



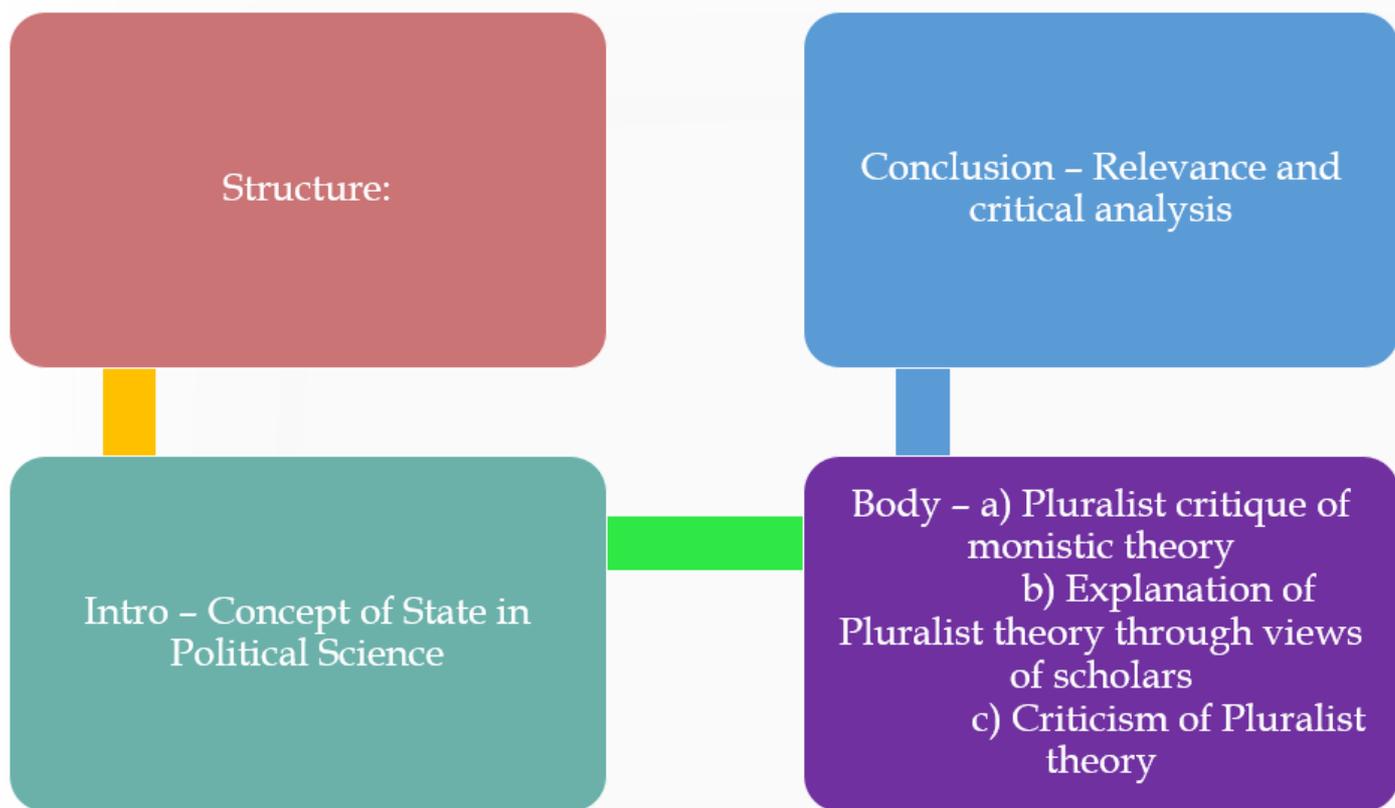
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Political Science & International Relations Crash Course

Lecture - 16

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1) Write a short note on pluralist theory of the State. [2019-10m]

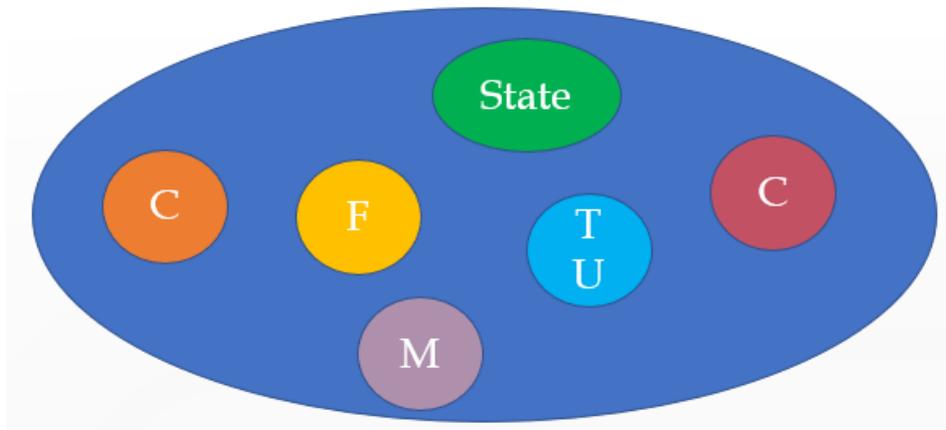


- **R.G. Gettel** defined political science as '**the science of the state**', while **J.W. Gamer** claimed that 'political science begins and ends with the state'. In modern political theory, the concept of the state has been fluctuating.
- Scholars like **Bodin, Hobbes, and Austin emphasized on the 'Positivist'** view of the state, with state possessing absolute power and authority in the society (Monistic theory). The Pluralist theory of state criticizes the monistic theory of state.

Pluralist theory of state

- Pluralist perspective portrays the state as a mechanism designed to serve the interests of various groups simultaneously. A pluralist state repudiates a single centre of power in society and is characterized by **multiple centres of power**. They argue that **contemporary state is too heterogenous and complex** for a single entity to prevail. According to pluralists the existence of absolute sovereignty is **neither possible nor desirable**. Most prominent scholars of Pluralist theory are **Laski, MacIver, Barker and Follet**.
- **Laski** - He argues that since society is federal, state should be federal also. According to him, in modern times, sovereignty is limited. The concept of popular sovereignty gives ultimate powers to the people and accordingly, the legal sovereign has to bow before them. Absolute powers for the sovereign are ethically indefensible as it retards the development of the individual.

- Laski viewed **state as a key stone of social architecture**. As an association, the state protects the interests of men as citizens. State's functions are merely to coordinate the activities of different associations in the society and resolve their conflict.



- **MacIver** – He criticized Austin's concept of law on the grounds of universality and formality. He saw **state itself to be a product of law** rather than being beyond it. Also, he argued that **the state is both the child as well as the parent of law** and the authority of law is greater than the authority of state.
- As per him, the society is composed of different associations and the state is one of them. There are many associations like the family and the church, which are as natural as the state and the state had no role in their formation. State's objective, like any other association, is to **develop human personality**. Thus, he asserted '**State as an instrument of social man**', and advocated **positive intervention**.
- **Isaiah Berlins** calls for **rejection of monism** for building plural societies. Pluralists unlike monists don't have a determined, single goal of society, neither do they believe that there are certain laws that can lead to achievement of perfection of humans and society.

• **Maxey sums up the major postulates of pluralism as follows:**

The state is but one of the **numerous social, economic, political and other groupings for promotion of interests of men in society**.

These different groupings are not creatures of the state but arise **independently and their functions are just as necessary**.

Monistic concept of sovereignty is a mere legal fiction.

Criticism

- **Contradiction on power and functions of state** - The pluralists suffer from an inner contradiction. On the one hand, they stand for decentralisation of power and autonomy of groups or associations, on the other hand, they also want the state to play a regulating role by coordinating the activities of the various associations. But the question is as to how the state will perform this function without overriding powers.
- **Increased role of state** - It is pointed out that modern society is highly complicated and the state must have power as the final judge in reconciliation of the interests of divergent groups such as the concept of welfare state.
- **Unequal powers of associations:** The notion of 'deformed polyarchy' points to the disparities of wealth and resources among the groupings in society leading to unequal access to power.

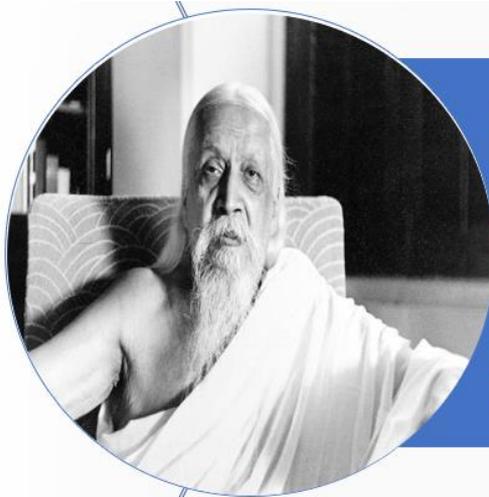
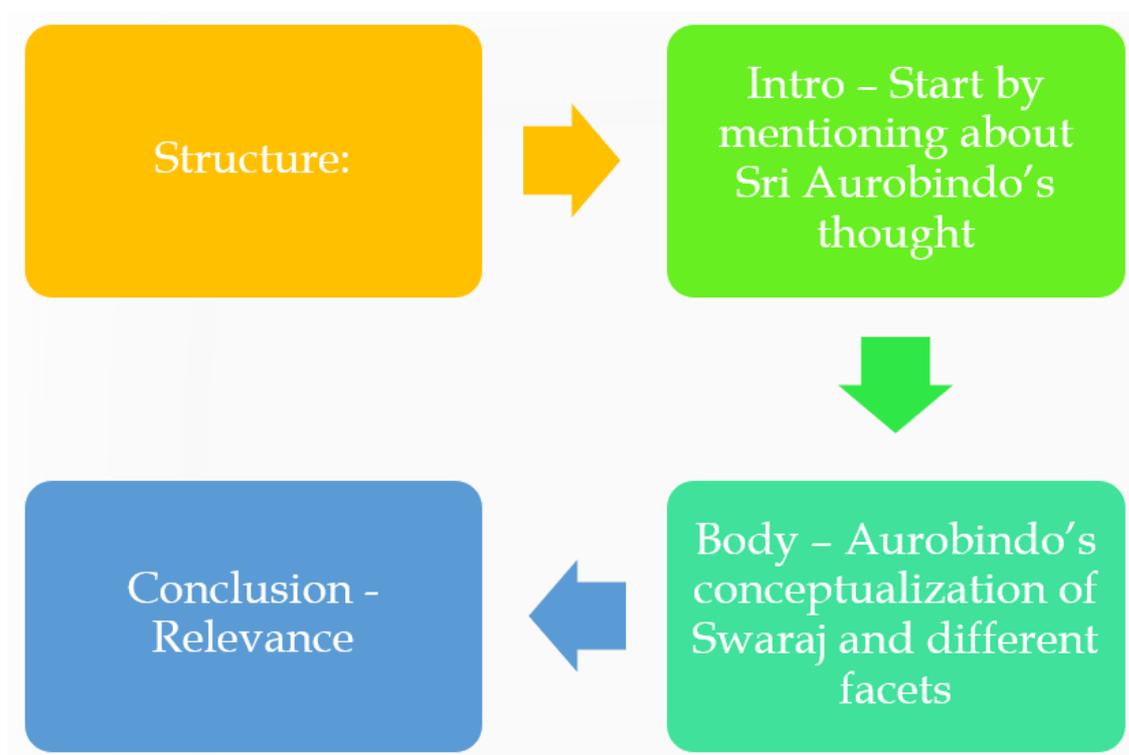
Conclusion:

Pluralism theory is a theoretical tradition used to analyse political actions in modern autonomous states like the USA and Britain where other associations like Pressure Groups and Media play a dominant role in policy decision making.

But in a developing countries like India, the founding fathers emphasized on the positive role of state in reforming the social, economic and political landscape.

Thus, state must gain primacy over other associations and act as a unique balancer and arbitrator among the conflicting parties.

2) According to Sri Aurobindo, Swaraj is a necessary condition for India to accomplish its destined goal. Comment. [2017-10m]



According to **Karan Singh**, Ghosh was the "*Prophet of Indian Nationalism*", a creative genius and a multifaceted personality, who was a towering figure of the Indian national movement. Ghosh's idea of India as a Nation, Passive Resistance, Freedom, integral Human unity and Swaraj represents his radical nationalist stance.

Ghosh's conceptualization of Swaraj

- Ghosh was the first person to propagate the concept of "Poorna Swaraj", ie, complete independence. He held that craving for freedom is lodged so deep in human heart that even thousands of arguments are powerless to uproot it.

Aurobindo gave four reasons in favour of 'Poorna Swaraj', i.e., why it should be accorded priority.

- First, that liberty is necessary for the **national life and therefore worth striving for in itself.**
- Secondly, it is **indispensable for the overall development of the nation.**
- Thirdly, freedom was **essential to accomplish and retrieve the Vedantic wisdom of India** and its applications in all segments of national life including politics in the modern conditions.
- Fourthly, and finally, Indian independence was essential for the **spiritual emancipation of the humanity at large.** He repeatedly made this point that Indian nationalism was not for India alone but for the sake of humanity.
- He wanted freedom but freedom was meaningless if it was not followed by religious and cultural regeneration of the nation. Freedom is related to achieving supreme happiness (*satchitananda*) through integral yoga.
 - **Idea of Passive Resistance** - The path to Swaraj, according to Ghosh, everywhere in the world has been '**full of sharp rocks and thick brambles**'. Those who wish for it must have faith and conviction in cause and methods apart from capacity to bear sufferings. They should possess the 'quality of endurance and sacrifice'.
 - For emancipation of the Indian nation from the British colonialism, he advocated for starting first the '**organized national passive resistance**', rather than '**organized active resistance**', which could involve assassinations, riots, strikes, agrarian risings, etc.
- **Swaraj as a Dharma System** - According to A. Kumar, Sri Aurobindo's idea of Swaraj was a Dharma-based system. He was mindful and appreciative of the Western concepts of freedom, democracy, and equality that has swept through much of the world. He was, however, skeptical of their 'hues of the West'. He recognized the inherent biases prevalent in these ideas.
- **Education as a component of Swaraj** - Central to Sri Aurobindo's idea of Swaraj was his notion of 'National Education'. To him, National Education was the most immediate need of the country. He proposed dismantling of the existing education system. Aurobindo like a number of thinkers such as Plato, Rousseau before him realised the importance of national education to cultivate these ideas in entire society.
- **Swaraj as a Divine concept** - According to Debashri Banerjee, Aurobindo's *swaraj* signifies the starting-point of an individual's inward journey towards the aspiring union with the Divine. His actual purpose is to make the *Life Divine* so that we can realize the inherent divinity within us. Spiritual and Political inextricably linked in his thought.

Conclusion

- The ideas of passive resistance and swaraj came to be adopted and further developed by Gandhi ji to turn the struggle for national freedom into a mass movement. Even after his move away from politics, Sri Aurobindo's thought was of great inspiration leading historian R.C. Majumdar to call him a "meteor in Indian politics".

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