

# Political Science and Administration

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### What is politics?

Politics, a familiar and controversial subject.

Politics is a multivocal term, endowed with different meanings depending on the field and the moment in which it is used.

Politics is not free from suspicion, on the contrary, it charges entry on a negative note. And yet it is capable of mobilizing large sectors of the citizenry at any given moment. It arouses emotions, produces feelings of solidarity and cooperation. And it is associated with solemn feelings: freedom, justice, equality.

Politia is a common but controversial concept of uo.

Politics as management of social conflict.

Politics is a collective practice that the members of a society carry out. the purpose is to regulate conflicts between groups and its result is the adoption of decisions that bind the members of the community.

The starting point of our concept of politics is the existence of social conflicts and attempts to quell or regulate them. The human species needs the community to survive and develop. However, these communities contain discord and antagonism, because they can affect material goods, religious or philosophical beliefs and legal rights.

Need for coexistence

+ --> Conflict risk --> Uncertainty about the future --> Search for security --> POLITICS

### Social Differences and inequalities

The origin of conflicts lies in the existence of social differences, which become inequalities. Not all members of the community have reasonably balanced access to material wealth, education, the ability to spread their ideas, etc...

### Politics: between life and liberty.

What is the ultimate goal of politics: to ensure freedom or to guarantee life?

If it is understood that it is to guarantee freedom, it will not be possible to speak of politics in societies subject to a dictator.

If it is admitted that society intends to give itself the minimum conditions to avoid its disintegration, politics occurs both in authoritarian systems and in democratic regimes. This is the option that this text opts for.

At the root of social conflict.

Where do the conflicts start from? What is the origin of these inequalities? -The fact that not all members of a community enjoy the same opportunities to access the basic resources that facilitate the maximum development of their personal capacities. This difference is expressed in multiple ways:

- In the enjoyment of natural abilities and talents.

- In the roles played.
- In the position in the social division of productive work.
- In the ability to intervene in decisions.
- In access to resources generated by economic activity (social classes) or status derived from social recognition.
- In the ascription to identities with the cultural connotations that they entail.
- In the location in the territory.

Such differences mark fractures -cleavages-. From all the asymmetric relations between these groups tensions are constantly born. It is not only important that the differences can be measured in economic terms, the social perception of the difference also matters.

From this perspective, the origin of politics can also be attributed to an unequal distribution of values in a given society and the attempts to correct it (Easton).

It is possible that differences or fractures of great importance at a given moment are replaced by others following the evolution of social and cultural conditions.

**Cases of the "micro" or smaller scale type would be, for example, when a group of neighbors becomes aware of a specific deficit.**

These issues fall within the scope of politics and will be managed through binding decisions that seek to review the current situation with the support -if necessary- of socially accepted coercion. On the other hand, when the disputes leave the sphere of politics, they will have to be resolved through a voluntary agreement between the parties.

The absence of politics -in situations of inequality- allows the groups that occupy the most favorable positions to play with an advantage.

New conflicts, new debates, new balances.

Some issues today provoke social debate and have moved to the political arena. A political analysis must ask some questions:

- What factors make these issues controversial?
- What groups or social actors are the protagonists?
- What arguments and resources do they use?
- In what sense do they intend to influence the pre-existing situation?

Societies without politics.

Is a society without politics imaginable?

Anthropologists and prehistorians speak of societies without politics when they describe small-sized societies, linked by ties of kinship, in which the goods needed to survive are shared. They can preside over permanent political structures.

The leadership role is not equivalent to a situation of superiority, but its function is more similar to that of a spokesperson, responsible for setting an example.

Perhaps in the future there may be a society in which certain differences have been eliminated. If such differences disappeared, conflicts would diminish, social risk would diminish and politics would become less and less necessary. This has been argued by some authors. Others understand that a society without difference is not foreseeable. For these, politics will persist.

Private property and political power.

During the s. XIX was seen in the inequality of ownership of capital, the main root of social conflicts. Political power appeared as an instrument at the service of the owners. Based on this analysis, the socialist and anarchist proposals predicted that the disappearance of private property would leave political structures without reason.

## 2. CONCLUSIONS

It is possible to distinguish four major currents among the classical definitions:

- 1) Politics as control over people and resources. Any phenomenon linked to forms of power or domination over others (Lasswell, Dahl).
- 2) Politics as an activity carried out through a system of political institutions -basically the State- authorized to exert coercion on the community (Weber).
- 3) Politics as an activity directed by values of order and social balance, aimed at promoting the common good (Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Locke)
- 4) Politics as an activity linked to the defense of the community against an external threat (Spencer, Gumplowicz), based on the "friend-enemy" distinction (Schmitt)

These definitions have common points, influence and complement each other.

But they are distinguished by the emphasis they place on some of the manifestations of politics.

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