CHAPTER II

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INTRODUCTION

'Political socialization' is an important concept in political sociology. The recent decades have witnessed the growth of sociological studies and political behaviour. In terms of theory and methodology political analysis has become more systematic and sophisticated.

Political socialization is the process by which an individual becomes acquainted with the political system, which determines his political attitude and his reaction to political phenomenon. It is generally determined by the social, economic and cultural environment of the society. Political socialization\(^1\) is the process by which the political culture of the individual is shaped at the community level. It also maintains, transforms and sometimes even creates the political culture of the people. It is also a process by which an individual acquires his basic political orientation from others. Easton and Dennis call political socialization a transmission belt, through which political orientations and political behaviours are passed from one generation to another\(^2\). The political beliefs, values and attitudes are learnt by the present generation at an early age, in its childhood. Therefore, what people do in politics depends upon what they learn about it while they were children.

In 1959 Herbert H Hyman first brought to the fore the concept of 'Political socialization'\(^3\). He regretted the "imbalances" of the
psychoanalytically oriented anthropology" which saw 'political behaviour'
as "determined by all sorts of motivational and emotional factors
operating through complicated psychodynamic process" whereas, in fact,
it was "full of purpose and direction" and was guided "by reason,
knowledge, judgement, intelligence." The role of cognitive processes,
having to do with certain perception and grasp of "the political scene" in
which men acted in getting urged to certain ends, had to be reinstated
as a necessary counterbalance to distorted analysis of political
behaviour. Individuals as he explained, learn gradually and early their
political orientations and that proves much of the stability of their adult
political behaviour. Yet the political scene is "full of novelty". The
question, as he noticed, is as to how the individual can have a ready
and prepared view on political issues, that have not yet arisen, one of
the answers, according to him, is that he is socialized into a party
loyalty and acts in relation to the party position rather on the novel
issue itself. It may have to be known, as to what a central cognitive
structure political party is. Thus political socialization was reviewed a
continuous learning process involving both emotional learning and
manifest political introduction, and as being mediated by all of the
participations and experiences of the individual and not simply by early
family experiences, while emphasising "the vitality" of the "psychological
approach to politics". Hyman further underlined the need, to look for
"paralleled inventories of sociological and historical knowledge of politics",
so that justice might be done to "the complexity of political behaviour". Shortly later Gabriel A Almond, too took the same line in theoretically
conceiving political socialization, recognizing "both the latent and the
manifest components of the process of induction into citizenship roles and orientations", and taking within its purview the scrutiny of "the later as well as the earlier and more 'socializing' institutions and influences."\textsuperscript{7}

**DEFINITION**

Definition of Political socialization are of two types. Some focus on the process of political socialization whereas others focus on its outcome. Representative definitions of the first kind are as follows:

1. **DAWSON AND PREWITT**
   "The development process through which the citizen matures politically."\textsuperscript{8}

2. **EASTON AND DENNIS**
   "Those developmental processes through which a person acquires political orientations of patterns of behaviour. It is developmental process that takes place over a period of time."\textsuperscript{9}

The first type of definition lays stress on political socialization as moulding the child to an a-priori set of conventions, rather than considering the child as an active innovator and modifier of political learning during the socialization process.

Some of the definitions of this type are as follows:

1. **R.S.SIGEL** : "Political socialization refers to the learning process by which the political norms and behaviour acceptable to an ongoing political system are transmitted from generation to generation."\textsuperscript{10}
(2) **HESS AND TORNEY**: "Socialization refers to the process by which a junior member of a group or institution is taught its values, attitudes and other behaviour".\textsuperscript{11}

3) **H. HYMAN**: "The importance of such formation (of politics as learned behaviour) to understanding the stability of political system is self evident-humans must learn their political behaviour early and persist in it, otherwise there would be no regularity perhaps even chaos".\textsuperscript{12}

All these definitions share the same implication, whatever the particular terms used and however ambiguous they may be. They suggest that the adult generation is moulding, a rising generation into something like its own adult image. This implies that the outcome of socialization is to provide for the continuity of existing forms and actions. That is to ensure the stability both in the sense of consensus of order (as against chaos) and of consistency of the system over time.\textsuperscript{13}

The process of transmission of knowledge or information is known as cognitive socialization. An individual learns about the forms of governments, its structures, political parties, leaders, elections, government policies through the process of cognitive socialization. He becomes aware of the political world around him. Cognitive socialization can be differentiated from affective socialization which implies the communication of beliefs and values. The process by which political beliefs, values, orientations and attitudes are acquired is known as affective socialization. Knowledge which is basically factual may precede
the formation of values and attitudes, but the reverse may also occur. Besides the above definitions of the political socialization, some others throw light on the nature of political socialization. They are worth quoting.

(1) **RUSH AND ALTHOFF**: "Political socialization is the process by which an individual becomes acquainted with the political system which determines his perceptions of politics and his reaction to political phenomena. It is determined by social, cultural and economic environment of the society in which the individual lives and by the interaction of experience and personality of the individual."^{14}

(2) **GREENSTEIN F.I.**: "Narrowly conceived it is the deliberate inculcation of political information, values and practices by instructional agents who have been formally charged with this responsibility. A broader conception of political socialization would encompass all political learning, formal and informal, deliberate and unplanned at every stage of the life cycle, including not only explicitly political learning but also non-political learning of politically relevant personality characteristic."^{15}

The political socialization is fundamentally a process of learning from experience. It is a developmental process, confined not only to childhood but which continues through life. Childhood political socialization does not completely determine an individual's adult attitudes and behaviour. His behaviour may be determined by the process by which he learns as an adult also. It is agreed that childhood is the major formative period of later behaviour. But socialization is a
continuous process, which continues into old age. Yet early socialization is the important and to an extent defines the limits of later adult learning.

STRUCTURES OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

'Structures', 'agencies' and 'agents' are the terms employed for those social institutions, processes and, at times significant events which condition and mould the orientation of the individuals towards political objects. They impart knowledge, feelings and judgements regarding them, by providing them with implicit or explicit messages which work to shape "their propensity for political behaviour"\(^{16}\).

Almond and others divide the social structures into two categories, primary and secondary. Such social institutions, processes and contacts as do not normally have to do anything directly with active politics and its bureaucratic administration are viewed as primary structures and such among them as have to do directly with it are viewed as secondary structures. Events and ideas, emerging abruptly and affecting political socialisation of the individuals, fall outside those categories.

AGENTS OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

The agents or the agencies of political socialization may be enumerated as under:

(i) The family, (ii) The community, the neighbourhood, the religious institutions, the peer groups, (iii) Schools and other educational institutions, (iv) Work groups or places, (v) Formal and voluntary recreational, occupational and cultural organisations, (vi) Mass media, (vii) Symbols, (viii) Specialised political input structures like political
parties, (ix) Specialised output structures like legislatures, bureaucracies, courts, police and army, (x) Specific political experiences of social, economic and political outcomes, (xi) Direct formal and informal relationships with specific elites in the political system work as the agents or agencies of political socialization, each in its own way and effect.

The individual first encounters a socialization structure in his family which latently imparts to him his earliest attitude towards authority experienced by him in its decision making. It conditions the formation of his attitude, at a very early and crucially delicate stage of his growth, towards the political system and its basic aspects. Likewise, at that very stage, his attitudes may be conditioned in their formation, both in latent and manifest ways. This is done through the immediate neighbourhood of his family, village/locality or urban community and the religious institutions or organisations with which he may be associated.

Studies have found that educated persons are more aware of the impact of government on their lives, they pay more attention to politics, have more information about political processes, and manifest a higher degree of political competence. Schools and colleges, institutions and universities present a second powerful agency of political socialisation for the individual. They particularly impart political attitudes to him in his pre-adult or adolescent life by both latently shaping his orientation about the unwritten rules of the political game. They manifestly transmit to him the awareness of the political system, and inculcate in him political values. Experiences in employment, the job and the formal and informal
organisations, the peer group or the work place, the professional union or association, the social club, etc., serve him as channels for the explicit communication of political information and beliefs.

The mass media, like newspapers and magazines, radio and television, etc., provide him information about specific and immediate political events. They act in course of time to shape his basic cognitive map of the political system and to inculcate political beliefs in him. Political symbols like national flags and emblems, flags and electoral symbols of the political parties, national days, etc., work to condition the individual's political attitudes. Specialised political structures like interest groups and political parties frequently affect the individual's socialisation towards politics in significant ways. The political parties help reinforce the existing political culture patterns. Either way, they influence the individual's socialisation in politics in all its three aspects, i.e. the cognitive, the affective and the evaluative, and impart more than several other agencies, the political skills. Likewise, the specialised political output structures, like legislatures, cabinets and councils of ministers, bureaucracies, courts, police and the army, socialise their members through their direct experiences of politics and administration. Specific experiences of social (ouster of burkha wearing in Turkey), economic (the great depression) and political (an independence movement or a war or any major political change) may also act as political socialisers of individuals. Finally, direct formal or informal contacts with specific elites of the political system may as well influence the individual's political attitude17.
STAGES

The individual's political socialisation involves his learning of political patterns corresponding to his socio-political position at various stages of his life through various socio-political agents. These are "the beginnings of his political behaviour in pre-adult life, the process by which it emerges, and the subsequent changes in the course of further experience."¹⁸

The beginning of political differences in childhood is only a precursive form of politics, as Hyman puts it is the prerogative of adults. Whereas political sociologists universally agree that the individual's political socialisation, as stated earlier is continuous in his life, from the age of 3 to 5 to his death, and that his political socialisation of childhood and adolescence may, in some way or the other, continue to have some stamp over his political socialisation of maturity. The most eminent among those who have paid attention to the stages of political socialisation in individual's life is Erik H. Erikson¹⁹. According to him, there are eight stages, or "ages" as he calls them, or man's political socialisation.

Peter Merkl has rolled up those stages under four heading - (i) Infancy and social trust, (ii) Sense of autonomy, (iii) Identity crises and (iv) Intimacy, generativity and ego-integrity.²⁰

The first stage of political socialisation commences in the early childhood of an individual with the internalisation of the belief that his mother is his saviour and it is through her that he becomes aware of his immediate family and social environment toward which he may
develop social trust or distrust. The individual passes through the second stage of socialisation in the subsequent years of his early childhood when, in seeking to possess something and in abandoning it, on getting satisfied with the acquisition, he develops his sense of autonomy.

In the third, fourth and fifth stages, the individual, in relation to his social environment, passes through a phase of identity crises by learning to take initiatives and encountering the sense of guilt in the third stage, by becoming industrious and seeking to shed his sense of inferiority in the fourth stage and by rehabilitating in his adolescence, i.e. the fifth stage of his life, whatever he had learnt in his preadolescence childhood through his own understanding. In the last three stages of adulthood and maturity, the individual gets socialised by developing capacity for social intimacy in the sixth stage, social creativity, productivity and generativity in the seventh stage and ego-integrity in the eighth stage. In the last stage, a stage of stabilising maturity, the individual identifies himself with the political system and fully accepts his role therein.

**STYLES**

Political socialization may be viewed to have diverse contrasting shades in terms of the modes, ways or styles in which the individuals in a political system get inducted to its political culture through the various socialising structures or agencies. It may be latent or manifest, diffuse or specific, particularistic or universalistic and affective or instrumental.  

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Political socialisation is latent or indirect when the transmissions of non-political information, values or feelings to the individuals regarding the roles, inputs and outputs in the non-political systems such as the family or the clan, etc., affect their attitudes toward similar roles and objects in the political system. It occurs with particular force in their early life experiences. As children they may acquire general attitudes of accommodation or aggression toward their fellow children and attitudes acquired that way may subsequently affect their attitudes towards political leaders or fellow citizens. Likewise, early participation in family decision-making, rather than strict obedience to parental decisions, may impart to them propensities to participate in political activities and to value such participation. But political socialisation is manifest when the communication of information, values or feelings to the individuals regarding the political objects is explicit, direct or open.

Political socialisation is diffuse if the same structures, undifferentiated and unspecified, impart to the individuals socialisation into political authority and political participation patterns in the same ways in which they socialise them into the family authority and participation patterns. It is specific when the individuals get socialised specifically and distinctly into the diverse social patterns of authority and participation—one pattern for the family, the other for economy and still another for the political system-through differentiated, and specified social structures.

Political socialisation is particularistic when the individuals' sense of belonging to the political system is based on their sense of kinship,
lineage or locality. It is universalistic when their sense of membership of the political system or citizenship is direct and not involved through those particularistic considerations so much so that their loyalty to the political system as citizens is direct and basically unaffected by their loyalties to their families, clans, localities or religions.

Political socialisation is affective if, as a result of it, the individual, in judging the political system, the roles and role incumbents within it, the inputs that go into it, the outputs that emerge from it, and so on, are guided by their attachment with their families, clans, localities or religions, etc. It is instrumental if, in judging the political objects, they are guided by their policy preferences, their outlook for good performance and efficiency and their awareness of the political goods being or not being delivered.

**POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION**

Almond and Verba explained, the socialisation process contributes both to a society’s political stability and its change. In fact, it contributes to the strain or ease with which the changes in its political culture occur. But if the attitudes, orientations and values of the people change through time, a simultaneous change must also occur to keep the shaping of political values and the process of change running in conformity with each other. “Too rapid a process of political socialisation” may “throw everything out of gear.” The test for a stable political system is whether the socialising agencies are adequately flexible and interdependent to allow change without violent disruption. Whereas an open society, while seeking to control political socialisation,
allows room for dissent and opposition and, as such, multifarious interests to operate for imparting multifaceted variety of political norms and values to the individuals, in a totalitarian society the governmental control of political socialisation is all-pervasive. Although both in stable and unstable societies political socialisation normally tends to help maintain existing patterns. "Changes in socialisation", particularly those in "values and expectations", present "a powerful source of pressures for political change" and not "even the most effectively controlled socialisation can be expected to limit the ambitions and aspirations of specific individuals in powerful roles".

**POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION**

Since political socialisation produces the basic attitudes in a society toward the political system, its various roles, and public policy, by studying it the understanding of one of the essential conditions which affect the way in which such roles are performed and the kinds of political inputs and outputs they generate can be gained for a qualitative appraisal of a political system in terms of its state of political development.

What is 'Political development'? In recent centuries there have been general trends toward increased secularisation in culture and increased differentiation in the structure of political system. Secularisation is "a process of attitude change, whereby people become more oriented to cause-and-effect relationships they can see in the world around them". Individuals tend to believe in their ability to shape their environment and adopt courses of action accordingly.
Traditional orientations and attitudes give way to more dynamic decision-making processes involving gathering and evaluating information, lying out alternative courses of action, selecting some course from among them and testing whether or not that course is producing the consequences intended. Structural differentiation conveys the roles becoming more specialised or autonomous. Talcott Parsons underlines four "pattern-variables" contrasting modern and traditional cultures. Modern culture views objects in specific rather than in diffuse terms. It views them in a neutral, rather than in an emotional fashion. It is attuned to universal standards and concepts, rather than particularistic ones. It emphasised achievement, rather than inherited status in evaluating worth.

Two major elements, as Almond and Powell explain, shape the socialisation process in directions that have enhanced secularisation—the breakdown of traditional social structures and ways of life, e.g., the penetration of commercial markets, the introduction of new agricultural techniques and products, the growth of urban trading centres and manufacturing plants, the changes in mobility and population growth, and the appearance of mass media, and the exposure to secular elements, e.g. radio and films depicting alternate ways of life, merchants offering new products and the cities promising new chances to experience such things. The educated citizens, the citizens exposed to mass media and the citizens in non-agricultural occupations are substantially more likely to hold the modern attitudes.
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

Summing up the specialist findings of the five area studies of the closing 1950s, James S. Coleman observed that "the cultural fragmentation" of the developing countries reflected "two basic types of internal cleavage". One was the gap "on the vertical plane" between "the predominantly urban, modern subsociety of the Westernized elements" and "the traditional societies" and the other was the gap between "the horizontal divisions among the melange of indigenous political cultures". Quite a bulk of persons in those countries continued to be in a transitional stage, remaining subject to the socialising processes in both the spheres. The governing elites of those emergent stages were engaged in developing and strengthening systemwise secondary structures which, besides impinging directly upon the individual, penetrated also the primary socialising structures. Their efforts were being met with strong resistance from particularistic forces which, ironically, were being strengthened by modernisation.

About a decade later, Lucian W. Pye noted the absence of a widely shared understanding as to what should be the generally expected limits and potentialities of political action as "an almost universal feature" of the political cultures of developing societies. Their sudden passing from colonial subjugation to somewhat respectable statehood "has left deeper divisions among the people of most of these countries because widely different political socialisation processes have produced inordinately sharp cleavages between the generations and among social classes. In such countries many political activists
became aware of the potentialities of politics through "the excitement of participating in nationalist movements". Consequently, they continue to believe that politics should be an intensely emotional activity spurred on by the most dramatic, extreme, and even violent language. Others might have joined politics out of ambitions to be admitted to the security of careers in a colonial civil service and their language of politics has been "legal formulae and bureaucratic regulations". Still others might be relating government with status, authority, and the inherent right of rulers and potentates. There may yet be others to whom politics might be providing the main chance for personal advancement in which rewards are great and efforts minimal. There may be others for whom politics is a chance for public service and a means of nation building. Since the people of these countries have not been "systematically inducted into a coherent political culture through a common political socialisation process", their personal expectations can easily be disappointed. They are constantly being jarred by discovering that the ways they were taught to view the working of politics are not in line with reality.

Dwelling upon legitimacy crisis, Pye further notes that in most traditional societies a prime stress in socialisation is the installing of respect and deference for authority. In transitional societies having, by now, relatively weakened traditional social and political institutions with their authority undermined, childhood dependency of the individual is still a reality and that continues to generate "a sense of general dissatisfaction about any form of leadership in the society". People continue to look for new leaders who will be able to live up to their
ideals about what authority should be able to do. They grow up "with a view of the world that is sharply divided between those who are powerless and those who are omnipotent". Those without authority are expected to keep their place and not criticise the conduct of those who have authority. On the basis of such a socialisation process sentiments about authority within the more explicitly political realm are likely to be complex and potentially explosive. Young people, finding it impossible to express any form, revolt against paternal authority in their home, may express their aggressive feelings against other forms of authority that appear less threatening. The basic stability of governmental institutions is strongly influenced by the degree to which socialising agents reinforce or contradict one another in forming the community's sentiment about authority. Harry Eckstein's researches led him to conclude that the patterns of authority in a society outside the strictly political realm can affect the stability of political regime. "Where there is congruence is style and value there is higher likelihood for stable democracy than when there are discontinuities in authority patterns." The developing countries are mostly faced with the alienation arising from the fact that "the early socialisation process provides the individual with a distrusting and suspicious view of all human relations, and then the later agents of political socialisation leave him with conflicting and contradictory notions about the political realm. More often the basic socialisation process has been implanting suspicion and mistrust of human relations outside the immediate family, the individual's understanding and feelings about politics hardly resting on firm foundations.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Political Culture: "Political culture is composed of attitudes and orientation which people in a given society develop towards object within their political system". These orientations may have three distinct dimensions which are cognitive, affective and evaluative. The cognitive orientation imply the knowledge to the people have about object within their political system, the effective orientations refer to their feelings about them feelings either of attachment and involvement or of rejection and the evaluate orientations indicate their judgements them involving the use of values, information and feelings.


5. Ibid. P.26

6. Herbert H. Hyman, op. cit P.2


8. Dawson and Prewitt, Political Socialisation (Boston Little Brown, 1969), P.17


22. Gabriel A. Almond and Sindney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton, 1963), Ch.IX.


30. Ibid. PP.19-20


32. Almond and Powell, n.17, PP.104-06.
34. Ibid. PP.544-45
36. Ibid. PP. 106-07.
37. Ibid. PP. 106-07.
38. Ibid. PP. 106-07.
39. Ibid. PP. 106-07.
40. Ibid. PP. 106-07.
42. Ibid. PP. 144-47.
43. Ibid. PP. 144-47.
44. Harvy Eckstein, Division and Cohesion in Democracy, (Princeton, 1966), P.41.
45. Lucian W. Pye, n.41, PP.157-58.