

The Need for Political Theory in the Analysis of Political Systems

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Abstract: *Political theory occupies a central position in the systematic analysis of political systems, offering the conceptual clarity, normative benchmarks, and interpretive depth necessary for rigorous political inquiry. In recent decades, the increasing dominance of empirical, behavioural, and data-driven approaches within political science has often relegated political theory to a peripheral role. This article argues that such a separation is analytically unsustainable. Political theory is indispensable not only for defining and classifying political systems but also for evaluating their legitimacy, performance, and transformative potential. Drawing upon classical, modern, and contemporary theoretical traditions, this article demonstrates how political theory enriches the study of political systems by clarifying key concepts, interrogating power relations, enabling comparative analysis, contextualizing institutions historically, and providing critical perspectives for democratic reform. The article seeks to reassert the relevance of political theory within mainstream political system analysis and contributes to ongoing debates on methodological pluralism in political science.*

Keywords: Political theory, political systems, normative analysis, power, comparative politics, democracy.

