opportunism, Cynicisms, Existentialism, Environmentalism, post behaviouralism, fundamentalism, Post modernism, methodological revolution have changed the forms of political theory. Recent development, conceptual history, proves a close relationship between historical and contemporary theory. The major cleavage has been between individualists, who look for universal foundations in postulates such as human nature, and communitarians, who begin with persons embedded in contingent social relationships and practices. In applied political theory, the major shift has been from institutional questions to the analysis of issues in public policy, such as welfare provision and sexual and racial discrimination. So according to these scholars political theory is not dead. It still exists. So to say that the political theory is dead, it will be a great mistake. It is not declined but had transformed in to different aspect.

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Political theory has flourished over the last 20 years but it has also become more fragmented. The critical study of classic texts has been replaced by a more narrowly historical approach, which seeks to locate texts in their political contexts. Political theory helps us to analyse and explain the norms, practices, and organisation of political action. Importantly, it explores what a better political world would look like and how it can be created and many more.

The post Second world War period: Specifically the 1950s—witnessed new directions in the development of political theory and it is observed that the War served as a separate line between the old and the new concepts of political theory. A large number of scholars from Europe migrated to America and many of them began serious research work on political theory and their interest did not lie in the study of political theory in traditional way. They arrived at the conclusion that the traditional method of analyzing political phenomena and theory was not adequate for these new reforms or rejuvenation of political theory is needed, new methods are to be devised, area of activity is to be widened, rigorous research is also the need of the hour for the growth and development of political theory.

This tendency finally laid the foundation of a new way of studying political theory that is known as resurgence of political theory. The resurgence of political theory means the revival of the normative or value-based (Philosophical) political theory in political science. In the middle of the twentieth century, many thinkers (David Easton, Alfred Cobban) have written about the decline of political theory. Again many concluded (Lasslett, Dahl) as a political theory is dead. But it would not be right to conclude that political theory has become unimportant or has declined. It is in fact true that the nature, character, scope, area of study and shape of political theory has changed in line with the changing circumstances. The students and professionals should not only know the political theories but also deeper insights as to its application in their own field of expertise. Thus the study of political science will also include the empirical investigation of political facts through social research and the application of critical thinking.

The main resurgence was found in United States where American Political Science Association and Rockefeller Foundation played the pioneer role. A large number of researchers gathered at various research institutes and universities of America and their painstaking efforts really enriched the empirical approach to the study of political theory leading to its resurgence. Towards the second half of the 19th and 20th century, value-based political theory was revived (resurgence of political theory) in the writing of Leo Strauss, Isaiah Berlin, Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss, Michael Oakeshott, Bertrand de Jouvenal, Sheldon Wolin, John Rawls, etc. Their arguments about the resurgence of political theory are given below.

Leo Strauss views on resurgence: Leo Strauss was a German born -American political philosopher and classicist who specialized in classical political theory. He was highly influenced by Allan Bloom, Carl Schmitt and others. Leo Strauss prefers the term political philosophy to political theory. To him the growth of democracy that is liberal democracy unlike the decline of political theory, he

considered political philosophy as distinctive kinds of political thought. He focuses on the importance of traditional or normative political theory in dealing with modern day problems. According to him, today's democracy is mass democracy. Therefore political theory has got unbreakable link with the theory of politics. To him, political science and political philosophy are identical. The Greek philosopher Aristotle also evaluated political issues in the discussion of political science. Behaviorism is as harmful as positivism. He opposes the behaviorist's statement. Because behaviorists have separated political philosophy from political science. Because behaviorism denies knowledge of the final rules.

Isaiah Berlin on resurgence of political theory: Isaiah Berlin, British social and political theorist, historian in his article "Does political theory exist" told that political theory still exists. It can never see its end. Political theory even in the sense of political philosophy is neither also dead nor even in a state of decline. He writes political theory will not wholly diminish from the earth. However, many of its rivals such as sociology, social psychology, economics, philosophical analysis, jurisprudence and many more claims to have dispelled in imaginary realm. To him the responsibility for causing the decline of political theory should be laid on rank empiricist who has displaced the classical tradition. Political theory thus thriving both at behavioral and traditional level. Ever since civilization started man has tried to establish some form of authority and also accept it. Thus political theory has arisen from an enquiry of this crucial issue of political obligation. He admits that though some portion of political theory may lose its relevance but it doesn't mean the subject as a whole is irrelevant. New political scientists tried to explain its new horizon and its changing perspective.

John Rawls on political resurgence: John Bordley Rawls is one of the American moral and political philosopher in the liberal tradition was a notable figure in the second half of the twentieth century. He is remembered in the mental horizon of posterity for his penning of immortal classic "A Theory of Justice" in 1971". Political Theory meets its revival in the monumental classic of John Rawls. His theory of justice threw a gauntlet to David Easton's behaviouralism. He enriched his theory of justice by adopting John Locke's theory of social contract, Kant's theory of individualism. He says that justice is the virtue of first social institution as truth is the system of thought. He seeks to evolve a working basis for social cooperation in liberal democratic society by engaging himself in the problem of distribution of liberties, opportunities, income, wealth and bases of self-respect. John Rawls discussed different steps such as Communitarities where the liberal conception of individuated self and hold that self is part of social relations in which he/she is embedded, Michael Sandel-Liberalism and the limits of justice. Secondly, Post modernism which got genesis in the writings of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. In post modernism Identity and culture are the prominent aspects on which post modernists emphasized. Thirdly, Multiculturalism, To Rawls some scholars blame the contemporary political theory of being culture biased and neglecting the concerns of different cultural groups. Finally, Feminism, The theorists of this school have attacked the alleged neutrality of public sphere. Instead, they locate structures of power that symbolize power of men over women.

It neglects the aspect of gender and results in subjugation of women. Lastly, Environmentalism: Instead they place ecological components at the centre of political theory and emphasize its importance over other animate objects. Germino defines that political theory as a critical study of the principles of right order in human social existence. As a science it comprehends both the knowledge of facts and the insights.

To Plato political philosophy was the search for knowledge in fact. Aristotle discussed political activity as a principle of justice. In practical matters he speaks about autonomy of prudence and political action to be essentially ethical. Till the beginning of 19th century there was no difference between values and facts. So the questioning of making distinction between political philosophy and political science did not arise. All the grants to the history of political theory appear to have held strong views regarding the burning public issues of their day. In fact their strong interest on these issues may be said to have brought them reflect on politics in the first place. As human society becomes more advanced with the growth of technology and rapid communication, men need political theory.

Sheldon Wolin: Sheldon S. Wolin, a great American political philosopher, Princeton Emeritus professor coined the term inverted totalitarianism. Continuity and innovation is in western political thought is a work of political theory of Sheldon S. Wolin. He has interpreted the usefulness of the traditional style of political theory that has developed from the time of the Greek scholar Plato to the present day. To him, the political theories of the past can be easily used to better understand the politics of the present. The feature of political theory is always bright. He has become aware of how to revive political theory or political philosophy. He has presented in support of the former political tradition.

Michael Oakeshott: Michael Oakeshott, a great English political philosopher who wrote about philosophy of history, philosophy of religion, philosophy of education and philosophy of law. In his immortal work 'Experience and Modes'. According to him "*The understanding of politics as an empirical activity is, then, inadequate because it fails to reveal a concrete manner of activity at all.*" He has analyzed the philosophical interpretation of experience and emphasises the multidimensional aspect of the experience. To him purpose of philosophy is to identify each mode to experience and to explain its relation to other aspects of the experience.

Philadelphia meets: The American political and social science in an organized conference at Philadelphia in 28th December 1965 to discuss about the subject matter, objective, methods of study of political theory. Hans S.J Morgenthau, Norman D Palmer, Harry Eckstein, David Easton, Alfred D. Grazia, and other scholars in the meeting. It was unanimously decided that political theory is a very dynamic subject, it explains the present, understand past and focus on future, it suggest policy and also it is an embryonic subject.

Pluralism: Pluralism has a clear liberal lineage. The great pioneer in this field is David Easton. Behaviouralism opened the new vistas of political theory and at the same time injected new blood into the body of political theory. The Resurgence in Political Theory that took place after the

Second World War assumed various shapes and manifestations and the present space cannot comprise them all. One such manifestation is pluralism, which wants to emphasise that in any society there are numerous individuals who cherish different tastes, interests and values.

Behaviouralism: Behaviouralism constitutes a very important aspect of the resurgence of political theory that took place at the beginning of 1950s. It appeared mainly as a reaction against the shortcomings of the traditional approaches. Behaviouralism is basically a protest movement against the excessive formalism and value orientation of the traditional approaches and gives a scientific character to researches in politics. It takes the individual person as the unit for political analysis. In the behavioural view, group or collective actions are the results of individual behaviours. Political institutions are behaviour systems. Behaviouralism in political science states that it does not deal with all sorts of behaviour of the individuals but only with that behaviour which displays political character. It was an attempt by a group of mainly American political scientists to gather 'scientific' knowledge about politics. It is a belief that social theories can be constructed on the basis of observable facts and behaviour, quantifiable data and facts. It seeks to examine the behavior, actions, and acts of individuals – rather than the characteristics of institutions such as legislatures, executives, and judiciaries – and groups in different social settings and explain this behavior as it relates to the political system. It has opened the new vistas of political theory and at the same time injected new blood into the body of political theory.

Conclusion

The central problems of politics and timeless the aims and purpose of political theory are forever need discussion. The goal of the theory is to enhance and understanding political theory. To talk about the decline of political theory is wrong, but it has transformed from one to another form. Political theory has seen its marvelous development which may be rejuvenication or, resurgence in present time. Undoubtedly, there has been a resurgence of political theory since the seventies of the twentieth century. Hebermas, Nozick, Walzer, M Sandel, etc. highly contributed for the development of political theory. Thus political theory is a never ending conversation among political theorist. A number of special issues like welfare rights and social justice, democratic theory and pluralism, utilitarianism, post-modernism, feminism, neo-social movement and municipal society, etc that need to be addressed in the construction of theories. It is certainly wrong to talk about the neither decline nor demise in the present age of democracy, ideology or, socialism. It can be said that there has been resurgence of political theory. The philosophical aspect of political theory is inherently far-fetched.

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