

The revolution in comparative politics

All these factors led to dynamic efforts in innovation and to an effort to create a new rational order. The result was, as Sidney Verba so aptly comments, ' A revolution in comparative politics' . Verba has adequately summed up the principles behind the ' revolution' : ' Look beyond description to more theoretically relevant problems; look beyond the formal institutions of government to political process and political functions; and look beyond the countries of Western Europe to the new nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America.' In the language of Almond and Powell, the efforts at innovation were motivated by the search for more comprehensive scope, the search for realism, the search for precision and the search for theoretical order.

Nature and directions of the transformation

It is not really needed at this stage to concern ourselves with the specifics of the behavioural phenomena. A more apt thought will be the general nature of the transformation brought about by behavioural influence in the field of government and politics and the central features of this approach within the purview of our study. It must be noted that the behavioural approach has now been generally accepted and incorporated into the discipline.

Under the influence of the behavioural reform, the institutional mode of analysis has been restored by the process mode. Behaviourists study the behaviour of people and

groups rather than the structure, institutions, ideologies or events. It is now largely agreed that the process mode avoids the static quality of structural analysis. It has a dynamic dimension that is particularly valuable in accurately capturing the mercurial quality of political life. Secondly, the state was no more regarded as the central organizing concept, and attention was now paid to the empirical investigation of relations among human beings. Smaller, more manageable units like individuals and groups and their interaction became the centre of study. In the third place, one of the directions of practical innovation had been the redefining of institutions as systems of related individual behaviour or systems of social action. For example, instead of studying the American Supreme Court or the American Congress as isolated institutions, behaviourists enquire about the behaviour patterns of the justices of the Supreme Court and of the members of the Congress. In the fourth place, in terms of the methods, one finds a diverse tendency toward the building of complicated models, the use of quantitative techniques of statistical measurements and management of computers in speeding up the management of large amounts of quantitative data and in stimulating administrative or military processes of decision-making. Lastly, as Sydney Verba has examined, some of the fruits of revolution have been a rich body of theoretical literature, a proliferation of frameworks, paradigms and theories,

and elaborate system models, which are important as part of the intellectual equipment of the students of political systems. Some of these paradigms and frameworks have often been so abstract as to suggest no clear focus on problem, but nobody can question the utility of these models in accounting for the observed regularities of political behaviour and for providing a solid foundation for its further study.