CHAPTER - II

POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM : A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS
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Political parties are organised groups, seeking political power either by ballot or by force, within a political system. The modern parties have their origins in the 19th century Europe and the United States along with the development of electoral and parliamentary mechanisms.

The emerging industrial capitalism signaled the death knell of the old feudal order and ultimately caused the appearance of modern political parties as bourgeois agencies to challenge the hereditary authority of aristocrats and monarchs. Further, the increasing industrialisation, urbanisation, development of science, technology, transport and communication heralded epoch making breakthrough in human society and thereby making it more complex. Such a complex society resulted in a large labouring class, a further diversification of bourgeois class and the rise of middle class. These new classes occupied their role in the echelon of the decision making process of the political economy. For articulating their various emerging interests and demands, they organised a number of groups and associations. Later these organised groups were converted into political parties with the spreading of political activities and the extension of franchise.

The modern complex societies became more atomised and pluralist crumbling down the old social structures and traditional value system and bases of loyalty. After these cleavages, political parties prominently represented new ideology, structure and value system. They competed fiercely with each other, by patronising the interests of diversified segments of electorate, for securing their support. Hence, Socialist, Labour and Communist parties stood for securing the allegiance of the proletariat; Liberal parties strongly protected the interests of capital in the name of democracy and free enterprise; Christian parties in Europe tried to synthesize the demands of modern society with the values generated by the Church, Conservative parties,
other than Christian Parties, in Britain associated with the support for monarchical tradition rather than with the Church. However, in a democratic system, a distinction can be made between those parties which rose from within the ruling elites (e.g. Parliaments) such as Liberals and Conservatives and those which rose from outside the ruling elite (i.e. from the mass) such as the Socialist or Labour Parties.

The political parties can be placed into two broad categories viz. "Cadre Parties" and "Mass based Parties". The "Cadre Parties" are dominated by political elite groups of activists developed in Europe and America during 19th century. The right to vote is given to a larger number of people but the political influence is essentially limited to a very small segment. The Cadre Parties of 19th century reflected a fundamental conflict between two classes like aristocracy on the one hand and the bourgeoisie on the other. The former composed of landowners, depended upon rural estates on which a generally unlettered peasantry was held back by a traditional clergy. The bourgeoisie made up of industrialists, merchants, tradesmen, bankers, financiers and professional people, depended upon lower classes of clerks and industrial workers in the cities. The aristocrats developed conservative ideology. Both the Conservative and Liberal Cadre Parties emerged during the great social and economic movements and dominated Europe politics through electoral and parliamentary methods.

On the other hand "Mass based Parties" unite hundreds of thousands of followers, sometimes millions. Besides the number of membership, the party attempts to base itself on an appeal to the masses. It attempts to organise not only those who are influential or well known or those who represent special interest groups but rather citizen who is willing to join the party. If such a party succeeds in

1 Sirsakar and Fernades, *Indian Party Politics*, New Delhi, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1984, p. 3
gathering only a few adherents, then it is mass based only in potential. The Socialist Parties of continental countries developed on the mass basis for organising the growing population of labourer and wage earners because of industrialisation.

Etymologically, the term "party" has been derived from the old French word, Partir which means "to divide". Thus the political parties are organised groups, representing diversified interests, values and ideologies, to exercise power.

The students of political parties have got one common agreement that the "political parties channelise and institutionalise the power drives of the people". The political parties are the primary and the intermediary structures between society and government. They connect bridges to create a two way communication process between them "Political parties are the life line of modern politics."

Edmund Burke, Benjamin Constant and others conceive of party as an ideological group. In his famous definition, Burke says, "a party is a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principles in which they are all agreed". Burke cast parties in an ideological mould and differentiated them from factions which were considered as evil.

However, Hume intermingles the term "party" and "faction" but uses the former as those groups with a "principle". Highlighting the ideological aspects, Bryce observes "What life is to an organism, principles are to a party. When they which are its souls are vanished,

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3 Op Cit
4 Puspa Asthana, *Party System in India Development or Decay*, New Delhi, Criterion Publications, 1988, p 2
6 Edmund Burke, "Thoughts on the Present Discontents (1770)", in *the Works of Edmond Burke*, Vol 1, Boston, Little Brown, 1839, pp 425-6
Its body ought to dissolve ...."n Disraeli has summarised this as "a party is a group of men bound together to pursue certain principles "

Emphasising the theoretical and practical aspects of the principles of a party, Philip Friese holds party as "a common union of citizens agreed in opinion and design concerning government, and organised for the double purpose of propagating those opinions and designs by discussion, and of personifying them by the election and appointment of persons strongly entertaining them to fill the leading positions of the state."10 Although the principles are useful in studying the political parties but they are not the only characteristics to define a party.

A good number of scholars reject the normative overtone of the above definitions of party and characterise it as a power seeking instrument through electoral mechanisms. Max Weber describes a political party as "an associative type of social relationship, membership in which rests on formally free recruitment ... devoted to secular power within a corporate group for its leaders in order to attain ideal or material advantages for its active members (which) may consist in the realisation of certain objective policy for the attainment of personal advantages or both 11 Schumpeter contradicts the approaches of Burke by saying that "a party is a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for power 12 Anthony Downs defines a party as "a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election."13 Explaining the electoral nature of the political parties further, Austin Ranney and Willmoore view : "Political parties and autonomous organised groups that make nominations and contest

8 James Bryce, Modern Democracies, New York, Macmillan, 1921, p 54
10 Philip Friese, An Essay on Party, Showing Its Uses, Abuses and Natural Dissolution, New York, Fowler and Wells, 1856, p 7
12 J A Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, New York, Harper, 1950, p 283
elections in the hope of eventually gaining and exercising control of the personnel and policies of government.

Most of the parties are animated by the desire to capture power while formulating issues in terms of ideology. They play the game of power in the name of ideology. J La Palombara and Myron Weiner provide a broad definition of parties which includes such elements as:
(1) continuity in the organisation — that is, an organisation whose expected life span is not dependent on the life span of the current leaders, (2) manifest and presumably permanent organisation at the local level with the regularised communications and other relationships between local and national units, (3) self-conscious determination of leaders at both national and local levels to capture and hold decision making power alone or in coalition with others, not simply influence the exercise of power, and (4) a concern on the part of the organisation for seeking followers at the polls in some manner striving for popular support.

According to Joseph A. Schlesinger, political parties are "organisations whose goal was the capture of the public office in electoral competitions with one or more other parties. Subsequently the term party was extended to include political organisations not engaged in electoral competitions, minor parties which had not realistic expectations of gaining through appeals to electorate, revolutionary organisations seeking to abolish competitive elections and the governing groups in the totalitarian states."

Many scholars take the party as a political structure and study it from the standpoint of organisational characteristics. Duverger describes a political party as "a community with a particular structure"
and that the contemporary parties are "characterised by their anatomy" 17

Almond and Powell consider political parties as "the specialised, aggregation structure of modern societies" 18 Taking a similar line of approach Sorauf holds, "The political party may be defined as an agency for the organisation of political power characterised by exclusively political functions, by a stable structure and the inclusive membership, and by the ability to dominate the contesting elections 19 Sharing with Sorauf's view La Palombara and Weiner emphasise the stability and continuity of the party organisation 20 Duverger speaks of four possible structures of parties which are the caucus, the branch, the cell and the militia A "caucus" more like a committee relies on small membership with emphasis on quality rather than quantity It is a closed group which intensifies its activities during election time A "branch party", in contrast, is a mass party interested to enroll as many member as possible Its activities cover a wide range and are continuous The European Socialist Parties provide typical examples of the branch. The third type of party structure the "cell" - is a typical invention of the revolutionary political parties, its basis is not geographical but occupational The militia structure is more like a private army whose members are subjected to the discipline and training that one usually comes across in a military organisation It is a fascist creation more interested in overthrowing a democratic regime than in electoral and parliamentary politics Hitler's "Storm Troopers" and Mussolini's "fascist militia" provide examples of this structure Duverger points out that in the actual formations parties will always be having mixed structures

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17 Maurice Duverger, Political Parties, New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1954, p xv
20 Ibid
Robert Michels presented a provocative theory that all political parties—indeed all organisations and even the most democratic ones—are subjected to the iron law of oligarchy in the sense that they are controlled by a minority of leaders.21

On the basis of his studies of the socialist parties of Germany and Italy, he argued that decision-making power lay centered in the top echelon of party leadership. Leaders gain recognition over a long period of time for what they themselves come to accept as their own indispensability.

Neumann contests Michels' "glittering generalisation," and provides data to conform the equally omnipresent democratic, leveling and centrifugal forces encountered even within totalitarian regimes.22 He mentioned several determinants which could account for the different kinds of relationships with the party.

Samuel J. Eldersveld in his behavioural study of political parties advances the concept of "stratarchy" meaning thereby the structural styles of parties.23 He suggests four theoretical constructs about political parties (1) The party is clientele oriented structure and is open to recruit new members and also elites (2) The party is adaptive and its character is coalitional. It seeks to convert social interests into political power directly (3) The heterogeneity of membership and the subcoalitional system make centralised control difficult and even unwise (4) There is a career system within the party. A substantial section of its members are not power seekers, but only status seekers.

Other scholars like Ostrogorski, Michels and Schattschneider conceptualise party as an organisation and stress on formality.

explicitness, determinate location of authority etc. Although this idea of a party as an "organisational structure" provides useful tool for analysis, a pure organisational theory has got its own limitations. Another group of scholars consider party as a "social group". A scholar like Eldersveld views "The political party is a social group, a system of meaningful and patterned activity within the larger society. It consists of a set of individuals populating specific roles and behaving as member-actors of a boundaried and identifiable social unit." According to Raymond Aron "Political parties are voluntary groups, some more organised, some less, which claim in the name of a certain idea of the common interest and of society to assume, alone or in coalition, the function of the government." Emphasising the institutional dimension, Crotty holds the parties are "institutionalised agencies that share certain dimensions of behaviour. These dimensions include both common objective to influence and, if possible control decision-making-and related methods, distinguished by principally non-violent means directed towards occupying authoritative positions." Neumann offers a similar view and takes a political party as "the articulate organisation of society's active political agents, those who are concerned with the control of governmental power and who compete for popular support with another group or groups holding divergent views. As such it is the great intermediary which links social forces and ideologies to official governmental institutions and relates them to political action within the larger political community.

With the emergence of behavioural movement in political science, the Survey Research Centre of the University of Michigan
conducted party-identification studies and regarded a political party as a social formation exercising some influence on the people, "strong identification is equated with high significance of the group as an influential standard."29 Thus, the political parties are relatively permanent groups acting as institutionised agencies for influencing the people and creating support bases.

On the extreme side, parties have been conceptualised as instruments of conflict. Lipset and Rokkan consider parties as "alliances in conflict over policies and value commitments within the larger body-politic."30 This emphasises conflicts within populations as well as the promotion of coalitions to bridge cleavage lines. According to McDonald, a political party "represents a cleavage within the society and the political system in which it exists and functions. Where there is one party it represents a cleavage between those who are regarded as being within the party and all others. Where two or more parties exist side by side there is a cleavage between those who adhere to some party and to no party."31

Political parties operate under different forms of government and have different motivations and objectives in different political systems. Although political parties originally emerge within the framework of liberal democracy in nineteenth century, they have been utilised by undemocratic regimes for their own purposes. Tracing the rationale of political party in both liberal democratic and dictatorial regimes, La Palombara and Weiner write "The emergence of political party clearly implies that the masses must be taken into account by the political elite either out of a commitment to the ideological notion that

29 Angus Campbell, Geral Gurin, and Warron Miller, The Voter Decides, Evanston, Row, Peterson, 1954, pp 88-89
the masses have a right to participate in the determination of public policy or the selection of leadership or out of the realisation that even the rigidly dictatorial elite must find the organisational means of assuring stable conformance and control.\textsuperscript{32} 

The communist approach to treat political parties as representation of particular classes has inspired studies into the sociology of the political parties. This approach has also been extended to tracing the influence of such factors as ethnicity, religion, language or region or political affiliation. This approach is based on the argument that ideological orientations and organisational structures are determined by material factors or group identities and affiliations. But the arguments have been advanced to prove that the converse can be true. Parties and leaders not only reflect socio-economic forces but also seek to change and mould society and the economy.

However, all those conceptualisations and approaches do not carry common man's language to understand the meaning of the political party. Ranney takes an attempt to study the impression of American people regarding the meaning of the party. Analysing the Survey Research Centre's National Election Studies from 1952 to 1964, he finds that the popular concept of party has such divergent variations as "groups of leaders", "managers of government", "advocates of general philosophies", "proponents of specific policies", "champions and enemies of groups", "organisations conducting conventions and campaigns", "certain kinds of people" etc.\textsuperscript{33}

**FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTY:**

In the context of the above definitions and approaches of the political parties, an attempt is in order to discuss, in the broader

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\textsuperscript{32} J La Palombara and M Weiner, *Op. Cit.*, p 4
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perspectives, their principal functions in society and polity. Of course, the functions which the parties perform, necessarily depend upon the nature of the political system and the society as a whole under which they operate.

One of the most important functions of political parties is that of uniting, simplifying and stabilising the political process. They tend to provide the highest common denominator. They bring together sectional interests, overcome geographical distances, and induce cohesion. Due to the diversified nature of the society and polity, conflicts are obvious. These conflicts reflect the clash of various interests with each other. While the system satisfies a section by acting up to its expectations, the other one may remain dissatisfied because of its unsolved grievances. The later develops a psyche of deprivation and ultimately becomes indifferent and alienated from the system. The alienation occurs in either passive form of "apathy" or active form of violence etc. It may so happen that the hostile feelings of alienation encourage the people to take up arms or secede from the system. Here the political parties try to integrate the diversified elements into a meaningful and stable pattern of relationship. Further, they evolve a degree of consensus and institutional framework to check and regulate the elements going alienated and disintegrated. As a result, the system comes out of the turmoil and its patterns remain intact. This vital function may be termed in Talcott Parson's language, as "Pattern maintenance". Here "Pattern maintenance" has been used in dynamic sense.

Every society has got its own requirements and problems. In spite of this, the society as well as polity are to march ahead for providing a reasonably high standard of living to the people. Accordingly, they set before themselves the goals of human welfare.

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liberty, justice and other necessary conditions for development of man. To attain these goals certain mechanisms are developed. This process is known as "goal attainment." However, mostly, the goals or ends are pronounced in value terms or ideological terms. Different associations, groups, parties etc. adhere to these value laden goals. Of all the agencies, the political parties are the most articulate to further the goals of the society while contending political power. In the modern political systems, the political parties can not undermine the goals for human development. Thus, simply "pattern maintenance" will not be beneficial for the system in long run, it should be supplemented by the task of "goal attainment."

Each and every system lives in the environment. The political system has got its own environment which is conditioned by geographical, historical, cultural, sociological and economic factors. Being an open system, the political system continuously interacts with the environment and gets influenced by it. Under this situation the political parties exhibit the dynamic features of the environment and ultimately get themselves adjusted with it. In order to ensure easy going of "goal attainment" and "pattern maintenance", the political parties always under take the function of "environmental adjustment."

The above triple functions make the parties as greatest mobiliser of the society. While undertaking the task of mobilising the society, they become well versed with the needs of the different sections. Being identified with the aspirations of the people, the parties espouse their needs and articulate their diversified interests. The parties develop their perceptions, norms and ideologies on the basis of the vital interests, values and rights of the people. This function is known as "interest articulation. 36 by which the political parties secure the support of different sections in a national society and virtually becomes the spokesman of the concerned section.

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36 See, Gabriel A. Almond, "A Comparative Study of Interest Groups and the Political Process" in Eckstein and Apter (eds.), Op Cit
There is the danger of ignoring the interests of other sections by the political parties while articulating the interests of some sections. In fact, no political party will take the risk of espousing the cause of one section at the cost of the support of another. Thus, a political party has to dovetail the compatible interests of a fairly cross-section of the national community in order to enhance its electoral constituency. Political parties are multi-interest groups representing diverse interests of the society and perform the function of aggregation of interests. In other words, they have to "aggregate or to relate organically cross-sectional interests by shifting the essential from the peripheral and the universal from the particular."

We may call this function "interest aggregation" as it concerns itself with "aggregates" or "wholes" of interests that are sought to be reconciled with one another, keeping the good of the whole of society paramount." Political parties, thus evolve a consensus among as many groups as possible. They perfectly act as mediators in a peaceful way and through institutional means.

Further, political parties have a pedagogical educative role to play in the society and polity. Parties may either reinforce the existing political culture or it may try to alter or modify the prevalent political culture by presenting new attitudes and beliefs. Thus, in developing societies that are engaged in the work of radical socio-political transformations, the party's function of socialising the people by means of initiating changes in the political culture assumes special importance. This function becomes "political socialisation" or "socialisation to politics" which is carried out through the media, door to door campaigning, strikes, mass rallies, slogans, leaflets etc.

For undertaking all these vital functions, the parties perform one important intra-party function-political recruitment-concerning their own

37 Sirsakar and Fernades, Op Cit, p 17
38 A K Mukhopadhay, Political Sociology, Calcutta K P Bagchi and Co, 2nd Ed, 1987, P 145
organisation and leadership Recruitment is one on going function which does not stop at the mere swelling of the ranks of the party. It aims at popularising the party ideology among the masses in order to attract and motivate new members into the party fold.

Modern political elites are recruited through political parties. Recruitment infuses fresh blood and new spirit into the party organisation. It ensures "circulation of elites" within the party and thereby making the same dynamic and vibrant. Political recruitment can be both horizontal and vertical concerning higher and lower ranks of the party. This function is very important in socialist regimes where the party provides the only avenue to political power, but is also significant in open and competitive party systems. It is only in the most traditional societies or dictatorships that political leaders are selected by bodies other than parties. The recruitment of political elites without the more popular base of party leaders has significant effects on the stability of the regime. Successful recruitment can be hallmark of the successful functioning of the political parties.

Another intra-party function is the "maximisation of utility". A political party is always considered as utility maximiser. Parties try to maximise their own utility and importance arithmetically by maximising the number of votes in the electoral game.

They also maximise the utility of voters by responding to their demands while in power, by giving high sounding promises while in Opposition. Wittman assumes that parties try to maximise their expected utility by trying to adopt their own policies in government and winning election is just a means to that end. "It is which party's policy..."


40. See Prakash Sarangi, Op Cit
is implemented, not which party receives the most votes that determines the winner."\textsuperscript{41}

Political parties provide a link between government and the people. It is primarily through the parties that the government is kept informed about the demands and interests of the people. Parties seek to educate, instruct and activate the people. They use the mass media and local organisations to mobilise people. The political education and dissemination of information by parties go on continuously and they become important agencies of "political participation."

Political parties exercise control over the government in many ways. If it achieves success at the polls, the party assumes the responsibility for running the government. Party discipline maintains stability of ministries in parliamentary systems while in presidential forms of government, party provides co-ordination between executive and legislative branches of the government. Opposition parties perform a vital function in a democracy as critic and watchdog of government's policy. Political parties perform the essential function in the management of succession to power. While the party/parties in power create sufficient support to buttress the authority of the government, the opposition parties attract or organise discontent and dissatisfaction sufficient to oust the government.

**PARTY SYSTEM : TYPOLOGY**

The distinction between party and party system is as old as Duverger. While his predecessors were using party and party system almost interchangeably, Duverger made a first ever attempt to differentiate party structure from the party system. He considered party system as types and modes of coexistence of the parties.\textsuperscript{42}

The suffix of "system" with "party" has got wider connotations. The "system" originated in biology, developed in sociology and recently

\textsuperscript{41} Donald A Wittman, "Parties as Utility Maximisers", *American Political Science Review* June 1973 p 498
\textsuperscript{42} M Duverger, *Op Cit* p 203
has been popularised in political science. "The most general and fundamental property of a system is the interdependence of parts or variables. Interdependence consists in the existence of determinate relations among the parts of variables as contrasted with randomness of variability. In other words, interdependence is order in the relationship among the components which enter into a system. This order must have a tendency to self-maintenance or a stable equilibrium."\(^{43}\) The "party system" falls in this line. Within a representative model it is based on competitive interaction among the parties. The elections are the principal mechanisms to shape the popular choices in the competitive interactions and ultimately determine the support base of the parties.

In addition to the competitive interaction of parties, Sartori emphasises their separate identity as a subsystem. He explains the party system as "precisely the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition. That is the system in question bears on the relatedness of parties to each other, or how each party is a function (in a mathematical sense) of the other parties and reacts, competitively or otherwise, to other parties."\(^{44}\) "When parties (in the plural) interact among themselves, we have a situation in which the parties are left to operate a system of their own, that is an independent subsystem. More technically, inter-party interactions are both - conducive to, and result from, subsystem autonomy."\(^{45}\) It follows that Sartori considers party systems as an essential structural requirement of the political system, and hence its subsystem. "While parties become parties in the wake of the first extension of the suffrage - that is, under conditions of very low participation and of very restricted enfranchisement - the same does not apply to the establishment of the party system. The party system structuring of the polity emerges only when the


\(^{45}\) *Ibid* p. 45
enfranchisement and other conditions reach a critical mass and involve a substantial section of the community. Thus, Sartori discusses three important events as reversible sequences of the establishment of party system (i) responsible government, (ii) the "reality" of elections; and (iii) the establishment of parties as a subsystem.

However, due to the diversified nature of the parents, it is impossible to classify the party system with the help of a common criterion. As such a good number of criteria have been developed to classify the party systems which are in order.

The earliest and a very commonly used criterion is the number of important parties in the political system. Thus, there can be single (one) party system, the two (bi) party system and the multiparty system. It is, however, pertinent to remember that there are important variation amongst party systems with the same number of parties.

The historical examples of one party system are provided by Fascist Party under Mussolini and Nazi Party under Hitler during the inter-war period. At present it is found in Communist as well as many African countries. The communist theory of one party system emanates from its concept of classes. There can be only one party which will act as the vanguard of the and peasants (who constitute an overwhelming majority) in the struggle for the consolidation of socialism.

According to La Palombara and Weiner one party systems may be divided into "one party authoritarian", "one party pluralistic" and "one party totalitarian". "One party authoritarian system" is dominated by a single-monolithic, ideologically oriented non-totalitarian party. Franco's Spain, N Krumh's Ghana, Diem's South Vietnam, Castro's Cuba provide examples of this type. The "one party pluralistic system" is characterised by a single party which is pluralistic in

46 Ibid, p 22
47 See, Prakash Sarangi, Op Cit, p 196
48 J La Palombara and M Weiner, Op Cit, pp 37-41
organisation, pragmatic, absorptive rather than ruthlessly destructive in its relationship with other groups. Mexico, Ivory Coast and Cameroon illustrate this type. In the "one party totalitarian system", the state is itself an instrument of a monolithic party which has one ideological goal—the total use of the power for the restructuring of the society's social and economic system". Soviet Union, China, North Vietnam, North Korea and several of the East European States fall in this category. Theoretically, the existence of a single party is antithetical to democracy. It testifies to the existence of a monochromatic belief system based on the principle of unanimity and the horror of dissent. The "monopoly of legality" enjoyed by one party leaves little choice for the people.

In a two-party system there are only two parties which are strong enough to expect coming into power though other parties may operate but remain on the side lines. It exists in United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and West Germany. It may further be classified into two distinct two party system found in Britain, Australia and Germany and indistinct party system as illustrated by USA. In the former, parties are more centralised and ideology-oriented and their activities are not merely limited to election. In the latter the parties are not merely mass parties, they are ideologically flexible and more interested in winning elections.

The arguments in favour of the two-party system is that the voters are provided with the clear alternative, national issues get crystallised in two broad alternatives presented by two major parties. Balance in the political system which is essential to political liberty is best maintained under this system. One party forms the government, another keeps watchful eye on it. Again this system is conducive to political certainty and stability.

49 Ibid, p 40
50 See, Giovanni Sartori, Op Cit, p 36
The multi-party system refers to the existence of more than two political parties in a political system. No single party ordinarily expects to win a majority thereby leading to a coalition government. Sweden, Norway, France, Italy, Denmark, India and many other countries provide examples of this system may be classified into working multi-party and unstable multi-party system as represented by Norway and Sweden on the one hand, and by France and Italy on the other. In the former the parties function more on the model of the distinct two party system while in the latter multiplicities of parties leads to a frequent change in government and political instability. In countries like India and Mexico within the framework of multi-party system, there emerges, what is known as "one dominant party system". One party much stronger than all other parties and institutionally establishes its dominance in the political system. Thus, the Congress Party in India, up to 1980s, and the PRI in Mexico bear great resemblance of "one dominant party system" than a multiparty system.

Giovanni Sartori combines certain "counting rules" and "control indicators" with numerical criterion for distinguishing between the two-party systems and for making further distinction within the latter. Accordingly, he offers five categories of democratic party systems 51 (i) the predominant party system, (ii) two-partism, (iii) moderate multipartism, (iv) extreme multi-partism, (v) the atomised party system.

Sartori includes, under his predominant party system, those systems in which power is exercised by no more than a single party for a long period. The "two partism" is characterised by two leading parties which come to power alternatively, or each party has got a chance or expectation of doing so, with winning a majority of seats at regular intervals to form the government independently. Under such system neither the coalition governments are formed nor the third parties exercise any significant role.

The "moderate multi-partism" and "extreme multi-partism" are characterised by more than two parties, under such systems a coalition of parties always alternate in power. Generally, in "moderate multi-partism" all political parties support the system and its rules. They work with pragmatism and openmindedness in their mutual relations and also in their approach towards various problems and political issues. On the other hand, "extreme multi-partism" is generally of the communist variety or of the fascist one, which is characterised by an anti-system opposition.

Further, it follows a "cogent ideological patterning" by exhibiting a doctrinaire and dogmatic approach to issues and problems. The "extreme-multipartism" gives rise to "irresponsible opposition" as all parties do not get access to power due to the sharp ideological differences among the large number of parties. 52

Sartori also advocates the system of "atomised multi-partism". This category includes the party systems which have not achieved "structural consolidation" because the parties are no more than the loose coalitions of notables that "change at each election and tend to dissolve from one election to another" 53

Pfeiffer advocate four categories of party system viz: (i) "one party" system in which 71% or more votes are obtained by the major party, (ii) "modified one party" system with the major party, polling 61% to 70.9% votes, (iii) "weak two party" system with the major party polls not more than 56.9% and not less than 49% votes 54

The party system can be categorised, in different ways, as per the purpose and manner of competition among the parties. La

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53 See, Bashiruddin Ahmed, Op Cit, p 499
Palombara and Weiner have classified party systems into two broad categories - competitive systems and non-competitive systems. All of the two-party and multi-party systems are included in competitive systems. For competitive situations, they suggest, a four-fold classification, that is based, in part on internal characteristics of the parties and, in part, in the way political power is held. This later dimension refers to the political system and the terms they use to describe them are "turn over" and "hegemonic." A hegemonic system is one in which over an extended period of time, the same party or the coalitions dominated by the same party hold governmental power.\footnote{55}

The U.S. during the period of New Deal, Norway under the control of Democratic Socialists, India under the Congress party are examples of the hegemonic system. Turnover situations would be those in which, even where there may have been hegemonic power, there is relatively frequent change in the party that governs or the party that dominates. Britain is the most striking example of the turnover pattern.

The second dimension along which they classify competitive systems is the ideological pragmatic. These two types, ideological and pragmatic, are indeed two ends of the spectrum, and political parties fall somewhere along this continuum. In terms of central tendency, the authors conceive of the following four sub-categories: (i) hegemonic ideological, (ii) hegemonic pragmatic, (iii) turnover ideological; and (iv) turnover pragmatic.

Douglas Rae considers the party system as "matrix of competitive relationships between...parties." "And it is this web of competition which makes the whole number of parties something more than they would be counted singly. That something more is democratic competition for the right to govern."\footnote{56}

\footnote{55 J La Palombara and M Weiner, \textit{Op Cit}, p 35}
\footnote{56 Douglas W Rae, \textit{The Political Consequences of Electoral Law}, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1971, p 47}
Since the democratic competitions occur exclusively in two different fields, viz, elective and legislative it would be more appropriate to categorize the party system into two comprehensive types. Accordingly, Rae calls these as "elective party system" and "parliamentary or legislative party system" While in the former, competition is measured by the votes polled by the parties, in the latter, the seats secured by the parties determine the competition.

However, both the systems are closely related with each other. The "legislative party system" is considered as the product of the "elective party system". The later is converted into the former through a process of conversion of votes into seats in the legislature, which occur in favour of the parties with large vote shares.

This process make some parties both elective and legislative and some others (small parties) as elective only having no representation in the legislature. It would be difficult for those parties, which fail to get a representation in the legislature or manage to get only few seats, to survive in the elective arena.

From the standpoint of the strength of the political parties, party systems can be classified in a different way. The strength of the political parties is exhibited perfectly through electoral competition. Duverger evaluates the strength of parties thus (i) parties with a majority character and also with the capability of commanding absolute parliamentary majority; (ii) major parties which fail to command absolute majority but can govern with some external support, (iii) medium parties which can participate in government only by playing a subordinate role in coalition, (iv) minor parties which are very small and incapable of playing any role in government or opposition. Duverger's criteria, on the whole, concern with the actual or potential role of parties in government and opposition.

Sartori develops two rules to examine the strength or counting.

57 M Duverger, Op Cit, pp 283-90
relevant parties, namely, (i) coalitional potential- A minor party can be discounted as irrelevant whenever it remains superfluous over a period of time in the sense that it is never required to put to use for any feasible coalition majority and, (ii) Blackmail potential-A party qualifies for relevance whenever its existence, or appearance, affects the tactics of party competitions and particularly when it alters the directions of the competition of the governing oriented parties 58

Gabriel A Almond and G B Powell develop their classificatory scheme of party systems on the basis of function significance of the parties in the political process. Emphasising the role of party system in the function of aggregation of political demands, Almond offers a four-fold scheme of party systems, such as, "authoritarian party system", "dominant non-authoritarian party system", "competitive two party system" and "competitive multiparty system" 59 Authoritarian party system is further divided into totalitarian and authoritarian types. Totalitarian parties aggregate interest by means of penetration of the social structure and by the transmission and aggregation of demands and claims through party structure, Dominant non-authoritarian party systems are mostly prevalent in the developing countries where nationalist movements were spearheaded by groups/public organisation which assumed power after independence. India vividly illustrates such a party system. The Indian National Congress formed in 1885 led the national movement for independence and has been the dominant party after freedom.

The competitive two party system is characterised by homogeneous, secular, bargaining political culture and effective and autonomous system of associational interest groups. The competitive

58 Giovanni Sartori, Op Cit, pp 121-25, also see, Prakash Sarangi, Op Cit, p 197.
multi-party system is most fragmented and is found in West European countries.

Taking democratic performance into consideration, Powell classifies party systems into strong and weak ones. Further, on the basis of the representational and the majoritarian roles of the party systems, he divides the strong party systems into (i) aggregative (ii) responsible (iii) mobilisational (iv) representational party systems.

On the criterion of the rigidity of party doctrine party system may further be classified into doctrine-based (ideological) and non-doctrinal (pragmatic) The ideological parties are more doctrinaire-dogmatic They are not amenable to bargaining and compromise. Some Socialist and Communist parties are of this type. The pragmatic parties are programmatic and less ideological; they are also broker-bargain parties in so far as they accommodate many groups and diverse points of view in order to win an electoral majority. The American parties and many liberal parties come under this category. Since the second world war, political parties are losing their ideological sharpness.

Roy C Macridis has evolved a typology of parties on the criteria of (i) the sources of party supports, (ii) internal organisation, (iii) the function they perform and the mode of action.

1. The sources of party support: (a) Comprehensive parties, and (b) Sectarian parties.

2 Internal organisation. (a) Closed parties (authoritarian and repressive) and (b) Open parties (permissive and pluralistic).

3 Modes of action and function: (a) Diffused parties (national integration, community building, resort to mobilisation) and (b) Specialised parties (aggregative and representative).

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Another group of scholars develop an index of "fragmentation" or "fractionalisation" to calculate or determine the dispersed competitive strength among the contesting parties, instead of providing any viable classification of the party system. Douglas Rae has made pioneering contributions to develop the index of "fragmentation" or "fractionalisation". Generally, "fragmentation" or "fractionalisation" implies the division of votes or seats into many parts or shares, with the relative equality of party shares, whatever their number being an integral part of the concept. Subsequently, Mac Ray and Kesselman develop an index of convergence of votes among the competing parties.

Further, both "fragmentation" and "competition" have got two dimensions each, viz., high and low. Accordingly, there can be "high fragmentation", "low fragmentation" and "high competitiveness" and "low competitiveness". On the basis of these two dimensions, scholars present four basic categories of party systems: (i) Dominant multi-party systems, (ii) Dominant two-party systems, (iii) Competitive multi-party systems, and (iv) Competitive two-party systems. The Figure 1 explains this.

**Fig. 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Fragmentation</th>
<th>Dominant Multi-Party Systems</th>
<th>Competitive Multi-Party Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Fragmentation</td>
<td>Dominant Two-Party Systems</td>
<td>Competitive Two-Party Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Competitiveness</td>
<td>High Competitiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

62 Douglas Rae, *Op Cit*, p. 54
In the dominant multi-party systems, the size of the dominant party's share of the total pool of power in the system is relatively small. On the other hand, in the dominant two-party systems, this share is relatively large. In both the cases, the ability of the other parties to influence the working of the system will be always less because of the magnitude of the dominant party's share. In terms of the configuration of the opposition alone, a dominant multi-party system leaves relatively large power at the disposal of the opposition parties, and a dominant two-party system provides relatively low share of power to the opposition.

In the competitive two-party systems, two parties possess almost equal strength, capturing all or most of the seats in the case of the legislative party systems, and all or most of the votes in the elective systems thereby making the total amount of power of the third parties insignificant. In other words, in the competitive two-party systems, the presence of third parties "does not prevent the two major parties from governing alone." 66 The competitive multi-party system includes two types of systems: (i) the system in which two or more parties get almost equal share, with all individual shares being less than 50% of the total votes or seats, and (ii) in the other system one party gets little more than 50% of the total pool of power, while the rest of the power is held by at least two other parties in substantial proportions.

On the whole, the party system is dynamic one. Each system has got its uniqueness and it contributes towards shaping the political process.

66 Giovanni Sartori, Op Cit, p 331