

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY

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A) The expression "politics" derives from the Greek word "Polis", which means city.

Hence this first approach to the concept of "politics" and which he understood or defined as the government of the citizens, that is, that activity of leading the men who live in the city.

However, it must be noted that the concept of city that the Greeks had does not correspond to what we have today of that notion.

Currently, we understand by city that material infrastructure consisting of buildings, streets and squares that form a material unit, which, depending on its size, we call metropolis, city, town, hamlet or hamlet.

For the Greeks, the city was the set of citizens, and understood as such the inhabitants who had or held the legal status of citizens.

Given the above, in an example of the present era, we could point out that not all the inhabitants of our country are Chileans, but only those who hold our nationality.

Being Chilean is a legal category; not all people living in Chile are; they also exist, from the national perspective, they are foreigners.

But who are Chileans?

The answer is found in Art. 10 of our Constitution, which on this matter states that they are Chileans:

- + Those born in the national territory, with the exception of the children of foreigners born in Chilean territory who are in the service of their government or who are passers-by (Ius Solis);
- + The children of a Chilean father or mother born in a foreign territory, when their parent is in the service of the country (Ius Saguinis);
- + Children of Chilean fathers or mothers born abroad, for the mere fact of living in Chile for more than one year (Ius Sanguinis);
- + Foreigners who obtained a letter of nationalization in accordance with the law; y
- + Foreigners who obtained special grace of nationalization by a special law.

In the latter two cases, nationality is obtained by an act of authority.

Returning to the concept of citizen of the Greeks, we can point out then that not all the inhabitants of a Greek city - understood the term in its present sense - were citizens.

For example, foreigners and slaves did not have the status of citizens in the ancient Greek polis.

Thus things, the city, for the Greeks, was a set of organized relations between people who had a certain status: that of citizen.

If we wanted to make a comparison with the present reality, the ancient Greek city could be assimilated to the current conception of the state.

B) From a grammatical point of view, the expression "Politics" varies in meaning depending on the grammatical function assigned to it.

Thus, it is not the same to speak of the Political thing as to speak of the Politics.

For J. Freund, "the political evokes the world of essences"; says relation "with the world of rational discourse on the orientations of the evolution of society", therefore, "the political" does not consider aspects of contingency, does not go down to the historical juncture, but refers to the foundational formulations of society, with its duty to be.

In short, "politics" has to do with big projects, those that form the basis of a society.

Politics, on the other hand, is understood as that concrete activity that men deploy in order to govern themselves.

From this perspective, "politics" is visualized at a lower level than "politics."

Politics is the struggle for power, so it is in itself conflictive and belligerent.

The policy is then in the contingency plane.

What we usually visualize is the action of "politics." She is the one who is always present and is shown to us daily by the media, with all her drama, are her virtues, and most of the time, with her flaws and smallnesses.

But both "politics" and "politics" come from a common core. Moreover, they cannot subsist in isolation from each other.

"Politics" and "politics" are closely related, they cannot be ignored.

Indeed, today, man in society must face a dynamic and constantly changing reality, which means having to make decisions.

But these decisions must point to or fit into certain goals or perspectives that are about contingency and daily struggle.

The reflection that gives that perspective must also be permanent, and it is she who gives meaning and orders that set of contingent decisions.

If this did not happen, "politics" would be a contentless activism; an activism for activism, destined, ultimately, to disintegration.

In conclusion, it is "the political" that gives projection and permanence to "politics."

C) There is a third aspect that must always be kept in mind when it comes to politics.

No one today disputes that politics and power are intimately related and inseparable realities.

Power is a phenomenon that is constituted from an interpersonal relationship of command-obedience.

Power is an attribute of the human being. Only human beings, in short, are the custodians of power.

Power is held, occupied, or in a position of power, when a person is able to generate human behavior in others tending to obey the command.

In politics, this command-obedience relationship is an essential part of it, to the point that it can be argued that the political relationship is a power relationship.

Then it happens that both concepts become confused. Today, power is the name given to the political relationship.

The above, said in a more scientific way, can be stated as follows, following in this matter Georges Burdeau: The political character is that which relates "to any fact, act or situation as they translate the existence of a human group of relations of authority and obedience established in view of the common good".

In the same vein as Burdeau, Robert Dahl points out that a political system "is a persistent web of human relations that involve a significant measure of power, domination, or authority."

It is possible, however, to make some clarifications in this matter:

The power-politics relationship, in the sense that all power is political, is only valid and sustainable, if we use the expression "political" in its formal sense.

Formally, for there to be politics, it is enough that the activity of some human beings in relation to others, pursues that the behavior of the latter is determined by what the former propose.

Formally, then, there is political activity, when it is achieved that other people's wills adjust their behaviors to goals that are proposed to them.

Faced with this formal idea of politics, it is possible to distinguish the idea of politics in a broader material sense.

In this perspective, the policy is understood as subjects promoting actions and certain aims to be carried out, which deploy them within the framework of an activity that shapes permanent command-obedience relations.

If we look at politics in its most restricted material sense, we will find that the activities and relationships that derive from it, form a political reality related to the state.

Thus, power is gender, and political power, one of the classes of that power. There is a gender-to-species relationship between power and politics.

There are other kinds of powers, apart from the political, such as military power, economic power, religious power and social power.

In this course, when we talk about political power, we will be referring to politics in the restricted material sense already indicated: activities and political relations related to the State.

From this perspective, politics, according to the author Ismael Bustos, is the activity "developed by men in order to govern themselves within political society."

In any case, it should be borne in mind that although there is a marked tendency to identify politics with power, and more precisely, with the struggle for power, not all political relations can be explained or understood as relations of power.

There are also other elements involved in the political relationship. In this sense, it is worth mentioning, for example, feelings and values.

David Easton, considering precisely such elements, has said that politics consists of "the authoritarian attribution of values in a given society" such as the common good, justice, peace and / or order.

Looking again at politics in its restricted material sense — that is, political activity in relation to the state — we can distinguish there the existence of a state power and a non-state power.

The first, says relation with those subjects that hold command in the governmental organs and whose activity is imputed to the State.

Non-state political power, on the other hand, is verified in the relations established between groups and institutions that seek to have their members occupy positions within state bodies.

From this perspective, we can affirm that the policy is constituted as much by the activity that comes from the state organs, as of that one activity directed towards them by groups and institutions with a determined purpose.

In this perspective, Professor Mario Verdugo defines politics as "the activity of those who seek to gain power, retain it or exercise it with a view to an end."

D) Faces of the Policy.-

Politics is made up of a kind of activity and a type of relationship that, together, constitutes, at the same time, a type of system: the political system.

Activity and political relationship are existentially linked, that is, they cannot exist in isolation from each other. They necessarily coexist.

From the descriptive point of view, politics then, already seen as a process, can be appreciated from a dynamic perspective and from a structural perspective.

They are called DYNAMIC FACE and STRUCTURAL FACE of politics.

The link between dynamic face and structural face, in turn, give rise to two other faces: the AGONAL PHASE and the ARCHITECTURAL PHASE.

Let's look at each of these last two concepts separately:

1.- The agonal face of politics consists in the struggle to conquer state power and maintain it. Also included in this face are those actions designed to ensure victory in the struggle for power.

2.- For its part, the architectural face of politics is executed through the configuration of a project and its realization, once power has been conquered.

The conjunction of both sides, results in the plenary policy, that is to say, they give account of the total content of the policy.

But for this to happen, in addition to both sides being present, they must be intertwined and mutually supportive.

The agonal face captures that reality that gives an account of a human society marked by diversity - there are different experiences and values - which delivers that dynamism of political life that translates into the expression of different conceptions and political forces. If this did not happen, the political process would inevitably lead to its stagnation, fossilization and dogmatism.

However, an exacerbation of the agonal side of politics, that is, a political dynamism taken to the extreme, could lead to anarchy, putting at risk the very existence of society and the state.

Due to this ever-present risk, the agonal face of politics must be balanced and complemented by the architectural face.

The latter is the one that makes it possible to build the social project according to the prevailing concept of common good.

It is the architectural face of politics that ultimately gives stability to society.

Thus, political life, in the proper equation of these two faces, will be able to account for those contradictions always present in its development.

Political life, let us not forget, contains in itself and simultaneously, stability and change, order and movement, consensus and conflict.

Finally, we reiterate that while it is true, we have been able to conceptually distinguish these two aspects in politics, in practice this is more diffuse since both coexist simultaneously.

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