

University of [Algiers 03]

Faculty of Political Science

Department of International Relations

Course Title: Comparative Politics

**Third-year students, Political and
Administrative Organization (special Section).**

Instructor: Prof. Mohammed Cherif Fethi

Academic year:2025 – 2026.

Contact: mohammed.cherif.fethi@gmail.com

Course Description :

This course is primarily theoretical in nature, focusing on the study of political systems through the lens of comparative politics. It introduces students to a range of conceptual approaches and analytical frameworks that enable a deeper understanding of how political institutions, processes, and actors operate across different contexts.

Objectives of the Course:

- 1 _To familiarize students with the major theories, concepts, and debates in the field of comparative politics.
- 2 _To develop students' ability to analyze similarities and differences between political systems.
- 3 _To encourage critical thinking about the functioning, stability, and transformation of political regimes.
- 4 _To provide the tools necessary for comparing political institutions, public policies, and patterns of governance across countries.

Methodology:

The course will combine lectures, discussions, and case studies. Emphasis will be placed on theoretical readings, comparative analysis, and practical examples from different regions of the world. Students will be encouraged to actively participate in debates and to apply the theoretical tools acquired to real-world political phenomena.

Comparative Politics – Course Syllabus

the Program topics will be as follows :

1 – A Conceptual Framework.

1.1 – Classification of Concepts through the Ladder of Abstraction.

1.2 – Basic Rules for Conceptual Definition in the Social Sciences.

1.3 – The Fundamental Concepts of the Comparative Politics Course.

2 _ Forms of Governments.

2.1 – Features of the Presidential System.

2.2 – Features of the Parliamentary System.

2.3 – How to Attain Power.

2.4 – Coalition government.

2.5 – Profound divergences in perspectives between the executive and legislative branches.

3 _ The process of law-making.

3.1 – Bill (Government Bill).

3.2 – Legislative Proposal (Private Member's Bill).

3.3 – Stages of lawmaking.

4 _ The environment within which the political system operates.

4.1 – The geographical context

4.2 – Social and economic circumstances

4.3 – The Historical Legacy.

4.4 – Prevailing political culture.

5 _ The Evolution of the Study of Comparative Politics.

5.1 – The Behavioral Revolution (1950s–1960s).

5.2 – The Post–Behavioral Approach (1970s–1980s).

5.3 – The Second Scientific Revolution (1989–Present).

6 _ Theories and Approaches that can be used to compare development between different Political systems: (Some of them)

6.1 – Structural–Functional Approach.

6.2 – The Communication Approach.

6.3 – The Group Approach.

6.4 – Political Culture Approach.

7 _ Political parties.

7.1 – The Nature of Political Parties.

7.2 – The Main Forms of Party Systems.

8 – Electoral systems.

8.1 – Plurality/Majority Systems.

8.2 _ Proportional Representation System.

8.3 _ Issues Related to Proportional Representation.

8.4 – Mixed Electoral Systems.

8.5 – Other Electoral Systems.

8.6 – Effects of Applying Different Electoral Systems.

9 – The impact of The Necessary Renewal in the Structure of the International System on domestic politics.

9.1 – Necessary Renewal.

9.2 – The Zero–Sum Conflict of Political Cliques.

9.3 – Research Problem.

9.4 – Sub–Questions.

9.5 – The Nature of Class Conflict.

9.6 – Factors Influencing the Zero–Sum Conflict Among Political Cliques.

9.7 – Methodological Framework.

9.8 – Building a Predictive Tool.

9.9 – Types of Elites in Arab Context.

Chapter One: A Conceptual Framework:

1.1 – Classification of Concepts through the Ladder of Abstraction :

Dr. Gharib Abdel-Sami¹ Gharib defines a concept as: “a symbolic tool used by the researcher—or by human beings in general—to express various meanings and ideas in order to communicate them to others.¹” Researchers often disagree when discussing different topics, and the root of such disagreement essentially lies in the perspective from which each researcher approaches the concepts related to a given subject. Hence, defining concepts becomes a necessary step for any scientific research: the more precise and clear the concepts are, the easier the research becomes to understand and comprehend, and disagreements among researchers within any specialized field can be resolved².

Since concepts are technical terms, their main purpose—according to this meaning—is to unify the language of researchers concerned with the same issues. This requires every research work to include a specific conceptual framework that serves to clarify complex and ambiguous terms³. Thus, one of the fundamental requirements of sound scientific and theoretical construction lies in the clarity and precision of concepts: the clearer and more accurate the concepts are, the more valid empirical theories can be built—and vice versa. Ambiguous and vague concepts negatively affect theoretical construction. This is why many scholars have emphasized the importance of conceptual clarity and precision. Hempel, for instance, stresses: “The first essential requirement for building a scientific theory is to define its basic concepts with precision. In

¹ Gharib Abdel-Sami Gharib, *Social Scientific Research between Theory and Empiricism* (Alexandria : Shabab Al-Jamea Foundation, 2010), p.42.

² Belkacem Saltnia and Hassane El-Jilani, *Lectures on Methodology and Scientific Research*, 2nd ed. (Algeria : University Publications Office, 2009), p. 152

³ Moataz Bellah Abdel Fattah, *Empirical Political Analysis*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Center for Political Research and Studies, 2007), p. 48.

other words Definition can be regarded as the clearest, and perhaps the most appropriate, way to describe and define a scientific concept.⁴ Likewise, George Thompson affirms that “...all sciences depend on their concepts; they are the ideas that carry names, they determine the kinds of questions posed, and the kinds of answers obtained by the researcher. They are even more fundamental than theories, for theories are themselves determined by these concepts.”⁵

Immanuel Kant argues, through the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories, that there are some a priori concepts for which it cannot be claimed that they apply universally to the objects given in our experience; rather, such a claim would be considered a more ambitious one⁶.

Karl Popper also distinguished between two types of concepts: universal concepts and individual concepts. Universal concepts are those that can be applied almost universally, across diverse environments and societies. For instance, terms such as “dictatorship” or “democracy” are universal concepts—they are highly abstract and general, and broadly agreed upon⁷. In other words, universal concepts are applicable across time and space while still remaining empirically testable. As such, many researchers consider universal concepts to possess a meaning that goes beyond their specific empirical reference (supra-empirical)⁸.

By contrast, individual concepts are characterized by particularity and detail. They exist at the lowest level of abstraction and are therefore not applicable

⁴ Carl G. Hempel, *Philosophy of Natural Science* (United States of America : Prentice Hall 1966), p. 85.

⁵ Mohammed Zahy Bashir Al-Mugherbi, *Readings in Comparative Politics (Methodological Issues and Theoretical Approaches)*, 2nd ed. (Benghazi : Garyounis Publications, 1998), pp. 103–104.

⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. And ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (United States : Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.9.

⁷ Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London : Routledge, 2005), pp. 42–43

⁸ Paul G. Lewis and David C. Potter, *The Practice of Comparative Politics* (London : The Open University Press, 1973), p. 184.

across diverse environments or societies. They refer to the specific. For example, the word “Hitler” corresponds to the broader concept of “dictator,” but it is a more specific and less abstract concept⁹.

Based on this, the Italian political scientist Giovanni Sartori classified concepts according to the Ladder of Abstraction. The higher one goes up this ladder, the broader the scope of concept application and the more universal it becomes. Conversely, the lower a concept falls on the ladder, the narrower and more particular its application¹⁰. Concepts in the middle represent intermediate levels, applicable only within a moderately broad scope¹¹.

Sartori also warned against concept stretching, meaning that concepts should not be forced to carry more meaning than they can logically and contextually sustain. Conceptual meanings vary depending on social environments¹²; thus, concepts carry contextual connotations, and their meanings only become clear when placed within specific contexts. The meaning of a concept in one society may not be identical—or even close—to its meaning in another. This is expressed by the term connotation. For instance, the concepts of development and change may appear related, as both imply a shift from one state to another. Yet, the former carries a positive connotation, implying upward, progressive change, while the latter is neutral, potentially positive or negative, upward or downward.

⁹ Jaber Saeed Awad, *Comparative Political Systems (Theory and Application)* (Cairo: Al- Ashri Press, n.d.), pp. 23–24

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹¹ Bashir Zahi Al-Mugherbi, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹² Jaber Saeed Awad, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

1.2 –Basic Rules for Conceptual Definition in the Social Sciences :

Researchers, particularly those in the field of social sciences, frequently encounter considerable difficulties in defining concepts. Some concepts carry multiple meanings; others are vague, while at the same time functioning as shared terms with overlapping semantic fields. There are also concepts that emerge from common social experiences, which naturally vary across environments. Since such experiences differ from one society or environment to another, and concepts are products of these experiences, the concepts themselves inevitably differ from one context to another. Moreover, some concepts may undergo semantic transformation over time, as a result of scientific and intellectual development¹³.

In order to define concepts rigorously, researchers in any given field are expected to follow the following steps:

1.2.1 – Referring to prior definitions of the concept (the original or etymological meaning).

Democracy, in its original sense, derives from the Latin root “Demos Kratos,” meaning rule of the people, by the people, and for the people. It is expressed as a declarative statement and a phrase that indicates the concept; however, this expression alone cannot define the specific points through which the concept can be studied or clearly defined. The original nominal definitions are numerous and diverse, based on providing a theoretical conception of this or that concept. Researchers often differ in presenting this concept for various reasons, primarily due to their individual orientations and the perspectives from which they approach the subject.

¹³ Gharib Abdel-Samie Gharib, op. cit., p. 43.

1.2.2 – Employing operational definitions.

This step involves transforming nominal concepts into observable indicators, thereby narrowing the gap between abstract theoretical notions and empirical reality. While researchers may differ in their nominal definitions, operationalization facilitates convergence by providing measurable proxies for abstract concepts.

The operational definition refers to the process of transforming an abstract concept into a set of indicators. These indicators must reflect the nominal (etymological) concept and must also be measurable.

For example, in the case of the concept of democracy, its nominal definition—as previously mentioned—is “the rule of the people, by the people, and for the people.” However, in the operational definition, since we deal with measurable indicators that signify the concept, democracy can be expressed through several indicators, such as:

- A – The separation of powers,
- B – Freedom of the press and media,
- C – The existence of an elected representative assembly,
- D – Respect for human rights, and
- E – Free, fair, and periodic elections.

There is an indicator that must be removed because it does not reflect the etymological definition of the concept of democracy.

There are also two identical indicators that should be merged together.

The important point is that these indicators must be consistent with and reflective of the nominal (etymological) definition. For instance, it would be

incorrect to include as an indicator something like “the ruler’s monopoly over decision-making,” since it contradicts the very essence of the concept. Hence, the nominal (etymological) definition plays a crucial role in formulating operational indicators, as they must align with and express the same concept.

Through the operational definition, we thus convert vague and complex concepts in the nominal (etymological) definition into a set of concrete indicators. As a general rule, the greater the number of indicators, the more meaningful and precise the definition becomes. The worst operational definitions are those based on a single indicator, since this increases the risk of bias—unlike cases where multiple indicators are used.

Additionally, it is important that the indicators are not redundant. For example, in the indicators of democracy mentioned above, two of them—“the existence of an elected representative assembly” and “free and fair periodic elections”—are essentially identical. These two should therefore be merged into one indicator, stated as: “the existence of an elected representative assembly through free and fair periodic elections.”

Here we have a question: Are social phenomena measurable? Or, can social phenomena be measured?

in fact, the question is flawed, so it is better to rephrase it in a more accurate and different way. We can say: Are some social phenomena measurable? Undoubtedly, the answer would be yes. And are some social phenomena unmeasurable? Undoubtedly, the answer would also be yes.

So, which social phenomena are measurable, and which social phenomena are not measurable?

As for measurable social phenomena, we have two categories¹⁴:

A – Social phenomena that can be observed in the external world and whose meanings can be clarified or communicated to others.

B – And social phenomena that cannot be observed in the external world but whose meanings can still be clarified or communicated to others, since both the first and second categories include logically interconnected scenes.

As for social phenomena that cannot be observed in the external world and whose meanings cannot be clarified or communicated to others, they remain subjective phenomena that are not measurable.

1.2.3 – Identifying the structural and functional properties of the concept.

The structural characteristics express the structure of a concept — for example, we can describe the structure of power through its components, namely the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Functional properties, by contrast, pertain to the roles performed by a given concept: parliament legislates and monitors government, government executes laws, the army defends the nation, and the media disseminates information.(In fact, this classification is misleading and deceptive, and we will clarify this in more detail in the section on how to construct laws in the lectures.)

As with structural characteristics, this step remains highly sensitive, especially when it comes to unifying researchers' perspectives in interpreting and translating concepts from one language to another.

1.2.4 – Defining concepts through synonyms and antonyms.

Tracing linguistic roots or finding synonyms often helps clarify a concept's meaning, though ambiguities remain, particularly in translation. For example,

¹⁴ Mohammed Zahi Bashir Al-Mughairbi, op. cit., p.57.

the Arabic term sultan may correspond to *autorité* (authority, i.e., coercive power enforcing law), or alternatively to *sultan* (the ruler of a sultanate or modern state)¹⁵. As for defining concepts through their opposite meaning, for example: the Arabic term *madani* may translate differently depending on context: civil (as opposed to military rule), secular (as opposed to religious), urban (as opposed to rural), or civic (as opposed to authoritarian). Thus, contextual and oppositional meanings often play a decisive role in ensuring accurate translation.

1.2.5 – Defining by enumeration.

Certain concepts can be delimited by listing their components. For example, the Arab regional system can be defined by identifying its elements, namely the twenty-two Arab states that constitute this system.

1.2.6 – Defining by classification.

As for concepts that do not lend themselves to an operational definition or to structural and functional characteristics specifically, they can be identified through classificatory definitions, based on several criteria. For instance, political systems can be classified according to the form of government into presidential, parliamentary, or even mixed presidential-parliamentary or parliamentary-presidential systems¹⁶. They can also be classified according to political orientations into democratic and totalitarian systems, or according to the field of international relations into systems such as a unipolar international system, a bipolar international system, a multipolar system, and so on.

¹⁵ Hadi Al-Alawi, *Dictionary of the State and Economy*, 1st ed. (Beirut : Dar Al-Kunouz Al- Adabia, 1997), p. 12.

¹⁶ Moataz Bellah Abdel Fattah, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

1.2.7 – Defining by examples.

Illustrative cases may be used to render concepts more concrete: Concepts can be identified by providing examples, such as illustrating the concept of a presidential system through cases like the United States or Vietnam, or defining the parliamentary system through examples such as the United Kingdom, Italy, and Germany.

1.2.8 – Defining by exclusion.

This involves distinguishing a concept from related but different notions. For instance, differentiating between knowledge and science: knowledge obtained through scientific methods is scientific knowledge, whereas other forms remain general knowledge.

Another example of defining concepts by excluding overlapping meanings is the distinction between war and terrorism. War refers to the unintentional killing of civilians, whereas terrorism involves the deliberate killing of civilians¹⁷.

Note:

Not all concepts lend themselves equally to every definitional strategy outlined above. Some may resist operationalization; others lack structural properties or cannot be fully enumerated. Nonetheless, no concept can entirely escape linguistic, terminological, or etymological clarification. Importantly, the more definitional strategies are applied, the more concepts advance from the individual level to intermediate and ultimately to universal categories.

According to Karl Popper, these procedures contribute—at least to some extent—to the transition from subjective theories (*théorie subjective*), shaped largely by the researcher's perspective, to objective theories (*théorie*

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 5

objective)¹⁸. This relationship can be further illustrated in Table 1, which outlines the hierarchical levels of abstraction in concepts.

Table (01): Levels of Conceptual Abstraction :

Levels of Abstraction	Scope of Comparison (Goals & Domains)	Logical & Empirical Properties of Concepts
High Level	Transregional or cross-border comparisons, directly leading to the formulation of general theories.	Highly objective and normative concepts; minimal influence of subjective orientations; maximum adherence to objective definitional procedures.
Medium Level	Intermediate, taxonomy-based comparisons; results are relatively context-dependent.	Concepts situated within relatively homogeneous contexts; aim at middle-range empirical theories with explanatory and predictive power; analytical and moderately abstract.
Low Level	Case-specific comparisons (country-by-country or region-to-region).	Narrow-gauge theoretical analyses; high degree of subjectivity and contextual dependency;

¹⁸ Daniel-Louis Seiler, *The Comparative Method in Political Science* (Paris: Dalloz, 2004), p. 48.

		concepts largely interpreted within specific contexts.
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Source : Paul .G. Lewis and David. C . potter, Op. Cit, p. 199.

1.3 –The Fundamental Concepts of the Comparative Politics Course

This course is considered highly important and sensitive in relation to various disciplines and fields of knowledge,

1.3.1 – Science:

Linguistically, the word science (‘ilm) means “perceiving something in its true reality.” It denotes certainty and knowledge. To “know” something is to recognize and comprehend it. Thus, in its linguistic sense, science is closely tied to the sensory perception of things (sensory knowledge).

Is science simply a body of knowledge or a collection of facts, as many of us learn in high school?¹⁹.

Science is a strategy for understanding and explaining the social and natural world that emphasizes the use of statements that can be examined to see whether they are wrong²⁰.

Terminologically, there are many definitions associated with science, but in short, science can be understood as the body of knowledge acquired through systematic and disciplined scientific methods. In terms of classification, it is well known that the sciences are divided into three main branches:

¹⁹ William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder, Principles of Comparative Politics, 2nd ed. (United States : SAGE Publications, 2013), p. 4.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 19.

A – Human Sciences (or Humanities):

Some scholars reject labeling this field as a “science,” believing that it does not rely on the experimental method in its strict sense, but rather on reflection, analysis, and interpretation. The humanities include a range of disciplines such as literature, philosophy, languages, history, and the arts, as well as other fields concerned with the study of human beings and their cultural and intellectual production.

B – Social Sciences:

These sciences are concerned with the study of human beings within their social context — that is, within the groups, institutions, and relationships they form. Their main objective is to understand social phenomena, analyze individual behavior within society, and explain the interactions among various social structures. The social sciences include a range of disciplines such as sociology, political science, anthropology, social psychology, and economics, among other fields that seek to interpret human behavior in its collective and institutional dimensions.

C – Natural Sciences:

The natural sciences are concerned with the study of the physical and natural phenomena that govern the universe, relying on careful observation, experimentation, and quantitative analysis to uncover the general laws that regulate the workings of nature. They aim to explain physical, chemical, and biological phenomena and to build objective knowledge that is testable and generalizable. The natural sciences include various fields such as physics, chemistry, biology, earth science, and astronomy, among other disciplines that study the material world in its different manifestations.

D – The relationship between sciences:

Without delving into the broad epistemological debate between proponents of the positivist approach and those of the historical approach, it can be demonstrated and described that the relationship linking the sciences and disciplines that fall under the same field of knowledge is based on a shared epistemic matrix. This matrix, in turn, encompasses a set of analytical elements represented by the symbolic generalizations and metaphysical principles common to those disciplines.

For example, carbon dioxide is nothing more than a shared symbolic generalization among certain natural sciences such as physics, chemistry, and meteorology. Similarly, the atom represents a shared metaphysical principle among these or some of these disciplines. Over time, these shared symbolic generalizations and metaphysical principles have led to the emergence of an integrative relationship among these disciplines. This integrative relationship, in turn, gave rise to twin sciences such as nuclear physics and nuclear medicine, chemical engineering, and other similar paired sciences.

As for the social sciences, the relationship that connects the disciplines within their framework concerns the same issue—namely, that they share common symbolic generalizations. The concept of a system serves as a symbolic generalization shared among these sciences; just as there is a political system, there is also a social system and an economic system. This reflects an integrative relationship that gives rise to twin sciences within the realm of social science disciplines—for instance, political economy, social psychology, and psychological anthropology, among others.

However, if we were to employ certain tools specific to the natural sciences in analyzing social phenomena, such an approach would merely contribute to

bringing those phenomena closer to the designation of “science,” under a contributory rather than integrative relationship.

1.3.2 – Knowledge :

Knowledge (ma‘rifa), on the other hand, is a broader and more general concept encompassing all that surrounds human beings, including judgments, representations, concepts, and beliefs across various domains of human activity. Because of its importance and the necessity of examining it from all perspectives, knowledge has been studied by numerous philosophical and social sciences, leading to the establishment of a dedicated branch of philosophy known as epistemology. This branch explores the origin, formation, methods, and validity of knowledge. Knowledge itself can be divided into three types²¹:

A – Sensory Knowledge: This is the knowledge acquired by humans through the senses, such as touch, hearing, and sight. It is a simple form of knowledge, as it is shared by a large number of people. It is commonly referred to as common sense (sens commun). Accordingly, the grounds for persuasion here are tangible, perceptible, or firmly established in the human mind.

B – Speculative or Metaphysical Knowledge: This type of knowledge is concerned with reflecting upon what lies beyond the natural world, such as inquiries into life and death, the attributes of the Creator, and His existence. Such knowledge cannot be proven through experimentation.

²¹ Belkacem Slatnia and Hassane El Jilani, Op.cit, pp 10–13.

C – Scientific–Experimental Knowledge: This is the form of knowledge based on deliberate and systematic observation of phenomena, the formulation of appropriate hypotheses, and their verification through experimentation, as well as the collection and analysis of data. This type of knowledge requires that the researcher go beyond merely clarifying the meanings of terms and concepts, striving instead to uncover general laws and theories that link these concepts together. Such laws enable generalization and prediction regarding the behavior of different phenomena under specific conditions.

D – The relationship between the three types of knowledge :

However, there can be no empirical knowledge without sensory knowledge, and no metaphysical knowledge without empirical scientific knowledge. The relationship among the three types of knowledge is an organic one, in which each level confirms the existence of the other in a series of interconnected circles. Although sensory knowledge is simple and its persuasive arguments are evident since it relies on the senses, a large part of those senses serves as a means of reaching arguments and proofs, which in turn form the basis for verifying scientific hypotheses and constructing general laws within the framework of empirical scientific knowledge. These arguments and proofs of empirical science, in their turn, represent a scientific indication or manifestation of metaphysical knowledge.

E – The relationship between Science and knowledge :

As we mentioned earlier, science can be understood as the body of knowledge acquired through systematic and disciplined scientific methods, Accordingly, the basis for distinguishing between science and knowledge lies in the fact that knowledge obtained through scientific methods is scientific knowledge, whereas other forms remain general knowledge.

1.3.3 – Epistemology

The origins of the epistemological dimension as a fundamental part of philosophy can be traced back to Greek Platonic thought. Plato is considered the first to raise questions about this dimension as an integral part of philosophy. These questions revolved around the nature of knowledge, how much genuine knowledge we actually possess, whether the human mind is capable of attaining knowledge, and what relationship exists between knowledge and true belief. However, the epistemological dimension, since its emergence in the Greek era, did not develop significantly until it gained greater momentum in the early twentieth century at the hands of the pioneers of logical positivism. They raised questions about the possibility of attaining factual truths by engaging with the dialectic of essence and appearance, relying on methods of reasoning and the indicators of the empirical approach.

The term *épistémologie*, as defined in the French dictionary *La Rousse illustré* (1906), literally means *Théorie de la science* (Theory of Science)²². The word *épistémologie* is composed of two parts: *épistémé* (knowledge), which is the subject matter of epistemology, and *logos* (rational discourse about knowledge and science)²³. Thus, epistemology, from an etymological perspective, refers specifically to the dimension that is concerned exclusively with scientific knowledge, distinguishing it from theory of knowledge (gnoseology), which encompasses all forms of knowledge.

According to Rome Harre, “Epistemology is the theory of knowledge. Within epistemological research, we seek the criteria that allow scientific inquiry to correspond with true knowledge.”

²² Jaber, Malika A. “The Contribution of Epistemology to the Pedagogy of Sociology.” *Journal of Kasdi Merbah University* 8 (June 2012): 393.

²³ Ferry, Jean-Marc. *Course on the Epistemology of Political Science*. Free University of Brussels, 2005–2006.

André Lalande defines it as “the precise meaning of the philosophy of science, serving as a critical study of the principles, assumptions, and outcomes that aim to determine the logical origin, normative value, and objective weight of various sciences.”

Meanwhile, Philippe Parjis regards epistemology as “a central component of the philosophy of science, concerned with the study of the nature of scientific knowledge, as well as its formation and limits.”

Similarly, Gérard Fourez defines it as “a part of the philosophy of science that examines the way in which knowledge is organized.”²⁴

From the preceding definitions, it can be inferred that the epistemological dimension is a philosophical branch devoted to the study of knowledge, particularly scientific knowledge. What distinguishes it from other philosophical concepts can be clarified as follows:

A – The Difference between Epistemology and Other Branches of Philosophy :

The epistemological dimension is distinct from other philosophical dimensions such as axiology, which deals with values and aesthetics, or ontology, which concerns itself with essence and existence. Epistemology, by contrast, focuses specifically on scientific knowledge—its nature, scope, credibility, biases, and underlying assumptions.

A.1 – Epistemology vs. Methodology

The distinction between epistemology and methodology lies in the fact that methodology refers to the procedures or scientific steps by which researchers arrive at certain knowledge about studied phenomena, while epistemology is

²⁴ Marc Jacquemain, *Epistemology of Social Sciences: An Introduction*, provisional course notes, 2014, p. 2.

concerned with the principles of scientific knowledge, including its assumptions and outcomes²⁵.

A.2 – Epistemology vs. History of Science

Whereas the history of science is concerned with the chronological development of individual sciences and the ways in which they were formed from their earliest beginnings and ideas, the epistemological dimension is concerned with how those early intuitions and ideas evolved into comprehensive or partial systems of knowledge. Nonetheless, each historical stage remains distinct from others, with its own unique perspective, and no particular period can be said to be closer to the truth than another²⁶.

1.3.4 – Comparison :

Comparison, as defined by John Stuart Mill, is: “the study of similar or corresponding phenomena in different societies, or the systematic analysis of differences in one or more subjects across two or more societies.”²⁷ From this, we can infer that comparison requires the presence of both similarities and differences among the phenomena being studied.

When we link the concept of comparison to politics, we encounter a range of related notions and meanings—such as comparative governments, comparative politics, comparative analysis, and the comparative method. These terms do not necessarily represent true synonyms or opposites referring to the same thing; rather, they reflect the stages in the development of the field of comparative political studies²⁸.

²⁵ Nasr Mohamed Aref, *Epistemology of Comparative Politics: The Knowledge Model – theory – Method*, 1st ed. (Beirut : Majd University Institution for Studies Publishing and Distribution, 2002), p. 2.

²⁶ Mohamed Zahi Bashir Al-Mughirbi op. cit, p. 68.

²⁷ Nasr Mohammed Arif, op. cit., pp. 93–94.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 95.

1.3.5 – Politic:

Politic emerged as a natural consequence of the appearance of the social phenomenon, which itself arose with the beginning of human coexistence. This coexistence gave rise to numerous interactions—some social (such as friendship and marriage) and others economic (such as buying and selling). Yet, given the nature of the human psyche, which may sometimes be inclined toward wrongdoing, problems inevitably arise in both the social and economic dimensions. As Kant expressed in his book *Philosophy of History*, man possesses an unsocial temperament that drives him to wish to bend everything to his own will. Consequently, the political dimension came into being in order to regulate society and protect individuals. Thus, the recognition by individuals of the common interest and its importance can only be guaranteed through political function²⁹.

In general, the political dimension is linked to relations of power, for individuals are not equal in terms of the authority granted to them. Over time, institutionalization increases at the expense of personalism among individuals. It is inconceivable that all individuals could be rulers or ruled alike; hence, the authoritative political dimension emerged among them. For this reason, David Easton defined the political system as the most influential of all subsystems, since it monopolizes the authoritative allocation of values and employs coercive means. However, this does not preclude it from being influenced by other subsystems³⁰.

²⁹ Issam Suleiman, *Introduction to Political Science*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dar Al-Nidal for Printing Publishing and Distribution 1989), pp. 12–13.

³⁰ Paul .G. Lewis and David. C . potter, *Op. Cit.*,p. 261.

1.3.6 – Political Science:

In its traditional sense, political science is the systematic and organized knowledge of the affairs of the state. From its very beginnings, it was established as an independent discipline. The roots of political science go back to the Greeks, who both invented politics and laid the foundations of political science. As Edmond Goblot states: “Ancient Greece, the mother and teacher of European civilization ...” With the development of political science, the transformation of its concepts, and the diversification of its subjects, political science has come to be defined as the discipline concerned with studying power relations among different human groups.

1.3.7 – Comparative politics :

Comparative politics is the subfield of political science that focuses primarily on politics within countries. In Chapter 3 we define and examine the nature of politics. In this chapter we define and examine the nature of science³¹. Comparative politics is the study of political phenomena that occur predominantly within countries. This contrasts with International politics that are the study of political phenomena that occur predominantly between countries³².

Edward A. Freeman, clarifying the meaning of comparative politics has accepted that comparative politics is a comparative analysis and description of various types of institutions and governments. In other words, in comparative politics not only comparative study of various forms of the government is included, but also various political processes and comparative study of political and non-fiscal institution are related to them.

³¹ William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, Sona Nadenichek Golder, Op.Cit, p. 19.

³² Holly Oberle, Comparative Politics: A Practical Guide for a Globalizing World, Colorado Mesa University,, 2023, p.29.

Describing the word “comparative”, Rai C. Macreeds has written that since the time of Herodotus and Aristotle, variations have been there in political values, beliefs, institutions, governments and political stages and for searching similar elements of these variations processes, efforts should be given the name of political analysis.

According to G.K Roberts, “now this comparative study of politics is not limited till structural comparisons only, instead under it behavioural study of tribes, communities, unions, groups and non-fiscal is also started to be done. This is the reason why today comparative politics is now called either everything or nothing.”³³

1.3.8 – The Political System:

Why do we study comparative politics? As mentioned in previous lectures, one of the main reasons that lead us to study comparative politics is to understand political systems, because we study political systems through the lens of comparative politics.

The term political system was introduced into political science in 1953 when the American scholar David Easton published his book *The Political System*. Political scientists borrowed the concept of “system” from sociology, whose scholars had in turn drawn it from biology. In biology, the notion of a system refers to the human body as composed of several organs, each performing a specific function in order to achieve harmony, thereby enabling the body as a whole to operate. Any dysfunction in one of these organs leads to a disorder in the body as a whole. This idea was then transferred— as mentioned—into the social sciences, including political science.

³³ Vinod C.V., *Comparative Politics* (Phagwara/New Delhi : Laxmi Publications (P) Ltd, n.d.), p. 2

Gabriel Almond defined the political system as “that system of interactions existing in all independent societies, which performs the function of integration and adaptation both internally and externally through the use, or threat of use, of some degree of coercion, although the legitimacy of this coercion varies from one degree to another.”³⁴

The social system consists of many sub systems. Each sub system has certain specified functions to perform. The political system is interwoven with other subsystems in society³⁵. The concept of a system is originally an organic entity. Each system refers to the political, social, and economic entity, among others. A system is composed of parts that interact with one another to perform specific functions. Government constitutes a part of the system, specifically the political system. Hence, the political system is broader than government, as it encompasses both a formal dimension—empowered with the authority to exercise particular functions—and an informal dimension.

The political system exists within an environment that both influences it and is influenced by it. This environment operates at three levels: local, regional, and international. The political system affects its surrounding environment and, as noted, is also affected by it. There are outputs from the political system that influence the external environment, and there are inputs from the environment into the political system.

Inputs to the political system consist of resources, demands, and support.

Resources: Political systems vary in terms of the resources available to them. Resources include both material and human resources. Human resources refer to the population in terms of both quantity and quality.

³⁴ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., pp. 21 – 22.

³⁵ Comparative Politics, Study material, 2nd semester, M.A. Political Science, CORE COURSE: POL2C05, University of Calicut, Malappuram, Kerala, India, 2019, p. 9.

Demands: Demands directed at the system also differ. The system is required to respond to these demands, whether they originate from the internal or external environment.

Support: Support refers to the legitimacy or endorsement enjoyed by the system³⁶. Systems differ in the degree of support they receive; however, support tends to increase when the system successfully addresses demands³⁷.

The political system responds to these inputs in the form of outputs, which consist of decisions and actions issued by the political system."

The political system consists of two parts: the formal part, which includes the official and the government institutions and the government, and an informal dimension, which includes political parties, interest groups, pressure groups, and so on.

1.3.9 – Theory and Approaches in Political Science :

1.3.9.1 – Theory :

The word theory derives from the Latin *theoria*, meaning "to see"; in French, vision; and in English, sight, i.e., a way of seeing. It is also used to refer to something of a higher intellectual level³⁸. A theory may be defined as: "a set of interrelated concepts, definitions, and propositions that provide an organized view of phenomena by specifying the relationships among variables, with the aim of explaining and predicting phenomena."³⁹ In this sense, a theory represents a set of hypotheses that have been verified.

³⁶ Paul .G. Lewis and David. C . potter , Op. Cit, .p.267.

³⁷Dr. Jaber Saeed Awad. Op.cit, pp. 49–50.

³⁸ Dr. Nasr Mohamed Aref, op.cit, p. 71.

³⁹ Mohamed Chelbi, *Methodology in Political Analysis: Concepts, Methods, Approaches, and Tools* (Algeria, 1997), p. 17.

A – Stages of Theoretical Construction :

The process of building theory in the social sciences involves three main stages, comprising seven interconnected and overlapping steps. These stages also serve as a fundamental criterion for evaluating the extent to which approaches succeed in building empirical theories within political science. The stages and steps may be summarized as follows⁴⁰:

Stage One: Identifying the Research Problem, which includes:

- 1 – Raising questions about the problem after defining it (problematisation).
- 2 – Defining concepts: a sound conceptual framework = a sound approach = a sound theory (and vice versa).
- 3 – Research procedures.

Stage Two: Systematic Scientific Observation of the Problem (Observation), which includes:

- 1 – Collecting information to answer the questions raised in the first stage.
- 2 – Establishing relationships among variables to arrive at provisional generalizations about the problem (generalisation).

Stage Three: Hypothesis Testing for the Purpose of Theory Building, which includes:

- 1 – Testing those generalizations to confirm their validity (confirmation).
- 2 – Implementing or applying the theory (application).

After the researcher completes the first step (defining the problem) and proceeds to the stage of observation, new questions may arise, prompting a return to the first step for refinement. Similarly, further questions may appear in

⁴⁰ Jaber El-Sayed Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 16.

the third stage, requiring a return to the second or even the first stage. This back-and-forth dynamic confirms the interrelated and cyclical nature of the theoretical construction process⁴¹.

B – Types of Theories :

1 – Normative Theories:

These are theories that address how reality ought to be. They consist of evaluative propositions that seek to arrive at normative value-based statements founded on analytical reasoning. They are divided into two categories:

a – Philosophical Normative Propositions:

These are linked to values and higher ideals such as justice, equality, freedom, and tolerance—positive values pursued by humanity as a whole, while rejecting negative behaviors like racism, injustice, and corruption⁴². Achieving the ideal form of government, for example, is a normative proposition⁴³. In this sense, philosophical normative theory is synonymous with political philosophy.

b – Scientific Normative Propositions :

These are often formulated by thinkers or researchers, based on their reading of scientific literature, as judgments about expected outcomes. In other words, whereas philosophical propositions rest on defending normative stances, scientific propositions rest on judgments about expected results and on specific understandings of how phenomena influence one another.

An example is Karl Marx's proposition about the relational link between the economic structure and the political, social, and cultural superstructure. Such propositions, derived from the efforts of thinkers to connect phenomena—either

⁴¹ *bid.*, p. 16

⁴² Moataz Bellah Abdel Fattah, *op.cit.* p.p.28 – 29.

⁴³ Donatella Della Porta and Michael Keating, *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences : A Pluralist Perspective* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 41.

through deduction or induction—may serve as generalizations or what are known as analytical–theoretical efforts. These, in turn, are divided into⁴⁴:

- **Analytical Efforts:** initially normative propositions, but which, through their correspondence with reality and their use as analytical and explanatory frameworks for social phenomena, are elevated into theoretical analyses.
- **Theoretical Analyses Preparing for Empirical Testing:** these are analytical propositions that serve as a prelude to empirical testing. For instance, Ibn Khaldun’s assertion that “injustice portends the ruin of civilization” was made after a comparative study of despotic and non–despotic states, in which he gathered data on both and compared their levels of corruption. Here, such theoretical efforts represent the starting point for transitioning from normative theories to empirical ones, as they prepare the ground for empirical testing. On this basis, not every normative proposition can be considered a starting point for empirical theory.

2 – Empirical Theories:

These are theories that examine reality as it is in order to understand how it ought to be. They are classified according to their explanatory and predictive capacity into⁴⁵:

a – Low–Level Theories: theories with limited explanatory and predictive capacity, as they deal with only one aspect of a political phenomenon. Consequently, they are of limited importance in political science.

b – Grand or Universal Theories: in principle, these would have the capacity to explain all political phenomena. However, such theories do not exist in political science, although some researchers have attempted to construct them.

⁴⁴ Moataz Bellah Abdel Fattah, op.cit. p. 29.

⁴⁵ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., pp. 14–15.

c – Middle–Range or Partial Theories: these are theories derived from empirical research⁴⁶. Political scientists aim to construct such theories because they have a moderate level of explanatory and predictive capacity. They therefore represent the endpoint of sound, reasonable, and fully acceptable empirical theory–building in political science⁴⁷.

1.3.9.2 – The Approach:

Approach” refers to the criteria through which relevant questions and data are selected, or it is “the framework used to indicate the standards by which questions are posed and the rules that govern the choice of certain topics and information, or their exclusion from the scope of research.”⁴⁸ It is called an approach because it helps the researcher get closer to the phenomenon under study⁴⁹. In fact, every scientific or intellectual discipline has its own approaches. Thus, an approach is a conceptual model formulated by thinkers or researchers within a given scientific field, which can be employed to study specific phenomena in that field.

Accordingly, researchers in their area of specialization—after choosing the most suitable methods for their subject matter—must also select the approaches that are most compatible with those chosen methods. From this definition, it becomes clear that the method is broader and more comprehensive than the approach, since the method encompasses a set of approaches. The approach, on the other hand, represents a prior adoption of a certain conceptual framework for the purpose of building a general theory

⁴⁶ Niklas Luhmann , , Introduction to Systems Theory, trans. by Youssef Fahmi Hijazi, 1st ed, (Baghdad: Al-Jamal Publications, 2010), p. 19.

⁴⁷ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 16

⁴⁸ Mohamed Shalaby, op. cit., p. 14.

⁴⁹ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 17

based on experimentation, capable of explaining what occurs and attempting to predict what will occur.

It thus constitutes a prior adoption by the researcher of a particular conceptual framework in order to probe the relationship between two or more variables. It functions as a guide or reference point that directs the researcher. Consequently, the conceptual framework is the essence of the approach. In turn, it is a system of organized concepts that proves useful in studying a given subject. Examples of such concepts in the field of political science include: power, influence, conflict, competition, wealth, and so forth.

Since the conceptual framework is essentially a system of concepts, its strength lies in the fact that its concepts are precisely and rigorously defined—that is, there must be a degree of agreement among researchers concerning them. Conversely, if there is disagreement among scholars about that system of concepts, the approach becomes a shaky approach⁵⁰.

1.3.9.3 – The Relationship between Theory and Approach:

There is no doubt that the approaches we study function as lenses that guide the researcher in viewing political reality. Although an approach itself does not possess explanatory or predictive power—qualities that are the hallmark of theory—the importance of the approach lies in its role as the cornerstone of theoretical construction. As noted earlier, it is a prior adoption of a certain conceptual framework in order to construct a general theory based on experimentation, capable of explaining what happens and attempting to predict what will happen.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 20–21.

Given that the conceptual framework forms the core of the approach, and that no theory can be conceived in practice without an approach, and since theory expresses relationships between variables and is built upon a system of concepts—then if the conceptual framework of the approach is shaky, the approach itself will be shaky, and accordingly, the resulting theory will also be shaky. Conversely, if there is a degree of consensus among researchers about the conceptual framework of the approach, then the approach will be solid, which in turn will positively reflect on the quality of theoretical formulation.

Even though theory alone possesses the explanatory and predictive capacity with regard to political phenomena, and approaches do not rise to that level, approaches nevertheless constitute the foundation of any theoretical construction⁵¹. What unites them is the fact that even when approaches are chosen and employed in a given study, they are still directed toward answering the questions of that study, through the same iterative procedures, thereby achieving what is referred to as methodological complementarity.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 21–22.

Chapter Two: Forms of Government :

As for governments or political systems, they are divided into two main groups as follows: we have forms of government—or we can say forms of political systems—that are divided into presidential systems and parliamentary systems.

Parliamentary system is a system of government wherein the ministers of the executive branch are drawn from the legislature, and are accountable to that body, by contrast A presidential system is a system of government where an executive branch exists and presides (hence the name) separately from the legislature, to which it is not accountable and which cannot, in normal circumstances, dismiss it⁵².

It is well known that every political system has three main branches of power: the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch.

To determine whether a system is presidential or parliamentary, we set aside the judiciary, since it is supposed to enjoy independence, although its actual independence depends on the degree of democracy within the political system. Then we look at the relationship between the legislative and executive powers.

If the relationship is based on the principle of separation of powers, the system is considered presidential. However, if the relationship is based on the fusion of powers, then we are looking at a parliamentary system.

Therefore, the difference between the presidential and parliamentary systems lies in the relationship between the executive and legislative branches.

⁵² Olarotimi Ajayi, Introduction to Comparative Politics, Course Guide POL 228, National Open University of Nigeria, 2020, pp. 87–93.

Nevertheless, it is observed that the dominant trend in contemporary political systems is the mixed or hybrid model—governments that combine features of both the presidential and parliamentary systems⁵³.

What is the difference between the presidential system and the parliamentary system?

First, let us address the presidential system. The presidential system provided a model that can be found in the United States of America. Historically, this model emerged in the United States and is based on the principle of separation of powers.

After the United States gained independence from the British Crown and following the drafting of the American Constitution in 1789, the founding fathers of this constitution—led by George Washington—realized the need for a government that would maintain order in society⁵⁴. The question that arose was: What kind of government does the United States need?

According to the writings of Rousseau and John Locke, there was a continuous spectrum with two extremes: on one end, a very strong government with great authority; on the other end, a very weak government with minimal authority. Both extremes were completely rejected. The alternative was to adopt a middle ground, a balanced government. The founding fathers believed this was indeed possible, and it could be achieved through the principle of separation of powers.

⁵³ Ibid. p.p.118 – 119.

2.1 – Features of the Presidential System :

The first principle of the presidential system is the separation of powers. This means that no person, by law, can hold a position in more than one branch of government at the same time. For example, those who participate in making laws cannot simultaneously be involved in executing them. This separation prevents abuse or authoritarianism.

Another key feature is checks and balances. The executive and legislative branches are granted equal authority, and neither has the right to dissolve, dismiss, or dominate the other. Both are balanced because they are directly elected by the people⁵⁵.

In a presidential system, there are two separate elections: one for the legislative authority and another for the executive authority⁵⁶.

Now, let us move to the parliamentary system, whose historical model is found in Britain.

2.2 – Features of the Parliamentary System :

The parliamentary system is based on the principle of fusion of powers, the opposite of the presidential model. This means that a person cannot hold an executive position unless they are already elected as a member of the legislature.

Parliamentary supremacy: the two branches are not equal. The legislative branch holds greater authority than the executive branch, since it is directly elected by the people. This gives it the power to dismiss the executive branch. By contrast, the executive branch comes to power through indirect election.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 123.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 123.

It is also noteworthy that in the parliamentary system, only one election is held, unlike in the presidential system⁵⁷.

Table (02) : Aspects of diferents Political Systems :

Aspect	Presidential System	Parliamentary System	Mixed/Hybrid System
Historical Model	United States of America	United Kingdom	France (Fifth Republic)
Core Principle	Separation of Powers	Fusion of Powers	Combination of separation and fusion
Division of Branches	No person may hold both legislative and executive powers simultaneously	Members of the executive must be part of parliament	Some overlap: president separate from parliament, but government linked to parliament
Relationship of Powers	Legislative and executive branches are equal and balanced	Parliament is stronger than the executive branch	Shared authority: executive power divided between president and prime minister; parliament retains

⁵⁷ Ibid. p.p. 124 – 125.

			oversight
Elections	Two separate elections: one for the president (executive) and another for parliament (legislative)	One direct election for parliament, from which the government is formed	Dual elections: president elected directly by the people, parliament also elected directly
Dismissal Power	Neither branch can dissolve or dismiss the other (except through special procedures such as impeachment)	Parliament can withdraw confidence and dismiss the government	President cannot be dismissed by parliament, but government can fall through no-confidence votes
Legitimacy	Both the president and parliament derive legitimacy directly from the people	Parliament derives legitimacy directly from the people, while the government derives it indirectly from parliament	Dual legitimacy: president from the people, parliament also from the people
Stability	Generally more stable, since the president serves a fixed term and is not affected by parliamentary	Potentially less stable, as the government can fall through a vote of no confidence	Intermediate stability: president provides continuity, but government

	crises		may still face instability
Real-World Example	United States of America	United Kingdom, Canada, India	France, Portugal, Finland

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the literature.

Questions:

Explain the validity of the following statements, indicating your reasoning.

1 _All members of the executive authority in the parliamentary system are also members of the legislature.

→ This statement is true. because The parliamentary system is based on the principle of fusion of powers, This means that a person cannot hold an executive position unless they are already elected as a member of the legislature.

2 _All members of the legislature in the parliamentary system are also members of the executive authority.

This statement is false, because executive members are always fewer than legislative members.

3 _All members of the executive authority in the parliamentary system are also members of the legislature, and all legislators are also executives.

→ This statement is false, because while all members of the executive authority in the parliamentary system are indeed legislators, the reverse is not true: not all legislators are members of the executive

4 _In the presidential system, the executive and legislative branches are equal and independent of each other.

→ True, since both derive legitimacy directly from the people and cannot dissolve one another.

5 _Some members of the executive authority in the parliamentary system are legislators.

→ This statement is false, because all members of the executive in the parliamentary system are legislators, not just some of them.

6 _There is only one direct general election in the parliamentary system that brings both the legislative and executive authorities to power, without the need for another election.

→ This statement is true.

Reason: The people elect parliament directly, and the executive (prime minister and cabinet) is formed from the elected members of parliament.

The process of combining members of the legislative branch and members of the executive branch in the presidential system will be explained through a mathematical phenomenon, As for the process of combining members of the legislative branch and members of the executive branch in the parliamentary system, it will be explained through a chemical phenomenon.

→ This statement is true.

* * “The number of members of authority in the presidential system:

Number of members of the legislative branch: 400 members

Number of members of the executive branch: 25 members

The total equals 425.

In the parliamentary system:

Number of members of the legislative branch: 400 members

Number of members of the executive branch: 28 members

the total equals 400.

7 _Some members of the legislature in the parliamentary system are also members of the executive authority.

→ This statement is true. because the executive (prime minister and cabinet) is formed from members of parliament.

8 _In the parliamentary system, the executive authority cannot be dismissed by the legislature.

→ False, because parliament can withdraw confidence and dismiss the government.

9 _In the presidential system, there is only one election for both the executive and legislative branches.

→ False, since the president and parliament are elected separately in two elections.

10 _In the parliamentary system, the prime minister is chosen directly by the people through elections.

→ False, the prime minister is selected indirectly by parliament.

11 _The principle of separation of powers is the foundation of the presidential system.

→ True, no person can simultaneously hold office in more than one branch of government.

12 _The principle of fusion of powers is the foundation of the parliamentary system.

→ True, the executive emerges from the legislature and is accountable to it.

13 _The presidential system tends to be more politically stable than the parliamentary system.

→ True, because the president serves a fixed term regardless of parliamentary crises.

14 _The parliamentary system tends to allow for greater flexibility and quicker government change than the presidential system.

→ True, since governments can be replaced through a vote of no confidence.

2.3 – Methods of Attaining Power :

2.3.1 – In presidential systems :

Power can be obtained either through election or appointment. In presidential systems, the electoral process involves two main parties: the voters and the candidates.

For example, let us assume that political parties are responsible for nominating candidates. To simplify, let us imagine two parties: Party A and Party B. Each of these parties presents its own candidates, though not necessarily in equal numbers. Suppose Party A nominates 800 candidates, while Party B nominates 700 candidates⁵⁸.

Next, the voters cast their ballots to elect 400 members in total. Theoretically, it is possible for all 400 elected members to come from either Party A or Party B exclusively. However, in reality, it is more likely that both parties will win seats.

Let us assume that the results are as follows: Party A wins 250 seats, and Party B wins 150 seats. In this case, the party holding more than half of the total seats becomes the majority party, while the other becomes the minority party. This is how the legislative authority is elected⁵⁹.

Then, there is another direct election for the executive authority. The voters again cast their votes in a separate election to choose the head of the executive branch, that is, the president. Since the president assumes office through a direct electoral process, this grants him significant powers and prerogatives.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 128.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p.p. 128-129.

The selection of the head of the executive authority, or the president, takes place through the political parties that have succeeded in the legislative elections. Each party nominates one candidate for the presidency. In some systems, a party may nominate a joint ticket, consisting of both a presidential and a vice-presidential candidate. In such cases, the victory of one candidate necessarily means the defeat of the other.

For example, if the candidate of Party A wins the presidential election, he then has the authority to form the executive branch from members of his own party, provided that those individuals have not been elected as members of the legislature, since the system is based on the principle of separation of powers, and therefore also on the separation of individuals between branches⁶⁰.

2.3.2 – In parliamentary systems :

As for parliamentary systems, voters elect candidates from the two parties, Party A and Party B, resulting in a majority party and a minority party within the legislative authority. However, regarding the executive authority, there is no need for a separate election. Instead, the outcome of the legislative elections determines who forms the executive branch. The Prime Minister is the leader of the majority party, while the Head of State may be a ceremonial president, a monarch, or another symbolic figure. The Prime Minister, as the leader of the winning party, becomes the head of government and selects the cabinet ministers from among the members of his party, in consultation with other party members⁶¹.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. p. 129 – 130.

⁶¹ Ibid. p. p. 133 – 134.

2.4 – A Coalition Government:

2.4.1 – In presidential systems :

In presidential systems, elections are conducted as follows: for example, let us assume that there are five competing parties in the legislative elections, namely parties A, B, C, D, and E. Suppose that one of these parties — party E — did not win any seats in those elections, while the other parties won a total of 400 parliamentary seats.

After that, another election is held to choose the head of state. In this case, each winning party nominates one candidate for the presidency, and the voters decide who will assume the position. Suppose that the elected president belongs to **party A**; in this case, the head of state has the right to appoint ministers exclusively from his own party.

Note: Theoretically, party E, which did not win any parliamentary seats, has the right to nominate a candidate for the presidency; however, in practice, this rarely happens.

2.4.2 – In the parliamentary system:

Let us assume that five parties take part in the legislative elections — for example, parties A, B, C, D, and E. Suppose that none of the candidates from party E won in those elections. In parliamentary systems, there is no need to hold another election; the leader of the party that wins the majority — that is, 50 percent plus one of the votes — becomes the Prime Minister and forms the government.

If none of the competing parties in the elections is able to obtain an absolute majority (50 percent + 1) to form the executive authority, the parties are then ranked according to the number of seats they have won. For example: _

Party B won 195 seats (assuming that the total number of seats is 400).

Party C: 95 seats.

Party A: 60 seats.

Party D: 50 seats.

We then move to the first party that obtained the largest number of seats, which is Party B. It won 195 seats, which is less than the required majority; therefore, it does not constitute a majority. Hence, we combine it with the next party (Party C), resulting in the following calculation: $(195 + 95)$. Here, the total of both parties gives the required majority. Consequently, Parties B and C form the majority, while the remaining two parties, A and D, constitute the minority⁶².

Note: We may have three majority parties and only one minority party, and the opposite can also be true.

The leader of the party with the plurality (not the majority) of seats becomes the Prime Minister (that is, in the previous example, the leader of Party B becomes the Prime Minister). He selects the ministers from both parties in proportion to their representation. For example, $195/95 = 13/06$ (meaning 13 ministers from the party with the plurality and 6 from the next party).

The leader of the second party assumes the position of Deputy Prime Minister or Minister of Foreign Affairs (that is, a sovereign ministerial position). When selecting ministers from both parties, the varying importance of ministries is taken into consideration (as there are sovereign ministries and ordinary ones).

⁶² Ibid. p. 144.

This is the general rule; however, at the individual level, the situation varies depending on the case. The party with the plurality is free to form a coalition with any other parties it chooses.

A coalition government is when the executive authority is formed by more than one party, and this is limited to parliamentary systems only.

Explain the validity of the following statement: “Coalition governments exist only in parliamentary systems.”

The statement is correct. A coalition government does not exist in presidential systems; it exists only in parliamentary systems. This is because, in parliamentary systems, members of the executive authority are selected based on the results of the legislative elections. If a particular party fails to obtain the required majority, it forms a coalition with another party in order to achieve the necessary majority.

A coalition government means that when none of the parties is able to secure the required majority, one party joins with another party or several other parties to form the government⁶³.

As a rule, in presidential systems, the president selects ministers exclusively from members of his own party; otherwise, the government is considered a mixed one.

2.5 – Executive–Legislative Relations :

Due to the sharp divergences in viewpoints between what constitutes execution and what constitutes legislation, the government forms a single unit and refers to all three branches together. Legislation and execution must work

⁶³ Ibid.p. 145.

in harmony and coordination, as both represent the government or constitute the government.

2.5.1 – In a presidential system :

In a presidential system, if the executive branch in this government wants to raise the tax by 10%, but the legislature considers raising it by only 8%, this means there is a divergence in viewpoints. However, this divergence is not significant, so it is acceptable and natural⁶⁴.

2.5.2 – In a parliamentary system :

In a parliamentary system, if we assume the same previous example, we would not find a problem, as limited divergences are possible. But when does this divergence become a problem? When one side says to raise taxes by 10% and the other side does not agree with this proposal at all. Here, it is considered a sharp divergence in viewpoints, which increases when each side insists on its own position. This is when what is called a deadlock occurs.

Clarify the validity of the following statement:

claiming that sharp divergences in viewpoints are limited to governments or presidential systems alone, without parliamentary ones, is incorrect.

The reason is that divergences exist in both. We analyze the divergence in viewpoints in presidential and parliamentary systems separately:

In presidential systems, the president is the genuine executive authority. The executive branch may enjoy a majority in the legislative branch through its party, or it may not. If the president has a majority of legislators, it is likely that they agree with the executive branch's opinion, but this is not necessarily the

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 176.

case. The two branches are equal, so neither of them has the right to impose its control over the other.

In parliamentary systems, the executive authority usually holds a majority in parliament—in fact, always. So when does divergence occur in the government or in parliamentary systems? This divergence occurs in the case of a coalition government. The greater the number of parties involved and participating in the coalition government, the less independent the government, i.e., the executive authority, becomes, due to differing orientations.

If we have a single majority party, where do sharp divergences come from? This is due to the presence of more influential and less influential members within the majority party. This disparity in influence stems from differences in experience, skills, and intellectual and mental capacities. The more influential members are those who have risen to the executive branch, while the less influential members occupy the backbench seats. They are less influential and less impactful within the majority party as a result of limited skills, lack of experience, and similar factors. These members always support their leadership in its decisions, but sometimes they may not see things the way the more influential members do. In other words, they agree with their leadership most of the time, ensuring that the executive branch has the required majority, but they may disagree on certain occasions⁶⁵. For example, the Turkish parliament during the parliamentary system era.

In conclusion, sharp divergences exist in both presidential and parliamentary systems. In presidential systems, the government may or may not enjoy a majority in the legislative branch—this is the first reason. The second reason is that both branches, executive and legislative, are equal, and neither can impose its opinion on the other. In parliamentary systems, although the

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 178.

executive branch always enjoys a majority, divergences arise from two factors: first, the coalition government, and second, the influence of backbench members.

Is tolerance or leniency possible in cases of severe discrepancies? Tolerance occurs when the two branches of government are equal. In a presidential system, both sides are equal, and neither can impose its viewpoint on the other; each branch possesses power equal to the other. In contrast, in a parliamentary system, the two branches are not equal in terms of strength, as the legislative authority holds superior power. Therefore, tolerance does not occur in parliamentary systems. Thus, tolerance is greater in a presidential system due to the balance between the two branches, whereas in a parliamentary system intolerance prevails as a result of the supremacy of parliament, since elections are held directly—or solely by the people—for the legislative authority rather than for the presidency⁶⁶.

How are severe divergences in viewpoints between the executive and legislative branches resolved?

In presidential systems, compromise is necessary, as it is the only solution. As for critical matters in which no compromise is possible, the issue is referred back to the people through a referendum.

Explain the validity of the following statement, providing justification: “In presidential systems, the only solution is a compromise between the two viewpoints.”

This statement is correct, and this is due to the fact that, given the equality or balance between the two branches, neither of them can impose its viewpoint on the other. In the previous example concerning the increase of taxes, if the

⁶⁶ Ibid.p. 179.

final outcome were to approve a 10% tax increase, one might ask: Is there a middle-ground solution here? Does this constitute a compromise?

Yes, a compromise may still exist, especially when multiple issues are being discussed simultaneously. In such cases, bargaining can take place—what is known as logrolling, or the exchange of interests—where each side gains something in one issue in exchange for concessions in another.

How are conflicts or severe divergences in viewpoints between the two branches resolved in parliamentary systems?

To begin with, it is necessary to distinguish between two situations :

The first situation if the disagreement is with a small number of members of the executive branch, the solution is to replace that number and appoint new members drawn from the majority party or parties whom the legislative authority approves of.”. For example, if the disagreement is with a minister—such as the Minister of Finance—he may be forced to resign.

The Second situation If the problem lies with all members of the executive branch or with the leader of the majority party, then the legislative council adopts a motion of no confidence in the government. This procedure requires an absolute majority of 50% plus one. This is followed by a call for new legislative elections.

When a motion of no confidence in the government is passed, it is usually accompanied by the dissolution of parliament and the calling of early elections. However, the executive branch remains in office until the election results are announced⁶⁷.

⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 181.

Explain the validity of the following statement, providing justification: “Early elections can exist in both presidential and parliamentary systems.”

This statement is incorrect. Early elections are limited to parliamentary systems only and do not occur in presidential systems. In parliamentary systems, one authority is superior to the other; the legislature has the power to withdraw confidence from the government, which creates a political vacuum that necessitates calling early elections.

In contrast, presidential systems do not have early elections because the two branches—the executive and the legislature—are balanced and equal in power. If the president leaves office, the vice president replaces him, and if the vice president is unable to serve, the speaker of the legislature (or another constitutionally designated official) assumes office, depending on what the constitution stipulates. Therefore, no early elections are needed in presidential systems.

Chapter Three: The Law-Making Process:

In fact, the principles of the separation of powers and checks and balances, democracy, and the rule of law set certain requirements for both the rules of the legislative process (the regulation) and the behavior of the actors involved therein (the practice) that together constitute a prescriptive normative standard that must be achieved to guarantee the compliance of parliamentary law-making with constitutionalism⁶⁸.

However, the basis for distinguishing between a Bill and a Legislative Proposal lies mainly in the body that initiates it:

3.1 – Government Bill

A bill is a draft law submitted by the executive branch (the government) to parliament for discussion and approval. In other words, the initiative comes from the government or the relevant minister after the text is prepared within government institutions.

3.2 – Private Member's Bill

A legislative proposal is a draft law introduced by a member or a group of members of parliament, rather than by the government. Thus, the initiative comes from the legislative branch itself.

Summary of the difference

Bill = initiative of the government.

Legislative proposal = initiative of members of parliament.

⁶⁸ Viktor Kazai, *The Equilibrium of Parliamentary Law-making: Comparative Perspectives on the Role of Courts in a Democracy* (New York: Routledge, 2025), p. 12.

Important note :

In many political systems, both types ultimately pass through the same parliamentary discussion and voting procedures; the difference lies only in the source of the initiative.

3.3 – Stages of lawmaking :

The process of lawmaking, whether in parliamentary systems or presidential systems, falls within the competence of the legislative authority. The lawmaking process goes through six stages, which are as follows⁶⁹ :

First, the introduction of a bill or the first reading. The first reading represents an idea intended to be transformed into a law. A law is binding, in the sense that once it is enacted and approved, it must be respected and implemented, and anyone who opposes the application of the provisions of the law is subject to punishment. By contrast, a bill is not binding; it is merely a proposal that has not yet been approved or ratified, but it may eventually become a binding law.

Question: How do members of the executive authority propose draft laws?

Since a bill is merely a proposal, members of the executive authority in both presidential and parliamentary systems have the right to submit proposals for draft laws.

Second: The bill is referred to the competent committees. The system of work in all legislative councils is based on the committee system, meaning that members are distributed among committees according to the nature of their specialization. Thus, there may be, for example, an Education Committee, an Agriculture Committee, a Health Committee, a Foreign Affairs Committee, and

⁶⁹ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., p p. 148 – 161.

so on. It is worth noting that the number of members is not necessarily equal across all committees. The legislature is divided into several committees because there is a large number of bills, and it is difficult to study all of them directly. Therefore, these committees facilitate the examination and study of such bills.

There is what is known as the General Committee, which is composed of a group of committees. Its tasks include the following:

first, distributing the members of the legislature among the specialized committees of the council based on experience, specialization, and other relevant criteria.

second, referring draft laws to the specialized committees. A committee may add to or delete provisions of a bill, or even shelve it altogether. Given that not all members of, for example, the Education Affairs Committee necessarily possess sufficient expertise in this field, they may in such cases hold what are known as hearings or a hearing session. These consist of inviting specialists who are not members of the legislature—that is, from outside the council—to listen to their opinions, without granting them the right to vote. Their consultation is based on their expertise and specialization, and as a result, the bill may be completely altered or subjected to amendments.

Thus, the committee has the authority to decide whether a bill does not merit consideration; in such a case, it is not submitted to the deputies and is set aside. The committee may add to it, delete from it, or modify it entirely. Therefore, the committee's power is extensive and may go so far as to effectively kill a bill.

Question: Why do legislative councils operate through a system of specialized committees?

Answer: Because a large number of issues are discussed, and each committee has a specific task and area of jurisdiction under which it examines the matters referred to it.

As a note, once the specialized committee has completed its work, the second reading takes place, after additions and deletions have been made and before the bill is submitted for general debate.

Third: Submitting the bill for general debate.

After the competent committee approves the draft law, one of its members presents the bill to all members of the council, outlining the main idea of the project and reporting the conclusions reached by the experts who were consulted regarding its merits. All members have the right to participate and express their opinions, and a specific time is allocated to each member to contribute during the debate session, whether in parliamentary or presidential systems. Members also have the right to propose amendments to the bill before it is put to a vote in the fourth stage, at which point what is known as the third reading of the bill takes place. It is worth noting that the readings may differ from the first to the second and to the third, and that no additions or deletions may be made to the bill, in which case it remains unchanged.

Fourth, submitting the bill to a vote after the third reading: following the third reading, the bill is presented within the council for voting. Members vote either in favor, against, abstain, or may be absent. If, for example, the votes are as follows—two hundred and Twenty in favor, one hundred and seventy against, and ten abstentions—we are faced with a majority voting “yes,” and thus the bill is considered passed. In other words, the passage of a bill requires a majority of fifty percent plus one of the total number of council members, not merely of those present. If attendance is less than half of the

members, the vote is postponed or deferred to another session. If attendance at the subsequent session is still less than fifty percent, the vote proceeds, and the passage of the law is then calculated based on a majority of those present.

In presidential systems, members of the executive branch cannot vote on a bill as a result of the separation of powers; however, in parliamentary systems this is possible due to the fusion of powers.

Fifth : Submitting the bill to the conference committee: If the legislative authority consists of two chambers, both chambers must approve the bill. This is done through the convening of a conference committee, in which members of both chambers meet to vote on the bill. However, if the legislative authority consists of only one chamber, this step is not required.

Question: Why is the bicameral system adopted? For example, in the United States of America, first, there is a chamber in which the states are represented unequally, and second, a chamber in which the states are represented equally.

In Britain, for example, there is, first, the House of Lords, in which the nobility and holders of special interests are represented. Second, there is the House of Commons, which has broader powers than the House of Lords because it is elected.

What is meant by the conference committee?

A conference committee is a committee composed of members of the legislative chambers. It is temporary and is convened to resolve differences between the two chambers' positions. Once it achieves its purpose, it is promptly dissolved.

Conditions required for forming a conference committee:

a) There must be two chambers, Chamber A and Chamber B.

- b) Differences must exist between the two chambers.
- c) Each chamber must have the authority to participate in lawmaking.

Sixth: Submitting the approved bill to the executive authority. Here, it is necessary to distinguish between types of political systems, namely presidential and parliamentary systems. In presidential systems, the bill that has been passed is sent to the Head of State. If he approves it, it becomes law and enters into force after its publication. However, if the Head of State objects, the bill is returned to the legislative body, and the Head of State must state the reasons for the objection. If the legislative authority rejects the Head of State's objections and approves the bill by a majority exceeding two-thirds, it becomes law without the President's approval.

In parliamentary systems, the bill that has been passed is sent to the Head of State for promulgation, and he or she does not have the authority to approve or reject it; the bill automatically becomes law.

Question: Explain the extent to which the following statement is correct, providing justification for your view:

A bill passed by the legislative authority in parliamentary systems automatically becomes law.

Answer: The statement is correct because a bill that has been passed is sent to the Head of State for promulgation, and the Head of State does not have the authority to approve or veto it. Therefore, the bill automatically becomes law. This applies only in parliamentary systems, whereas the situation differs in presidential systems.

Question: What happens if the legislative authority objects to the reasons given by the Head of State in a presidential system?

Answer: We know that the bill is submitted to the Head of State for approval, and the President expresses his opinion either in approval or objection. In the second case, which is objection, the President must provide one or more reasons for the objection. The bill is then returned to the legislative authority. If the legislative authority objects to the reason(s) provided by the President, and the bill is approved by a majority exceeding two-thirds, it becomes law without the President's approval.

Chapter Four: The Environment of the Political System :

The political system is a conceptual construct with no tangible existence; it was introduced into political analysis by the American political scientist David Easton. This concept was originally borrowed from sociology, which in turn drew it from biology, where the living organism is regarded as an integrated whole⁷⁰.

The political system is thus a whole composed of interrelated parts that interact to perform specific functions. This system does not exist in isolation; rather, it operates within a surrounding environment that influences it and is influenced by it. The political system is affected through inputs and, in turn, affects the environment through outputs⁷¹.

Within the framework of inputs, three main elements can be distinguished according to how the system utilizes them ⁷²:

First are resources, whose quantity, management, and effective utilization vary from one system to another. Resources are not limited to what exists within the territory of the state, even though the system has greater control over domestic resources. Resources also include anything at the system's disposal; they may come from the regional or international environment, such as friendly states. Resources also encompass both the quantity and quality of the population, meaning all material and human resources.

Second are demands, which constitute pressures on the political system. These demands vary from one system to another and may also vary within the same system over time. Demands are characterized by their unlimited nature

⁷⁰ Ismail Ali Saad, *Issues of Society and Politics* (Alexandria : Dar Al-Ma'rifa Al-Jami'iyya, n.d.), 74–75.

⁷¹ Paul.G. Lewis and David. C. potter , *Op. Cit*, p.267.

⁷² *Ibid*.p.267.

and are not confined to the domestic environment; they may originate from different levels of the surrounding environment.

Third is support and backing, which depend on the legitimacy of the system at different levels. The system must respond satisfactorily to demands, using the resources it obtains as well as the support and backing it enjoys.

Outputs appear in the form of decisions and policies. The political system responds to demands coming from the surrounding environment at its various levels through decisions and policies, making use of available resources and benefiting from the degree of support and backing at its disposal⁷³.

There is no doubt that just as the political system influences the environment surrounding it, it is also affected by the outcomes of that environment. Several environmental factors influence the political system, including historical legacy, the economic and social reality (level of development), political culture, factors related to the external environment, and, alongside these, the geographical reality, which itself includes several elements such as location and area, resources, topographical features, population distribution, state borders, and climate as follows⁷⁴ :

4.1 – The geographical context:

4.1.1 – Location and Area:

Both geographical location and territorial area affect the political system either positively or negatively⁷⁵. Just as political systems dominate the internal

⁷³Niklas Luhmann, Op.cit.p.64.

⁷⁴ Mohamed Metwally and Mahmoud Abu Al-Ela, Political Geography (Cairo : The Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 1987), pp.57–82.

⁷⁵ Khalil Hussein, Political Geography: A Study of Land and Maritime Regions, States, and the impact of the Global System on Their Transformations, 1st ed. (Beirut : Dar Al-Manhal Al-Lubnani 2009), p. 61.

environment that includes the state's territory and population, the environment also compels the political system to act in certain ways, just as the system influences it in return. In this regard, two schools of thought have examined the effects of geographical location and area on political systems⁷⁶:

A – Geographical Determinism (German School):

This school argues that both location and area exert a deterministic influence on the political system, and that political systems in general are captive to them. Social and economic phenomena within political systems are thus merely reflections of geographical realities and facts.

B – Geographical Possibilism (French School):

This school contends that social and economic phenomena are not solely reflections of location and area but are instead the result of human intellect and effort, which can overcome geographical determinism and thus transcend the difficulties associated with geographical reality, eventually freeing societies from its constraints.

C – Moderate Approach :

The moderate position between the two schools acknowledges the real influence of geographical factors on political systems but denies that this influence is deterministic. Political systems can transform themselves and adapt in order to overcome geographical constraints. This view appears more logical and better aligned with reality. For example, there are cases of geographically landlocked states, Mongolia is a landlocked country situated between two major powers, Russia and China, and it must maintain good relations with both neighbors, or at least with one of them. Likewise, a country such as Singapur,

⁷⁶ Ahmed Youssef Ahmed and Mohamed Zubara, Introduction to International Relations (Cairo : The Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, n.d.), pp. 47–48.

with its limited territorial area, faces constraints imposed by its small size. For example, its air bases are located in Indonesia, and its limited territory does not allow it to conduct large-scale military maneuvers.

There are also doubly landlocked countries, such as Uzbekistan. At times, geographical determinism prevails, leaving little room for action. At other times, however, it is possible to overcome geographical constraints.

4.1.2 – Resources :

Resources are diverse and include agriculture, industry, trade, natural wealth, human resources, and so on. Whether we are referring to material or human resources within the territory of a state, as a general rule, the larger and more geographically extensive the state, the more resources it tends to possess. The United States of America is an example.

Water also represents an important part of national wealth. The more a state possesses national rivers that originate and flow within its territory, the greater a source of strength this constitutes for the state.

It is often said that an abundance of resources is an advantage. Abundance creates a condition of economic prosperity, which in turn leads to progress and political stability. Conversely, scarcity results in economic poverty, which in turn leads to underdevelopment. There is, however, another view which argues that an abundance of resources may lead to a kind of complacency, lack of effort, and reduced creativity.

In general, if resources are not available, a state cannot achieve progress. Nevertheless, every rule has its exceptions. For example, countries such as Japan and Singapore have reached an average annual income of 20,000 US dollars despite their limited natural resources.

We mentioned at the beginning that, as a general rule, the larger and more geographically extensive a state is, the more abundant its resources tend to be. We cited the example of the United States of America. However, this rule has exceptions: size alone does not necessarily guarantee an abundance of resources. The issue is not merely the existence of resources, but rather the scale of their reserves.

We also referred to Egypt as an example. Although Egypt possesses oil, the key question concerns the size of its reserves, which are relatively limited—especially in light of its growing population. In general, the greater the degree of self-sufficiency in resources, the stronger the state becomes, particularly in times of war.

4.1.3 – Topographical features (relief) :

by which we mean the physical shape of the territory in terms of highlands and lowlands. Is the state flat, making it easier to advance into and invade? Or is it surrounded by natural barriers and boundaries that help it defend itself and make invasion difficult?

For example, Afghanistan's rugged terrain constituted a major obstacle to the U.S. army during the war—one that the United States long claimed was a Fair war.

4.1.4 – The state's borders :

Some states possess natural borders—such as mountains, seas, and plateaus—that are difficult to penetrate. Other states, however, have artificial borders. This falls within the framework of historical legacy, as many such borders were drawn along lines of latitude and longitude. Consequently, this may create various problems affecting the political system and national integration, or hinder the achievement of national cohesion.

4.1.5 – Climate :

Climate is also linked to geographical location and to resources. The more diverse the climate, the more varied the agricultural regions become, which in turn leads to a diversity and abundance of resources. Climatic diversity is largely associated with the size of the state. For example, in countries such as the United States, the former Soviet Union, and China, the vast territorial expanse contributes to climatic diversity and, consequently, to resource diversity. However, as we mentioned earlier, the sheer volume of resources is not necessarily correlated with the size of the state in most cases.

4.1.6 – Population distribution :

in terms of concentration and rural–urban dispersion. In Argentina, for example, the proportion of the urban population is high, which contributed to the rise and success of President Perón and his accession to power in 1946. He was later overthrown in a coup in 1955, before returning again in 1972. Urbanization facilitates mobilization and collective action; Perón was able to mobilize the working class effectively. The more concentrated the population, the easier it is for the regime to mobilize them. This contrasts with dispersed rural populations, where mobilization is more difficult.

The hydraulic (or riverine) society theory argues that societies built around major rivers—such as Egypt and China—require the establishment of a strong centralized government. A flowing river necessitates central authority to confront the dangers of flooding. Farmers cannot protect themselves individually from such threats; therefore, they turn to the government for protection, particularly in managing floods and constructing dams.

In short, the political system exists within an environment, one aspect of which is the geographical reality. This includes whether the state is landlocked

or has maritime access, whether its location is strategic and therefore coveted by invaders, and whether it has natural boundaries that enable it to defend itself. Geographical reality also encompasses topographical features, the size and shape of the state—whether it is contiguous, an island, or a country with vast deserts. Additionally, it includes the state's resources and the nature of its borders—whether they are natural or artificial, imposed by colonial powers. Population concentration and its impact on the ability to mobilize either against or in support of the regime is another factor; such mobilization is particularly difficult in hydraulic (river-based) societies. All of these points fall under the first element of the internal environment, namely, the geographical reality.

Assess the validity of the following statement, providing justification: “Geographical reality has no impact on political reality.” This statement is false. In this regard, there are schools of thought. The first is the German school, or the school of geographical determinism, which holds that geographical reality has a decisive impact on the political system, from which it cannot escape. The second is the French school, or the school of geographical possibilism, which argues that political systems are not bound by geographical reality, and that social and economic developments are not mere reflections of geography but are the result of human intellect and effort, which can overcome geographical constraints.

Our position, however, is a middle ground between these two schools. In some cases, determinism is present and cannot be avoided; for example, Mongolia is a landlocked country situated between two major powers. Similarly, Singapore is a country with limited territory, and this territorial constraint imposes limitations on its political system and on the system in general. However, the geographical context is not the only factor influencing the political system; there are other factors as well.

Assess the validity of the following statement, providing justification: “The concepts of the German school in geography are entirely correct.” This statement is false. The German school argues that the political system is bound by geographical reality and cannot escape it, and that geography has a decisive impact on political reality. However, this claim is not entirely accurate. In certain circumstances, determinism is present and cannot be avoided, while in other situations, geographical challenges can be overcome, and the political system is not necessarily constrained by geography. For example, Japan has successfully overcome geographical challenges to a remarkable degree. Similarly, maritime states that focus on building strong navies, such as Britain and Japan, illustrate this adaptability. Moreover, geographical context is not the only factor affecting the political system; other factors, such as technological advancement, have reduced the significance of geographic location.

4.2 – Social and economic circumstances:

the social and economic reality may affect the political system either negatively or positively. The social and economic reality is the lived reality. By social and economic reality, we mean whether the society is primarily agricultural or industrial. Each society has its own values, and all systems are a mixture of both, but in varying proportions depending on the contribution of each activity or sector.

The more agricultural a society is, the more values such as particularism, isolation, and pride in lineage tend to prevail. In contrast, in an urban or industrial society, a person's status is determined not by lineage, but by competence and merit.

In rural societies, non-urban characteristics tend to prevail, such as isolation and particularism, as a result of the population's dispersion in the countryside. This contrasts with urban areas, which are characterized by population concentration. Consequently, interaction and contact generate ideas; therefore, mobilization and rapid influence occur more easily in urban settings and societies. Revolutions and demonstrations typically take place in urban areas.

As for class structure and social mobility, social mobility refers to the possibility of an individual moving from one social class to another. The primary basis for determining the social hierarchy is the economic level. It is worth noting that the stability of society depends largely on the existence and breadth of the middle class. The broader this class is, the greater the degree of stability within the political system, and the less intense the conflict becomes between the upper and lower classes.

In the diagram, we observe that the most stable society is Society "C," due to the breadth of its middle class. The middle class plays a crucial role in

maintaining balance between the upper and lower classes. It is worth noting that each class is itself divided into three strata. For example, the upper class is divided into the upper–upper, middle–upper, and lower–upper strata. The middle class is likewise divided into upper–middle, middle–middle, and lower–middle strata, and so on.

The political system faces various challenges as it attempts to respond to the demands of the social and economic reality and to resolve its problems. The more complex and severe these problems are, the more difficult the system's task becomes. Among the socio–economic challenges confronting the system are: rural–urban divisions; cultural divisions; ethnic, religious, linguistic, and gender divisions; and others. These problems become even more acute when the divisions are overlapping or compounded—for example, when they are both ethnic and religious, as in the case of South Sudan.

Malaysia represents a model of a multi–ethnic society that has nevertheless managed to achieve a degree of balance among its different ethnic groups. Singapore, too, has succeeded in overcoming conflicts arising from demographic heterogeneity. Even in advanced industrial societies, population differentiation and diversity continue to exist.

4.3 – The Historical Legacy :

If the social and economic reality represents the existing situation—one that generates either resources or problems (i.e., demands) for the political system—then a large part of this social and economic reality is itself inherited from the political system. The current political system is influenced by the one that preceded it, just as the previous system was influenced by what came before it. In other words, change in the lifespan of a political system does not occur in a single leap or sudden rupture.

The political system inherits the following:

4.3.1 – Institutions :

Are they strong and well-established institutions, or are they newly formed, fragile, and weak? In other words:

Are there political parties?, Are there active political organizations?, Is there a strong army, or is there a need to build a modern one?, Does the state possess an efficient administrative apparatus, or is it still underdeveloped?, Does the administrative system implement decisions efficiently and effectively?, Is there a long-standing and competent parliament, or does the country need to establish a new one?.

In short, to what extent does the political system benefit from established institutions and from the existence of a strong and organized civil society?

A system that inherits a stable political environment differs significantly from one that inherits an unstable situation.

4.3.2 – Political Values and Ideas :

Political values can be imported; however, imported values are not the same as those that emerge organically from within the system and society itself.

4.3.3 – Aspects Related to the Past :

These cannot be overlooked. For example, the existence of a strong educational system differs greatly from the absence of such a system. A well-established education system strengthens the political system, whereas its absence creates long-term structural weaknesses.

4.3.4 – Border Issues :

A political system may inherit border disputes that generate demands and pressures upon it. A clear example is the boundary problems inherited by many African and Arab states as a result of colonialism, which often drew borders arbitrarily without regard for social realities. This was particularly evident in parts of Africa and the Arab world, where colonial powers imposed artificial boundaries that later became sources of tension and conflict.

4.3.5 – Illiteracy Problems :

The system inherits the level of illiteracy within society—whether high or low. High illiteracy rates may represent an additional burden, while lower rates can serve as a source of support and stability for the system.

4.3.6 – Developmental Imbalance (Unequal Distribution of Development) :

This refers to disparities in development among different regions within the state. For example, in Egypt, development has historically been uneven, with Upper Egypt remaining neglected for long periods. Similarly, in China, western regions long suffered from developmental neglect compared to the more prosperous eastern areas.

In other words, the political system inherits either balanced or unbalanced development. Less developed regions often become persistent hotspots of instability.

4.3.7 – National Integration :

The system also inherits issues related to national cohesion, such as ethnic, religious, and linguistic divisions. The greater the degree of fragmentation and lack of integration, the more pressure the political system faces in maintaining unity and stability.

4.4 – Prevailing Political Culture :

Explain the validity of the following statements, giving reasons:

1 – Political culture varies from one society to another.

The statement is correct, because political culture is the result of political socialization, and socialization itself differs from one society to another. Therefore, political culture is acquired rather than innate.

2 – The political culture of any society is characterized by absolute stability.

The statement is incorrect. Political culture changes gradually over time, and this change becomes more noticeable as the time period becomes longer.

3 – The political culture of individuals within the same society is identical.

The statement is incorrect. There is always a margin of difference among individuals due to factors such as age differences, level of education, and life experiences.

4 – The process of political recruitment is influenced by the prevailing political culture in society.

The statement is correct. For example, political recruitment or holding public office may be restricted to a particular social class, limited to the elderly, or there may be a preference for males over females.

5 – Political stability partly depends on political culture.

This is because political culture is formed through socialization, and socialization influences attitudes. Attitudes determine orientations, and orientations in turn guide behavior. Some cultures tend toward violence, while others promote peaceful behavior within society.

6 – The official and unofficial political culture in the same society are identical.

This statement is incorrect. It is not necessarily the case that the official and unofficial political cultures are identical.

The official political culture refers to the ideology adopted by the ruling elite, which may aim either to change the existing situation or to maintain it.

In contrast, the unofficial political culture refers to the values, beliefs, perceptions, and ideas that prevail among individuals or the general public.

Therefore, the official culture may coincide with the unofficial culture, or it may differ from it.

Political culture is a system of values, beliefs, attitudes, and orientations that members of a society believe in. It is acquired through political socialization rather than being innate. Political culture is therefore the result of political socialization, which refers to the process through which ideas and values are transmitted from one generation to another.

This process is carried out by several institutions such as the family, school, mosques, and other social institutions.

The core of political culture consists of values and beliefs, which are themselves the product of history and social experience. Although political culture is changeable, its change is usually slight and hardly noticeable in the short term, and it evolves slowly over time.

Political culture may be ideological, and the official political culture—the one promoted by the state or the ruling elite—may or may not coincide with the unofficial political culture that exists among the general public in society.

Political culture also influences political recruitment. For example, political positions may be restricted to a particular social class or ethnic group, or there

may be a preference for the elderly over the young, or for males over females in occupying political offices.

In short The environment of the political system influences it, and this environment includes four main elements:

Geographical reality

Historical heritage

Socio-economic reality

Prevailing political culture

All of these factors—together with the factors related to the regional environment and those related to the international or supranational environment—work collectively to influence the political system.

Thus, none of these factors operates independently; rather, they interact with one another to shape and affect the functioning of the political system.

Chapter Five: Evolution of Comparative Politics :

5.1 – The Behavioral Revolution :

The field of comparative politics witnessed profound transformations starting from the mid-1940s. From this historical point, it becomes necessary to distinguish between the traditional school and the behavioral school. The end of the Second World War constituted a decisive turning point between the two approaches, particularly during the decade extending from the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s.

The main reason for the shift from the traditional school to the behavioral school was the dissatisfaction of scholars working in comparative politics. These scholars developed a strong desire to reform and develop the field. The differences between the two schools can be summarized as follows⁷⁷:

1 – The traditional school dominated before the Second World War and emphasized description more than analysis, whereas the behavioral school, which emerged after the war, emphasized analysis rather than description.

2 – The traditional school focused mainly on the formal aspects of the political system, such as legal structures, constitutional texts, and official institutions. Consequently, it concentrated on the formal side of government and neglected the informal aspects, such as political parties and interest groups.

In contrast, the behavioral school paid attention to both the formal and informal aspects of the political system. Thus, while the traditional school focused on comparative governments, the behavioral school focused on comparative political systems.

⁷⁷ Gerardo L. Munck, *The Past and Present of Comparative Politics*, Working Paper no. 330, (Notre Dame : The Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, October 2006), pp. 9–11.

3 – The traditional school had a limited scope of study, as the study of comparative governments was restricted to six or seven political units (the United States, France, Britain, the Soviet Union, Italy, Germany, and Mexico).

By contrast, the behavioral school witnessed a significant expansion in the scope of study due to the increase in the number of units under examination. The greater the number of units included in comparison, the more accurate the theoretical construction becomes, since broader comparison reflects reality more effectively.

In other words, The number of countries has increased significantly since 1945, growing from just over 50 members in the United Nations to more than 190 by 2003. Initially, most new states emerged through decolonization, but later the main cause became the breakup of existing states. After the end of the Cold War, new countries formed from the collapse of federal entities such as the USSR and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as well as from divisions in parts of Africa and the Middle East⁷⁸.

4 – The traditional school focused mainly on constants rather than variables, paying attention to long-established institutions and ignoring new and changing phenomena.

The behavioral school, however, examined both constants and variables. Since it is concerned with behavior—which is inherently variable—it naturally emphasized change. This focus also resulted from the emergence of newly independent states, many of which lacked long-standing institutions such as constitutional courts or parliaments. These states had to establish such institutions, making the study of change essential within the behavioral approach.

⁷⁸ Jeff Haynes, "Tracing Connections between Comparative Politics and Globalisation," *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 6 (2003), p. 1030.

5 – The traditional school did not focus on theoretical construction, whereas the behavioral school devoted considerable effort to building empirical middle-range theories with explanatory and predictive capacity.

6 – The traditional school suffered from methodological limitations. Although some methods existed within it, they were not sufficiently developed to solve complex problems faced by researchers in comparative politics.

In contrast, the behavioral school demonstrated significant methodological sensitivity. Since it moved beyond description toward analysis and emphasized the construction of empirical middle-range theories, it sought to answer questions beginning with “why?” and “how?”, unlike the traditional school which was largely limited to descriptive questions beginning with “what?”. Consequently, the behavioral school developed various methodological tools and approaches that played a major role in producing the behavioral revolution in comparative politics⁷⁹.

Table (03): Comparison between the Traditional School and the Behavioral School :

Traditional School	Behavioral School
Dominated before World War II and emphasized description over analysis.	Emerged after World War II and emphasized analysis over description.
Focused on formal aspects of the political system and neglected informal ones (comparative governments).	Focused on both formal and informal aspects of the political system (comparative political systems).

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 10–11.

Had a limited scope of study.	Witnessed a major expansion in the number of units studied.
Focused on constants rather than variables.	Studied both constants and variables.
Did not emphasize theoretical construction.	Sought to build empirical middle-range theories with explanatory and predictive capacity.
Characterized by methodological shortcomings.	Characterized by strong methodological sensitivity.

Source : Jaber Al-Sayed Saeed Awad, op.cit. p.12.

5.2 – Post-Behavioral School:

The post-behavioral school emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as an expression of dissatisfaction among scholars with the approaches of the developmental perspective. It represented a scientific reaction to what had been produced by the behavioral school in the field of comparative politics. The main points distinguishing this school from its predecessor are as follows⁸⁰:

1 – While the behavioral school dominated the field of comparative politics from the end of World War II until the 1960s, the post-behavioral school dominated the academic direction of the field in the period after the 1960s and 1970s.

2 – Whereas the behavioral school focused more on techniques than on substance, and on abstract theorizing rather than real political issues, the post-

⁸⁰ Nasr Mohammed Arif, op. cit., pp. 297–298.

behavioral school paid great attention to values and the substantive realities of political life.

3 – The behavioral school tended to accept ready-made Western modernization solutions, regardless of whether they were suitable for addressing the problems faced by developing countries. In contrast, the post-behavioral school moved beyond Western frameworks and emphasized the experiences and cultures of other societies.

4 – The failure of the behavioral school to construct empirical middle-range theories with sufficient explanatory and predictive power led to what was called the “revolution of rising frustrations.” This failure was largely attributed to the inability to identify independent variables clearly. Without such variables, theories cannot be properly developed, and only methods may be produced.

5 – The post-behavioral school attempted to overcome this limitation by focusing on several independent variables, such as international market influences, the global economy, political-economic forces, and international dependency. From an ontological perspective, these variables enable researchers to build theories that correspond to the nature, structures, and cultures of developing societies, despite their differences.

6 – While behaviorists tended to neglect values and focus on causality and quantitative methods in pursuit of scientific neutrality, post-behavioral scholars emphasized interpretation and qualitative approaches, giving greater attention to explanation rather than mere analytical description. As a result, the idea of strict scientific neutrality becomes less central, while values and the interdependence of variables are acknowledged as integral to political analysis.

7 – The behavioral school focused mainly on the inputs of the political system and did not give equal attention to outputs. The post-behavioral school

criticized this imbalance and therefore emphasized the study of outputs in order to understand what political systems seek to achieve through their decisions and policies.

Table (04): Comparison between the Behavioral School and the Post-Behavioral School

Behavioral School	Post-Behavioral School
Dominated comparative politics from the end of World War II until the 1960s.	Dominated the field from the late 1960s and 1970s onward.
Focused more on techniques than on substance and relied on abstract theorizing.	Emphasized values and the real substance of political life.
Accepted ready-made Western modernization solutions.	Moved beyond Western frameworks and emphasized other societies' experiences and cultures.
Failed to clearly identify independent variables and thus could not build strong theories.	Focused on identifying independent variables to construct theories in comparative politics.
Neglected values and emphasized causality and quantitative methods to achieve scientific neutrality.	Emphasized interpretation and qualitative methods and recognized the role of values and interconnected variables.
Focused mainly on the inputs of the political system.	Focused on outputs to understand the objectives pursued by political systems.

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the literature.

5.3 – The Second Scientific Revolution (1989–Present) :

The second scientific revolution in comparative politics began around 1989, driven largely by the APSA section on Comparative Politics. Its main goal was to make the field more scientific and to overcome fragmentation caused by area studies. This shift emphasized quantitative methods, statistical analysis, rational choice theory, and formal modeling.

This new agenda had three main components:

Rational choice theory

Formal theory

Quantitative methods

After 1989, rational choice approaches became more formalized and were applied to topics such as democratization, voting, civil wars, and economic policy. At the same time, quantitative research expanded significantly, supported by new datasets, cross-national statistics, and large-scale surveys like election studies and global value surveys.

Despite these advances, this revolution did not transform the field as deeply as the behavioral revolution of the 1950s–60s. One reason was resistance from movements like Perestroika, and another was the continued presence of multiple competing approaches. As a result, the field became pluralistic rather than dominated by a single paradigm.

A major debate centered on rational choice theory. While it helped sharpen theoretical discussions, it also created divisions. Over time, both rational choice and historical institutionalism converged on the importance of institutions,

though neither fully resolved key issues—such as how institutions change (endogeneity) or how to link static and dynamic analysis.

In terms of methodology, the period saw:

Growth in quantitative methods

A revival of qualitative research, led by scholars like David Collier

Efforts to bridge methods, combining statistics, case studies, and formal models

In substantive research, there was continuity rather than a major shift in topics.

However, economics became more influential, leading to productive exchanges between economists and comparativists.

Overall, the period since 1989 is best described as one of:

Methodological diversity

Theoretical pluralism

Increased rigor and cross-disciplinary interaction.

Finally, although debates over theory and methods intensified, many scholars shared common values—especially a commitment to democracy—which helped maintain cohesion in the field. While comparative politics may have lost some value-driven engagement, it gained a rich, rigorous, and diverse body of research⁸¹.

⁸¹ Gerardo L. Munck, *Op.cit.*, pp.16 – 21.

Chapter Six: Theoretical Approaches in Comparative Politics

6.1 – Structural–Functional Approach:

Most studies of political systems revolve around structural–functional analysis, which is closely associated with the name Gabriel Almond⁸². Structural–functional analysis was first presented by Gabriel Almond and James Coleman in 1958. Almond later reformulated it several times, sometimes with Bingham Powell and sometimes on his own. However, Almond maintained a consistent guiding principle from the beginning: a political system can be studied through the functions it performs⁸³.

The idea of structural functionalism is based on the notion that the system represents a behavioral model performing a single appropriate function. The existence of this function does not prevent the existence of multiple structures that perform it; in other words, the system consists of a set of structures that compose it⁸⁴.

Structural–functional analysis is actually a development of an idea that originally emerged in physiology, then moved to sociology, and later to political science. The origins of structural functionalism can be traced to some theorists in anthropology and sociology. Among anthropologists, we may mention Bronislaw Malinowski (1954) and A. R. Radcliffe–Brown (1957). Among sociologists are Talcott Parsons, Edward Shils (1951), Robert Merton (1957), and Marion Levy (1952)⁸⁵.

The central idea of structural functionalism is derived—as mentioned—from biology. The human body contains several organs, each performing a specific function that ensures harmony, enabling the body to carry out its overall

⁸² James Dougherty, Robert Pfaltzgraff, op. cit., p. 111.

⁸³ Mohamed Shalabi, op.cit., p. 174

⁸⁴ James Dougherty and Robert Pfaltzgraff, op. cit, p. 111.

⁸⁵ Paul.G. Lewis and David. C. potter, Op. Cit, p. 26.

functions. Any dysfunction in one organ leads to dysfunction in the entire body. This idea was later transferred to the social sciences, including political science, where structural–functional analysis became closely linked with Gabriel Almond⁸⁶.

According to Almond, the political system is “the system of interactions found in all independent societies that performs the function of integration and adaptation internally and externally through the use or threat of the use of legitimate coercion, although the legitimacy of this coercion varies in degree⁸⁷.”

On this basis, the political system consists of a number of structures and institutions, each performing a set of functions. If these structures perform their functions, they are considered functional; if they fail to do so, they are dysfunctional. For example, the legislative authority is responsible for legislation and oversight of government activities. If such an authority exists but does not perform its role, it becomes dysfunctional. However, if it exists and fulfills its function, it is functional.

It is worth noting that Almond later developed his framework by introducing some modifications to certain propositions, while keeping the core idea intact: a number of structures perform a number of functions. The key criterion is not merely the existence of structures, but whether they actually perform their functions properly. Furthermore, a single function may be carried out by several structures.

Almond divided political functions into formal and informal functions as follows :

⁸⁶ Abdel Nasser Jandali, Op. Cit, p. 222.

⁸⁷ James Dougherty and Robert Pfaltzgraff, Op. Cit, p. 109.

6.1.1 – Formal Functions :

Each formal function corresponds to specific structures⁸⁸:

A – Legislative Function: Making legal rules — performed by parliaments.

B – Executive Function: Implementing laws — performed by the government.

C – Judicial Function: Adjudicating according to legal rules — performed by courts.

6.1.2 – Informal Functions⁸⁹ :

A – Interest Articulation: This function is carried out by pressure groups and interest groups, which formulate opinions on certain issues. Ideally, this process should occur through legitimate channels; however, reality sometimes shows the opposite, as interest groups may use illegitimate means, sometimes even violence, which may destabilize the political system.

B – Interest Aggregation: This refers to expressing interests in the form of policy alternatives or proposals presented to decision-makers. This process enhances the responsiveness of the political system. Political parties are among the main structures performing this function.

C – Political Socialization and Recruitment: This refers to the transmission of political values and orientations from one generation to another. Several institutions perform this role, including the family, schools, and religious institutions.

D – Political Communication: Through this process, information and proposals are transmitted either from citizens to the political system or from the system to citizens. This function is carried out by media organizations and

⁸⁸ Mohamed Zahi Bashir Al-Mughirbi, Op.Cit, p. 160.

⁸⁹ Jaber Said Awad, Op.Cit, pp. 51–52.

interest groups, facilitating the political system's performance of its various functions.

Therefore, the effectiveness of a state's policy depends on the extent to which these structures perform their functions. If these structures exist but fail to perform their roles, the policy will be ineffective. Conversely, if they exist and perform their functions effectively, the state will have an effective policy. Thus, two conditions must be met⁹⁰:

The existence of structures (even if they are latent patterns preserved within the system).

Effective functional performance.

6.1.3 – The Concept of Political Development :

according to Gabriel Almond, the criterion for judging the progress or backwardness of a political system lies in the effectiveness of its structures and the extent to which they perform their functions. Any dysfunction in the performance of one of the structures composing the system leads to dysfunction in the system as a whole⁹¹ .

In conclusion, structural–functional analysis provides an important comparative advantage, as it enables researchers to conduct comparative analyses in fields such as comparative foreign policy. It is also characterized by an empirical orientation, as it helps scholars develop a classificatory model for studying political phenomena. Structural–functional analysis assists researchers in linking the functions of structures within political systems to the goals those systems seek to achieve, while also considering key variables that

⁹⁰ Munsif Al-Salimi, *The American Political Decision*, 1st ed. (Paris: Arab-European Studies Center 1997), p. 117.

⁹¹ Mohamed Shalabi, *Op.cit.* p. 173.

help maintain internal balance and enable the system to adapt to environmental changes⁹².

⁹² James Dougherty and Robert Pfaltzgraff, *Op. Cit*, p.112.

6.2 – The Communication Approach:

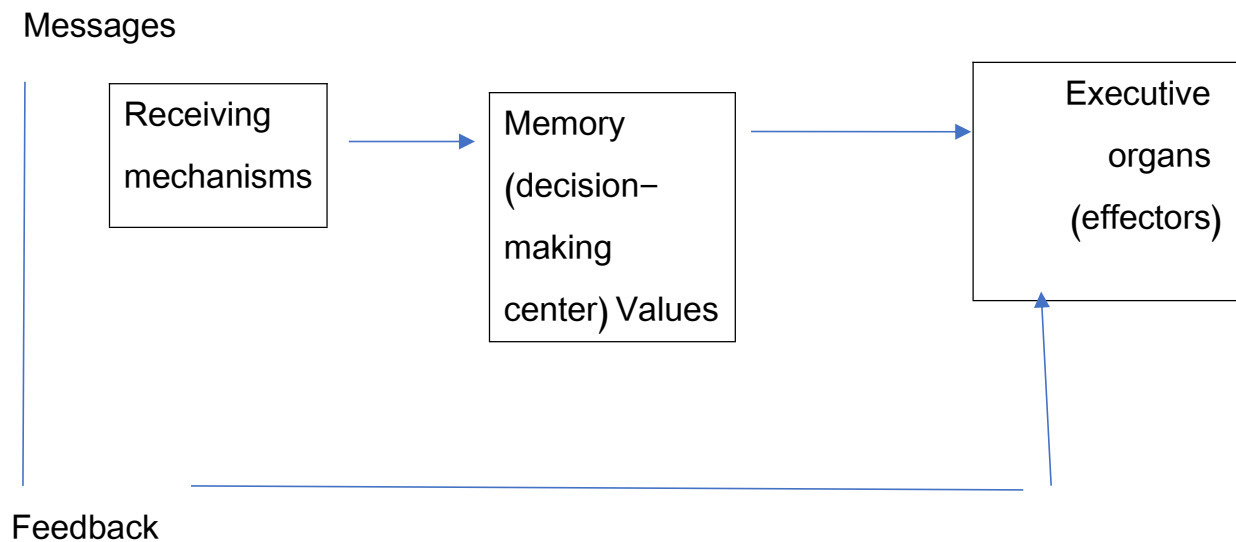
The American political scientist Karl Deutsch is considered the first to use this approach in political science, particularly through his well-known works such as *The Nerves of Government and Politics* and *Government: How People Decide Their Fate*⁹³. The communication model is regarded as part of general systems theory. Although Karl Deutsch employed concepts different from those used by David Easton, he did not depart from the essence of systems analysis developed by David Easton, especially its core concepts such as inputs, outputs, the transformation process, and feedback.

The central idea of the communication approach is that the political system continuously receives a vast amount of messages; therefore, it must read, analyze, and respond to them. This occurs through receiving mechanisms that process these information-laden messages and transmit them to decision-making centers—what Karl Deutsch calls the “memory.” This “memory” then conveys the decisions reached—after a process of choosing among various alternatives—to the executive organs (effectors). These decisions may generate various reactions, which are received again by the reception mechanisms and transmitted back to the memory (decision-making centers). This constitutes feedback in Karl Deutsch’s model⁹⁴.

⁹³ Dr. Mohamed Shelbi, op. cit., p. 149.

⁹⁴ Nasr Mohammed Aref, *Epistemology of Comparative Politics (Cognitive Model – Theory – Method)*, op. cit., p. 267.

Figure (1) : A schematic representation of the communication process in the political system according to Karl Deutsch includes:



(originating from the internal and external environment)

Source : Dr. Mohamed Shelbi, op. cit., p. 149.

Karl Deutsch views the political system as an information system, where information represents a patterned relationship between events, and communication is the transmission of these patterns. Thus, the communication process involves both the information itself and the channels through which it flows. Accordingly, Karl Deutsch considers information to be the essence of the political process and the fundamental unit for analyzing political systems.

He also emphasizes the importance of clearly defining the content of messages in any communication process. The clearer and more precise the content, the stronger and more effective the message becomes in influencing the receiving entity. In such cases, feedback tends to be positive (indicating

satisfaction and encouraging the political system to continue its behavior to achieve its goals).

Conversely, when messages are vague and poorly defined, they are more susceptible to distortion, leading to a loss of informational value due to misunderstanding or misinterpretation. This results in corrupted messages and consequently negative feedback⁹⁵.

In addition to the contributions of David Easton and Gabriel Almond, Karl Deutsch introduced new concepts that enriched political and international relations theory. While David Easton focused on inputs and outputs, and Gabriel Almond emphasized structure and function (formal and informal), as well as efficiency and effectiveness, Karl Deutsch added several key analytical concepts, including:

Reception system, Memory (information storage related to internal and international conditions), Value system (for selecting among alternatives), Execution system, Load (the volume of information and messages entering the system from the environment), Load capacity, Recall, Delay, Gain, Positive and negative feedback, Learning capacity, Self-transformation, Initiative (or lead)⁹⁶.

6.2.1 – Functions Related to the Volume of Incoming Information :

Karl Deutsch argues that understanding the signals of the external environment requires the ability to comprehend and process the flow of information coming from the external environment. A political system can only

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 150.

⁹⁶ James C. Charlesworth, Op. Cit. p. 283 – 284.

achieve this through performing a set of functions related to the communication process, which can be summarized in the following points⁹⁷:

a. Load Capacity: Before addressing load capacity, it is important to clarify the concept of load. According to Karl Deutsch, load refers to the vast amount of information or messages flowing from the environment into the political system. The system's ability to handle this incoming information—across different levels of the international environment and its changes—determines the pressure placed upon it.

As these pressures increase, the burden becomes heavier, making it more difficult for the political system to adapt and respond effectively. Thus, load capacity refers to the system's ability to receive, process, and respond to this large volume of information. This depends on the availability of communication channels within the system and its ability to deal with message distortions or deficiencies affecting incoming information.

b. Recall Function: This function relates to how the political system responds to incoming information from the external environment by relying on its memory—in other words, by drawing upon past experience in analyzing and interpreting new information.

6.2.2 – Output Functions :

a. Lag : Lag refers to the time period the political system takes after receiving information (i.e., the load) to respond. The shorter this response time, the more efficient and effective the system is. Conversely, longer delays indicate weaker adaptability and lower efficiency in dealing with the international environment.

⁹⁷ Mohamed Shalaby, op. cit., p. 152.

b. Gain: Gain represents the political system's ability to achieve positive outcomes through its interaction with environmental inputs. It reflects how effectively the system responds to incoming information by producing outputs (decisions and actions). The more effectively the system adapts to environmental changes, the greater the gain achieved.

6.2.3 – Feedback :

According to Karl Deutsch, feedback refers to the reaction of the environment—particularly the international environment—to the outputs of the political system. It represents a new flow of information (or new load) and serves simultaneously as a measure of the system's gain.

Feedback allows for evaluating the effectiveness of the system by assessing errors, reducing them, and determining whether the desired goals have been achieved⁹⁸. Karl Deutsch classifies feedback into three types:

a. Positive Feedback: Indicates that the political system's actions are satisfactory to external actors. It signals success and encourages the system to continue the same behavior to achieve its objectives.

b. Negative Feedback: Represents signals from the international environment indicating dissatisfaction with the system's previous decisions. It prompts decision-makers to modify their behavior to improve outcomes and achieve desired goals.

c. Goal-Changing Feedback: In this case, decision-makers may realize either that the original goal has been achieved—leading them to set a new

⁹⁸ James c. charlesworth, Op.cit. p.281

one—or that the original goal is unattainable, prompting them to shift toward a different objective.

6.2.4 – Adaptation Function :

a. Learning Capacity: This function enables the political system to acquire knowledge about the international environment and its changes through prior interactions. It relies on stored information and past experience, especially when new situations resemble previous ones.

Decision-makers use this accumulated knowledge to make informed decisions. When external inputs are manageable and not excessively disruptive, the system stores them in its memory to build future response strategies⁹⁹. However, when inputs are overwhelming, they may threaten the system's stability or even lead to its collapse. In such cases, the system must anticipate and act proactively by generating outputs before being overwhelmed, engaging in self-transformation.

b. Self-Transformation: This refers to the political system's ability to restructure and renew its internal organization to maintain social cohesion and political stability.

c. Leadership (Lead): Through this function, the political system can anticipate changes in the international environment and respond proactively. This helps reduce load pressure, maximize gain¹⁰⁰, and ensure the system's survival and continuity, particularly when facing large and complex external inputs.

6.2.5 – The Concept of Political Development :

⁹⁹ Ibid. p p.281- 282.

¹⁰⁰ Mohamed Shalaby, op. cit., pp. 153–154.

According to Karl Deutsch, the criterion for judging the extent of a political system's progress or backwardness lies in its ability to perform the aforementioned functions effectively and successfully. This can only be achieved if it possesses strong institutions and communication channels capable of understanding the signals coming from the system's environment at all levels.

6.3 – The Group Approach:

6.3.1 The Central Idea

The Group Approach emerged as a reaction against traditional studies that focused mainly on the formal and legal aspects of the political system. Within the framework of the modern school, this approach shifted attention toward the informal aspects of the political system, while still acknowledging the importance of formal structures¹⁰¹.

Supporters of the group approach argue that the political system is essentially the outcome of interactions among social groups¹⁰². In their view, the political system itself does not possess an independent existence; rather, it is a reflection of the dominant group within society. In other words, the political system is considered a dependent variable, while the dominant social group represents the independent variable¹⁰³.

Therefore, to understand the political system, one must analyze the groups that compose society, since the political system is essentially a large network of interacting groups. These groups vary in size and influence, and they engage in continuous interactions that often take the form of pressures and counter–pressures. As a result of these interactions, a dominant group emerges in society, shaping the direction of the political system.

6.3.2 – Definition of a Group :

¹⁰¹ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 89.

¹⁰² Jean Meynaud, *Introduction to Political Science*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin 1961), p. 128.

¹⁰³ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., pp. 82–83.

Arthur Bentley defined a group as: « A particular segment of society that does not separate itself from the broader public but represents a collection of people intending to act toward a specific activity. »

David Truman defined a group as: « A collection of individuals who share certain common characteristics. »

He also defined an interest group as: « A group that shares one or more common attitudes and advances certain claims or demands within society. »

From these definitions, a political group can be understood as a collection of individuals who come together to achieve specific political objectives¹⁰⁴.

Since groups consist of individuals interacting to achieve common goals, proponents of this approach focus primarily on groups rather than individuals. They consider the group to be the basic unit of analysis, arguing that individuals influence political processes only when they act collectively within a group¹⁰⁵.

6.3.3 – Analytical Origins of the Group Approach

Before the early twentieth century, there was no systematic theoretical analysis of groups in political studies. Although interest groups had been studied, they lacked a well-developed conceptual framework.

The first scholar to systematically introduce group analysis in political science was Arthur Bentley, in his book *The Governmental Process* (1908). Bentley presented a sophisticated theoretical analysis of group interactions in political systems¹⁰⁶. However, his work was initially ahead of its time and received little attention.

¹⁰⁴ Nasr Mohammed Aref, op. cit., p. 239.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. p.238.

¹⁰⁶ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 81.

Beginning in the 1930s, the concept of groups gained wider recognition in political studies, particularly among scholars of the behavioral school in the United States¹⁰⁷. Later contributions were made by several scholars, including:

Gabriel Almond /Earl Latham /Charles Hagen, The approach gained further momentum through the work of: Mancur Olson /Joseph LaPalombara / Myron Weiner¹⁰⁸.

6.3.4 – Questions and Assumptions :

Advocates of the group approach raised several important questions, including¹⁰⁹:

What types of groups exist in advanced societies?

Why do groups form?

How do individuals organize themselves into groups?

How is membership within groups determined?

What factors shape the role and influence of groups in society?

What is the relationship between these groups and the political system?

What explains continuity and change among formal and informal groups?

How do interactions between different types of groups influence political systems?

To address these questions, scholars proposed a fourfold classification of interest groups.

6.3.5 – Classification of Interest Groups :

¹⁰⁷ Jean Meynaud, *Op. Cit.* p. 128- 129.

¹⁰⁸ Jaber Saeed Awad, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 89.

Gabriel Almond, Bingham Powell Jr., and James Coleman classified groups based on three main criteria¹¹⁰:

- Degree of organization
- Primary area of interest
- Method of expressing demands

Based on these criteria, they identified four types of interest groups ¹¹¹:

A. Associational Interest Groups :

These groups are created specifically to represent and promote the interests of their members and communicate those interests to decision-makers. They are well organized and usually employ peaceful methods to express their demands.

Examples include: Professional unions /Student movements /Chambers of commerce /Business associations

B. Institutional Interest Groups :

These groups exist within government institutions and are not primarily formed to represent the interests of their members. Instead, they perform public functions within society. However, some may also pursue their own institutional interests.

Examples include: Government bureaucracies /Administrative institutions /Public financial institutions /The military, Such groups are typically highly organized and often cooperate through networks to influence policy decisions.

C. Non-Associational Interest Groups :

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 84.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 84–85.

These groups consist of individuals who share certain characteristics such as ethnic, religious, linguistic, or regional identities. They are generally poorly organized and may use coercive or forceful methods to express their demands.

An example is the Kurdish groups in southeastern Turkey.

D. Anomic Interest Groups :

These groups emerge spontaneously in response to sudden crises or specific problems. They are the least organized and their activities can sometimes threaten political stability.

Examples include: Riots /Spontaneous protest movements /Football hooligan groups in Britain /Spontaneous protest movements in East Berlin and Hungary in the 1950s¹¹².

6.3.6 – Political Development in the Group Approach :

This classification provides significant comparative value in political analysis. According to this approach, political development occurs when societies move from dominance of anomic and non-associational groups toward dominance of associational and institutional groups.

In other words:

The greater the proportion of associational and institutional groups, the higher the level of political development.

The greater the dominance of anomic and non-associational groups, the lower the level of development.

¹¹² Gabriel A. Almond, G. Bingham Powell Jr., and Robert J. Mundt, *Comparative Politics: A theoretical Framework* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), pp. 60–75.

Thus, developed societies are typically characterized by strong associational and institutional groups, while many developing societies—especially in parts of the Arab world—are dominated by less organized groups.

6.3.7 – Ibn Khaldun’s Concept of “Asabiyyah” :

The idea of group solidarity resembles the concept of ‘Asabiyyah developed by Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun. He used this concept to describe group cohesion based on kinship and loyalty.

According to Ibn Khaldun, two key elements form Asabiyyah¹¹³:

- Kinship (blood relations) – a psychological and familial bond connecting members.
- Loyal companionship – the presence of individuals who support and defend each other when necessary.

Thus, Asabiyyah represents a form of group solidarity among relatives who stand together in mutual support.

6.3.8 – Evaluation of the Group Approach :

The group approach contributed significantly to political analysis by:

- Raising important analytical questions
- Clarifying key concepts
- Introducing central elements of political life such as power, interests, cooperation, and conflict

¹¹³ Mohamed Abed Al-Jabri, *Asabiyya and the State: Features of a Khaldunian Theory in Islamic History*, 6th ed. (Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1994), pp. 167–168.

- It also helped explain the dynamics of political decision-making, moving beyond purely formal institutional analysis.

However, this approach has some limitations¹¹⁴:

- Difficulty in gathering empirical data, particularly regarding non-associational groups.
- An overemphasis on associational and institutional groups, which are easier to study because they operate through formal channels.
- In reality, many societies—especially developing ones—are heavily influenced by informal and non-associational groups, which cannot be ignored.

Empirical experience has also shown that non-associational groups can sometimes evolve into highly organized interest groups, even in advanced societies¹¹⁵. For example, the Chinese lobby in the United States, despite its relatively small membership, has successfully influenced U.S. foreign policy decisions¹¹⁶.

Conclusion

The major weakness of the group approach lies in its overemphasis on formal and organized groups while neglecting informal groups. Because its theoretical foundations are largely derived from Western political experiences, the approach is often more suitable for analyzing advanced Western societies than developing societies.

¹¹⁴ Jaber Saeed Awad, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 91–92.

¹¹⁶ Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Mahmoud Khairy Issa, *Introduction to Political Science*, 10th ed. (Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 1998), p. 320.

Ignoring informal groups leads to the loss of crucial information needed to understand the political realities of developing countries, where such groups often play a significant role in shaping political processes.

6.4 – The Political Culture Approach:

6.4.1 – The Central Idea of the Political Culture Approach

The essence of this approach is based on the assumption that there is a correlational relationship between political culture and political reality. Supporters of this approach argue that political behavior is, first and foremost, a product of political culture. Therefore, if we want to understand a political system, we must first understand its political culture¹¹⁷, which is considered the independent variable, while political behavior represents the dependent variable.

6.4.2 – Questions and Assumptions of the Political Culture Approach :

A. Questions:

What is the nature of the relationship between political culture and political behavior?

How can the dynamics of the individual, as a citizen, be interpreted—whether toward the political system or toward oneself (i.e., the extent of their participation in political life or lack thereof)?

¹¹⁷ Jaber Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 65.

What is the nature of the classificatory framework that accommodates the process of interaction between different patterns of political culture?

Is it possible—at the ontological level—to demonstrate the existential essence of civic culture by determining the level of intersection among various societal political culture samples?

What is the nature of the relationship between civic culture, as an outcome of the interaction among different patterns of political culture, and political security and stability?

B. Hypotheses:

The relationship between political culture and political behavior is inherently circular rather than linear, since the political system is influenced by political culture and, in turn, shapes it through mechanisms of political socialization.

The dynamics of the citizen can be explained through a set of factors influencing their political orientations and attitudes, such as economic, political, and social experiences within society. This relationship is dialectical, based on dynamic interaction leading from one condition to another new and different one.

The nature of interaction among different patterns of political culture falls within classifications structured according to relationships of support and coexistence, rather than an either/or relationship.

Civic culture is the outcome of interaction among three ideal types of political cultures (parochial, subject, and participant), according to relative proportions or statistical recurrence. The greater the level of participation in a given society relative to subjection and parochialism, the more likely it is to achieve the desired mix—namely, civic culture.

Whenever civic culture is present, the citizen becomes more interested in political participation and less involved in security matters, as the latter fall within the domain of experts and specialists in the security field.

Addressing these questions and verifying the hypotheses requires a selective process that relies on employing certain information while excluding others according to the needs of the research. This is achieved by formulating a set of sub-questions based on a transitional process between the elements of the study, moving back and forth, provided that these questions serve the objective of the research. Examples include: What is the nature of interaction among individuals or citizens within the same society? To what extent do individuals adapt to the normative structure of the society to which they belong? On what basis do individuals acquire most of the values, symbols, and orientations of public political life prevailing in their countries, and consequently, how are different political attitudes formed among citizens? On what basis is the individual's relationship with the political system determined? What are the factors influencing political culture, and consequently, what factors affect its stability or change? What are the analytical elements governing the formulation of different patterns of political cultures? What is the most appropriate and justifiable classification reflecting the reality of societies and states within which various patterns of political cultures can be situated? How can political development be achieved based on the interaction of these different patterns? What is the criterion for distinguishing between societies as a comparative value? And finally, what is the best ideal developmental model that reflects the extent of the presence of civic culture across the world?

6.4.3 – Linking Concepts or Variables :

A. Linking Political Culture and Political Behavior (the Political System):

Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba argued that there is a correlational relationship between political culture and political reality. In their view, political behavior is essentially a product of political culture. Therefore, to understand a political system, one must first understand its political culture as the independent variable. In other words, if a researcher seeks to understand a political reality or a given political system, they must analyze the prevailing political culture within that system as an independent variable¹¹⁸, while political behavior represents the dependent variable. Any change in political culture necessarily leads to a change in political behavior.

Figure (2): Illustrates how political culture influences political behavior:

(Political Culture) → (Political Behavior)

Independent Variable → Dependent Variable

Source : Dr. Jaber Al-Sayyid Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 65.

B. Linking Political Culture and Political Socialization:

The relationship between political culture and political socialization is an organic one, to the extent that the former is considered a product of the latter. Gabriel Almond defined political socialization as “the process through which political culture is stabilized, resulting in a set of attitudes, knowledge, values, levels, and feelings toward the political system and its various roles.¹¹⁹” It is

¹¹⁸ Jaber Al-Sayyid Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 65.

¹¹⁹ Ibrahim Abrash, Political Sociology, 1st ed. (Amman: Dar Al-Shorouk for Publishing and Distribution 1998), pp. 203–204.

also the process through which individuals acquire political values, norms, and attitudes¹²⁰.

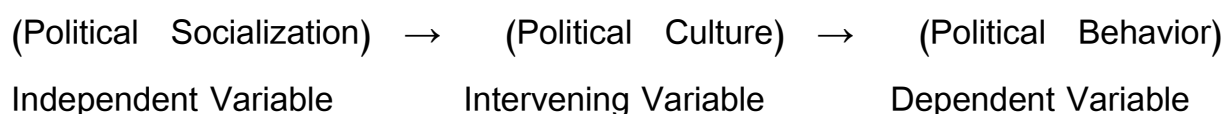
Political socialization varies from one society to another; consequently, since political culture is its outcome, political cultures also differ across societies. This explains, for instance, why women can occupy high political positions in some societies but not in others¹²¹.

C. Linking Political Socialization, Political Culture, and Political Behavior:

Since variations in political culture lead to variations in political behavior, individuals within the same country may share certain orientations while differing from others in their ideas, assumptions, and perspectives on politics¹²².

Given that political culture is the product of political socialization, and political behavior—according to Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba—is the product of political culture, then political culture acts as an intervening variable that clarifies the ambiguous relationship between political socialization and political behavior.

Figure (3): Directional relationship between the three variables:



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the literature.

6.4.4 – Continuity and Change in Political Culture:

¹²⁰ Kenneth Newton and Jan W. van Deth, *Foundations of Comparative Politics: Democracies of the Modern World*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 175.

¹²¹ Jaber Al-Sayyid Saeed Awad, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

¹²² Kenneth Newton, and Jan W. van Deth, *Op. Cit.* p. 175.

Political culture is the product of the collective history of societies and the accumulation of social experiences, particularly individuals' experiences within the political system¹²³. Although political culture is not static and tends to change gradually over time, empirical evidence from industrialized, communist, and some Asian societies shows that change can sometimes occur rapidly in response to fast-changing economic, political, and social conditions.

In contrast, political culture may exhibit stability when traditional national, religious, and cultural values dominate over ideological or democratic ones, as seen in countries like China and India. Lucian Pye argued that such societies possess their own unique patterns of modernization¹²⁴. This explains why the pace of change in citizens' behavior and orientations varies across environments and political systems.

6.4.5 – Political Orientations and Attitudes:

Gabriel Almond defined political culture as a set of orientations, attitudes, and behavioral patterns held by individuals toward the political system, its components, and their role within it¹²⁵.

This definition highlights three interconnected concepts¹²⁶:

Orientation: Deep-seated, latent dispositions formed over time.

Attitude: A more defined and expressed form of orientation.

Political Behavior: The final outcome of orientations and attitudes.

Thus, orientation precedes attitude, and attitude precedes behavior.

¹²³ Jaber Al-Sayyid Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 67.

¹²⁴ Mohamed Zahi Bashir Al-Mughirbi, Op, Cit, p. 229.

¹²⁵ Ibid. p. 219.

¹²⁶ Jaber Al-Sayyid Saeed Awad, op. cit., p.68.

There are two main types of political orientations:

Toward the political system as a whole

Toward the self (i.e., the individual's role and level of participation)

Drawing on the work of Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils, Almond and Verba identified three analytical components of political orientations¹²⁷:

Cognitive (Perception): Knowledge and understanding of the political system

Affective: Emotional attachment (loyalty, alienation, etc.)

Evaluative: Judgments and opinions based on cognition and emotion.

These components produce three types of orientations¹²⁸:

a. Cognitive Orientation: This concerns the extent of an individual's knowledge about the political system in general, its main institutions, the roles these institutions perform, the political figures occupying these roles, as well as the electoral systems, and the inputs and outputs of the political system.

b. Affective Orientation: This refers to the orientation that enhances a citizen's belief in the importance of political issues in their country. It originates from individual feelings toward the political system, resulting in either love or dislike of it, and consequently in support or opposition, as well as a sense of belonging or alienation. In other words, it is a feeling shaped through cognition.

c. Evaluative Orientation: This involves the judgments and opinions individuals form about the political system, which are shaped by both cognition and feelings, whether positive or negative. It can take the form of explicit support for the political system if the citizen is satisfied, or efforts to reform it if

¹²⁷ Ibid.p. 68 – 69.

¹²⁸ Newton and Van Deth, Op.Cit. p. 175.

dissatisfied. In both cases, this process requires that citizens possess sufficient influence and the capacity for political change.

6.4.6 – Types of Political Cultures:

Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba identified three main types of political culture¹²⁹:

A – Parochial Political Culture:

A feature of this type of culture is the absence of differentiated political roles, lack of specialization, and overlapping functions. This type of culture exists in traditional societies such as clans, where the tribal chief performs multiple roles—he is the ruler, military leader, judge, and sometimes even the legislator. The political cultures of African tribal societies fall within this category¹³⁰. Individuals' orientations toward the political system in this type of culture are limited. The relationship between the ruler and the ruled is characterized by a severe lack of understanding on the part of the individual regarding the ruler. Often, there is a vast gap that may even reach the point of deifying the ruler, reflecting the concept of "parochialism" in a political sense, where the feeling of citizenship is absent due to the lack of expectations for the political system to respond to individuals' demands. Citizens also lack the minimal capabilities or desire to participate in political life; in other words, the citizen's perception of his role in this type of culture is minimal¹³¹.

B – Subject Political Culture:

This culture is characterized by a high level of individuals' orientations toward the political system, coupled with a low level of orientation toward themselves

¹²⁹ Jaber Al-Sayyid Saeed Awad, op. cit., p. 70.

¹³⁰ Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture : Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 17.

¹³¹ Michael G. Roskin, Robert L. Cord, James A. Medeiros, and Walter S. Jones, *Political Science : An Introduction*, 10th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ : Prentice Hall, 2008), p. 119.

(a passive role). In other words, individuals are highly attentive to the political system, fully understanding the rules of the political game, but they have no emotional commitment to it nor any desire for political participation, considering themselves obedient subjects rather than active participants¹³². Their abstention from political participation stems from a perception of its ineffectiveness. Consequently, the political system produces outputs in the form of decisions and policies that interest the individuals, but there are no corresponding inputs from them. As Almond and Verba describe, these decisions and policies take the form of a "Downward Flow"¹³³, since some political systems—sometimes manipulatively—distort or selectively accept only the inputs that suit them.

C – Participating Political Culture:

This type of culture represents the ideal environment in which democratic experience can grow and be sustained¹³⁴. It is characterized by a high level of individuals' orientations toward the political system as well as toward themselves. Citizens possess a high degree of knowledge and interest in the political system in both its entirety and in its details. This results from the political competence and effectiveness of citizens, which fosters a sense of capability to participate and influence the political system. Consequently, a high level of self-confidence and political awareness develops, leading to maximal political participation¹³⁵.

6.4.7 – Classification of the Political Culture Approach

A – Unordered Classifications (Taxonomy):

¹³² Ibid. p. 119.

¹³³ Gabriel Almond & Sidney Verba, Op.Cit. p. 19.

¹³⁴ Michael G. Roskin, L. Cord, Robert., James A. Medeiros, and Walter S. Jones, Op. Cit.p. 119.

¹³⁵ Ibrahim Abrash, Op.Cit. p. 210.

These are based on dichotomies (e.g., traditional vs. modern, democratic vs. authoritarian)¹³⁶. According to Talcott Parsons, modern societies are distinguished by specialization and role differentiation¹³⁷.

However, Gabriel Almond criticized such classifications as misleading because they oversimplify reality by forcing societies into mutually exclusive categories (“either–or”), ignoring transitional and mixed forms.

B – Ordered Classifications (Typologies):

Unlike taxonomies, typologies view societies as mixtures rather than pure types. According to Gabriel Almond, all societies combine elements of tradition and modernity in varying proportions¹³⁸.

Relationships within typologies are¹³⁹:

Mutually reinforcing (supportive)

Coexisting (continuous spectrum)

This allows for:

Measuring levels of development.

Comparing societies and tracking change over time.

The political culture approach falls within this category, as the three types identified by Almond and Verba represent a continuum rather than strict divisions.

6.4.8 – The Concept of Political Development :

¹³⁶ Todd Landman, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 6.

¹³⁷ Jaber El-Sayed Saeed Awad, *Op.cit*, p.25.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 27–28.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*. pp. 28 – 31.

From the perspective of political culture theorists, political development is the process through which societies move from parochial and subject political cultures toward a participant political culture.

This transformation occurs through a dialectical struggle between traditional and modern forces, generating social change that gradually leads to higher levels of political development and eventually to what Almond and Verba termed “civic culture”¹⁴⁰.

6.4.9 – The Ontological Dimension of Civic Culture :

A – Civic Culture :

In their empirical study (1959–1960), Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba examined five countries: United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and Mexico¹⁴¹.

They developed the concept of Civic Culture, defined as a balanced mixture of parochial, subject, and participant orientations, with a predominance of participant culture¹⁴².

This culture is characterized by moderation and balance between:

Government authority and responsiveness.

Public satisfaction and disagreement.

The presence of some parochial or subject elements does not contradict democracy; rather, it helps regulate political behavior and maintain social equilibrium¹⁴³.

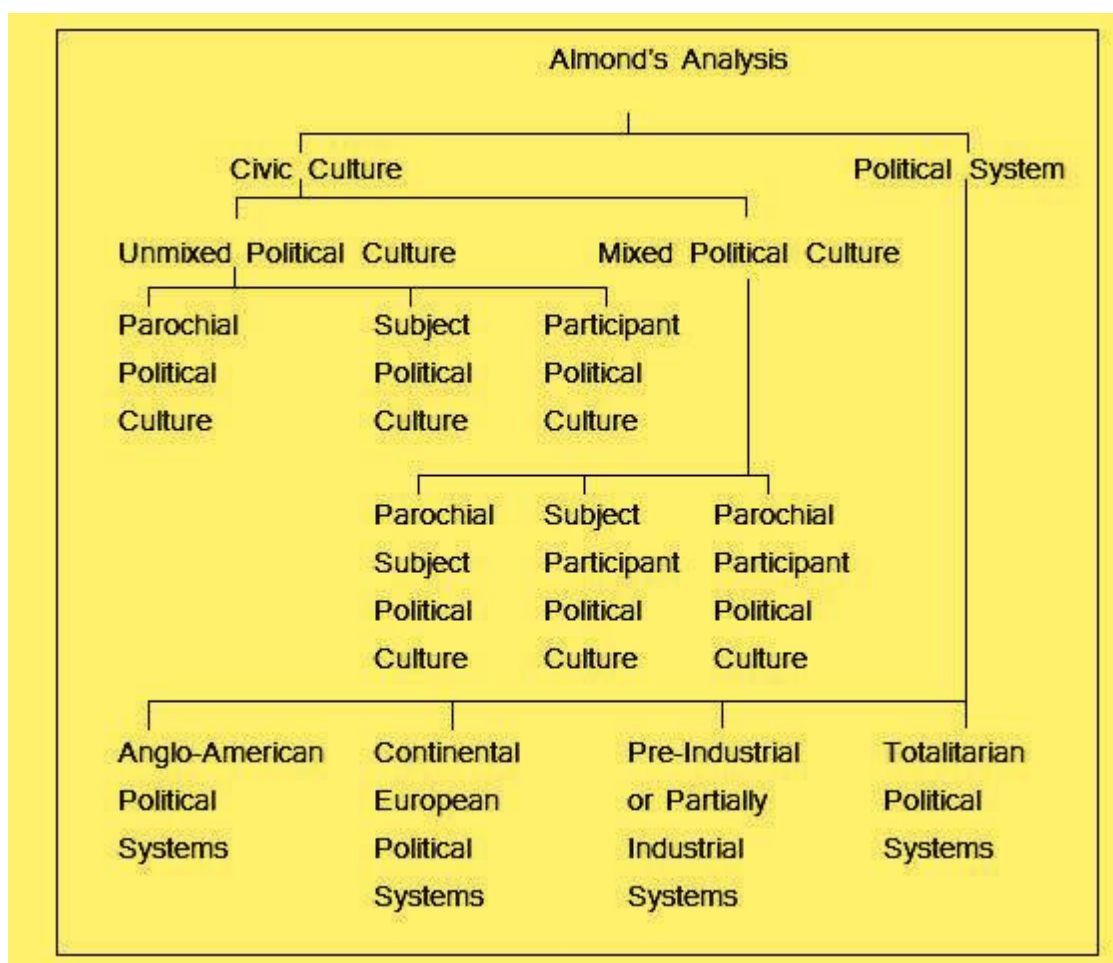
¹⁴⁰ Ibid. pp 74 – 75.

¹⁴¹ Michael G. Roskin, L, Cord, Robert., James A. Medeiros, and Walter S. Jones, Op. Cit.p. 119.

¹⁴² Jaber El-Sayed Saeed Awad, Op.cit, pp. 74 – 75.

¹⁴³ Gabriel Almond & Sidney Verba, Op.Cit. p. 19.

Figure : 04 Political Culture and Political System by Almond.



Source: Comparative Politics, Study Material, Second Semester, For, M.A.Political Science, Op.Cit, p. 19.

B – The Space of Societal Political Culture Samples:

The interaction of analytical tools produces a comparative framework that allows classification of societies based on dominant orientations¹⁴⁴:

Parochial–dominant societies: Lack specialization and civic interaction (e.g., some tribal contexts).

Subject–dominant societies: Hybrid systems with limited participation (common in parts of the Arab world).

Participant–dominant societies: Advanced democracies where participation prevails, such as the United States.

Alexis de Tocqueville attributed the success of democracy in the United States to a strong culture of participation and belief in equality¹⁴⁵.

Factors supporting civic culture in such societies include:

A strong middle class

High levels of education

Technological advancement

Urbanization and social interaction.

These elements foster political awareness, participation, and continuous evolution of political culture.

6.4.10 – Civic Culture in Confrontation with the Cultural Matrix of a Virtual World :

The transformation brought about by the information revolution within the broader cultural system has played a crucial role in the emergence of a new

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 19.

¹⁴⁵ Stephen Fisher, *Political Culture, Social Capital and Democracy* (Oxford : Trinity College Oxford, 2022), p. 43.

global political culture. This emerging culture is likely to form the foundation of a new civilization—one that does not belong to any single nation, especially as we witness a form of coexistence between this globalized culture and local political cultures.

This global culture is expected to expand extensively, challenging local political cultures and placing them before a set of choices: closure, adaptation, or extinction. Rather than completely eliminating local cultures, it is more likely to destabilize them, generating identity conflicts and increasing societal divisions—particularly in societies characterized by complex social compositions. Religious, nationalist, and patriotic movements thus face significant challenges imposed by a global cultural matrix rooted in communication technologies, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing.

According to David Rothkopf, this matrix constitutes a virtual informational space that shapes political culture. Within this space, three types of cultures coexist and sometimes conflict¹⁴⁶:

A – Globalized Culture:

Globalized culture is one that shapes global consciousness, leading to the emergence of a new civilization grounded in communication technologies, artificial intelligence, automation, quantum computing, and immaterial production. It is built upon economic, social, and industrial foundations within a global cultural matrix of a virtual world. Its importance and value increase geometrically—according to Metcalfe's Law—as the number of users of communication technologies grows.

¹⁴⁶ Rashid Salman, *The Strategic Dimension of Knowledge*, 1st ed. (Dubai: Gulf Research Center. 2004), pp. 128–129.

Within this framework, trade and business adapt to a world in which information becomes the dominant factor of production, eventually transforming into a product in itself. Consequently, capital expands with the growth of knowledge. This global cultural matrix may at times coexist with national culture and at other times come into conflict with it, particularly in a period where the nation–state experiences decline or is compelled to redefine its functions. This is especially evident as it no longer maintains full control over trade and financial flows, while geography, in its classical sense, diminishes in importance in favor of virtual factors—factors that can only be secured through the consolidation of civic culture.

B – National or Local Culture:

National (or local) culture is grounded in national, ethnic, or ideological references, extending vertically across national and regional dimensions. It sometimes coexists with and at other times conflicts with globalized culture, particularly through the preservation of traditions, heritage sites, and national symbols.

In the absence of civic culture within this framework, societies dominated by subject-oriented political cultures become more vulnerable to rising waves of frustration. These frustrations may generate negative consequences across security, political, economic, and social domains.

C – Horizontal Culture:

Horizontal culture represents a synthesis of the variations found in both globalized and national cultures. It reflects a world that expands horizontally, characterized by multiple identities and diverse cultures on a global scale. It relies heavily on modern technology and includes scientists, multinational

corporations, national firms, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as religious and secular institutions.

Paradoxically, within this world, governments may simultaneously confront organized crime networks and illegal migration while, at times, coexisting with or even indirectly supporting them. It is a world structured around a virtual knowledge matrix composed of metaphysical principles and unified symbolic generalizations, potentially creating a universal language. In such a context, individuals from different cultural backgrounds—for example, Arab, French, Indian, and African—can converge within a shared linguistic, cultural, scientific, and professional space.

In this type of environment, civic culture becomes a necessary solution for understanding and maintaining the balance inherent in such complex and hybrid cultural configurations.

6.4.11 – Evaluation of the Political Culture Approach :

Despite its analytical value, this approach has faced criticism. Studies by Abravanil and Hughes suggested that changes in political attitudes may sometimes follow political changes rather than precede them.

The main criticisms include:

Logical limitation: The approach assumes that political culture is the independent variable and the political system the dependent variable. In reality, the relationship is reciprocal and circular. The political system influences political culture through institutions and socialization mechanisms.

Focus on inputs rather than outputs¹⁴⁷:

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.p.178 – 179.

The approach mainly emphasizes how political culture shapes inputs (demands) but neglects how political outputs (policies and decisions) influence political culture.

Therefore, without clearly explaining the mutual interaction between political culture and political behavior, it is difficult to build a fully explanatory and predictive theory.

Chapter Seven: Political Parties :

A political party is a social organization with a complete administrative apparatus and a body composed of permanent staff. Political party is group of people who are organized under shared values to get their candidates elected to office to exercise political authority¹⁴⁸, It also attracts popular groups belonging to diverse backgrounds and possessing different habits. To achieve its goals, the political party always seeks either to seize power or to exert pressure on the ruling authority, through winning sufficient popular support or forming alliances with other political parties¹⁴⁹.

In short, “a political party is a political organization of a general and permanent character, with a program through which it seeks to attain power.” Thus, the distinction between political parties and interest groups lies in the fact that the party aims to gain access to power, whereas interest groups aim merely to convey their members’ demands to the authorities. Similarly, the distinction between political parties and the political class lies in the fact that members of the latter possess relatively equal positions—whether in political or economic influence, cultural and educational capital, or social standing—whereas a political party usually encompasses all social categories and strata, regardless of their political, economic, cultural, or social level.

¹⁴⁸ Holly Oberle, Op.Cit, p.213.

¹⁴⁹ Boutros Boutros-Ghali & Mahmoud Khairy Issa, Op. Cit, p. 303.

7.1 – The Nature of Political Parties:

The nature of political parties is classified according to certain criteria, among which are: the ideological criterion, the context of their emergence, the type of political system, adherence to principles, and the numerical criterion—this last being treated separately under the heading “The Main Types of Party Systems,” given its importance in defining their relation to electoral systems. Yet distinguishing the nature of political parties on the basis of these criteria remains difficult due to the considerable overlap between them.

7.1.1 – The Ideological Criterion:

According to this criterion, there are two main approaches to defining the nature of political parties¹⁵⁰: the liberal approach and the Marxist approach.

A – The Liberal Approach: Represented by James Coleman, Joseph LaPalombara, Myron Weiner, Dun Nimmo, and Thomas Ungs, this approach sees the essence of political parties as electoral competition, which serves as the primary means of attaining power. It reflects the fundamental role of political parties in Western societies, particularly in the United States and Western Europe.

From this perspective, political parties are the cornerstone of liberal democratic principles. If democracy in Western political thought signifies freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of communication, and freedom of association, then the plurality of political parties is the essential manifestation of this democracy. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to claim that democracy ceases to exist in the absence of party pluralism, since most other

¹⁵⁰ Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, eds., *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 3–32.

freedoms—such as association, expression, and thought—are embodied in the freedom to form and join political parties.

While political parties serve as instruments for peoples to express their aspirations, they also pursue particular interests. Groups of individuals concentrating their hopes in a given party aim to increase the weight of their aspirations and expect to realize them through the collective action that the party structure enables. Party pluralism, therefore, offers broader opportunities and wider horizons for the fulfillment of such aspirations and interests, since every individual can find in one party or another a vehicle for expressing their expectations.

B – The Marxist Approach: This approach views the political party as an instrument in the hands of the ruling class. A party is not a neutral institution but one often controlled by the dominant class to serve its interests or reinforce its political position. Accordingly, the political party, under this view, is controlled by a group of individuals bound together by shared interests, primarily of an economic nature, who strive to gain power through reform or revolution. In socialist–Marxist thought, the party is seen as a class or a vanguard segment of a class, with emphasis placed on its social composition, the economic ties of its members, and their positions within the social hierarchy.

Socialist parties emerged as a result of the “social question” and the rise of the labor movement, reflecting the crisis in the relationship between the exploiting capitalist and the exploited worker. They demanded improved living conditions, which had reached degrading levels in industrial cities. Among the earliest examples was the General German Workers’ Association, which later merged with other organizations to form the Social Democratic Party of Germany in 1875. This party became a model for other socialist parties that spread across Europe up until the First World War. Such organizations, often

linked with trade unions, developed systematically to provide the labor movement with electoral tools.

Although these parties participated in elections, their programs were revolutionary, and they continued to rely on direct action, such as street mobilization. This made them mass parties aimed at attracting as many adherents as possible.

7.1.2 – The Criterion of Adherence to Principles:

This criterion relates to the extent to which members of a political party remain committed to its principles, regardless of changing and unstable circumstances. In this regard, two types of parties can be distinguished¹⁵¹:

A – Programmatic (or Ideological) Parties: These are parties that adhere firmly to distinct and specific programs, with clear ideological differences from other parties. For programmatic parties, continued membership is conditioned on unwavering commitment to party principles; withdrawal is permissible only if the leadership itself abandons those principles.

However, cooperation between programmatic parties is rarely possible, since each one is dedicated to principles that cannot easily be reconciled with those of others. Examples include Communist, Socialist, Monarchist, Catholic, and Republican parties. Such parties are generally highly organized, with members displaying strict obedience to party directives and willingness to adapt to new interpretations of party ideology.

Programmatic parties are most widespread in Europe, where populations are differentiated along ethnic, social, religious, and national lines—for example, in Germany, Czechoslovakia (before World War II), Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland. They are also common in Northern Europe (Denmark, Sweden,

¹⁵¹ Boutros Boutros-Ghali & Mahmoud Khairy Issa, Op. Cit. pp. 308 – 309.

Norway, the Netherlands, and Iceland). In Eastern Europe, programmatic parties existed before World War II in Poland, Hungary, the Baltic States, and Finland, though they tended to move toward dictatorship. In Southeastern Europe (Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Greece), programmatic parties often degenerated into personalist parties.

B – Personalist Parties: What distinguishes these parties is the loyalty of members to the leader. While leadership is important in any party system, in personalist parties the leader plays the central role: founding the party, directing its activities, and shaping its program. Such leaders can alter party programs at will without fear of losing members' loyalty. Programs of these parties are often very similar, differing primarily by the identity of the leader.

Loyalty to the leader generally stems from two main factors:

- The leader's political, diplomatic, or military competence.
- The social or familial tradition that the leader embodies.

Personalist parties tend to spread in societies with strong kinship or tribal ties, where economic or political differences are less decisive. The greater the number of charismatic figures in such societies, the more numerous these parties become.

Examples include Egypt (before the July 1952 Revolution), Lebanon, Jordan, Japan, as well as the Balkan states and Latin America. Their prevalence is explained by:

- The persistence of feudal traditions.
- Low levels of education.
- The dominance of aristocratic elites and the loyalty of other classes to them.
- Strong family or class-based solidarity.

Unlike programmatic parties, personalist parties typically lack strong organization and discipline. They depend heavily on the vitality and authority of their leader. If the leader dies or withdraws from politics, the party usually collapses.

In addition to programmatic and personalist parties, there exist hybrid forms that combine elements of both—such as some right- and left-wing parties in France, or middle-class-based parties in the Arab world (e.g., Morocco's National Union of Popular Forces, the Arab Nationalist Movement in the 1950s, Iraq's Independence Party, Mustafa Kamel's National Party in Egypt, and other cadre parties)¹⁵².

7.1.3 – The Criterion of the Context of Emergence:

The origins and evolution of political parties are closely linked to citizens' right to participate in public affairs, as they represent attempts to break through the barriers erected by governments and elites to limit popular participation in politics.

Classical democratic theory emphasized direct relations between government and people. Yet modern representative democracy introduced an intermediary—the legislature—without initially anticipating the rise of party systems. Maurice Duverger associated the emergence of political parties with the formation of representative assemblies, meaning that parties were born and developed alongside elections and mass representation.

Although most political parties before the 19th century were parliamentary in origin, since the beginning of that century, parties founded outside parliament became the rule, while parliamentary-origin parties became the exception. With the Bolshevik Revolution, Europe entered a period of deep instability marked

¹⁵² Boutros Boutros-Ghali & Mahmoud Khairy Issa, pp. 309 – 310.

by the rise of new mass parties. In the Soviet Union, Lenin's vision—expressed as early as 1902 in *What Is To Be Done?*—shaped the highly centralized and disciplined Communist Party.

Parallel to this, Mussolini's Fascist Party introduced another model of mass-based, totalitarian organization that sought systematic ideological mobilization unprecedented in earlier politics. Compared with parliamentary parties, these mass movements were more centralized, cohesive, and disciplined.

In the Third World, political parties often emerged from liberation movements against colonialism. Typically clandestine at first, these movements transformed into mass parties after independence, often revolving around charismatic leaders who played a decisive role in shaping their structure and discourse. Thus, political parties in these regions developed in ways distinct from their Western counterparts. In addition, less-developed countries witnessed the rise of populist parties built upon traditional ties such as tribe, ethnicity, or religion—sometimes Communist, sometimes hybrid in nature¹⁵³.

7.1.4 – The Criterion of the Political System:

This refers to the type of regime in place: presidential (based on separation of powers), parliamentary (based on fusion of powers), mixed presidential-parliamentary leaning toward the presidential model, or mixed leaning toward the parliamentary model. According to this criterion, political parties are classified into rigid parties and flexible parties.

A – Rigid Parties: These oblige their parliamentary members to vote in a particular way, especially on crucial issues. Such parties are common in parliamentary systems (e.g., Britain) or in mixed systems dominated by

¹⁵³ Wajih Qanso, *Political Parties* (Amman: Dalil al-Tarbiya wa al-Tanweer, 2005), pp. 6–7.

parliamentary features. Rigid discipline is meant to prevent internal parliamentary disputes from destabilizing the executive branch, consistent with the principle of the fusion of powers in parliamentary regimes.

B – Flexible Parties: These allow legislators freedom in voting, unlike rigid parties. Internal disagreements in parliament do not necessarily affect the executive. Flexible parties are characteristic of presidential systems (e.g., the United States) or mixed systems leaning toward the presidential model, consistent with the separation of powers.

7.2 – Party Systems:

There is no doubt that, although political parties play a fundamental role in evaluating authority, exposing its errors, and bringing it back to the right path—let alone being genuine schools for educating, enlightening, and informing citizens of their rights and duties—there remain significant differences regarding party systems in terms of¹⁵⁴:

- The number of parties within the political system.
- The size of each party relative to others.
- The manner in which parties cooperate with one another.
- The strategies pursued by each party.

All these interrelationships result in a relatively stable pattern of interaction. Thus, the functioning of any political system cannot be realistically understood without examining its prevailing party system, the relations among its parties, and the way in which the party system is intertwined with the state's political system as a whole. This is especially important because the fundamental functions of parties become more significant when the political system provides genuine competition among them. The key question, therefore, is whether the party system ensures free competition in the political marketplace. Accordingly, party systems are classified into two broad types: competitive systems and non-competitive systems.

¹⁵⁴ Souad Al-Sharqawi, *Political Systems in the Contemporary World* (Cairo : Arab Republic of Egypt publishing context 2008), p. 221.

7.2.1 – Competitive Systems :

7.2.1.1 – Multiparty Systems :

A – Complete or Integral Multipartism (Le Multipartisme Intégral) :

This refers to a system in which a large number of small parties exist without attempting to coalesce or form alliances. Each party maintains a rigid stance, representing the interests of a narrow social group, without seeking compromise or reconciliation with other groups in society. Each party appears as the exclusive spokesperson of a specific constituency. This pattern was embodied in the French political system under the Fourth Republic.

Disadvantages:

- Inability to aggregate interests, neglecting the general interest.
- Voters are faced with too many programs, which creates an illusion of choice and thus a “false democracy,” often requiring mediators to form governments.
- Absence of a stable parliamentary majority capable of consistently supporting the government, which leads to fragmented legislatures and governmental instability¹⁵⁵.

B – Moderate Multipartism (Le Multipartisme Tempéré) :

This type is characterized by stable and cohesive alliances among parties, resulting in two major blocs, each presenting a comprehensive program to the electorate. Within parliament, each bloc acts as a unified force. This transforms multipartism into a system that closely resembles a two-party system.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. pp 222 - 223

Moderate multipartism was designed to overcome the shortcomings of integral multipartism. Its effectiveness depends on the nature of the parties involved: whether they are rigid (compelling members to vote along party lines) or flexible (granting members freedom of choice). It is often viewed as a middle stage between integral multipartism and the two-party system¹⁵⁶.

7.2.1.2 – Two-Party Systems (Les Systèmes du Bipartisme) :

The two-party system is often considered a natural and historically driven outcome, reflecting enduring conflicts between two opposing tendencies: stability vs. change, conservatism vs. radical reform, or even two social classes (bourgeoisie vs. proletariat). As Maurice Duverger notes, public opinion tends to divide into two rival camps.

Advantages of the Two-Party System¹⁵⁷:

- Facilitates interest aggregation and offers the electorate clear, straightforward choices.
- Voters choose representatives and governments directly.
- Ensures governmental stability since the ruling party usually enjoys an absolute parliamentary majority.

7.2.1.3 – Subtypes of Two-Party Systems:

A – Rigid vs. Flexible Bipartism (Bipartisme Rigide et Souple) :

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, pp. 224 – 225.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, pp. 225 – 226.

Rigid bipartism: Party discipline is strict; members are compelled to vote according to party decisions, ensuring governmental stability (e.g., the British system).

Flexible bipartism: Members are free to vote independently, as in the U.S. Congress. While this resembles multipartism and may endanger executive stability, the U.S. presidential system ensures stability through the separation of powers¹⁵⁸.

B – Complete vs. Incomplete Bipartism :

In complete bipartism, one party secures an absolute majority, governing alone without coalitions (e.g., Britain since 1935).

In incomplete bipartism, neither major party secures a decisive majority, requiring coalitions with smaller parties (e.g., West Germany during the 1960s–1980s)¹⁵⁹.

C – Balanced vs. Unbalanced Bipartism (Bipartisme Équilibré et Dominé) :

Balanced bipartism occurs when both major parties are nearly equal in strength, alternating in power based on marginal voters' preferences (e.g., Britain between 1945 and 1971).

Unbalanced bipartism arises when one party dominates for prolonged periods, marginalizing the other (common in several African states). This often devolves into a one-party system¹⁶⁰.

7.2.1.4 – The Dominant Party System :

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, pp.226 – 227.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, pp. 227 – 228.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 229.

This system exists within a multiparty framework but is marked by the prolonged supremacy of a single party, which consistently commands large majorities, limiting the chances of rivals¹⁶¹.

7.2.1.5 – Duverger’s Criteria:

- The party must achieve clear superiority over its competitors for a relatively long period, even if it occasionally loses elections.
- The party must embody the hopes and ideals of the nation.

Two forms exist¹⁶²:

A – Ordinary dominant party (e.g., Sweden, Norway, Denmark with their Socialist parties; Italy with the Christian Democrats). Such parties usually win around 40% of the vote.

B – Ultra-dominant party: A party consistently winning absolute majorities in both votes and seats (e.g., the Indian Congress Party in the 1951–52 elections).

7.2.2 – Non-Competitive Systems :

These are essentially one-party systems, characterized by political monopoly. If a dominant party abuses its position, it may evolve into an outright one-party state, where no competition is allowed.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 229 – 230.

¹⁶² Ibid, pp. 230 - 236.

Types include¹⁶³:

A – Communist One–Party System

Based on Marxist–Leninist theory, the single party represents the proletariat, justified by the abolition of class conflict. The ruling party becomes the principal apparatus of the state (as in the former Soviet Union).

B – Fascist One–Party System

Rooted in the rejection of political neutrality, the state embraces and defends a particular ideology, presenting itself as a bearer of supreme ideals (l'État porteur d'idéaux). Consequently, only the ruling party is permitted, with no tolerance for alternatives (e.g., Mussolini's Italy, Nazi Germany).

C – One–Party Systems in the Third World

Typically justified as a means of national unity during post–independence nation–building and development. Multiparty competition was often associated with colonialism. Examples include the Arab Socialist Union in Egypt (until 1976), the Socialist Constitutional Party in Tunisia (until 1981), and the National Liberation Front in Algeria (until 1989).

D – The Military–Party System:

This emerges when the military institution either transforms itself into a political party or forms the backbone of party rule. Such systems often arise from coups and rely on military structures for political organization.

¹⁶³ Ibid, pp. 236 – 239.

E – The No-Party System:

This refers to political systems that deliberately reject the idea of political parties, replacing them with tribal, sectarian, or local forms of representation. Examples can be found in some Gulf states and other societies where traditional forms of authority dominate.

There is no doubt that, although political parties play a fundamental role in holding authority accountable, exposing its errors, and redirecting it to the right course—not to mention that they are genuine schools for educating, enlightening, and making citizens aware of their rights and duties—there nonetheless exist differences regarding party systems in terms of:

- The number of parties within the political system.
- The relative size of each party compared to the others.
- The manner in which parties cooperate with one another.
- The strategy pursued by each of these parties.

Chapter Eight: Electoral Systems:

Electoral systems, in their basic meaning, function to translate the votes cast in elections into the number of seats won by parties and candidates. There are various types of electoral systems, which will be discussed in more detail in upcoming lectures. These include: the Alternative Vote, the Borda Count, the Block Vote, First-Past-the-Post, the Limited Vote, the Party List, the Mixed-Member System, the Party Block Vote, Proportional Representation, the Single Non-Transferable Vote, and the Single Transferable Vote¹⁶⁴.

There is a diversity of electoral systems and forms of voting, which makes it necessary to limit the study to only the main systems. In general, this diversity can be attributed to the human tendency toward innovation, invention, and creativity. However, choosing one system over another means giving preference to certain considerations and attempting to achieve them through the electoral process.

Every electoral system aims to achieve simplicity, fairness, and effectiveness, the latter being reflected in the formation of a cohesive and stable majority government. Yet, these three objectives are often contradictory and cannot all be achieved simultaneously. For example, a system that seeks to produce a stable and cohesive majority must broaden the scope of choice for the electorate and adopt relatively simple systems, but such systems may not fully achieve fairness.

On the other hand, achieving absolute fairness—which is provided by proportional representation—may reduce the chances of forming a cohesive and stable government. Therefore, the choice of a particular electoral system is closely linked to the objectives set by political systems. Since these objectives

¹⁶⁴ International IDEA, Electoral System Design : The New International IDEA Handbook, (stockholm: International IDEA, 2008), p. 35.

differ from one political system to another, the variation in electoral systems is a natural consequence of the differing goals pursued by those political systems.

In general, despite their large number and diversity, electoral systems can be classified into twelve main systems. Most of them fall within three main families, in addition to other types that are classified under different systems. This classification is based on how each system translates the votes won by political parties or participating groups in elections into seats in the elected legislative body (parliament). In other words, it depends on the degree of proportionality of each system.

To do this, it is necessary to take into account the proportional relationship between the number of votes and the number of seats, in addition to the level of wasted votes.

8.1 – Plurality/Majority Systems:

An election is considered a majority election when the system regards a candidate as having won the election simply by obtaining a majority of the votes cast. However, the required majority may be either an absolute majority or a relative (plurality) majority. The choice between these two types of majority (absolute or relative) determines whether a single round of voting is sufficient to determine the election result or whether a second round of elections is required.

Plurality/Majority electoral systems are divided into several types, namely: the First-Past-the-Post system, the Two-Round system, the Alternative Vote system, the Block Vote system, and finally the Party Block Vote system. What distinguishes these systems is that they are usually used within single-member constituencies.

In the First–Past–the–Post system (which is commonly known as the plurality system for single–member districts), the candidate who wins the seat representing the constituency is the one who obtains the absolute majority of the votes cast. In other words, plurality/majority systems are based on a simple principle: the victory of candidates or parties that obtain the highest number of votes from voters after the ballots are counted and tallied (in addition to some other conditions that may sometimes be imposed).

However, in practice, this result can be achieved through different methods depending on the type of plurality/majority electoral system used. These systems are generally classified into five types, as follows:

A. First–Past–the–Post System:

The First–Past–the–Post (FPTP) system is widely used in Britain and in several of its former colonies in the Asian continent, such as Bangladesh, Burma (Myanmar), India, Malaysia, and Nepal, as well as in some countries historically influenced by Britain, including Canada, the United States of America, and several Caribbean states. In addition, about fifteen countries in Africa use this system, not to mention some small states or islands located in the Pacific Ocean. Altogether, the countries that adopt the First–Past–the–Post system represent about 22% of the countries of the world.

This system is considered one of the simplest forms of plurality/majority electoral systems. It is used in single–member electoral districts and is centered on the candidates listed on the ballot paper. Simply put, the winning candidate is the one who obtains the highest number of votes from the electorate.

Theoretically, a candidate could even win the election with only two votes, provided that none of the competing candidates receives more than one vote.

This system possesses several characteristics, which can be summarized as follows¹⁶⁵:

1 – It provides a clear choice for voters between the two largest political parties on the political scene. It often leads to a decline in the chances of smaller parties, which results in the political system of the concerned country tending toward a division between a “left-wing” party and a “right-wing” party that alternate in power. Consequently, the opportunities for other parties diminish to the point where their ability to gain sufficient popular support to secure an influential presence in the elected legislative authority becomes very limited.

2 – This system enables the formation of single-party governments, as one of its outcomes is allowing the largest party to obtain more seats. As a result, coalition governments become the exception rather than the rule.

3 – This system also facilitates the emergence of a cohesive parliamentary opposition. Theoretically at least, the other side of the coin is that it provides a sufficient number of representative seats for the opposition, enabling it to perform its role in monitoring government actions and presenting itself as a credible alternative to the ruling party.

B. The Block Vote System:

The Block Vote system is used in multi-member electoral districts. Under this system, the voter has a number of votes equal to the number of representatives to be elected from their electoral district. The candidates who receive the highest number of votes are declared the winners.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 35 – 43.

In this system, voters usually cast their votes for individual candidates rather than for political parties. In most cases, voters may use any number of their votes within the total number allowed. In other words, voters possess a number of votes equal to the number of seats allocated to their district, enabling them to vote for any candidates listed on the ballot paper, generally regardless of their party affiliations.

In most Block Vote systems, voters are free to cast as many of their votes as they wish, as long as they do not exceed the total number of seats allocated to their electoral district¹⁶⁶.

C. The Party Block Vote System:

The Party Block Vote system is one of the plurality/majority electoral systems used in multi-member constituencies. Under this system, the voter has only one vote, which is cast for the party list they wish to elect, rather than selecting individual candidates.

The party that receives the highest number of votes wins all the seats allocated to the electoral district. It is not necessary for the winning party to obtain an absolute majority of the votes.

Several political systems adopt the Party Block Vote system, including Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, and Singapore¹⁶⁷.

D. The Alternative Vote System:

The Alternative Vote (AV) is one of the preferential plurality/majority electoral systems, used in single-member constituencies. Under this system, voters use sequential numbers to indicate their preferences among the candidates on the ballot paper.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 44.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 47.

A candidate is elected directly if they obtain an absolute majority of first-preference votes (50% + 1). However, if none of the candidates achieves this majority, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated, and the second preferences indicated on those ballots are redistributed among the remaining candidates.

This process is repeated until one candidate obtains an absolute majority of the votes. In this system, voters generally vote for individual candidates rather than political parties.

This system differs from the First-Past-the-Post system in the method of counting votes. Although the candidate who obtains an absolute majority of votes (50% + 1) wins directly—similar to what occurs in the First-Past-the-Post system and the Two-Round system—the procedure changes if none of the candidates achieves this majority.

In such a case, the candidate who receives the lowest number of first-preference votes is eliminated from the counting process. The ballots that were cast for this candidate are then re-examined, and their second preferences (number 02) are redistributed to the remaining candidates who received higher preferences.

This process continues repeatedly, eliminating the candidate with the lowest number of preferences and redistributing the next preferences on the ballots, until one candidate obtains the required absolute majority of votes and is therefore declared the winner of the election.

Accordingly, the Alternative Vote system is considered one of the majority electoral systems¹⁶⁸.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, pp. 45 – 51.

E. The Two–Round System:

A second round of elections is organized if none of the candidates or parties obtains a specified majority in the first round, usually an absolute majority of the votes (50% + 1).

This system can operate based on the plurality/majority principle, where more than two candidates may participate in the second round. In this case, the candidate who receives the highest number of votes in the second round wins, regardless of whether they achieve an absolute majority.

Alternatively, the system can rely solely on the majority principle, in which only the candidates who received the highest votes in the first round are allowed to compete in the second round.

The details concerning the second round vary from case to case. The most common method is to limit the competition in the second round to the two candidates (or parties) who received the highest number of votes in the first round. This is known as the two–round system based on the majority principle, which necessarily results in one candidate (or party) obtaining an absolute majority of votes in the second round, thereby winning the election.

The other method, known as the two–round system based on the plurality/majority principle, is used in legislative elections in France. Under this method, any candidate who receives more than 12.5% of the registered voters' support in the first round is allowed to participate in the second round. In the second round, the candidate with the highest number of votes wins, regardless of whether they achieve an absolute majority. This method differs from the first in that more than two candidates can compete in the second round, rather than being limited to just the top two.

This system is used in 22 legislatures worldwide and is the most common system for direct presidential elections in France, its former colonies, and its dependent territories¹⁶⁹.

8.2 _ Proportional Representation System:

The proportional representation system emerged in Europe at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Its main aim was to achieve one of the universal normative goals sought by humanity, namely fairness in the distribution of votes, or more precisely, enabling all candidates to obtain fair representation according to the proportion of electoral seats, whether in parliament or other elected bodies.

Whenever electoral competition among political parties in Europe intensified, under the majority system, the party receiving the highest number of votes—even if only by a small margin—would succeed or win all the seats. In contrast, under proportional representation, the share of each list of votes is translated into an equivalent share of seats. For example, a party that receives 20% of the votes would win 20% of the seats, or for instance, if 10% of the population vote for Political Party A, then the country's legislature will allow for 10% of its seats to be allocated to representatives from Party A¹⁷⁰.

As a Note : The wider the electoral district and the greater the number of seats, the more accurately the seats are distributed in proportion to the number of votes cast by the electorate.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 52.

¹⁷⁰ Holly Oberle, Op.Cit, p.213.

8.2.1 _ Types of Proportional Representation:

However, there are two types of proportional representation, namely the "list system" and the "single transferable vote system." In both systems—or in proportional representation in general—it is required to have multi-member electoral districts, which can be explained as follows¹⁷¹:

8.2.1.1 _ List Proportional Representation System:

The list proportional representation system is based on each political party presenting a list of candidates in each multi-member electoral district. Voters cast their ballots for the parties, and each party wins a share of the district's seats proportional to its share of the votes. Candidates are elected from the party lists according to their sequential order on the list.

8.2.1.2 _ Single Transferable Vote System:

The single transferable vote system is based on the existence of multi-member electoral districts, where voters rank the candidates on the ballot in order of preference—similar to the alternative vote system. In most cases, this ranking is optional, meaning that voters are not required to rank all candidates and may choose to select only one candidate if they wish.

After the first-preference votes on the ballots have been counted, the number of votes required to elect a single candidate is determined, usually calculated in practice or based on the following formula:

$$\text{Quota} = \text{Number of seats to be filled} + 1 / \text{Number of valid votes} + 1$$

¹⁷¹ IDEA, Op.Cit, pp. 60 – 71.

8.3 _ Issues Related to Proportional Representation:

8.3.1 _ Methods of Winning Seats:

First, it is important to note the fundamental difference between individual elections and list-based elections. The main distinction lies in the fact that in the former, the voter elects a single individual, so only one candidate's name appears on the ballot, and the electoral districts are small, represented by a single member of parliament. In contrast, in the list-based system, electoral districts are larger and represented by multiple members, requiring the voter to select several candidates who will represent the district—that is, to vote for a list of candidates.

It should also be noted that proportional representation applies only to list-based elections. For example, suppose we have a district represented by six members, with a total of 120,000 votes cast. Assume there are two lists: List (A) receiving 80,000 votes and List (B) receiving 40,000 votes. Under a majority system, List (A) would win all six seats, and its six candidates would be declared the winners, while none of List (B)'s candidates would win, despite having 40,000 votes. However, under proportional representation, List (A) would win four seats and List (B) would win two seats¹⁷².

Based on the above, proportional representation aims to ensure that all political parties are represented in proportion to the number of votes they receive in the election. To achieve this, a common measure must be established, which is determining the number of votes required to win a seat in parliament. This number or standard serves as a reference to determine the winners of the seats, so that each party wins a number of seats corresponding to how many times it reaches this set number of votes.

¹⁷² Dr. Souad Al-Sharqawi, Op. Cit, p. 156.

In this regard (i.e., for determining the number of votes based on the measure), there are two methods to win a seat:

A – Electoral Quotient :

This is the number obtained by dividing the total votes cast in the electoral district by the number of seats allocated to that district. For example, if 200,000 votes are cast and there are ten seats, the electoral quotient would be 20,000. This quotient serves as a measure of each party's strength, and each party wins a number of seats equal to the number of times it reaches the electoral quotient.

Example: Suppose we have four lists (A, B, C, D). If List (A) receives 80,000 votes, which equals four times the electoral quotient, it wins four seats. If List (B) receives 60,000 votes (three times the electoral quotient), it wins three seats. If List (C) receives 40,000 votes (twice the electoral quotient), it wins two seats. Finally, if List (D) receives 20,000 votes (once the electoral quotient), it wins one seat¹⁷³.

B _ The Uniform Number :

The uniform number method differs from the electoral quotient method in that the uniform number is predetermined and does not vary from one electoral district to another; rather, it is a single number applied nationwide, set in advance by the election law. Accordingly, any candidate who obtains this specific number of votes is considered elected. This number is determined based on studies that take into account the total number of voters nationwide and the approximate number of seats the state intends the parliament to have.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p. 158.

Each party wins a number of seats equal to the number of times it reaches the uniform number specified by law.

8.3.2 – Distribution of Remaining Seats :

In theory, proportional representation appears simple, but in practice, it presents intricate issues, particularly regarding the distribution of remaining (unallocated) seats. Regardless of the system used—whether the electoral quotient or the uniform number—there arises the question of how to allocate the remaining seats: should they be transferred to the national level or distributed at the local (district) level?

8.3.3 – Transferring Remaining Seats to the National Level :

In this case, all unused votes of each party across all the electoral districts in which it participated are aggregated to form a national-level list. The distribution among the different lists is then based on a national electoral quotient, calculated by dividing the total unused votes nationwide by the number of unallocated seats. Applying this method results in the so-called integral proportional representation system (La Représentation Proportionnelle Intégrale). This system encourages party plurality, as small parties can gain some seats by combining the votes they received across all districts where they submitted lists¹⁷⁴.

8.3.4 – Distribution of Remaining Seats at the Local Level :

Remaining seats are distributed locally according to three different methods¹⁷⁵:

A _ Largest Remainders Method (La Méthode des Plus Grands Restes) :

Under this method, the remaining seats are awarded to the parties with the largest number of unused votes. This approach benefits smaller parties—

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 159.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, pp. 160 – 161.

especially in districts with few seats—that are unable to reach the electoral quotient or uniform number but still accumulate a significant number of votes.

B _ Highest Averages Method (La Méthode de La Plus Forte Moyenne) :

This method is more complex and benefits larger parties. It involves dividing the total votes received by each party by the number of seats it would have obtained if the remaining seats were distributed. The party with the highest resulting average receives the remaining seat. Naturally, parties with the largest vote totals tend to gain the remaining seats.

C _ The Belgian Mathematician “Hondt” Method (Le Système D’Hondt) :

Belgian mathematician Hondt developed an advanced mathematical method to determine seat distribution using three steps:

Divide the total votes received by each list by 1, then 2, then 3, and so on, until all seats are accounted for.

Rank all resulting quotients in descending order until reaching the number of seats allocated to the district.

The last quotient in this descending ranking serves as a common reference index to determine the number of seats each list wins by dividing the total votes of each list by this reference index.

8.3.5 _ Electoral Threshold (Electoral Bloc) :

High thresholds are intended to exclude small political parties from the political arena. However, such exclusion may not always be necessary, particularly when small parties share the votes of specific voter groups, failing to gain any representation unless they unite to prevent vote fragmentation. To

address this, some countries allow small parties to form an electoral bloc, enabling them to run together as a single bloc while remaining independent parties and appearing separately on the ballot. In this system, votes received by any party within the bloc are counted collectively for the bloc, helping the parties surpass the threshold and obtain representation.

The electoral threshold refers to the minimum percentage of votes a party needs to gain representation in the elected body and is defined by constitutional or legal provisions specifying the electoral system. This procedure is used in several European and Latin American countries employing the list proportional representation system, but its application is very limited in African and Asian countries using proportional representation. For example, in Indonesia, it was abolished in 1999 after some parties found that their representation as independent parties declined, despite their blocs winning representative seats¹⁷⁶.

¹⁷⁶ IDEA, Op. Cit, pp. 83 – 84.

8.4 – Mixed Electoral Systems :

Mixed electoral systems are based on combining the advantages of plurality/majority systems (or other systems) with proportional representation systems. Accordingly, a mixed system consists of two different electoral systems that operate in parallel. Voters cast ballots under both systems, and the results from the two systems are combined to elect representatives to the chosen body. Typically, this involves single-member constituencies alongside a proportional list system. There are two main types of mixed electoral systems¹⁷⁷:

A _ Mixed–Member System

Under this system, proportional seats are distributed to compensate for the disproportionality of results in single-member districts elected via a plurality/majority system or other components of the mixed system. For example, if a party receives 10% of the national vote in the proportional list but wins no seats in the single-member constituencies, it is allocated enough proportional seats to ensure it obtains 10% of the legislative body (parliament).

This system may also operate by giving voters two options: one under each system, as in Germany and New Zealand, or by giving a single vote for their constituency candidate, with the party's total votes calculated by aggregating votes across all districts.

B _ Parallel Systems :

Parallel systems use two components: one proportional and one plurality/majority. Unlike the mixed–member system, the two components operate independently. The proportional system does not compensate for disproportionality arising from the plurality/majority system (as in Taiwan). In

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, pp. 90 – 104.

this system, voters may receive a single ballot (as in mixed-member systems) to vote for both their preferred candidate and party, e.g., South Korea, or two separate ballots: one for the plurality/majority seat and another for proportional representation, as practiced in Japan, Lithuania, and Thailand.

8.5 – Other Electoral Systems :

In addition to plurality/majority, proportional, and mixed systems, there are other electoral methods¹⁷⁸:

A _ Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV)

Voters select only one candidate in multi-member districts. Candidates with the highest votes win. This system poses challenges for parties: in a four-member district, if a party fields two candidates, distributing votes evenly may win two seats, but uneven vote distribution can reduce its seats. Key features include:

Enables small party, minority, and independent candidates to gain representation, with effectiveness increasing in larger districts.

Encourages parties to organize internally and guide voters to optimize vote distribution.

Despite benefits, it often ensures single-party dominance, e.g., the Democratic Party in Japan over 45 years.

Simple to understand and implement.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, pp. 112- 118.

B _ Limited Vote System :

Voters have more than one vote but fewer than the number of seats. Candidates with the highest votes win, similar to SNTV. Used primarily for local elections; at the national level, applied in Gibraltar and the Spanish Senate since 1977.

C _ Borda Count System :

The Borda system is preference-based, usable in single- or multi-member districts. Voters rank candidates, and each ranking has a numerical value. Totals are calculated for each candidate, and the highest totals win. In Nauru, for instance, first preference = 1, second = $\frac{1}{2}$, third = $\frac{1}{3}$, etc., summed for each candidate. Unlike alternative vote systems, counting is done once using these fractional values.

8.6 – Effects of Applying Different Electoral Systems :

8.6.1 _ Effects on Party Systems :

- Proportional representation encourages full multi-party systems, often along ethnic or local lines, potentially increasing internal societal conflicts.
- Two-round majority systems (e.g., France) favor moderate multi-party systems, balancing between complete multi-party and two-party systems, ensuring government stability when the ruling party has an absolute majority.
- First-past-the-post systems promote two-party systems, reducing opportunities for small parties (e.g., UK).
- Single-party dominance may result in some systems, preventing coalition governments, common in parts of Africa.
- Integral proportional representation (national-level seat transfer) encourages small parties to gain representation through combined votes.
- SNTV favors single-party dominance while prompting smaller parties to organize internally (example: Japan's Democratic Party).

8.6.2 _ Effects on Parliamentary Representation

- List-based proportional representation allocates seats proportional to party popularity, giving small parties representation not possible under individual or plurality/majority systems, but resulting in diverse parliamentary factions, making stable majorities difficult.

- Majority-based elections may be less fair to small parties but produce cohesive majorities and stability.
- Two-round elections: the first round favors centrist parties; the second depends on coalitions of right or left, so moderate tendencies may not prevail.
- Two-round individual or list elections magnify victories for winning parties and penalize losing parties, creating zero-sum outcomes favoring one side.

Chapter Nine: The Impact of International System Transformation on Domestic Politics:

Case study : the zero–sum conflict phenomenon among political factions in the Arab states:

There is no doubt that the first thing that may come to mind when speaking about the necessary renewal in the structure of the international system is those paradigmatic developments, which refer to the transition from a situation characterized by the dominance of a particular pattern of international systems to the dominance of another completely different pattern. However, what is actually meant here are the transformations occurring in the values of the main actors within the structure of the international system, considering the latter as an independent variable, while the international reality constitutes the dependent variable.

Despite this distinction in meaning, accompanying the developments witnessed by complex systems within a changing environment requires linking the changes in the values of the dominant powers within the structure of the international system to the pattern transformations of this system. Such linkage increases the level of awareness among various elites and raises their degree of preparedness. A skilled decision–maker or an astute researcher must therefore possess prior knowledge of the future trajectories of transformations in the patterns of the international system in order to identify the changing values of the dominant powers within its structure. This is because changes in the values of the international system follow transformations in its pattern in quantitative terms. Such a process would make the worldview of these elites clearer and more grounded in a realistic and sound interpretation of observed

international phenomena, enabling them to predict and take initiatives in response to them.

9.1 – Necessary Renewal :

Necessary renewal occurs when the effort exerted by a lower class to rise upward is easy and attainable. This is attributed to the decline or deterioration of the higher class, which does not display violent resistance when losing its position. This characteristic is found in societies where the outcome of class struggle is non-zero-sum.

9.2 – The Zero-Sum Conflict of Political Cliques :

Since the outcome of a zero-sum conflict is generally one in which the gains of one party equal the losses of another¹⁷⁹, the zero-sum outcome of political cliques is linked to the unequal distribution of power. Such conflict naturally grows due to unequal stratification and the desire for forced and radical change among various political cliques. Accordingly, the gradual deterioration of the power of any political clique within a society automatically leads to the increase in the power of other cliques within that same society at its expense.

9.3 – Research Problem :

Why is the phenomenon of zero-sum conflict among political cliques, as one of the outcomes of the process of necessary renewal in the structure of the international system, considered a characteristic limited to developing countries — including Arab countries as part of them — rather than others?

¹⁷⁹ Hamed Ahmed Morsi Hashem, *Game Theory and Its Role in Analyzing International Conflicts with Application to the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Cairo : Madbouli Library, 1984) p. r.

9.4 – Sub-Questions :

This research puzzle raises several subsidiary questions:

How can we distinguish between class conflict in developed countries and in developing countries, and what are the most important factors influencing the phenomenon of zero-sum conflict among political cliques in developing societies?

Since transformations in the values of the main actors in the structure of the international system influence this phenomenon and relate to its quantitative dimension, which mathematical models allow us to read the relationship between the variables of the study¹⁸⁰?

What are the preventive solutions or mechanisms capable of addressing this phenomenon?

9.5 – The Nature of Class Conflict :

(Distinguishing Between Developed and Developing Societies)

According to Nicos Poulantzas, the most prominent feature of the urban social structure of developed countries is the absence of a zero-sum outcome in class conflict. Although class struggle affects power as a reflection of social structures and is dependent on the resistance of other classes, the continuous decline of the power of a particular class does not necessarily lead automatically to the increase of the power of other classes at its expense¹⁸¹.

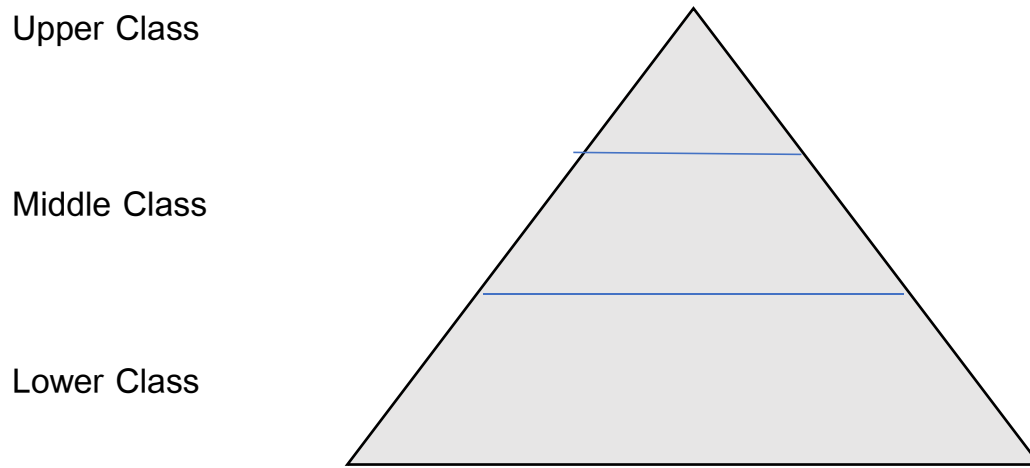
In contrast, the dominant characteristic of class structures in developing countries is the zero-sum nature of conflict. This is because the nature of

¹⁸⁰ Niklas Luhmann, *Op.Cit*, pp. 56 – 57.

¹⁸¹ Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes of the Capitalist State* (Paris: François Maspero 1982), pp. 126–127.

political cliques and the positions they occupy within the urban structure of those societies make their practices based on an exclusionary view of others. They perceive their survival and continuity as achievable only at the expense of their rivals.

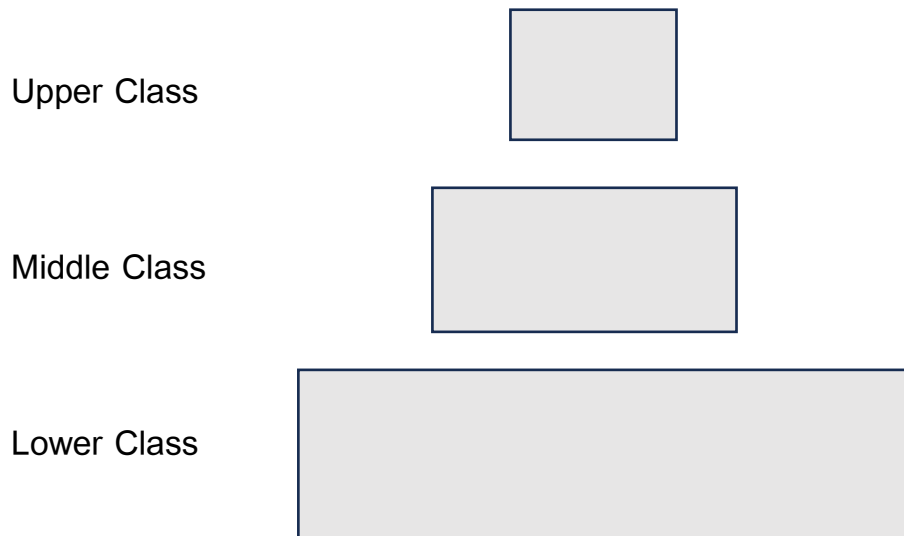
Figure (5) : A. Pyramidal structure :



Source : Nasr Mohamed Aref, op. cit., p. 220.

This is the most common and expressive form of class size distribution. As the name suggests, it takes the shape of a pyramid, narrowing as we move upward and widening as we move downward.

Figure (6): B. Hierarchical (Hydrarchic) Class Structure :



Source : Nasr Mohamed Aref, op. cit., p. 220.

This structure consists of stacked boxes from bottom to top without overlap. The largest box at the bottom represents the lower class, the middle box represents the middle class, and the smallest box at the top represents the upper class.

This type of class structure closely resembles Third World societies. Unlike the pyramidal class structure, which allows relatively easier social mobility, the hierarchical structure has rigid barriers between classes, making social mobility difficult.

9.6 – Determinants of Zero–Sum Conflict among Political Cliques :

A. Developmental Factors :

According to proponents of the group approach, development represents the transition from the dominance of spontaneous and non–associational groups to

associational and institutional groups. The greater the proportion of institutional groups within a society, the higher the level of political development, and vice versa.

B. Acquisition of Group Membership :

This factor is closely related to the previous one. Membership in a group may be voluntary, unlike membership in a class or elite. Since the concepts of elite, class, and group all consist of individuals, and the group concept forms the basic unit of analysis in both elite and class studies, the process of necessary renewal—where individuals rise from lower social levels to the political ruling elite—depends on their ability to join groups that defend their interests.

In developed countries, individuals enjoy wide freedom to join institutional and associational groups. These groups possess strong organization, peaceful channels for expressing interests, and clear agendas, often recruiting individuals based on competence and qualifications.

In developing countries, however, institutional groups often fragment into factions, cliques, or political cliques, based on shared characteristics such as: kinship ties /ideology /ethnicity /culture /regional affiliation /patronage networks. These characteristics act as barriers preventing individuals from joining them freely, reinforcing the exclusionary logic that produces zero-sum class conflict.

C. Conflicting Interests of Political Cliques:

These are reflected in the conflicting interests of dominant political cliques in developing societies. Class-based ideas and orientations exert a strong influence on political attitudes, even in the most advanced and socially

integrated states¹⁸². For instance, Marxist–Leninist analysis starts from the premise that the state is not a neutral apparatus but rather a tool used by the dominant social class to serve its interests. From this perspective, state political decisions become contingent upon the activities carried out by the ruling class to achieve and preserve its interests. Consequently, the conflict of interests between classes seeking change and the dominant class striving to maintain the status quo may impose a zero–sum class struggle.

D. The External Factor:

This is the most important element in this study, as it determines the direction of the relationship between the study variables. Interaction between active groups or political cliques in developing countries and international powers may impose a zero–sum class struggle on the former. When political elites and classes establish ties with external actors, they quickly transform into “internationalized groups.” The rise and decline of social classes in developing countries are influenced by elite circulation in major powers. Any change in the overall system of power relations in these powers is accompanied by changes within the social structure of developing countries. Thus, class conflict in developing countries, in its impact on authority, often reflects the structures, orientations, and practices of ruling elites in dominant states within the international system. Therefore, the competitive logic imposed by conflicting international interests—especially when multiple powers and interests are involved—may intensify zero–sum conflict among political cliques in developing societies.

According to McClelland, interaction within the international system is a process of exchange between active groups within the state and the

¹⁸² Karl W. Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations*, 2nd ed. (Cairo: The Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop. 1982), p. 78.

international environment. This interaction serves as a methodological framework for explaining changes in international reality. He argues that political events within the international system can be traced back to sub-systems such as pressure groups operating within system units (states). McClelland further assumes that the form of a state's social system plays a key role in shaping its external political behavior¹⁸³. Similarly, Oran Young emphasizes that international systems, like other social institutions, are products of human behavior and social group formations¹⁸⁴.

Although class conflict is historically linked to the existence of the state, class power relations extend beyond state boundaries¹⁸⁵. Ruling classes in developing countries often rely on their ties with international powers in their struggle against lower classes. For example, wealthy families in Bolivia have at times considered, with U.S. allies, scenarios for dividing the country, with Santa Cruz serving as a central hub to control oil and gas resources¹⁸⁶.

Based on the above, elite circulation in developing countries can be analyzed through a class-based perspective by identifying types of bourgeois classes, their sources of power, and their connections to elites in major powers. Changes in elite structures in dominant states lead to transformations in the social and political structures of developing countries, reinforcing zero-sum conflicts among political cliques.

¹⁸³ James E. Dougherty, and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, *Op. Cit*, pp. 119 – 120.

¹⁸⁴ Oran Young, "Regime Dynamics : The Rise and Fall of International Organization," *International Organization* 36, no. 2 (1982), p. 280.

¹⁸⁵ Nicos Poulantzas, *State Theory*, trans. by Michel Kilo, 2nd ed. (Beirut : Al-Tanweer for Printing Publishing and Distribution, 2010), pp. 35–36.

¹⁸⁶ Fawzi Saloukh, *Diplomatic Approaches to Regional and International Conflicts*, 1st ed Beirut : Dar Al-Manhal Al-Lubnani, 2006), p. 119.

9.7 – Methodological Framework:

To address these issues, the study employs approaches from the contemporary behavioral school: group, elite, and class approaches, with emphasis on the concept of the group as the primary unit of analysis. These approaches are complemented by both qualitative and quantitative tools, including probability space, conditional probability, and categorical measurement levels, forming a comprehensive framework for analyzing and preventing zero-sum conflicts.

9.8 – Building a Predictive Tool:

The study proposes a hybrid analytical tool combining qualitative and quantitative methods to forecast political developments and mitigate zero-sum conflicts.

9.8.1 – Qualitative Analytical Tools :

Qualitative analytical tools derive from the integrative nature of the analytical characteristics embedded within the Group, Elite, and Class approaches. Collectively, these approaches provide valuable frameworks for addressing a wide range of complex political issues that often remain unresolved in empirical research—such as power conflicts within urban social structures. Their effectiveness stems from their integrative capacity, which is itself the result of significant conceptual and analytical overlap among them. This overlap enables each approach to compensate for the limitations of the others, thereby reinforcing their collective explanatory power.

A – Conceptual Framework :

A considerable degree of conceptual convergence exists among the three approaches. The Group approach, for instance, incorporates many of the fundamental assumptions underlying Class analysis. Both approaches conceptualize society as being divided into units based on shared interests, and they rely on similar conceptual tools, such as the notions of competing and conflicting interests. The concept of "conflict" constitutes a central analytical category in both frameworks. Moreover, both approaches treat social interaction as an independent variable while considering political phenomena as dependent variables¹⁸⁷.

However, despite the epistemological proximity between the Elite and Class approaches—given that the concept of the elite is constructed upon the same foundational premise as class stratification (i.e., the division between dominant and subordinate groups)¹⁸⁸—the Elite approach suffers from a major conceptual limitation. Specifically, its core concept, "elite," remains analytically imprecise and has often been described as theoretically fragile¹⁸⁹. This weakness can be mitigated through the adoption of the Class approach, whose central concept—"class"—is more rigorously defined. As a relational concept, class derives its meaning from its position within a broader hierarchical structure, thereby offering greater analytical precision.

B – Information Gathering :

The process of information collection presents significant challenges, particularly for the Group approach. This approach encounters difficulties due to the elusive nature of non-associational and anomic groups, which often

¹⁸⁷ Mohamed Arif Nasr , Epistemology of Comparative Politics (The Cognitive Model – Theory – Methodology), Op. Cit, p. 235.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 223.

¹⁸⁹ Jaber El-Sayed Saeed Awad, previously cited reference, p. 103.

exert considerable influence on political decision-making despite their lack of formal organization. The absence of institutional channels for data collection further complicates the study of such groups.

In response to these limitations, contemporary scholarship—particularly in the American context—has expanded its focus to encompass broader societal strata, thereby increasing interest in the Class approach as an alternative analytical framework. While data collection within the Class approach is feasible, it remains complex and resource-intensive due to its comprehensive scope, which necessitates the examination of all social classes and strata within society.

Proponents of the Elite approach argue that this challenge can be addressed by narrowing the scope of analysis. Although elites may also exhibit a degree of opacity¹⁹⁰, the analytical focus on a relatively small and identifiable group enhances the feasibility of data collection. This approach is based on the assumption that political power is concentrated within the elite; therefore, studying this group alone is considered sufficient for understanding political dynamics.

C – Foundations of Analysis :

The analytical foundations of these approaches are rooted in the structural composition of society—that is, the underlying basis upon which societies are formed and organized. These foundations vary across societies, thereby influencing the methodological suitability of each approach.

The Class approach has been widely criticized for its strong ideological orientation, as it is largely derived from Marxist theory. Consequently, its analytical foundations are often perceived as normative rather than strictly

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, pp. 103 – 104.

empirical. Furthermore, its emphasis on economic factors limits its applicability in analyzing societies characterized by a dominant middle class or those lacking strong class-based political movements. Additionally, scholars continue to disagree on the criteria for determining class membership.

Similarly, the Group approach has been criticized for its tendency to focus predominantly on formal and institutionalized groups, for which data is more readily available, while neglecting informal and anomic groups. This limitation renders the approach more applicable to advanced industrial societies than to developing contexts, where informal structures often play a significant role in political life.

This shortcoming can be overcome through the elite approach, as the foundations upon which it is based are clearer and more objective. The position of elites in all societies rests on a set of bases, namely: the military base, the economic base, and the cultural, artistic, or professional base—albeit in varying proportions. In some societies, a particular type of elite may dominate over others. For example, Iranian and Saudi societies are predominantly characterized by religious elites, while the economic elite prevails in the United States¹⁹¹. In many Third World countries, military elites tend to dominate; for this reason, these states have often experienced the widespread phenomenon of military coups¹⁹². This variation among societies makes this approach more suitable for comparative studies.

9.8.2 – Quantitative Tools:

These translate qualitative analysis into mathematical terms through:

Probability Sample Space: representing all possible elite configurations.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, pp.98 – 99.

¹⁹² Lloyd Hassan, *Interpretation of Foreign Policy*, trans. by Mohammed bin Ahmed Mufti and Mohammed Al-Sayed Selim, 1st ed. (Riyadh: King Saud University Press, 1989), p. 160.

Categorical Measurement Levels: dividing elites into age groups (short-, medium-, long-term influence).

Conditional Probability Rule: used to estimate the likelihood of political events.

A – The Probabilistic Sample Space:

The probabilistic sample space comprises all possible outcomes of a random experiment. The sample space may be denoted by (S); the concept of the "Elite" by (E); the concept of the "Religious Elite" by (ER); the concept of the "Military Elite" by (EM); the concept of the "Economic-Capitalist Elite" by (EC); and the concept of the "Technocratic Elite" by (ET). For instance, if the dominant elite within the hegemonic powers constituting the structure of the international system is the Economic-Capitalist Elite, then the sample space would appear as follows:

$S = (ME, TE, RE) (TE, ME, RE) (RE, ME, TE)$

$(TE, RE, ME) (ME, RE, TE) (RE, TE, ME)$

$(ME, ME, RE) (ME, RE, ME) (RE, RE, ME)$

$(RE, ME, RE) (RE, ME, ME) (ME, RE, RE)$

$(ME, ME, TE) (ME, TE, ME) (TE, TE, ME)$

$(TE, ME, TE) (TE, ME, ME) (ME, TE, TE)$

$(RE, RE, TE) (RE, TE, RE) (TE, TE, RE)$

$(TE, RE, TE) (TE, RE, RE) (RE, TE, TE)$. Given the relative nature of social phenomena, the following cases were excluded from the sample space:

(ME, ME, ME), (TE, TE, TE), and (RE, RE, RE). Consequently, the analysis was limited to 24 cases. This decision is attributed to a set of reasons and considerations, which we outline as follows:

1. The phenomenon of elite circulation is among the most complex and volatile of social phenomena—even within advanced and socially cohesive societies. Accordingly, the notion of any of the aforementioned elites maintaining a state of permanent stability in power is an improbable scenario.
2. Considerations pertaining to the elite members themselves—such as advancing age (and the consequent susceptibility to senility, dementia, and memory loss), retirement, or even death.
3. Considerations regarding shifts in the prevailing political culture within society, and the impact of such shifts on class conflict in major states—which, in turn, leads to changes in social structures and, subsequently, to changes in the political structure (i.e., the circulation of political elites).
4. The difficulty in identifying or tracking changes affecting the specific characteristics of the phenomenon under investigation—particularly regarding the temporal scope of elite circulation. This is further complicated by the accompanying paradigmatic shifts in the structure of the international system, the duration of which generally does not exceed a period of approximately 40 years.
5. Considerations related to paradigmatic shifts in the structure of the international system, and the impact of these shifts on the broader phenomenon of continuity and change among political elites.

B – The Categorical Measurement Level:

This level encompasses various classifications of age groups among elite members within the states that dominate the structure of the international system. From a temporal perspective, these classifications yield three distinct ranges, defined as follows:

Category One: (20 to 39 years = Short-term range).

Category Two: (40 to 59 years = Medium-term range).

Category Three: (60 years and above = Long-term range).

To illustrate the dynamics of elite circulation, we apply the hypothesis positing that "there exists an inverse relationship between the age groups of elite members and the temporal duration of their circulation." This approach is grounded in the measurement of indicators specific to the "elite age groups" variable, analyzed in relation to the temporal span of their circulation within the aforementioned sample space. Furthermore, this analysis underscores the probability that the social strata recruited into activist groups within major powers will—in the future—evolve into the ruling elites of those nations; consequently, the cycle of elite circulation within these major powers significantly influences the processes of social class ascent and decline within developing nations.

C – The Rule of Conditional Probability:

The fundamental objective behind employing probabilities within the scope of this paper is to ascertain the instances of success—or the actual occurrence—of an international event, as opposed to instances of failure—or its non—

occurrence. Generally, the probability of the occurrence of an international event can be calculated in accordance with the following probabilistic rule¹⁹³:

$$\Pr(E) = (\text{Number of Success Cases}) / (\text{Total Number of Cases}) = X/n$$

However, within the framework of the rule of conditional probability*, an event generally manifests in one of two distinct forms: it may be an *independent event*—meaning that the occurrence of a specific event does not influence the occurrence of other events—or a *mutually exclusive event*—meaning that the occurrence of one event precludes the occurrence of the others¹⁹⁴. Consequently, determining the future trajectory of international events is a matter that can be empirically established by forecasting the rotation of elites within the dominant states of the international system's structure. This forecasting is based on observing probabilistic occurrences—specifically those classified as mutually exclusive events—within the theoretical framework of probability, and is governed by the following rule:

$$\Pr(B|A) = \Pr(A \cap B) / \Pr(A)$$

Case One: This case, in turn, subdivides into three potential sub-cases:

Sub-case One: This scenario involves the rise of one of the elites identified within the sample space—specifically as an alternative to the capitalist economic elite—for a single time period in the short term. For instance, if this alternative elite happens to be the military elite, the possible sequences of events regarding the military elite's rise as a substitute for the capitalist economic elite in the short term would be as follows:

¹⁹³ Samir Salim El Abidi and Djamel Ibrahim El Bayati, *Applied Statistics: Methods of Hypothesis Testing and Other Topics in Statistical Inference*, 1st ed. (Benghazi : Dar Shumoua Al-Thaqafa for Printing Publishing and Distribution, 2002), p.11.

¹⁹⁴ Murray R. Spiegel, *Theory and Problems of Statistics*, trans. by Shaaban Abdel Hamid Shaaban, 5th ed. (Cairo: International Publishing and Distribution House, 1998), p. 159.

(ME, TE, RE) | (ME, RE, TE) | (ME, RE, ME)

(ME, RE, RE) | (ME, TE, ME) | (ME, TE, ...) (n.t.)—that is, 6 cases.

Thus, if Event A represents the rate of recruitment of social groups with military backgrounds into the power structures of states dominant within the international system, and Event B represents instances of the rise of a military elite—occurring within a single timeframe over the short term—within the probabilistic sample space, then:

$$P(AB) = \Pr(B|A) \times P(A)$$

That is:

$$(6/24) \times (70/100) = 0.175$$

Consequently, the probability of a social group with a military background rising to prominence—serving as an alternative to the capitalist economic elite in states dominant within the international system—within a single timeframe (estimated at 20 years) over the short term is 17.5%.

Sub-case 2: In which the rise of...

For example, the probability of a military elite replacing a capitalist elite in the short term is calculated at 17.5%, while technocratic and religious elites have probabilities of 10.83% and 16.25%, respectively.

9.9 – Types of Elites in Arab Context:

Traditional Adaptive Elites – based on kinship and religion.

Modernizing Reformist Elites – middle-class, democratic-oriented.

Revolutionary Mobilizational Elites – driven by radical change and often reliant on force.

Proposed Mechanism: Self-Transformation Process:

A preventive mechanism aimed at managing zero-sum conflict by aligning domestic elites with shifts in global elite structures:

If global elites are capitalist → rely on traditional elites.

If military → rely on revolutionary elites.

If technocratic → rely on reformist elites.

9.9.1 – Recommendations:

Diversify political elites to avoid authoritarian concentration.

Expand institutional capacity to absorb different elite types.

Promote national loyalty across all social classes.

Enhance strategic awareness among policymakers.

9.9.2 – Advantages of the Proposed Tool:

Preserves social cohesion.

Balances conflict and cooperation.

Enhances adaptability to global changes.

Promotes value convergence among elites, reducing internal conflicts.

Conclusion:

The study provides a comprehensive analytical and predictive framework for understanding elite dynamics and mitigating zero-sum conflicts in developing countries, particularly in the Arab world, within the evolving structure of the international system.

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