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maestri of political science

Edited by
Donatella Campus,
Gianfranco Pasquino
and Martin Bull



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Introduction

Donatella Campus, Gianfranco Pasquino and Martin Bull

The idea for this book and its predecessor (Campus and Pasquino 2009) originated in 2003 when we (Donatella Campus and Gianfranco Pasquino), were then, respectively, Editor-in-chief and Managing editor of the *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*. Our young (but also not so young) Italian colleagues often appeared methodologically sophisticated, but on the whole not especially knowledgeable about the contributions made by prominent 20th century political scientists. In addition, we had serious reservations about the attempt of rational choice to present itself as the only truly scientific paradigm of political science, an attempt which we regarded as misguided and dangerous for the discipline.

We therefore organised a conference in Bologna, sponsored by the *Rivista*, and devoted to the academic trajectory of some prominent political scientists, who were chosen according to two simple criteria. The first criterion was to identify some political scientists who had had a significant influence when the major expansion of the study of politics occurred, that is, fundamentally in the 1960s. Hence, obviously, the focus was on political scientists born in the 1920s and early 1930s. The second criterion was a fair geographical distribution regarding both the political scientists we identified and the contributors invited to present, discuss, criticise and assess the merits of those political scientists. Obviously, we were quite aware that the selection was influenced by the availability of the contributors as well as by the need to provide a broad picture. Some of the essays were subsequently published in the *Rivista* (2003), then in a collective volume (Campus and Pasquino 2004) under the title *Maestri della scienza politica*. In 2007 the ECPR Press expressed an interest in translating the volume, an attractive proposition in view of its 'Classics Series', which republishes political science classic texts that are no longer in print. The translated volume, with an additional chapter on Giovanni Sartori, was published in 2009 under the title, *Masters of Political Science* (Campus and Pasquino 2009).

We can only refer anecdotally to the reactions to that volume, since we have yet to find a published review. On the one hand, there were many complimentary messages received, and sales of the volume have been good. On the other hand, amongst others there was a reaction to both the title and the subjects of the volume chosen, with an objection to the use of the translation 'Masters' and the failure to include any female political scientists in the list of 'Masters' chosen. We feel it is important to respond to these points, especially as they have a bearing on the current volume.

In Italian, the word ‘Maestri’ is associated with those who lead the way, for instance, with outstanding music conductors and performers. In fact, we also wanted to convey the idea, again associated with the meaning of the word in Italian, of teaching: *Maestri* are usually known as the beloved elementary school teachers. And, of course, the same name is also given to all those who have something to teach and are capable of doing so in a successful way. We never thought for a moment that the English translation ‘Masters’ might evoke a totally different interpretation with some people, one associated with a form of subjugation between human beings, and in particular, with the historical female submission to men’s power. This point is especially important to stress since, as our ‘Introduction’ to that volume made clear, we did not regard the expression ‘Masters’ (by which we meant ‘Maestri’) as a scientific concept with clearly defined characteristics. On the contrary, in seeking to convey what we had in mind in using that word we used an entirely different expression, that of Bobbio’s ‘classic author’ (1981: 215–16) which he defined as someone who:

- a) is considered as the one and only authentic interpreter of his/her times and his/her works are used as an indispensable tool for understanding them;
- b) is always contemporary, so that each age and generation feels the need to read and re-read his/her works and to give them fresh interpretation;
- c) has constructed model theories which are used over and over again to understand reality, even when this differs from the reality in which his/her theories were derived and applied, and with time, these models have become actual mind-sets (Campus and Pasquino, 2009: 1).

And we concluded that, ‘while we might not be able to define “Master” in a scientifically rigorous manner, we know when we’re standing on one’s shoulders’ (2009: 8: borrowing from Robert Merton’s (1991) reference to climbing ‘on the shoulders of giants’). In short, there was no editorial choice of the word ‘Master’ except through translation. The word from which it derived (‘Maestro’) has no connotation whatsoever with the implications which are evidently present in English, and the use of the word was more an attempt to capture the general *sense* of what we meant than to claim a pseudo-scientific definition which somehow excluded women.

Regarding the selection of subjects in that volume, this, as was also pointed out in the ‘Introduction’, was determined by the original translated work. This work was for an Italian audience and therefore the choices were oriented towards those authors whose works were not widely available in Italian. This meant, for example, that there were no Italians present in the collection (in fact, in the English edition a chapter by Pasquino on Giovanni Sartori was added). For this reason, in the ‘Introduction’ to the English edition, reference was made to authors who had not been included in that Italian edition but ‘who might nevertheless stake a claim to Master’s status’ (Campus and Pasquino 2009: 2) and a list followed which included most of the authors included in the present volume. In short, the choice of subjects in the English ‘Masters’ edition was already provided for

through the original work, so there was never a question of including some authors (save Sartori) and ‘excluding’ others. The selection was, therefore, accepted as appropriate not only because it simply respected the original criteria, but also because it was felt that the subjects, broadly speaking, were a representative sample of ‘the defining characteristic of the development of political science (a pluralism of analytical, methodological and theoretical perspectives)’ (2009: 4). In other words, the very character of political science meant that it could not be properly or truly ‘represented’ in all its diversity, either in its methods and approaches or in its subject matter.

The concerns raised about the title of the English edition, combined with our wish to provide a degree of continuity between the two volumes, has led us to adopt, in this second volume, the Italian word for Masters, mixed in with an English title, thus: *Maestri of Political Science*. The selection, moreover, follows similar criteria to the first volume, meaning that we do not claim that the political scientists we have chosen necessarily exhaust the field of those of the generation born in the 1920s and 1930s who might legitimately be considered as *Maestri*. Indeed, in the same way that the origins of this second volume lie in a discussion between the original editors (Campus and Pasquino) and the prospective third Editor (Bull) about the number of potential *Maestri* who had been excluded from the first book and how filling this gap was a worthy endeavour, so a discussion is currently taking place about a possible third volume to capture several potential *Maestri* who have had to be excluded from the second.

In our view, there can be little doubt that all of the *Maestri* deserve their place in this second volume for their path-breaking contributions to different fields of political science. We wish to draw attention to their writings and to the way they have dealt with some of political science’s perennial problems. We suggest that they all still deserve to be read, assessed, criticised, re-read and, more importantly, ‘utilised’. We believe that the political science discipline (or any other discipline) will not develop and grow if its founders are forgotten. On the contrary, we believe that future sophistication and growth is more likely if its practitioners are familiar with their predecessors’ work and are capable of making good use of the knowledge they produced. As we emphasised in the ‘Introduction’ to the first volume (Campus and Pasquino 2009: 7–8), ‘climbing onto the shoulders of giants’ is not an easy task but the effort is worthwhile, especially as the alternative is rather ‘stark: staying on the ground, unable to see the bigger picture (or pictures) of political science, and basing one’s vision only on the exchange of ideas with members of one’s own narrow tribe or sect’. This book, therefore, is aimed not just at assisting the education of younger contemporary political scientists but, at the same time, guarding against the danger of some of our political science ‘giants’ ending up in an archaeological museum.

In selecting these ‘giants’, one method we used was to try and imagine the political science discipline without their contributions. Can one imagine the advances made in the study of political culture and political development without Gabriel Almond’s writings? If Philip Converse provides, as we believe, the starting

point for all electoral studies, where would those studies be today in the absence of his contributions? Can one envisage the field of political party analysis in the absence of any reference to the writings of Maurice Duverger and the field of international relations without Stanley Hoffmann? No analysis of public opinion and political communication can afford the luxury of not taking cues from Paul Lazarsfeld's books, and it is difficult to envisage research on the performance of contemporary democracies ever being as rich as it is today without Arend Lijphart's path-breaking work. Would our understanding of the transformation and internationalisation of capitalism be the same without Susan Strange, and our ability to analyse the common good and its intricacies be as advanced and sophisticated in the absence of Nobel Prize winner, Elinor Ostrom? And where would students of positive political theory be without William Riker's attempt to provide the foundations of a genuine 'school of political science'? Finally, it is difficult to envisage as rich a comparative understanding of the dynamics of State-formation in Europe without the seminal contributions of Stein Rokkan.

In its search for a scientific status, we strongly believe that political science cannot afford to minimise or overlook what its most important scholars of the 20th century have done. Those who agree with us, will find food for thought in this book. Those who do not agree are offered the opportunity to change their minds after reading these chapters. In any case, we are hopeful and confident that most, if not all, of our colleagues will share our view that political science is not only important but that it also makes good, fruitful – even entertaining – reading. And our *Maestri* do offer exciting examples of what political science has been and what it must continue to strive to do in order to analyse and organise our collective life as scholars and citizens.

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chapter | Gabriel A. Almond: Comparative
one | Politics and Political Development
Gianfranco Pasquino

INTRODUCTION

Gabriel Abraham Almond (Rock Island, Illinois, 12 January, 1911 – Asilomar, California, 25 December, 2002) had a long and productive life, rich in scholarly enterprises and professional achievements. Most certainly he was one of the most influential American political scientists of the 20th century both as author and co-author of books and research studies, that have left an imprint on the discipline. As cultural organiser and mentor, he was able to recruit, for research purposes in visible roles, young promising collaborators, as shown especially by the successful professional trajectories of two of them: Sidney Verba and G. Bingham Powell Jr, who joined him in two major works: *The Civic Culture* and *Comparative Politics; a developmental approach*. His academic career was unique, certainly not repeatable, blessed by lucky encounters and events, as it appears clearly from the brief profile that he himself drew without complacency, but with great satisfaction and a sense of fulfilment (Almond 1987).

Son and grandson of rabbis who had migrated from Russia and the Ukraine, Almond attended the University of Chicago between 1928 and 1938 taking his Ph.D, having written a dissertation that, contrary to yesterday's and today's American usages and requirements of any academic career, could not immediately find a publication outlet. Even the publication of the only article reporting the dense work performed by Almond (1945), though in a manner that did not do justice to the originality and the richness of the research of the dissertation, had to wait several years. For several reasons, among which a significant difference of opinion between Almond and Charles Merriam, the powerful Dean of the Department of Political Science, concerning the perspective to be given to the revision of the dissertation in order to have it published, postponed indefinitely its publication. Merriam was afraid that the wealthy and powerful New Yorkers who were financing the University of Chicago would be unhappy with the content and the overall framework, certainly not flattering for them, depicted by Almond. Hence, his dissertation saw the light of day only sixty years later, published with

the title *Plutocracy and Politics in New York City* (1998) when the situation had changed and, of course, the protagonists had disappeared.

Naturally, the academic impact of the dissertation on the theory of democracy in the changed times of New York and US politics went largely unnoticed. Nevertheless, the volume retains several features of interest. First, the choice of the title which refers to the power that inevitably derives from wealth, suggests very clearly that Almond, at least partially influenced by Marxist opinions, had come to the realisation that, up to that period (the late 1930s), in New York city there had not been a true democracy, that is, an open competition among different groups capable and willing to rotate and replace each other in the government of the Big Apple. On the contrary, the young Almond argued that wealthy New Yorkers occupied powerful positions such as to make it very difficult for the politicians of New York to obtain and exercise any decision-making autonomy. Moreover, generally speaking, those politicians did not enjoy any social prestige comparable to that enjoyed by the wealthy ones. For this reason, whenever making important decisions New York politicians felt it necessary to secure the support of the wealthy people.

The second feature of interest in Almond's dissertation is to be found in the theoretical framework he utilised. Almond declares explicitly his intellectual debt to the theorists of the ruling elite: Mosca, Pareto, Michels, but also Weber and Marx. In this matter, though, one should not underestimate the influence of Harold Lasswell, who first supervised Almond's dissertation. His influence is visible both in the techniques applied to the analysis of the elites and in the inclination to look for explanations relying on psychological factors, those descending from personality and culture, precisely sectors in which Lasswell was then working and showing significant originality and extraordinary energy.

Third, it is Almond himself who stressed how his study had aimed at identifying and highlighting the possible transformations through time of the N.Y. élites and politics, by resorting to an appropriate reformulation of the so-called 'process approach'. Finally, one cannot but admire young Almond's capability to dig, collect, bring to the surface an enormous mass of data, extracted from a multiplicity of sources available in the grand mine of material that was and remains the New York Public Library, and of bringing them together in a systematic manner to offer an all round view and interpretation of the NY political situation before World War II and of the complex relationships between plutocrats and politicians. *Plutocracy and Politics* constituted also, in a special way, and continues to represent, even today, a model of theoretically informed empirical research on political and economic elites and on their control and exercise of concrete power.

Unfortunately, the fact that his dissertation was not published for a long time and was not available to other scholars meant that Almond forfeited the opportunity for his analysis to be taken into consideration when, starting in the early 1950s, a lively and fierce debate took place among the elitists, the pluralists and the neo-elitists on the existence, or not, of a 'power elite'. By that time, in any case, Almond's research interests had gone off in a rather different direction.¹

AT THE ORIGINS OF THE INTELLECTUAL TRAJECTORY

In the period between the 1920s and the outbreak of World War One, under the vigorous leadership of Charles A. Merriam² and the contributions of several other famous scholars such as Harold Gosnell (1896–1996), the then relatively young Harold D. Lasswell (1902–1978)³, the International Relations specialist Quincy Wright (1890–1970) and one of the most original students of American Politics, V.O. Key, Jr. (1908–1963), the Department of Political Science of the University of Chicago was highly innovative, very productive and clearly oriented, through behavioralism, to tackle relevant socio-political problems applying a reformist approach. There is no doubt, and Almond himself stressed this point repeatedly, that his formative experience was significantly marked by his scholarly and cultural relationships with that remarkable group of scholars and, especially, with Lasswell. Among other things, it was in collaboration with Lasswell that Almond came to publish his first scholarly article (1934) based on a careful empirical gathering of data as well as on his participant observation of the phenomena to be analysed. In order to pay for his college education, Almond had looked for a job and found it in the Department of the City of Chicago that was dealing with assistance to the unemployed. And this is what he decided to study.

Later, after a couple of years in which he had, too intensely and with insufficient gratification, taught the same courses on the political system of the USA at Brooklyn College in New York, Almond was invited in 1941 by Lasswell to join the Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of Facts and Figures. Among other activities, he was charged with the collection of information on Germany, Italy and, more in general, on those areas of Europe occupied by the Nazis, and afterwards on the ‘morale’ of the Germans who had suffered Allied bombing. At the end of World War Two, the young professor of Political Science was asked, partly because of his knowledge of German, to go to Germany in order to interrogate the functionaries of the police and of the Gestapo and to study their relationships as well as to interview the survivors of the German Resistance and to record the activities they had carried out in Nazi Germany. In this period, the idea was born of a book largely devoted to the (re)construction of democracy in Germany (Almond 1949) in which, though in a preliminary and tentative manner, Almond made early use of some conceptual tools that can be defined as belonging to the field of ‘political culture’ (Almond and Kraus 1949a; Kraus and Almond 1949). More precisely, he attempted to understand the impact of the attitudes, orientations and objects of reference of political culture on the formation and functioning of a democracy. The report on his research activities in those very peculiar circumstances was fortuitously recovered several years later and published together with a short explanatory note (Almond and Kraus 1999). When writing this report, Almond came into contact with some scholars working at the National Opinion Research Center of Chicago, who would then give birth to the extremely important and influential Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. In Almond’s words, this period represented his ‘post-doctoral training’.

In 1947 Almond made his return to the academic world, accepting the offer made to him by Yale University to teach and do research at the Institute of International Studies. During his sojourn he wrote his first important book, *The American People and Foreign Policy* (1950), putting to good use his conceptual and theoretical behaviouralist baggage. As a matter of fact, not only was Almond the first to analyse the vast mass of data made available by opinion surveys concerning the 'interest in' and the 'understanding of' foreign policy by the American people, he also formulated a clear-cut distinction of enduring relevance between the general attitudes of the 'American people' and those of the 'attentive public'. The American people are naturally less interested in foreign policy and, therefore, exposed to fluctuations in mood while the attentive public, endowed with the instruments necessary to understand the problematique of foreign policy, is much more stable in its inclinations and evaluations. Though, today, substantially neglected and appreciated only by the best specialists of US foreign policy, in addition to the important above-mentioned methodological and interpretative distinction, Almond's analysis remains remarkable and also contains many elements that are significant to a better understanding of his subsequent work. First, *The American People and Foreign Policy* is devoted to an analytical and political problem highly relevant, then and now. Without ever exaggerating the political relevance of his analysis, Almond was always committed to the purpose of acquiring knowledge for use in improving the functioning of political systems and democracy. Second, this purpose is pursued by a first-class empirical researcher who starts with a theoretical perspective and resorts to the gathering and the utilisation of survey data in order to test the validity of the theory. Third, Almond shows a fruitful attention to the overall psychological characteristics of the 'American public' with a view to explaining the differences in motivation and frequent fluctuations. Lasswell's influence, the scholar who formulated the first, concrete and original analyses of political psychology, is crystal clear, visible, and enduring. Also, it appears essential to the explanation. In any case, Lasswell's was not, as I have underlined above, a passing influence.

In 1950, Almond moved to Princeton together with the entire Institute of International Studies. He remained at Princeton from 1954 to 1959. In that period he published an important and somewhat controversial study, *The Appeals of Communism* (1954). It was the product of research that had lasted several years on the attitudes, orientations, and ideology of four representative samples of former members of the Communist Parties of the USA, Great Britain, France, and Italy. The material had been collected resorting to a variety of methods and data: in-depth interviews with former Communists, opinion surveys and content analysis of relevant documents. This study too must be located in the research tradition for it to be defined as 'political psychology', which was launched and practised by Lasswell, who is duly and explicitly thanked in the preface. Those were the McCarthy years in the USA which in all likelihood accounted for the willingness and interest of the Carnegie Foundation in funding a study of this kind, with the obvious objective of acquiring operational knowledge.

Nevertheless, there does not seem to be much that could be used for propaganda purposes in this research by Almond and his collaborators (Herbert E. Krugman, Elsbeth Lewin and Howard Wriggins) and nothing that could even remotely serve a 'McCarthyist' view of politics, even though Almond does not hide the fact that his conception of democracy combines some moderation in overt political behaviour and some deference towards authority. On the contrary, there is a visible twofold attempt to understand the psychological, familiar, environmental roots and motivations that had led people into joining the Communist Party and the subsequent disaffection and abandonment, as well as to explain the differences in motivations and behaviour, relating them both to the social characteristics of the four countries and the patterns of functioning and roles of the communist parties in the USA, Great Britain, France, and Italy.

Summing up, Almond came to the conclusion that there does not exist a well defined and unique 'communist personality' endowed with sufficiently precise, and neatly designed, traits and features similar to those found at the roots of the 'authoritarian personality'. However, there exist some predispositions that have been acquired and nurtured in the context of the family and society. These, under certain specific conditions, produce a neurotic 'susceptibility'. This susceptibility is made up of hostility and resentment, feelings of isolation and rejection, that appear more visible and conspicuous the greater the distance between the positions taken by the party and those of its respective society. Pushing this explanation to the extremes, one could add that Almond identifies, albeit indirectly, though with foresight, the phenomenon of the existence of a 'counter-society'. This is how Annie Kriegel (1985), who, as a former member of the Party, had inside knowledge, decided to define the French Communist Party. For a not insubstantial period this definition would also fit rather well, though with a lower, but not insignificant, intensity, the case of the Italian Communist Party.

Several years later, in a report presented to the annual conference of the American Political Science Association in 1962, but published much later, Almond (2002) drew a comparison between the findings of his research and those (much criticised and highly controversial) of others done in the same period, that had acquired more or less justifiably greater fame – *The Authoritarian Personality*.⁴ In his short, but very dense article, Almond dismisses, scathingly, the misplaced criticisms addressed against his analysis. He had never maintained that the dominant features of former Communists, as well as of those who remained Communists, were essentially aspects of the 'neurotic personality'. Almond especially highlights the lack of understanding by the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* of the social and political context in which personalities of this type could (can) make their appearance, consolidate and expand themselves. As is well known, the problem of the origins of different personality types, in the family, in society, the psychological factors, and their political expression, remains fully open. Re-reading at the same time *The Appeals of Communism* and *The Authoritarian Personality* continues to represent a useful, perhaps indispensable, by all means fruitful, point of departure for those who desire better to understand some characteristics of political extremism at the two opposing poles.

TOWARD THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

In the meantime, Almond had acquired a visible and prominent position in the American discipline of political science. It is not surprising that in 1953 the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) entrusted him with the task of attempting the application of the behavioural approach to the study of comparative politics. Almond accepted the proposal and gave birth to the Committee on Comparative Politics. As recalled by Heinz Eulau, Lucian Pye, Sidney Verba, and Robert Keohane (2003: 468), the Council's overall goal was twofold: 'first, to mobilize all the power of the modern social sciences—including, in particular, the insights and findings of sociology, anthropology, and social psychology—for the comparative study of political systems; and second, to expand the range of comparative analysis including the non-Western world, and in particular, the new states just emerging from colonial rule'. In this instance too, there is a clear motivation: to make of political science an applied science capable of improving the structuring and functioning of political systems and their democratisation. It was the beginning of fifteen years of enthusiastic devotion to analyses and theorisations meant to launch two research sectors: comparative politics and political development. Understandably, it was up to Almond to define the scope and the problems of the first research wave. He attempted to accomplish his task writing two very ambitious articles: 'Comparative Political Systems' (1956) and 'A Comparative Study of Interest Groups and the Political Process' (1958). Both were meant to provide some guidelines for in depth comparative analyses. In science, and in the social sciences in general, as well as in political science, success can probably be measured more in reference to the capability of identifying research paths and arenas and suggesting ways of theorising rather than in coming to a final, fully accomplished, exhaustive product. Overall, it seems unlikely that in the social sciences there will appear impassable achievements.

There is a widely shared opinion that it is preferable to have, or to formulate, a wrong theory, no matter how one would define 'wrong', than to have no theory at all to refer to and on which to rely. In practice, through the criticisms, revisions and the reformulation of a wrong theory, especially when one has reached a clear understanding of the inadequacies and the mistakes, it becomes possible to formulate a better, though itself constantly improvable, theory. As Karl Popper wrote, in a metaphor much liked by Almond, it would be highly unrealistic to look for explanations attaining the rigour of the functioning of a clock. However, it would also be wrong to think that all political occurrences are as much undetermined as the appearance and the disappearance of the clouds. The most promising way, not necessarily a middle way, consists in looking for regularities in human behaviour and in producing generalisations (Almond and Genco 1977). It also seems useful to experiment with classifications capable of giving directions to actual research efforts. Therefore, it was not by chance that from the attempt to classify all political systems in a theoretical manner, several studies of