

The Concept of "Politics". its Structure, Means and Methods

*Haitov Khusan Kadirovich*¹

Abstract: This article provides brief information about various definitions of the concept of "politics", its structure, tools and methods.

Keywords: politics, political theory, power, state, society, sociological definitions of politics, economic definitions of politics.

The study of political theory requires, first of all, a clear understanding of the concept of politics, its place and functions in the life of society, its structure, tools and methods.

The concept of politics appeared in ancient Greece (in Greek, "polis" - city), and it meant various forms of state governance. The first theoretical views on politics were also created in ancient Greece in Aristotle's work "La politika" ("About what belongs to the state"). Clarifying the concept of "politics", revealing its content and essence, and studying it have been perfected over a long period of time in the process of scientific research on the study of monarchy, republic and other forms of state, the separation of society and state (N. Machiavelli), church institutions (Christian traditions) and civil society (J. Locke), and the relationship of the state with the economic and social system (A. Smith).

Since ancient times, in accordance with established traditions, the content of politics has been inextricably linked with the source of state power - power. In general, in the states of those times, the content of politics was interpreted in connection with determining the legal, socio-economic and other resources of power. Also, the essence of politics began to become clearer through the study of the behavior of political actors in relation to power, establishing the criteria for the legitimacy and legality of management, understanding the features of the role of rulers and their subordinates (Parsons), and illuminating the group foundations of power (Bentley).

Politics is a complex social phenomenon. It is not easy to reveal its nature and content. It is used in scientific literature in both a broad and narrow sense.

In a broad sense, people often call any purposeful social activity politics. This concept is personified by the management of one or another process. M. Weber in his famous article "Politics as both a passion and a profession" writes: "What do we mean by politics? This concept has an extremely broad meaning and includes all manifestations of independent management activities. We can talk about the currency policy of banks, the policy of a trade union during a strike, the policy of a city or village community regarding schools, the management policy of a corporation, its leader, and finally, even the policy of a smart wife who seeks to manage her husband."

The concept of politics is often used in a narrow and literal sense. In this case, it is used to designate one of the independent spheres of society, that is, a sphere that is on a par with the economy and culture.

In a narrow sense, politics means the activities of state authorities, political parties, interest groups to ensure peace and harmony, social stability, and security in the country. This concept also includes the activities of states, various political forces, and organizations to ensure security in the international arena.

There are various definitions and interpretations of politics in the scientific literature. These scientific definitions can be divided mainly into three groups: sociological, substantive, and activity groups.

¹ Associate professor, colonel, head of the faculty of the Academy of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan



Sociological definitions of politics are based on a sociological approach. In them, politics is described through other social phenomena: economy, social groups, law, morality, culture, and religion.

Economic definitions of politics characterize politics as a superstructure on the economic basis, a concentrated expression of the needs and interests of the economy. In this case, politics loses its independence as a specific sphere of social life. It retains only relative, limited independence. In general, the content of politics is determined by objective economic laws that do not depend on the will of its subjects. Defining politics from the perspective of economic determinism focuses on only one of its important sources. These concepts usually exaggerate and absolutize the influence of economic needs on politics, and do not sufficiently appreciate its independence.

One of the important components of the sociological description of politics is the interpretation of stratification. In this case, politics is interpreted as the competition of certain social groups: classes and nations (Marxism) or interest groups (A. Bentley, D. Truman, etc.). Although the Marxian interpretation of politics as a struggle between classes has largely lost its influence in the modern world, the theory of interest groups is widespread. In particular, it is expressed in the pluralistic concepts of democracy, which interpret politics in modern advanced countries as the competition of various interest groups that ensure the balance and equilibrium of social interests. In the history of the development of political thought, including in the works of modern theorists, legal concepts of politics have a wide place. They consider politics, the state, as a phenomenon arising from law, primarily from public law, state laws and the natural rights of man, which underlie its activities. The legal concept of politics is a vivid example of the theories of the social contract, substantiated by such prominent thinkers as Spinoza, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant. The meaning of these theories is to interpret politics, first of all, the state, as a special activity that protects the fundamental rights inherent in every person from birth: life, freedom, security, ownership of property, etc.

In modern scientific literature, theories that are opposite to the legal concepts of politics are also widely used. They consider law as a product of politics, an important means of its implementation, an instrument for teaching a stable socio-political order. Law is created by the state and is based on political will and expediency by the state.

The legal interpretation of politics is directly connected with its moral definition. This is clearly seen in the concepts of natural law, which recognize the existence of the moral principles of human society before the state. In general, normative definitions of politics are an important direction of its sociological interpretation. The normative approach used in them requires considering politics from the perspective of ideals, values, goals and standards that it must implement. When analyzed from this point of view, politics is a social activity aimed at achieving common prosperity. Its highest value is justice, peace, freedom and serving common prosperity, and its norms are specific rules and laws that lead to its achievement.

The normative interpretation of politics has existed since ancient times. The great thinker of the ancient world, Aristotle, considered politics to be the highest form of human activity. Because through it, justice is established in the relationships between people, and the well-being of society and each individual is achieved. "Justice," he wrote, "has its place only in political life, because the entire political system is rooted in law."

Normative interpretations of politics have both strengths and weaknesses. Their strength, their value, is that they embody the ideal of humanity that should be reflected in politics. Such an ideal directs political participants to socially beneficial behavior. At the same time, the normative approach works with categories that allow for different interpretations of social well-being, which are multifaceted and not always clear. This creates a basis for masking the vested interests of different political forces. The weakness of this approach is also evident in the fact that there are large differences in the understanding of politics as an activity for achieving the common good and in reality, which testifies to the widespread prevalence of vested interests in politics. In addition, not all actions to ensure the common good are political. Many people carry out socially useful, noble deeds based on moral or religious reasons (motives).



The second widespread group of definitions of politics is the substantive definitions. These definitions are intended to reveal what, first of all, the foundations, the fabric of politics are composed of. There are several interpretations of politics in this group of definitions. The most common of them is the interpretation of politics as actions aimed at power: its acquisition, retention and use. Politics is "the desire to participate in power or to influence the distribution of power, whether between states or between groups of people within a state," wrote M. Weber.

Some supporters of the "authoritarian" approach to politics focus their attention on the art, techniques, methods and means of the struggle for power and its application. As early as 1515, one of the founders of political science, N. Machiavelli, described politics as a set of tools necessary for coming to power, staying in power and applying it.

"Authoritarian" definitions of politics reflect its essence, an important creative quality. These definitions are clarified and supplemented by institutional definitions.

Institutional definitions characterize politics through organizations, institutions, through which power is embodied, materialized, primarily through the main political institution - the state. Politics in this case appears to be participation in state affairs, the direction of the state, the content, tasks, and forms of state activity.

If the "authoritarian" and institutional interpretations of politics show its foundations in power and its carriers in organizations, anthropological definitions try to reflect its deeper sources rooted in human nature. From this point of view, politics is a form of interaction between people, a way of life of a person in a community. The anthropological understanding of politics was founded by Aristotle. He believed that a person is a political being, because he is a collective being. A person's normal life, his satisfaction of various needs and achievement of happiness are possible only in interaction with other people. The highest form of such interaction is politics. Its advantage over interaction before politics is that it is the interaction of free and equal people according to the norms of law, embodying justice in the state, the same treatment of all citizens.

Anthropological interpretations of politics are further enriched and supplemented by its conflict-consensus definitions. According to the famous French political scientist Maurice Duverger, political theory is divided between two dramatically contrasting interpretations of politics. According to the first, politics is a conflict, a struggle. In it, whoever has power ensures control over society and the appropriation of wealth. According to the other point of view, politics consists in maintaining order and trying to implement justice, ensuring the integration of all citizens into a community.

In conflicting definitions of politics, the main attention is paid to the contradictions that underlie politics, determining its dynamics. When viewed from the point of view of such contradictions, politics is interpreted as the activity of using force and resolving conflicts peacefully. Although politics is generally characterized by disagreement, it is usually impossible without a certain consensus, an agreement based on the social order, the need to recognize the legitimacy of power and obey the law, and the common interest of its participants.

In a democratic state, the role of consensus - the unifying factor of political subjects - is of paramount importance. In this case, the cessation and resolution of conflicts is carried out by the majority of citizens on the basis of the recognition of universal human values such as personal freedom, human rights, the will of the majority and the right of the minority to have their own independent opinion. The famous American political scientist S.F. Huntington noted that where there are no social disagreements, there can be no politics, and where there is no social consensus and social harmony, political institutions are impossible.

Interpretations of the functioning of politics are widely used, in particular, in the theory of political decisions. It is also used in teleological interpretations of politics. In this case, politics is considered as an activity for the effective achievement of collective goals. According to one of the founders of American sociology, T. Parsons, politics is a set of specific elements of a general system, effective organizational methods for achieving common goals.



In teleological definitions of politics, its two foundations are emphasized: the collective nature of activity and the conscious, purposeful nature. In politics, the private goals of individuals "grow", rise to the level of general state goals.

Teleological definitions of politics are widely used in the framework of a systematic analysis of society. From a systemic point of view, politics is a complex social organism, a relatively independent system, isolated from the environment, other spheres of society, and in continuous interaction with it. The political system takes care of the survival and development of society and satisfies a number of social needs, the most important of which is the unification of society.

Among the various methods and approaches to the study of politics, the functional-purpose method has become widespread. This method was based on explaining one or another meaning of living in social life in society. In this process, the concept of politics began to be defined as a form of implementing ethical goals, for example, "government in accordance with perceived justice or the development of well-being" (Plato); or "the implementation of rational thinking" (Hegel); "a means of establishing a social balance of forces in society and maintaining the integrity of society or the domination of some people over others" (Debre); "a form of distribution of values" (Laswell) or "the implementation of public offices" (Rousseau), etc. The German scientist M. Weber also made his own interpretations of politics. His following opinion helps to clarify the essence of politics: "thus, when discussed in detail, politics means the desire to participate in power or to influence the distribution of power, whether between nations, within a state, or between groups of people."

Modern interpretations of politics were further developed in the works of R. Aron. He tried to analyze the concept of politics in relation to all aspects of society. He deeply studied the differences between the concepts of "politics" and expressed the following thoughts: "The first difference is that the word "politics" is translated into English into two words, each of which has its own meaning. The English practically express politics with the words "policy" and "politics". The French call both "politics". Policy is a concept, a program of action, in this case, the behavior of an individual, a group of people, a government... Thus, the word "politics" in its first meaning is a program, methods of action or the behavior itself carried out by a person, a group of people in relation to a problem, a set of problems facing society. Politics in its second meaning (English "politics") refers to the sphere of social life in which different political directions are struggling or competing (in the meaning of policy). The political sphere is a complex of individuals and groups that have their own "policies" and struggle with each other.

At the same time, R. Aron interprets politics in relation to man, the existence of interpersonal relations, and the organization of people into a community: "Any interaction between people requires the existence of power; thus, the essence of politics consists in the way of exercising power and choosing those who govern. Politics is the main characteristic of a community, since it determines the conditions for any interaction between people. Politics is, first of all, a translation of the Greek word "politeia". This word is called the polis regime in Greek, and it is a concept that denotes a distinctive sign of organizing an entire community, a way of organizing leadership. If politics, by its essence, is a system of a community or a way of organizing it, then its characteristic features in narrow and broad senses are manifested. Politics in the narrow sense is the way of organizing those who govern and a specific system that determines the exercise of power. But at the same time, it is a way of interacting with individuals within each community. The second sign of politics follows from the first. Each society has its own regime, but it cannot understand itself if it does not recognize the diversity of social regimes and the emergence of correspondingly different problems. Now the differences between politics - a program of action and politics - a sphere become clear. Politics manifests itself in different ways, depending on its primary significance: the politics of those who have accumulated power in their hands and are exercising it; the politics of those who do not have power but hope to have it; individuals or groups who seek to realize their political goals and are inclined to use their own methods; and finally, the politics of those who seek to change the regime itself. All this is about the internal tasks of the regime or its "Politics is nothing more than a narrow or global program of actions,



depending on the goals of living itself. As noted above, politics characterizes not only a part of social cohesion, but also the entire face of society."

By the present time, a theory of clarifying the concept of politics has been formed in political science based on the study of different points of view. Such different interpretations are given in the following definitions in the British dictionary "What is politics?" Based on the question "What is politics?":

Politics is a part of morality that concerns the state and society, and includes the moral and spiritual obligations of the government to the individual.

Politics is a set of political actions and political practice.

Politics is a competition between competing interest groups.

Politics is the actions of non-governmental organizations aimed at expanding control over the government.

Politics is an activity related to the management of society.

Politics is a set of political principles, opinions, considerations or inclinations of an individual.

Politics is a set of interpersonal interactions and conflict relationships in society.

Thus, above we have considered some important definitions of politics. However, the definitions of politics are not limited to these. Its definitions are rich and diverse. This can be explained by the complexity of politics as a social phenomenon, the richness of its content, and the diversity of social functions.

Summarizing the various definitions and interpretations of politics, it can be defined as follows. Politics is the activity of understanding the conflicting collective interests of social groups and individuals, developing decisions that are binding on the whole society, and implementing them with the help of state power.

REFERENCES.

1. Ўзбекистон Республикасининг Конституцияси. - Т.: Ўзбекистон, 2023.
2. Otabaev A.K. "Regulatory and Legal Acts in the Field of Information and Communication Technologies in Ensuring State Security" // In Volume 61 (2025) of Miasto Przyszłości Kielce, Impact Factor: 9.9. ISSN-I: 2544-980X).
3. ЗҚ Музаффаров // Олий ҳарбий таълим муассасалари курсантлари ва тингловчиларининг ватанпарварлик даражасини баҳолаш мезонлари. Volume 48 (2024) of Gospodarka i Innowacje (2545 0573). С. 584-587. 2024/6/17.
4. Rustam M. Khalilov // "Risks and threats to the states' military security in the 1st half of the XXI century". In Volume 54 (2024) of Miasto Przyszłości. Impact Factor: 9.9. SJIF 2023: 6.567.
5. Otaboyev A.K. Sulton Jaloliddin – ozodlik va mustaqillik yalovbardori. International Journal of Economy and Innovation | Volume 48 (2024-06-22) | Gospodarka i Innowacje (2545-0573). Impact Factor: 9.87. SJIF Impact Factor: 7,916.
6. Otabaev A.K. The role of social partnership in community life. Web of Technology: Multidimensional Research Journal (IFSII JIF 7.425, ISSN (E) 2938-3757). Volume 1, Issue 9, Decembr, 2023.
7. Otabaev A.K. Political and legal foundations of civil society development. Diversity Research: Journal of Analysis and Trends (ISSN (E): 2810-6393, IFSII JIF 7.665).Volume 01, Issue 09, December 2023.
8. Otabayev A.K. "Relationships Between Military Service and Religion" // In Volume 54 (2024) of Miasto Przyszłości, Impact Factor: 9.9. SJIF 2023: 6.567.

