**Guddu’s Free Political Science Classes**

**2nd Lecture :**

**Political Thought**

1. **What is Politics?**
2. **What is Political thought?**
3. **What is difference political theory ,philosophy ,science**
4. **Approach for understanding any political thinker.**

**How to best utilize the material:**

Most important aspect about the subject is to keep an open mind .The beauty of the subject is that there are no boundaries , we need to take an interdisciplinary approach. Most of the teachings are quite visible in day to day activities, Newspaper readings etc.

Thus I would try to link with multiple aspects which I can think of while not letting the scholarly aspects get lost, further you can add/subtract/modify as per your own will. What you should not do is blindly follow anything and neither get into frivolous criticism just for the sake of it.

**Prerequisites :**

Nothing. Just Sit back and Enjoy :)

**Okay, lets get down to business:**

**Political Thought ?**

Political Thought can be defined in one line as view points regarding to different political ideas of rights, duties, equality, liberty etc. during an age at a particular place. It is a spatial and temporal concept and is evolving in nature ( not necessarily in sequential manner).

The key point to note is every term used in subject is not absolute. The subject is relativist , there are no absolute definition. In essence it potray's life situations in the most apt manner, for eg. What is normal for the spider is chaos for the fly, What is luxury for some humans is death for some animals etc.

Thus Political thought is representative of the thought of the entire age at a particular place. Say take Europe , the political idea during the medieval times were based on fractured notion of sovereignty which was shared between the institutions of church,king,nobles etc.(Which is in stark difference to the thoughts of todays Europe)

The political thought can be understood under the broad heads of ancient, medieval, modern and post modern . [We are living in the post modern world. The institutions of supra nationalism and local governance are characteristic features of the Post modern political institutions]

Each of the period or the epoch's have their characteristic features which separates them from the rest.

For eg. The Ancient European political thoughts were represented by Greek civilization. The thoughts of Plato and Aristotle are the bedrock of the western thought. Similarily the Ancient Indian thoughts would include the works of Manu, Kautilya, Buddha and his followers, Mahavira and His followers etc.

Do note that thought differs a lot from place to place, even if belonging to the same age. The ancient indian thought provided for a regulator state, where the state was to maintain the social order amongst other things. The Indian state had 'Danda' While the ancient Western state like in Athens was not much different from the society. We can consider the state and society to be the same thing. It was more like self regulated ,moderated city-state (Something like the forum)

**What is politics?**

The definition of politics is quite varied, it is most commonly understood as the art of managing power, coming into power and staying into power. We may normally visualize politics as politician campaigning for votes etc. However it is only of the many forms of politics(There was politics even during the time of kings and currently in countries with dictatorship. Imagine GOT and you should understand what politics is).

We need to understand politics in form of domination ,it is near to managing one's emotion and intelligence to gain domination over the other person in a non violent and consensus way.

**What is difference political theory ,philosophy ,science?**

The terms of political theory,philosophy,religion,ideology,science etc. are used interchangeably. However they are actually very different from each other.

Philosophy is based on logic, Religion on Faith and Science on Evidence.

For eg.

If a person pass the Civil Service Exam,2015 and he used to keep a punishing studying schedule everyday.

This can be explained as:

* Philosophy Guy: It is logical that if a person studies more --> Increase Knowledge --> Scores More in the Test --> Aces the exam
* Religion/Faith Guy: Once you have done your hard work, have faith that it will bear fruit. The theory of Karma kicks in
* Science Guy: Collects data about success ratio and hours of study .He then publishes a report with result backed by evidence, say the success ratio goes to 98% if the study hours are more than 26 hrs/day :P

**Approach for understanding any political thinker:**

In order to understand any political thinker, we need to keep our self in his/her shoes. The main aspect of understanding the thoughts of the person is to understand the circumstances in which the person has been brought up, context in which he/she has given a particular thought. We need to understand that there are various sides of any concept, we have the advantage of analyzing the thought in its hindsight . We are standing at a vantage point and should try to ensure that our understanding of the current does not color our opinion regarding history. For eg. The Forefathers of USA were slave owners (eg. George Washington) , Is it a bad thing? Yes it is now, but it was not at that time.

Similarly today Capitalism has overtaken Socialism but that doesn’t mean Marx thoughts were not correct, Rather during the 1850's Socialistic thoughts were vogue .

Thus while analyzing any thinker , be cautious and respectful towards the thought. The question of "**why such a thought ?"** is important and not the question of "**What is the thought?"**

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