

Philosophical Approach

In this approach, the study of state, government, power and man as a political being is inextricably linked with the pursuit of certain goals, morals, truths or principles which is supposed to be underlying all knowledge and reality. Rousseau and Hegel used this method in their studies. This method implies that principles should be deduced from a series of general truths or assumptions. It admits 'an abstract ideal and draws deductions from it concerning the nature functions and aims of the State'. A certain view of human nature is taken for granted and deduction about the nature of political institutions are made. This approach is not strictly realistic because a political philosopher may lose sight of actual facts and may roam in darkness. The Republic by Plato and Utopia by Moore are the products of philosophical imagination. Philosophy deals with the ideals and aspirations of a society. An accurate knowledge of the political life of people can, as a matter of fact, be acquired with the help of a combination of the actuals and ideals in life.

Observation Approach

The next approach of dealing with the political phenomena is the method of observation. This approach was first adopted by Plato and Aristotle, and afterwards by Montesquieu and Lord Bryce. Lord Bryce emphasised the use of this method. He used this approach in the preparation of his two great books: The American

Commonwealth and Modern Democracies. He travelled several countries and collected the data after having studied personally the psychology of the political institutions. Lowell is also of the view that 'politics is an observational and an experimental science'. The main laboratory for the actual working of political institutions, writes Lowell, 'is not library but outside world of political life'. One may observe the behaviour of the human beings and deduce conclusions. This can be done either through deductive or inductive method. When one proceeds from a particular to the general, it is the inductive method. But when one proceeds from the general to the particular, it is known as deductive method. Thus, both inductive and deductive methods are included in the method of observation, which is becoming more popular. Political scientists are studying the behaviour of human beings and arriving at different conclusions.