

Political Science Facing the New Millennium: Issues and Answers

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Introduction

Political Science, one of man's oldest and richest forms of intellectual inquiry, reaches back to Plato's *Politeia* (Republic) and Aristotle's *Politics*. The *Politeia* identifies the structures and functions of the ideal state and Aristotle, who considers man fundamentally a social creature, i.e, a political animal, created the basis for modern theories of government, especially by his distinction of the different forms of government. Today, political scientists worldwide continue to struggle with and analyze the vagaries associated with the notion of ideal state and the type and form of government that might provide the greatest good for the greatest number. The vast array of subjects being studied and methodologies being employed severely limits any delated or authoritative discussion of where the discipline might find itself in the twenty-first century. In this light, the following represents a perspective offered from the viewpoint of an American comparativist/international relations specialist and should not be construed as being either comprehensive or representative in any way of the broad and otherwise rich body of literature that is being published in numerous languages other than English.

The task at hand is to offer or lend some perspective to what the disciple of political science might be facing in the twenty-first century. This daunting task will be approached by first, revisiting the history of the development of the discipline; second, to touch on the objectives/methods debate; third, to provide some analysis of the current issues and their concomitant responses as reflected in the American literature; fourth, to provide an overview of one of the pressing and highly debated concepts of "Globalism" and, finally, offer some prescriptions for change.

Revisiting the Discipline

In its long and tumultuous history of development the field has taken uncertain first steps, has made new and important discoveries, and suffered major

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disappointments. Today, political scientists and their colleagues in sister disciplines struggle with the issues of the common era: they are complex, often daunting and are becoming increasingly critical as our quality of life and very existence depend on policies that address people, the core interest of any social science.

As the human condition is one of continuous growth and change so, too, is the discipline concerned with the systematic study of public affairs. Political science is today what it has become over time. In this light, what has become and where it might be going-the topic of this conference-is impossible to understand or approximate without knowing where it has been. In this light, Gregory- Scott estimates that the discipline has progressed through at least seven great eras, each defined by the following two important characteristics: (1) The objectives of the people who studied politics, and (2) the methods they employed to meet their objectives.¹ A truncated version of Hcott's analysis is offered below.

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Scholarly Objectives</u>	<u>Predominant Methods</u>
To 2000 BCE	Unity	Denial of Politics
2000 BCE-400 BCE	Individuality	Participation in Politics
400 BCE-400 CE	Good	Logic and Observation of Politics
400-1500	Government	Revelation and Reason about Politics
1500-1900	Godly	Rational Analysis of Political Experience
1900-1970	Government	Political Experience
1970-fifth millenium (?)	Facts	Observing Political Behavior
	Disciplinary Identity	Creative Synthesis of Methods and Data

Methods and Objectives

Over the millennia objectives and methods have proven themselves to be pivotal conceptual tools when seeking to explain the evolution of the discipline. Objectives have ranged from investigating the notion of being one with the cosmos² to what has become a rich literature dedicated to modifying the discipline to meet the exigencies of new era. With respect to methods, every system of inquiry is based, implicit or explicit, on a model, pattern of example that helps organize thought and give direction to research. As scientific research requires explicit paradigms which seek to develop systematic observations of natural events and conditions in order to discover facts about them and to formulate laws and principles based these acts,

political science has struggled since the nineteenth century to incorporate scientific methods. A considerable of debate has ensued. For example, the comparative field has in its evolution focused on three approaches as it relates to the development of a science of politics. First, the traditional approach which historically interrelated fact and value in the study of comparative politics became, in the early twentieth century, a subfield dedicated to the institutions of individual countries, descriptive, parochial, and static.³ Second, the behavioral approach that emerged in the 1950s and fully entrenched in the discipline by the 1960s emphasized the application of scientific methods and perspectives to the study of politics and government. Behavioralism focuses on the actual behavior of individuals and groups rather than on their formal roles or the institutions and structures within which they function. The development of the third approach, postbehavioralism, was as much an expression of dissatisfaction with the traditional and behavioral approaches as it is an attempt to further refine the discipline. The postbehavioralists have argued that the behavioralist's overemphasis on methodology has served to dissociate the discipline from the real substance and issues of politics,⁴ David Easton, writing as far back as 1969 addressed the concerns of many in the discipline by calling this a "post-behavioral revolution."

What I have called the postbehavioral revolution—a name generally used for this next phase—began during the 1960s and is still with us today. It represents a deep dissatisfaction with the results of behavioralism but has not led to the abandonment of scientific method in political science. The postbehavioral movement, in its broadest meaning, represented the awakening of the modern world to the dangers of rapid and unregulated industrialization, ethnic and sexual discrimination, world poverty, and nuclear war.⁵

Debate continues within the discipline simply because of the shifting emphases of the above approaches. To be certain, approaches have replaced each other throughout the history of the discipline and will continue to do so.

With the recent and dramatic shift in world affairs, particularly since the fall of the Soviet Union, we find ourselves on the cusp of yet another era. Social scientists in this new global era are facing a wide range of pressing issues. Population statistics are rising with concomitant demographic shifts taking place; food sufficiency in the underdeveloped world is becoming increasingly problematic; we are facing a new wave of weapons proliferation with profound destructive potential; issues focusing on the competition for energy resources have and will continue; the challenges of global economic restructuring are many and differ significantly across countries; the impact of increasing environmental damage; regional and ethno-linguistic conflicts and the "war on terrorism" have all necessitated a change in how political scientists approach the study of politics. Namely, the need to seek out new paradigms—or, in the words of Thomas Kuhn "research firmly based upon one or more past scientific achievements, achievements that some particular scientific community

acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for its further practice.⁶ As Ronald Chilcote points out, a paradigm gains in status as it becomes more successful than a competing paradigm in solving problems recognized as important.⁷ Unfortunately, we in the American comparative and international relations fields, are still in the stage of developing many, often poorly constructed, competing paradigms.

In the above light, one area that cries out for analytical attention and rigor is that of the construction of an Islamic paradigm. Why not? With a clear but complex set of internal variables which range from personal religious convictions to that of economic policies and international relations and law; a population that represents over one fifth of human kind; and, since the horrors of 9/11, a belief system that is regularly pilloried by Western pundits who have had little or no academic training suggests that our understanding of the doctrine and its complexities as expressed across a wide variety of cultures is in drastic need of further study and analysis. Whereas both the comparative and the international relations fields has long operated on the orthodox/radical frames of reference or have sought out analytical comfort in, among others, the idealist, realist, transnationalist paradigms, little is being said or done relative to the rich body of Islamic thought.

Similarly, Chilcote argues that in the comparative politics field [only] the orthodox and radical paradigms dominate. By tracing the theoretical and conceptual roots of each, Chilcote concludes that behavioralism can be traced to the positivist

Chilcote's Characteristics of the Orthodox and Radical Paradigms

Characteristics	Orthodox Paradigm	Radical Paradigm
Thrust	Ahistorical Micro or macro Compartmentalized Disciplinary boundaries	Holistic Macro Unified Interdisciplinary
Unit of analysis	System, in equilibrium, stable	State, in conflict
Structure	Groups, interaction and civic Culture	Classes, struggle between bourgeoisie and proletarians
Authority	Order decentralized Authority narrowly based Within specialized units	Order centralized with scope of authority broad and general
Rulers	Diffused, dispersed among Many centers, pluralist Competition in decision making	Concentrated and unified in a dominant position of authority and decision making
Development	Evolutionary, unilinear, materialistic, progressive	Revolutionary, multilinear, materialistic, and humanistic in attention to needs of all people

tradition of David Hume, Auguste Comte and Herbert Spenser. On the other hand, the radical paradigms can be traced to historicist thought which postulates that there are a variety of views, not a single view, of the objective world.⁸ Thinkers in the historicist tradition include Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Karl Mannheim and others. Exemplary of Chilcote's treatment of the debate is his comparative table of paradigms characteristics is summarized below.⁹

Chilcote's list of characteristics becomes increasingly important for contemporary comparative analysis because it **underscores if not illuminates the ever increasing need to synthesize our approaches, restructure our paradigms and seek out not only cross-disciplinary collaboration but international scholarly exchange on the issues that have clear global as well as domestic ramifications.** Jeffrey Kopstein and Mark Lichbach point out that the new global era has brought about certain internal (domestic) societal issues that have surfaced in the following ways:¹⁰

- Various kinds of subnationalisms involving territorial minorities have attempted to separate nations from states.¹¹
- Religious fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam continue to challenge the individualism, materialism and secularism of the Western-style state.
- The rise in gender politics-as shown in the struggles for political representation of women, gays, lesbians, and bisexuals-also challenges the nation-state from below by stressing the politics of diversity and cultural pluralism.
- The authority of the state is challenged from below by libertarians who want deregulation, privatization, and the control of welfare-state expenditures and public-sector taxes, and by environmentalists who seek to control the effects of economic growth.

The internationalization of domestic politics and the consequent interdependence of nations leads Kopstein and Lichboch to conclude, among other things, that

Herein lies another paradox of globalizations and heterogeneities: The source of globalization, the West, is also frequently the source of the challenges to it. Liberalism, democracy, fascism, and socialism for example, are all Western inventions.¹²

Charges of analytical biases and ethnocentrism in American political science publications-challenges that can have profound consequences if perceived as being linked to foreign policy initiatives and actions-abound. Recent studies shed light on the question of the "impact factor" found in American political science journals.

According to one study, American political scientists generate the largest share of published works today and American universities tend to dominate the field in terms of works cited in the scholarly literature. In research conducted by ISI Essential Science Indicators (ESI) a web-based data file reflecting upwards of 7

million papers published in 85,000 ISI-indexed journals over the last decade, covering 2 main fields of science and the social sciences, American scholarly journals ranked for the year 2000 "impact factor" clearly dominate the field. "The 'Impact Factor' is calculated by taking the number of all current citations to source items published in a journal over the precious two years and dividing by the number of articles published in the journal during the same period-in other words, a ratio between citations and recent citable items published."¹³

Journals Ranked by Impact: Political Science (ISI Essential Science Indicators)

Rank	Journal
1	American Political Science Review
2	American Journal of Political Science
3	New Left Review
4	Review of International Political Economy
5	Political Science
6	Political Geography
7	East European Political Science
8	Comparative Political Studies
9	Comparative Politics
10	Journal of Democracy

Additional data from the same source identifies the *American Political Science Review* (APSR) as the leading journal from as early as 1981. *The American Journal of Political Science* also maintained its second place ranking since 1981. Obvious questions arise when such data is presented, namely what financial advantages are accrued by very large professional organizations in the United States? What is the direct benefit, if any, of a large membership pool of scholars? How can certain technological advantages add to the mix? How many of the authors use English as their first language? Do editorial policies reflect, in the main, decidedly *American interests*?

The APSR is the publication of the American Political Science Association (APSA), the largest organization of its kind in the United States. The journal, widely considered as "mainstream" with a strong behavioralist/quantitative orientation is a quarterly, peer reviewed publication. It was first published in 1906 and is considered by many to be the preeminent political science journal in the United States. The APSA was founded in 1903 and is the major professional society for those engaged in the study of politics and government.

A similar study which focused on the role and influence of American institutions of higher education presented similar trends of American leadership in the social sciences. ESI research using a system based on the number of published papers in the social sciences and their corresponding number of citations recorded in journals

between 1991 and June 2002 suggest that the top five most-cited institutions in the world are American.¹⁴ The table below represents an abbreviated treatment of the ESI research.

Social Sciences (Georal): WorfcTs Most-Cited Institutions, 1991-2001

Rank	Institution	Number of Papers	Citations
1	Harvard University	4,267	28,439
2	University of Michigan	3,325	21,172
3	University of California, LosAngeles(UCLA)	3,285	21,013
4	University of Wisconsin	3,882	19,326
5	University of IUinois	3,428	15,586

Again, a wide range of intervening variables remain to be calculated into the above data as institutional funding, faculty research grants, and teaching load all play a role in the production and publishing of papers.

Perhaps, given the current climate of international affairs, additional emphasis should be placed on the state of international scholarly exchange than on a clear dominance of the American academy. For example, to what degree are American and Turkish scholars conducting and publishing their joint research on issues of international concern? What channels, administrative efforts, and funding mechanisms currently exist to ensure that formal exchange agreements are sufficiently in place to create the necessary environment for continued collaborative research? The answers to these questions, particularly as they relate to recently signed Memoranda of Agreement between Gazi University and California State University, San Bernardino remain to be seen.¹⁵ It is apparent however that the idea of joint conferences is not only unusual but serves to highlight the shared commitment to continued scholarly dialogue.¹⁶

The Discipline: What the Future Holds

As the formal study of politics as been with us for over four millennia, we can subsume that the twenty-first century will continue to find us grappling with complex issues and methods, seeking answers, debating and investigating a whole range of issues related to people and seeking the greater good.

Not unlike previous eras, we find ourselves facing a wide range of issues. How well or through what theories, concepts and models might we address these issues? What new paradigms will replace the old? As the objectives and methods of the discipline will continue to rest with individual researchers the inherent problem of bias will, of course, remain with us. As Gregory Scott points out

As political scientists, we accept the search for answers to these questions and many more. As creative political scientists, we know no bounds in asking questions about politics. As responsible political scientists, we were bounded in our investigations by integrity, ethics, openness, sincerity, faith in ourselves, and respect both for our own limitations and for the perspective of others¹⁷.

Narrowly stated and from a contemporary vantage point the issue that seems to have captured the attention of the international and comparative politics fields and which has continued to defy resolution and explanation is the concept of Globalization.

Many definitions have been offered but "Globalization" continues to be the subject of a definitional debate.¹⁸ Just as Scott labeled eras of history, certainly the modern era with such terms as the "depression," "roaring twenties," the "Space Age," and the "Cold War," served to define specific periods of history as well. With the world community tied more closely than any time in history through advanced communications technology, travel, commerce, communicable diseases and shared environmental concerns, it has become clear that the rapid change from a bi-polar world to one of a multitude of clashing perspectives or world views is upon us. The key is to define our current environment. In his book *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Thomas Friedman wrote:

Globalization is not a phenomenon. It is not just some passing trend. Today it is an overarching international system shaping the domestic politics and foreign relations of virtually every country, and we need to understand it as such.¹⁹

Political scientists are tasked with objectifying the dynamics associated with the term "globalism" using time tested scientifically derived and tested methods. There seems to be little evidence to suggest it will become, in the immediate future, a paradigm per se, but it will certainly rival other approaches in the development, political economy and international economic fields. As Friedman points out

Globalization can be incredibly empowering and incredibly coercive. It can democratize opportunity and democratize panic. It makes the whales bigger and the minnows stronger. It leaves you behind faster and faster, and it catches up to your fast and faster. While it is homogenizing cultures, it is also enabling people to share their unique individuality farther and wider.²⁰

While Friedman wishes to define the term in the context of a "system" which represents a complex array of good and evil, others on both the right and left, argue that is a threat to national sovereignty and the first step toward the establishment of a world government or it is simply a sham and cover up for the corporate economic interests who are escaping the scrutiny and regulation imposed on them by their own governments.

Perhaps the inherent confusion associated with the term has led many down a not well-informed path of anti-globalism, In November and December 1999, activists

disrupted a week-long meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle. Protests have also occurred in Europe, Canada and Washington, DC. As suggested above, anti-globalists come from a wide spectrum of the international community, Trade unions tend to be "anti-global" because of job security issues; environmental organizations attack the WTO because they believe the organization has lowered restrictions on business practices; and poor nations argue that free trade is a benefit for richer nations at the expense of poorer nations because tariff barriers and subsidies tend to punish the poor.

Organized by the United Nations, the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, the successor to the much-vaunted Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro a decade ago is likely candidate for cynicism.²¹ The rejection by the senior Bush at the Rio conference and his son's withdrawal from the Kyoto treaty on climate change last year, suggests-along with strong EU and American domestic policies which provide huge farm subsidies to protect domestic farmers-there is little chance for success at Johannesburg. As one analyst points out, the markets in sugar, coffee, cotton and other commodities that tropical farmers can grow cheaply are distorted by subsidies of \$300 billion a year to rich-world growers. For sugar alone, the EU puts 140% tariffs on many imports from Africa, supports its own sugar-beet farms to the tune of \$1.6 billion a year, and adding insult to injury by dumping surpluses in overseas markets.²²

One of the basic units of analysis in the study of international relations and comparative politics is the concept of state sovereignty. Definitional issues notwithstanding, has the "globalization era" truly captured the public imagination? Have or will supranational organizations threaten and ultimately undermine the notion of the supreme authority of the state? Will the principle of sovereignty remain dominant in the twenty-first century? The nagging question for many, particularly the concerns echoed from the far right, is whether supranational organizations such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, certain non-governmental organizations and regional defense alliances could reach a stage of development where the latter could assume some of the security responsibilities normally associated with a states' right of self-defense. Certainly voluntary membership in a wide range of international organizations serves the perceived best interest of the state and, too, membership also carries the burden of participation and acceptance of the vote of the majority. A nation's participation in IOs carries with it certain internal political liabilities that have surfaced and will continue to exacerbate state-state relations. The likelihood of a world "government" occurring in the millennium is next to nil and the loss of certain previously envisioned "sovereign rights" could and in some cases should be subjected to international mediation and/or arbitration.

Conclusion

The hypothetical work associated with explaining the present and predicting the future will necessarily create scenarios that with both complement and contradict each other. It is, then, the task of political scientists-particularly in the era in which we find ourselves-to continue to recognize that we are not alone, that we share the planet and our lives and futures are inextricably tied. Clearly, in our pursuit of knowledge a variety of responses will be generated from the complex array of views that constantly assault man's faculties and capacities. This being said, it seems that as educators and good citizens we must continue to stimulate the debate based on the time honored position that education should aim to make men good as men and as citizens. Drawing on Plato's response to the question dealing with the importance of education and its outcome, he opined that "the answer is easy-that education makes good men, and that good men act nobly."²³

Endnotes

- ¹ Gregory M. Scott, *Political Science: Foundations for a Fifth Millennium* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: 1997): 18.
- ² See for example, Mircea Eliade, *Myth of the Eternal Return or Cosmos and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).
- ³ Roy C. Macridis, *The Study of Comparative Government: Studies in Political Science*. (New York: Random House, 1955): 21.
- ⁴ Jack C. Plano, Robert E. Riggs and Helenan S. Robin, *The Dictionary of Political Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Santa Barbara, 1982): 110-111.
- ³ David Easton, *Political Science in the United States Past and Present*. (London: Routledge, 1991): 61.
- ⁶ Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of the Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970): 10.
- ⁷ Ronald C. Chilcote, *Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981):59.
- ⁸ Chilcote, 69.
- ⁹ Chilcote, 74.
- ¹⁰ Jeffrey Kopstein and Mark Lichback, eds., *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 7.
- ¹¹ Of the several tribal and national minority conflicts raging today, the Filipino Muslim call for political autonomy, the Indian Kashmir crisis, the Kurds of Iraq, the Uigurs of China, and the Palestinian struggle for state hood are but a few of the issues facing nation states today.

¹² Kopstein and Lichboch, *supra*, 8.

¹³ See SCI-BITES: Journals Ranked by Impact: Political Science at

¹⁴ See SCI-Bites: X at

¹⁵ See Memorandum of Agreement signed by Gazi President Ayhan and CSUSB President Karnig in June, 2002.

¹⁶ In the pre-signing negotiations, agreements were made that Gazi University would host a joint Gazi University-CSUSB conference in October and CSUSB would host the conference in San Bernardino the following year.

¹⁷ Scott, *supra*, 15.

¹⁸ See Peter A. Hall and Sidney Tarrow, "Globalization and Area Studies: When Is Too Broad Too Narrow?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 23, 1998

¹⁹ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000).