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The UNESCO project, and the handbook it published, *Contemporary Political Science*, at least touched on the question. It was discussed to a considerable extent at the round table on the teaching of Political Science organized by the International Political Science Association in 1952 and in the subsequent report by W. A. Robson.

The interest shown on this occasion encouraged the International Political Science Association to devote a particular round table on the study of “Comparative Government,” which was held in Florence from April 5-10, 1954, followed by a report of Professor Gunnar Heckscher. There was agreement amongst the forty participants in the round table on the importance of studying the Comparative Governments and the reasons for which such a study was regarded as profitable. Professor Gunnar Heckscher writes in his report: “Comparative studies are the core of any study of ‘foreign’ governments. They are of pedagogical importance, especially if we are to gain a reasonably realistic and relativistic view of our own government. Because of the growth of international contacts, scientific, political or economic comparisons between different countries, as well as knowledge of foreign institutions; are of great political value.” Then, he beautifully sums up the contribution of the comparative method to the development of Political Science itself. He says, “If we regard our field of study as mainly descriptive, comparisons are required to help us refine our tools of description.

If we have hopes of establishing a general theory on an inductive basis, we can do so only through comparison. If we attempt to test specific hypotheses, this is possible only if we bring in a sufficient number of

examples, to be investigated by the comparative method.” The comparative method aims at the study of existing political institutions or those which have existed in the past, to assemble a definite body of material from which the investigator, by selection, comparison, and elimination, may discover the ideal types and progressive forces of political history. By comparison, we accumulate material, arrange and classify it, and by the process of coordination and elimination deduce certain results there from. It enables us to determine common causes and effects by making a comparative study of the past and the existing political institutions.

Bryce compared the working of democracy in different countries and, then, accounted for its merits and defects as a form of government. The Indian Constituent Assembly amply benefited from this method. But the use of the comparative method needs great care. Comparative analysis does not have as its guiding principle the assumption that there is one best way of government, which, when discovered, is to be adopted everywhere.

There is limited practicability of transferring the fruits of political ingenuity from one country to another. When we compare political institutions with a view to finding out general principles underlying them, we must take into account the differences in the social, moral, intellectual, temperamental, political and economic conditions of the countries concerned or the communities compared. Comparison is most advantageous between countries and peoples with more or less similar conditions, as, for example, India and Pakistan. It is now generally believed that the parliamentary system of government, as obtainable in Britain, cannot work in India and Pakistan on the same lines and with the same ease and facility.

This is primarily due to the differences in the temperament and genius of the people belonging to both the countries, their economic and social conditions, their moral and legal standards, and their political training and experience in administration. The comparative study succeeds only when due prominence is given to the human element; their manners, customs, habits and environments. It, then, lessens the dangers of meaningless comparison of “ empty form and ossified rituals.” Merriam correctly said that like all social sciences, Political Science “ can be truly scientific only to the degree in which it contributes to the creation of a science of man.

” It is also necessary to stress the enormously growing importance of sociological study to the study of the comparative method. One of great contributions of contemporary Political Science is “ that it is proving, the extent to which cooperation with sociology is possible as well as indispensable to political science in general and especially to comparative studies.” As a result of the work of D. Easton, GA.

Almond and D. Apter, the discipline of comparative politics has virtually been re-oriented by the influence of structure-function analysis. In an article published in 1957, an approach to the Analysis of Political Systems, Easton suggested that a solution to the problem of comparing governments could be found by examining political life in terms of a system receiving certain inputs from the society and converting them into outputs affecting the society. He said that all governments processed inputs and transformed them into outputs. General comparisons, therefore, could be made and they would amount to a detailed examination of the content of both sides of the operation. Taking Easton’s analysis as a starting point, Gabriel Almond

looked for the functions which could be included among the inputs and outputs of all political systems. Looking at the conversion process which takes place within the political system, he showed that six such functions could be separated.

First, on the input side, demands are (1) formulated (or articulated) and (2) combined (or aggregated). Second, on the output side, rules are (3) formulated (rule-making), (4) applied (rule-application) and (5) adjudicated in individual cases (rule-adjudication). These various activities are (6) communicated within the system and outside. Almond also showed that, “ apart from converting inputs into outputs, the system has also to be defined in terms of its ability to maintain and adapt itself (through a process of political socialisation) and in terms of the character of its achievements (capability).” Almond’s analysis is known as structural-functionalism. The yardstick with which political systems are measured consists of the functions which are performed by the political system and the units which are being compared are the various structures which compose individual political systems.

Once the functions of a political system are defined operationally and the structures categorised with precision, it will become, Almond asserts, possible to write an equation of each political system which will show how much of each function is fulfilled by a particular structure. This Almond describes as the ‘ probabilistic theory of the polity’. Whatever be the merits of structural-functionalism and the possibilities of major advances likely to emerge from this analysis, there is no denying the fact that the study of comparative government has grown during recent years and has, indeed,

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become a major branch of study with scholars working on detailed problems and theorists attempting grand syntheses. It may not achieve a great deal “ but this should not be allowed to obscure its potentiality.

The student may find it one of the most rewarding and stimulating parts of Political Science”.