



Wm A. Dunning

A HISTORY OF POLITICAL THEORIES

RECENT TIMES

ESSAYS ON CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS
IN POLITICAL THEORY

CONTRIBUTED BY STUDENTS OF THE LATE

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IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY AND GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF
HIS SCHOLARLY INSPIRATION AND SYMPATHETIC
GUIDANCE AND COUNSEL

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WILLIAM ARCHIBALD DUNNING

ON August 25, 1922, Professor Dunning passed away, after a lingering illness following his collapse in February of that year. Professor Dunning was born in Plainfield, New Jersey, in 1859. He received the degree of bachelor of arts from Columbia University in 1881; from the same institution the master's degree in 1884 and the doctorate in 1885. The forty years of his academic life were spent in Columbia, where he was successively fellow, lecturer, instructor, adjunct professor and professor. Since 1913 he had occupied the Lieber professorship of history and political philosophy. The degree of doctor of laws was conferred upon him in 1904 and doctor of letters in 1916. His leadership in scholarly work was evidenced by the double honor of the presidency of the American Historical Association in 1913, and of the American Political Science Association in 1922. His presidential address was to have been given at the December (1922) meeting of the latter association.

Professor Dunning's work was crowned with unusual success in three fields, as a teacher, as an editor, and as a scholar in the fields of history and government. As a university lecturer, Professor Dunning was a marvel of lucidity and keenness, and left an ineffaceable impression upon the hundreds of students who attended his courses during the long period of his academic career. He was equally notable in his power to interest and encourage students in special fields of inquiry, and in his many stimulating contacts with those who had passed out from the university halls as students. The hundred volumes of the Columbia publications in history, economics, and public law are full of acknowledgments of his friendly interest and counsel in the development of scholarly studies. His students published in 1914 *Studies in Southern History and Politics* as a testimonial to his inspiring work in this field, and the present volume is a product of the appreciation by his students in the history of political theory of his notable contributions to this department of learned endeavor.

He was one of the active group of editors of the *Political Science Quarterly* from 1890 to the time of his death, and managing editor from 1894 to 1903. His discriminating judgment and his editorial care and skill were significant factors in creating and maintaining the high standards of a periodical notable in the field of political science. Ten years of his life were largely occupied with this exacting labor, wearing upon the editor, but immensely useful to his collaborators in the field of government.

The contributions of Dr. Dunning to productive scholarship were made in the fields of American history and political theory, and particularly in the latter field. His doctoral dissertation was on *The Constitution of the United States in Civil War and Reconstruction* (1885). This was followed in later years by his *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction*, published in 1898, and *Reconstruction, Political and Economic*, a volume in the American Nation Series. In 1907 with Frederick A. Bancroft he edited *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz* (1907-17). In 1914 he published a very remarkable survey of Anglo-American relations under the title of *The British Empire and the United States*.

His outstanding contribution to the study of political philosophy was his *History of Political Theories, Ancient and Mediæval* (1902), with the succeeding volumes, *From Luther to Montesquieu* (1905), and *From Rousseau to Spencer* (1920). These lucid and scholarly accounts of the development of systematic political thinking quickly superseded the earlier works of Bluntschli and Janet, and became the standard histories of the evolution of political thought, the indispensable guide for all serious students of formal political philosophy. Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the *opus magnum* was its dispassionate and objective quality, its detached point of view. Few men of equal ability have been able to resist the temptation to formulate an independent system and advance a dogmatic philosophy. In the final chapter of the concluding volume this attitude developed into a form of pessimism, which was not, however, characteristic of the study as a whole. No one in the last generation has done more than the author of these volumes to advance the study of formal political theory, and to prepare the way for the increasingly intensive study of the evolution of the political mind.

Finally, it may not be amiss to say that Professor Dunning was in the true sense of the term a noble man, as well as a great

scholar, and that his personal qualities endeared him to all who came within the bright circle of his acquaintance. He combined in unusual manner great keenness of mind with rare tolerance and breadth of sympathy. Spirited and witty in conversation, he never allowed the scholar to overshadow the man. In his benevolent rôle in his favorite haunt in the Century Club, he became almost an institution.

The departure of Professor Dunning in his sixty-fourth year was a heavy blow to American scholarship. With the death of Lord Bryce, a former president of the Political Science Association, the year 1922 marked the passing of two preëminent figures in the field of history and government. While their walks in life were far apart, and their types of experience widely different, yet they had in common many intellectual characteristics. In both there was a sympathetic understanding of all types of thought; in both a quality of facile and lucid expression; in both an aversion to dogmatic conclusions. In both there was a strain of weariness and pessimism at the end, but the lives of both radiate inspiration and cheer to those who seek the truth in the troubled maze of political events.

This volume has been prepared by students of Professor Dunning who seek in this manner to express their appreciation of what he gave them individually as students, and what he did for the systematic study of political science, and especially of political theory. This work was projected before Professor Dunning's untimely death, and was planned as a tribute to a living scholar. But as fate decreed it will be a memorial to one who has passed on. We cannot present the volume to him in person, but we can and do dedicate it to him and to the spirit of scholarship which he so long embodied and which still radiates from his memory.

The third volume of Professor Dunning's study of political ideas, *History of Political Theories, Rousseau to Spencer*, reached into the third quarter of the 19th century. Since that time there have been many interesting and significant developments in political thought, which the present volume presents and interprets. Some of the developments here discussed overlap slightly the field traversed by Professor Dunning, but only so far as is necessary to establish their continuity and to make clear their significance.

It is the hope of the writers that these chapters will provide

material for the understanding and appreciation of the more important movements in political theory during the recent period. It is true that the method and direction of some of these movements is not yet fully apparent, but it is believed that that task of interpreting our time will be made easier by the analysis here presented.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
✓ I RECENT TENDENCIES IN POLITICAL THOUGHT	1
By <i>Charles E. Merriam</i> , University of Chicago	
The Outstanding Social Forces of the Period	1
Leading Groups that Developed Systems of Political Rationalization	6
The Intellectual Equipment of Contemporary Political Theorists	12
Methods of Political Inquiry	16
Actual Progress in Political Speculation	21
✓ II SOME RECENT CRITICS AND EXPONENTS OF THE THEORY OF DEMOCRACY	46
By <i>Malcolm M. Willey</i> , Dartmouth College	
Introduction	46
Uncritical Advocates of Democracy	49
Antagonists of Democratic Theory	50
Differential Biology and Psychology	57
The Exponents of Democracy	61
The Basic Problems	77
✓ III PLURALISTIC THEORIES AND THE ATTACK UPON STATE SOVEREIGNTY	80
By <i>F. W. Coker</i> , Ohio State University	
The Traditional Doctrine of State Sovereignty	80
The Pluralistic Attacks	89
State Sovereignty and Group Autonomy	89
State Sovereignty and Internationalism	98
State Sovereignty and Law	100
Conclusions	111
✓ IV POLITICAL THEORY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW	120
By <i>E. M. Borchard</i> , Yale University Law School	

CHAPTER		PAGE
V	RECENT POLITICAL THEORY DEVELOPED IN JURISPRUDENCE	141
	By <i>Caleb Perry Patterson</i> , University of Texas	
	The Nature, Scope and Methods of Jurisprudence	141
	The Schools of Jurisprudence	145
	The Analytical School	145
	The Historical School	148
	The Philosophical School	151
	The Comparative School	158
	The Sociological School	161
	Recent Tendencies in Jurisprudence	176
VI	PROLETARIAN POLITICAL THEORY	178 ⁰
	By <i>Paul H. Douglas</i> , University of Chicago	
	The Purpose and Setting of Proletarian Political Theory	178
	Collectivism	182
	Anarchism	197
	Syndicalism	216
	Guild Socialism	227
	Consumers' Cooperation	234
	Agrarian Distributivism	242
	The Single Tax	246
	Bolshevism	254
VII	INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL TACTICS ON SOCIALIST THEORY	
	IN GERMANY, 1863-1914	270
	By <i>Carlton J. H. Hayes</i> , Columbia University	
	The Lack of Revolutionary Tradition in Germany	270
	The Influence of Lassalle	274
	The Era of Persecution	284
	Patriotism and Revisionism	294
	The Fateful Election of 1907 and the Triumph of Revisionism	301
VIII	POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT PHILOSOPHICAL	
	MOVEMENTS	313
	By <i>Herbert W. Schneider</i> , Columbia University	
	The Rival Methods	314
	Idealism	314

CONTENTS

xi

CHAPTER		PAGE
	Naturalism and Evolutionism	321
	Pragmatism and Experimentalism	332
	Fundamental Issues	338
	Monism versus Pluralism	338
	Moralism versus Non-Moralism	343
	Democratic versus Aristocratic Ideals	349
IX	SOME CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOCIOLOGY TO MODERN POLITICAL THEORY	357
	By <i>Harry Elmer Barnes</i> , Smith College	
	Sociology and Political Science	357
	The Sociological View of the Nature of the State	361
	The Origins of Political Institutions	366
	The Basic Factors in the State	370
	The Forms of the State and Government	377
	The Processes and Mechanism of Government	380
	Sociological Opinion on Liberty and Rights	385
	Social Progress and the Scope of State Activity	388
	International Relations	392
	Extra-Legal Phases of Political Institutions	395
	Political Theory and the Social Environment	398
	Concluding Estimate	399
X	SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND POLITICAL THEORY	403
	By <i>Charles Elmer Gehlke</i> , Western Reserve University	
	The Group and Social Control	403
	Psychological Factors in Social Control	407
	The Cultural Analysis of Political and Social Facts	417
	Some Practical Applications of the Psychological Approach to Politics	421
XI	ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORIES OF POLITICAL ORIGINS	430
	By <i>Alexander A. Goldenweiser</i> , New School for Social Research	
	The Basic Forms of Social Organization	430
	Theories of Social and Political Evolution	433
	Development of the Evolutionary Position	433
	Criticism of the Evolutionary Scheme of Morgan	438
	Primitive Political Organization	445

CHAPTER	PAGE
XII SOME REPRESENTATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ANTHROPO- GEOGRAPHY TO POLITICAL THEORY	457
<i>By Franklin Thomas, Columbia University</i>	
Introductory	457
Karl Ritter	460
Henry Thomas Buckle	465
Friedrich Ratzel	471
Ellen Churchill Semple	479
Jean Jacques Elisée Reclus	482
Halford John Mackinder	488
Ellsworth Huntington	494
Edwin Grant Dexter	500
Robert H. Lowie	504
XIII RACE AS A FACTOR IN POLITICAL THEORY	508
<i>By Frank H. Hankins, Smith College</i>	
Introduction	508
Aryanism	512
Teutonism	517
Anthropo-Sociology	526
Anglo-Saxonism and Teutonism in America	531
American Nordicism	540
INDEX	550