

Political Philosophy

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Political Philosophy

- **Political philosophy** is the study of fundamental questions about the **state, government, politics, liberty, justice** and the enforcement of a **legal code** by **authority**. It is [Ethics](#) applied to a **group** of people, and discusses how a **society** should be set up and how one should **act** within a society.

Two parts

- Western Political Philosophy
- Islamic Political Philosophy

Western Political Philosophy

- Plato
- Aristotle
- Machiavelli
- Montesquieu
- Hobbes
- Locke
- Rousseau
- Bentham

- J.S Mill
- Hegel
- Marx
- Lenin
- Mao
- Frances Fukuyama

- Plato

Dimensions

- 1. Explain Plato's Theory of Justice. How he tries to implement it through the Education System? **(2001)**
- 2. Plato's Communism was, is and will remain impracticable. Critically examine this statement. **(2003)**
- 3. Examine the main similarities and differences in the Political Ideas of Plato and Aristotle. **(2004)**
- 4. Explain Plato's theory of Justice. How he tries to implement it through educational system? **(2006)**
- 5. "Plato intended to build an institution for scientific study of politics and training of statesman" elaborate **(2008)**

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6. Discuss Plato's contribution to the History of political thought. **(2009)**

7. Platonic and Aristotelian paradigms **(2011)**

8. Plato intended to build an institution for scientific study of politics and training of statesman." elaborate. **(2012)**

9. Critically examine the concept of "Justice" by Plato. **(2014)**

Introduction

- 427-347 BC
- Born in Aristocratic Athenian family
- Looked for career in public service
- Disenchantment: disastrous outcome of Peloponnesian war, rule of thirty tyrants, execution and condemnation of Socrates
- Period of soul searching

- • Left Athens with Aristotle's notion of "virtue is knowledge"
- • Went to Greek state of southern Italy: studied class structure and mathematics
- • Egypt: conservatism and mathematics
- • Dionysus's wrath
- • Ransomed by friends
- • Back to Athens

- Academy
- Taught there, many works lost
- Some left, became basis of western philosophy
- First constructive and positive effort: Republic

Plato's justice

JUSTICE ON THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Human soul is divided into 3 parts **A**
- There are 3 corresponding traits in every person **B**
- Out of these one trait is dominant leading to 3 functions **C**

A

- GOLD
- SILVER
- BRONZE

B

- REASON
- SPIRIT
- APPETITE

C

- RULER
- WARRIOR
- PRODUCER

- Proportionate presence of 3 Traits
- Coordination among the three
- Dominance of one trait
- Every individual should perform that duty for which he is best suited to

JUSTICE ON THE SOCIAL LEVEL

- PHILOSOPHER CLASS
- DOMINANCE OF WISDOM
- WARRIOR CLASS
- DOMINANCE OF COURAGE
- PRODUCER CLASS
- DOMINANCE OF SENSUALITY

JUSTICE ON THE SOCIAL LEVEL

- Proportionate Presence of 3 Classes
- Coordination among the 3 Classes
- Specialization of Work
- Each class should stick to performing its own duties and not interfere with others jobs

FEATURES

- Presence of classes in a society
- Moral concept rather than legal
- Internal element of soul
- Man's importance lies only in being a member of society
- Wisdom of king accorded topmost priority
- Division of labour
- Specialization of work
- Non interference

CRITICISM

- Justice should have been a legal concept
- Concentrating power in the hands of philosopher class is not correct
- Overall development of individual and society is not possible
- Who will decide which trait is dominant in an individual
- Impossible to implement in modern day states with large population

Plato's education



BACKGROUND

- Plato's book REPUBLIC or CONCERNING JUSTICE
- Justice can be achieved in two ways.
- POSITIVE
- NEGATIVE
- Well planned, state-controlled education.
- A Communistic pattern of society involving
 - Communism of Family
 - Communism of Property



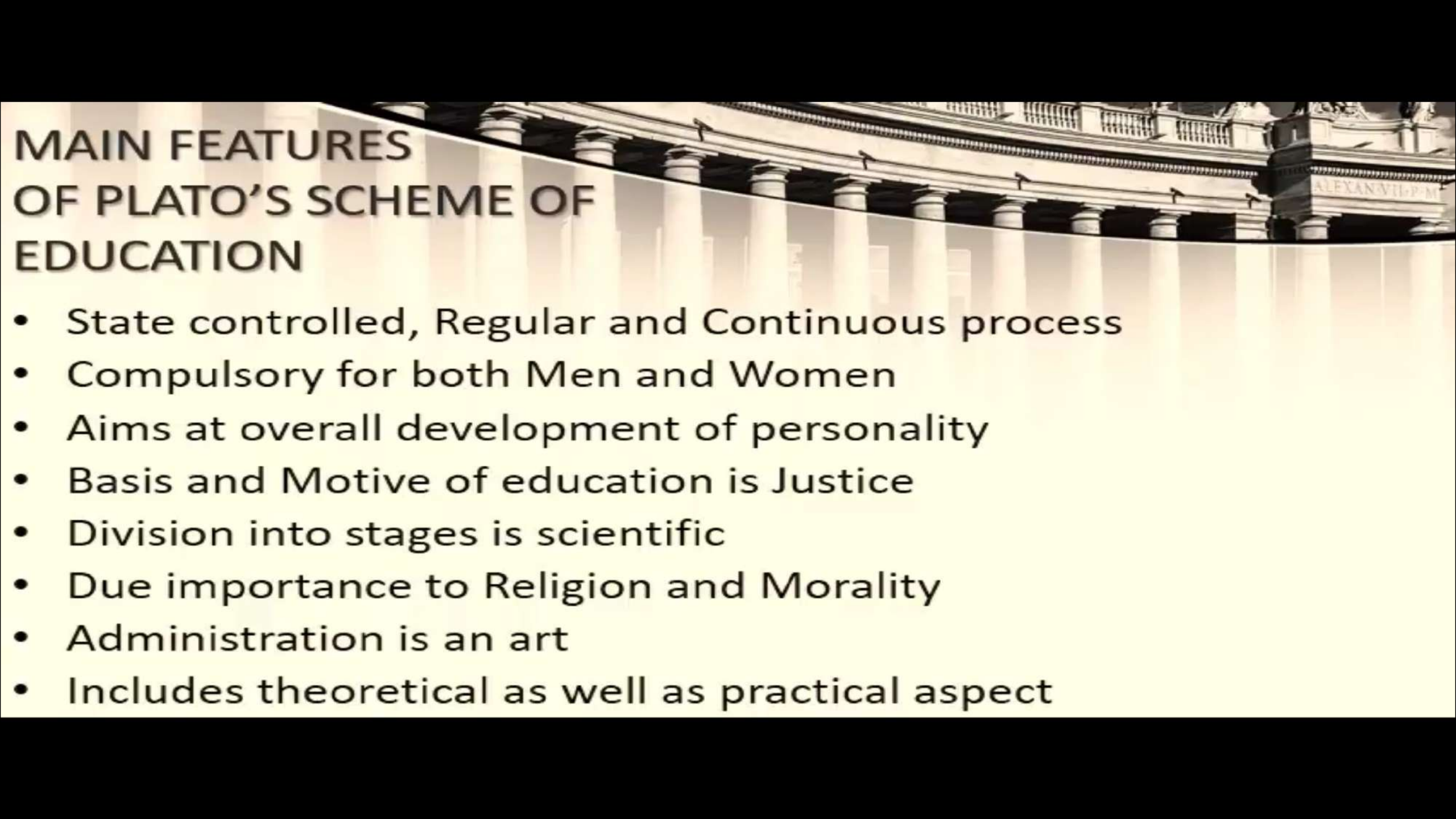
PLATO'S SCHEME OF EDUCATION

- A continuous lifelong process
- State controlled
- Aim of education was overall development of personality to suit the needs of state
- Divided into two stages
 - Elementary education
 - Higher education



ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

- 6 to 18 years
- Character building
- Physical exercise for body and music for mind.
- 18 to 20 years- Military training
- Aim is to make everyone good citizens
- ELIMINATION TEST
- Those who fail will become warriors and producer class
- Those who pass will get Higher education



MAIN FEATURES OF PLATO'S SCHEME OF EDUCATION

- State controlled, Regular and Continuous process
- Compulsory for both Men and Women
- Aims at overall development of personality
- Basis and Motive of education is Justice
- Division into stages is scientific
- Due importance to Religion and Morality
- Administration is an art
- Includes theoretical as well as practical aspect

The background of the slide features a black and white photograph of a grand classical building, likely a government or institutional structure. The building is characterized by a series of tall, fluted columns supporting a heavy entablature. The architecture is symmetrical and formal. In the upper right corner, a portion of a pediment is visible, containing the inscription 'ALEXAN VII P M'. The overall tone is historical and authoritative.

CRITICISM

- Emphasis on education of Ruler class only
- Literature has been ignored
- Undue control of State
- Long and expensive process
- Individual development sacrificed at the cost of State
- More theoretical less practical
- Similar syllabus for both men and women is inappropriate

Plato's Communism

- Only for upper class/ Guardians
- Aristocratic communism
- Communism means common ownership
- Extended to property and family
- No property
- No wives
- No corruption

Criticism of Communism

- Human nature overlooked
- Anti-democratic
- Not desirable and inadequate in modern world

Aristotle

Background

- In Athens, Plato was preoccupied with his last work laws
- Also pre occupied with Dyanoisis 2
- Meanwhile Aristotle came in Academy, instead of Isocrates
- Triumvirate completed
- Disagree with Plato and Socrates

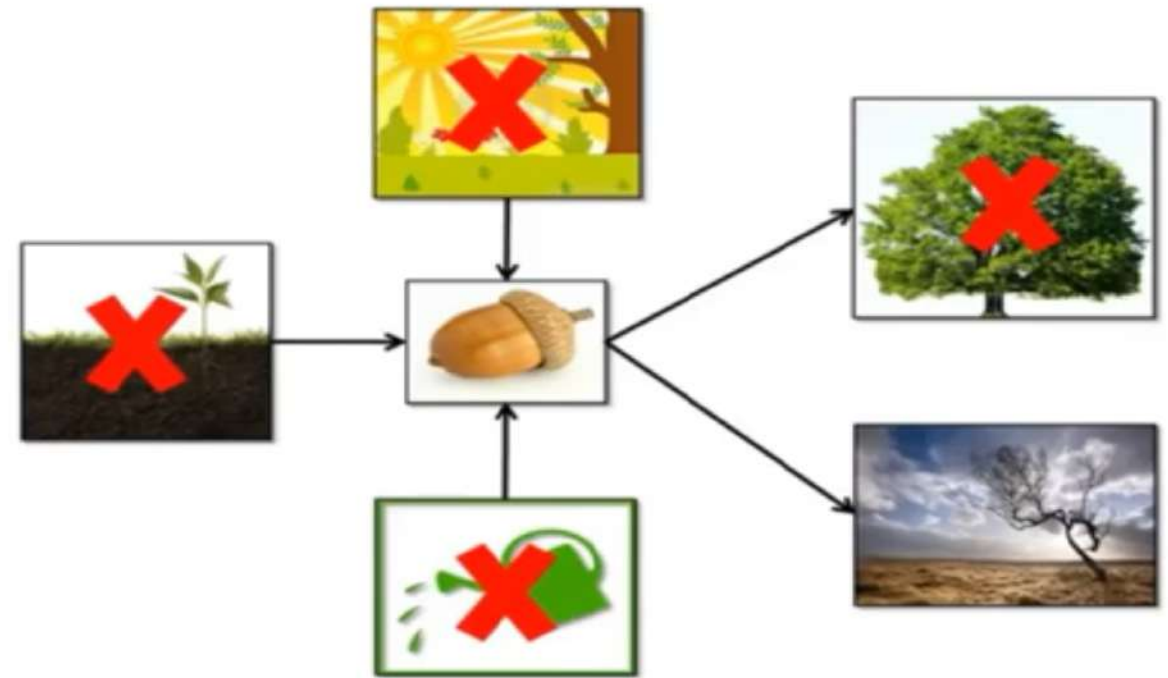
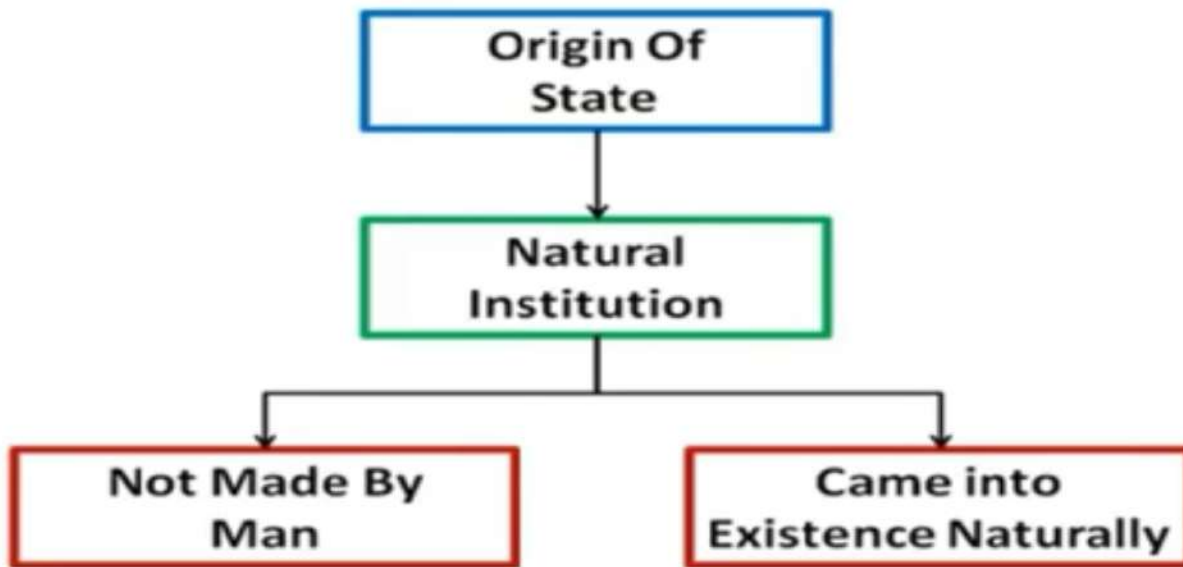
- Built his philosophy on rule of law and constitutionalism-
conducive to Athenian model

Dimensions

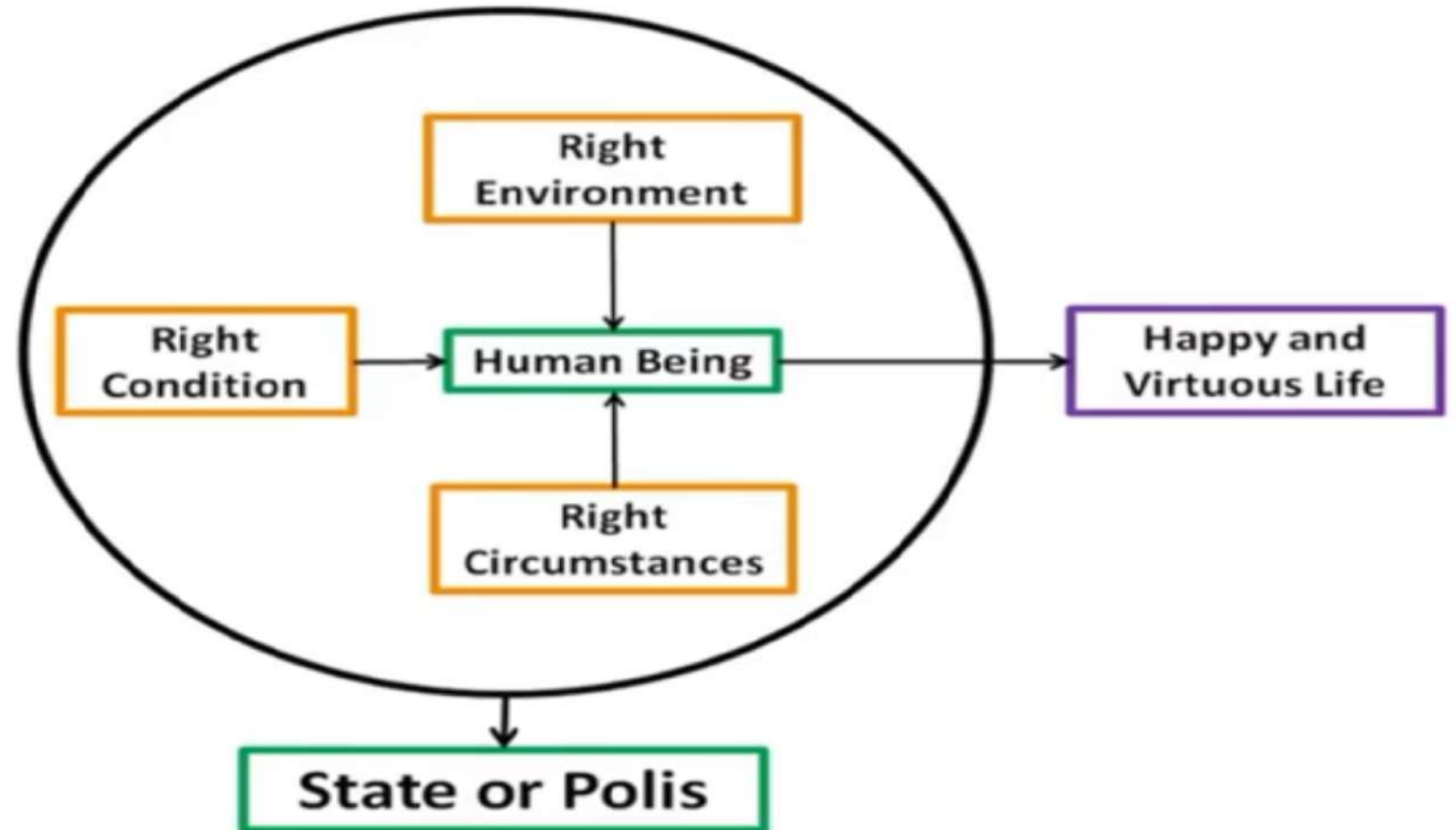
- 1. Show how Aristotle's Organic Theory different from Plato's Idealistic Theory of State. **(2000)**
 2. Aristotle was a Realist and not an Idealist- explain w.r.t his theory of the Ends and functions of the state. **(2007)**
 3. Aristotle was great but not grateful student of Plato" Comment. **(2010)**

State

- Man is by nature a Political Animal



State





State – Highest community
Moral and Material Benefits
Highest community
Political Authority or rule

Aristotle's Idea of State

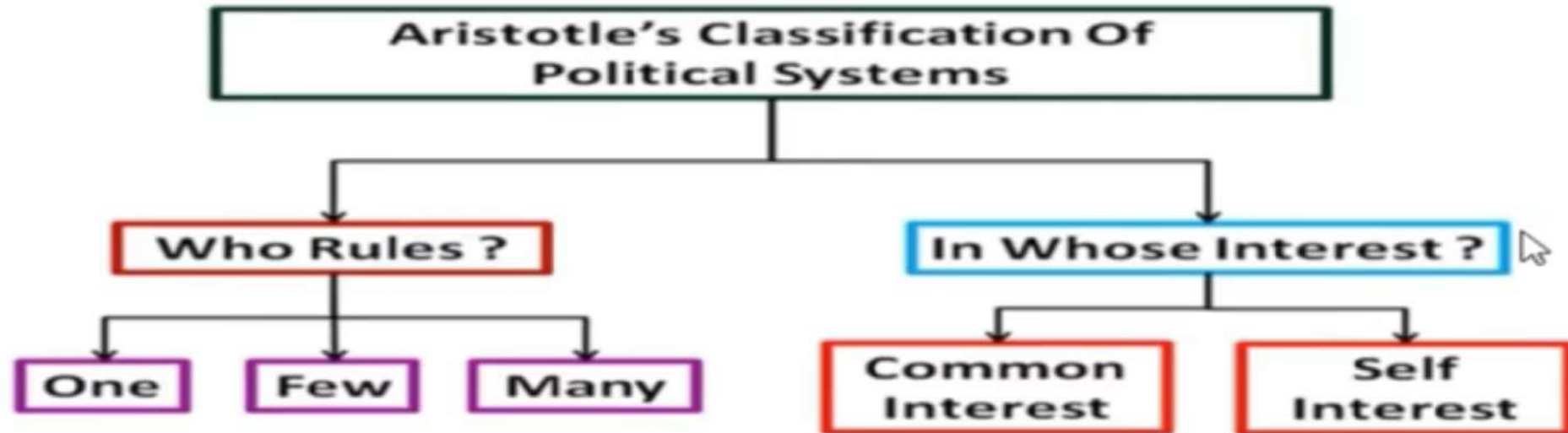
→ Idea of Citizenship

→ Classification of Regimes/Political System

→ Best practical Regime/Political System

Aristotle's Political System

- Classification of Political System into **Six Types**



<p>In Whose Interest</p>			
<p>Normal Rule In The Common Interest</p>	<p>MONARCHY Honor</p>	<p>ARISTOCRACY Virtue</p>	<p>POLITY</p>
<p>Perverted Rule In their Own Interest</p>	<p>TYRANNY Pleasure</p>	<p>OLIGARCHY Wealth</p>	<p>DEMOCRACY Freedom</p>
	<p>Rule by a Single Person</p>	<p>Rule by a Select Few</p>	<p>Rule by the Many</p>
	<p>Who Rules?</p>		

Monarchy

Not Practical

- Hard to find One Completely Virtuous Person.
- If there is one, he would be equal to God
- People don't get chance to participate in Politics and exercise their Rationality.

Aristocracy

Not Practical

- Aristotle wanted a kind of Aristocracy where most virtuous would rule.
- Like Plato, Aristotle believed that ruling is an Art and it should be performed by those who are expert at it.
- He feared that power would corrupt this small group of people and they will turn into oligarchy.



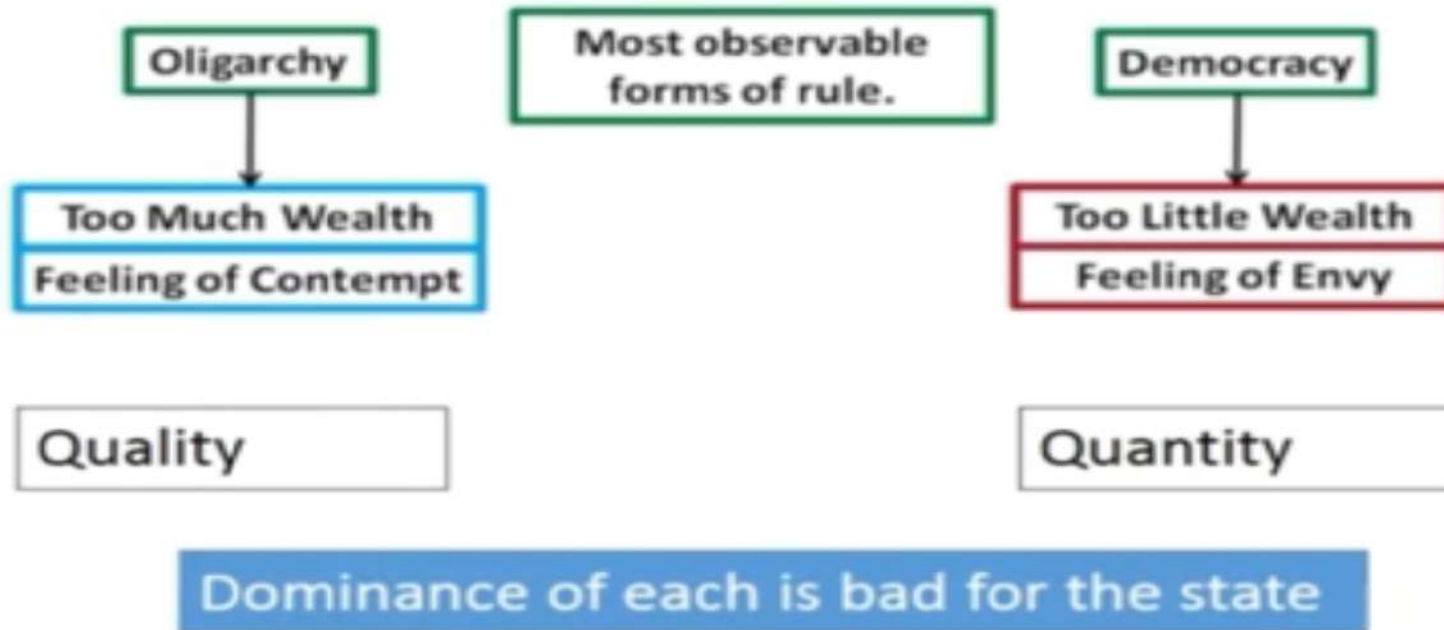
Aristotle Rejected

Tyranny

Oligarchy

Democracy







Polity

- Best Practical Regime Possible.
- It is Mixed Regime.
- Mixture of Oligarchy and Democracy.
- Best part of both the Regime taken.
- Rule by the Middle Class.
- Middle class is the most Virtuous class so most eligible to rule.



Aristotle's Ideal State

- Ideal can not be achieved.
- Must reflect the **good life** of individual.
- Ingredients of good life
 - External good
 - Good of the body
 - Good of the soul
- Optimum size for Ideal State

Aristotle's Ideal State

- Good state never **aggressive or imperialist**,
concerned with **peace and internal improvement**
Sufficient military to defense, not annoying to neighbors
- **Location**: Access to sea for naval and trading purposes
Naval Force should be adequate to defense, but excluded from politics.
- **Commercially** , Import necessities and export surplus. Not act as broker, should be self sufficient, not profit end

Aristotle's Ideal State

Family:

Not too large

Best age for marriage : Male 37, Female 18

Primary Training of infants – Physical

Proper course of study- Reading, writing, drawing and music



Aristotle's Ideal State

- **Six services** must be performed

1. Agriculture
2. Arts and crafts
3. Defense
4. Land ownership
5. Religion
6. Government Services

Agriculture , Arts and crafts → Lower Class

Defense , Religion and Civil Services → Citizens

- **Land Ownership** Shared by all citizens

Some land communally owned for common tables and worship institutions

Privately owned – Two plats, one near city and one in the frontier area

Comparison between Plato and Aristotle

- Plato is radical, Aristotle is conservative
- Plato is perfectionist
- Aristotle believes in middle Way
- Aristotle believes good must not be sacrificed for best because Best is unachievable
- Aristotle believes in common sense
- Plato believes in special training of philosophers

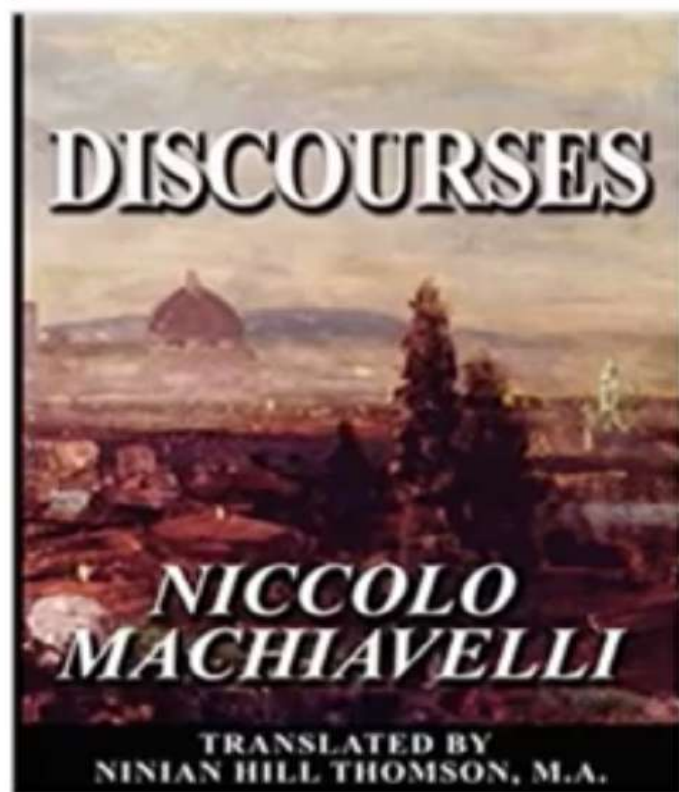
Machiavelli

Dimensions

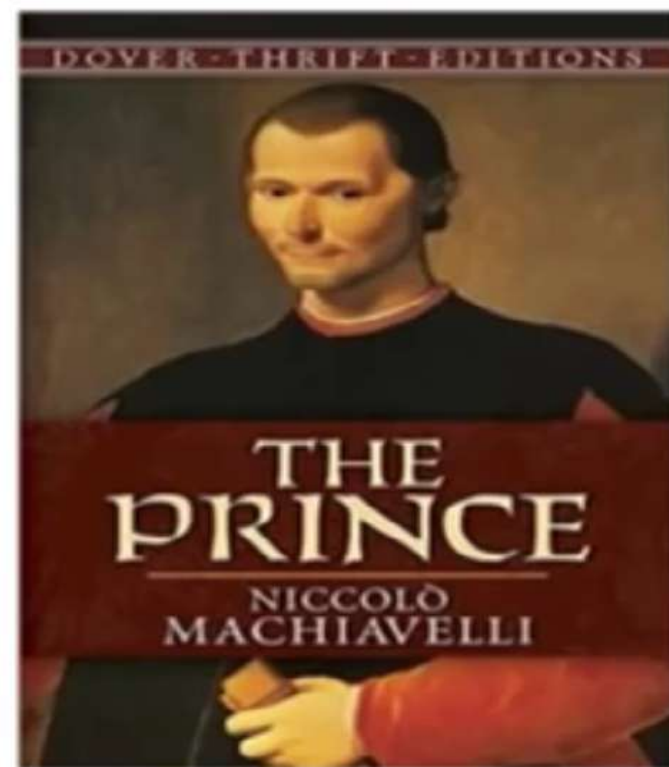
- 1. Machiavelli's Prince. **(2000)**
 2. Machiavelli enunciated the philosophy of art of the government for effective discipline and stability in the state. Analyze and discuss the basis of his philosophy in detail. **(2002)**
 3. Machiavelli enunciated the philosophy of Art of government for effective discipline and stability in the state. Analyze and discuss the basis of this philosophy in detail? **(2006)**
 4. "Is it correct to call Machiavelli citizen of all states and contemporary of all ages"? Argue. **(2010)**

Machiavelli's Political Philosophy

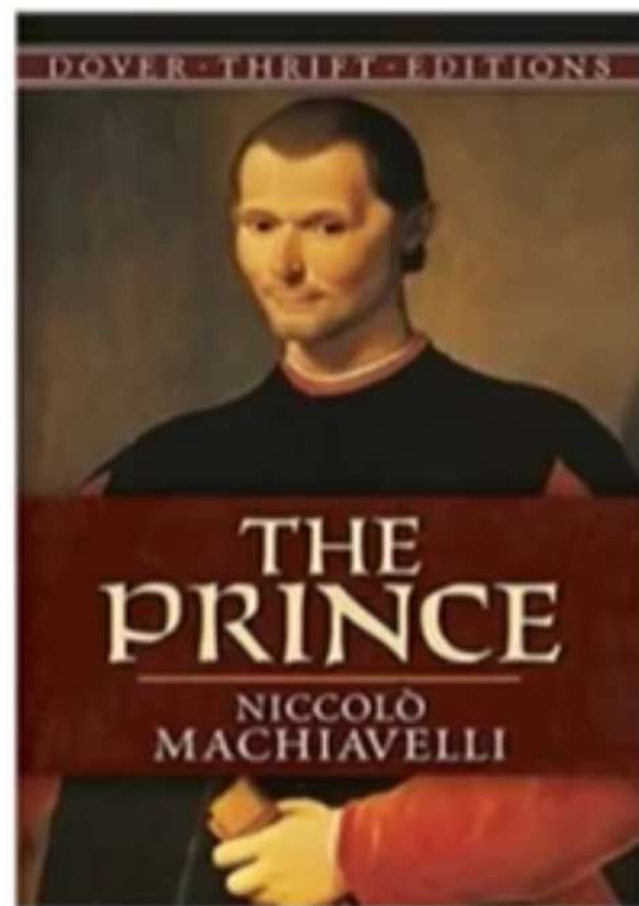
The Discourse



The Prince



The Prince



- A Book on **art of statecraft.**
- It presents a “Theory of **Preservation of State**”.
- Machiavelli advises Prince on How to Get Power and How to maintain it.
- A **handbook of Realpolitik.**
- Supports the use of evil means like Violence, Treachery, Cunningness, Deception etc.
- Understanding the context in which the book is written is important.

Context

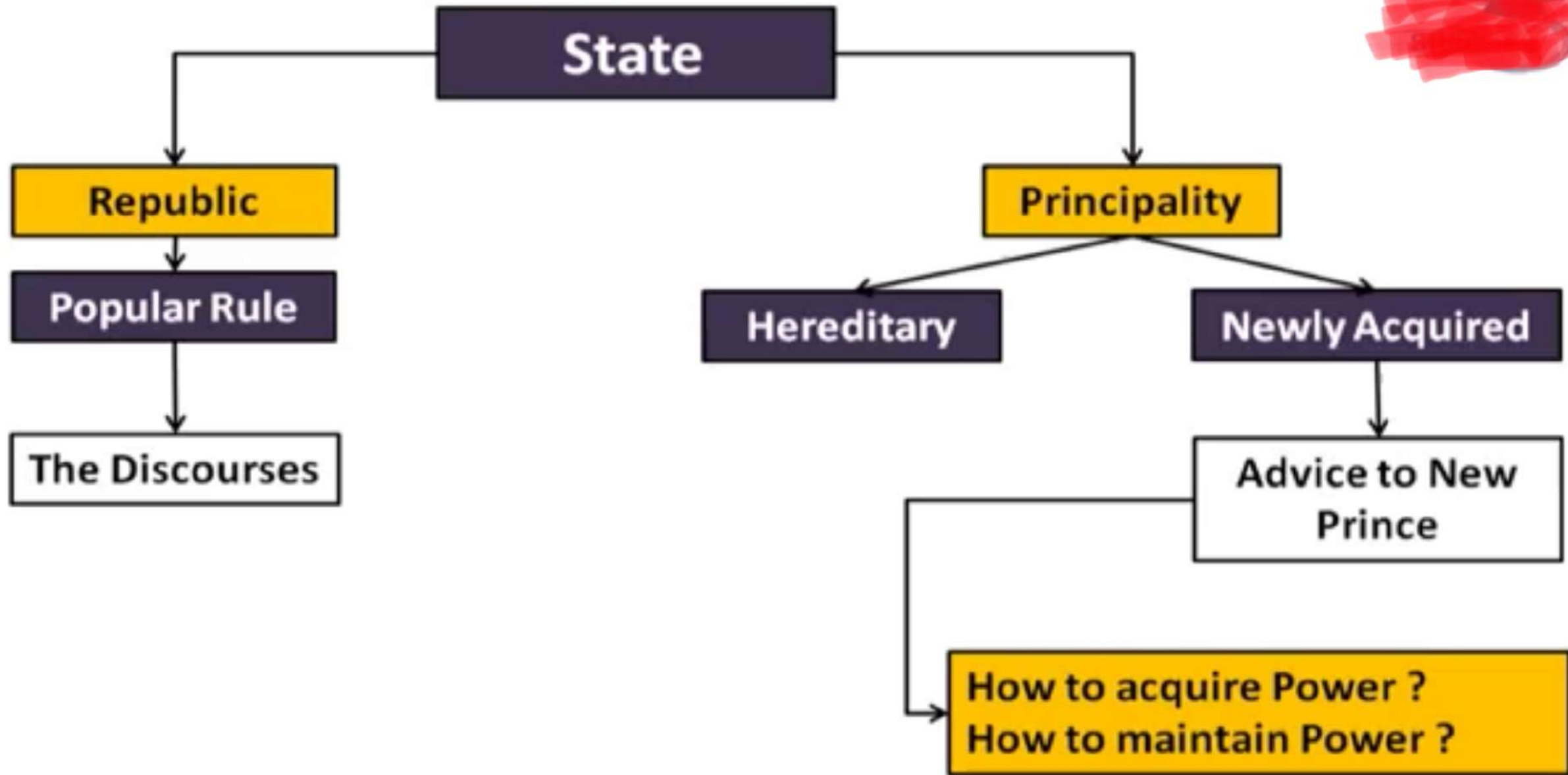
- Born in 1469 in Florence, Italy.
- Florence was one of the five city-state of Italy.
- All the city-states were at war with each other.
- Others were : Naples, Milan, Venice and States controlled by Pope.
- Big Kingdoms like Britain, France, Spain, Germany interfered in the Politics of Italy
- Machiavelli was influenced by the chaos and lack of unity of Italy.
- He wanted to see Italy as a single united Nation like France and Britain.

Context

- Till 1494 Florence was ruled by "Medici Family".
- In 1494 Medici are overthrown and a Republican Government is established in Florence.
- At the age of 29 Machiavelli enters Public life.
- Appointed as Second Chancellor (a civil service post).
- Become member of "Ten of War Committee".
- Works as a Diplomat for 14 years. Travel to different Kingdoms. Have a closer look at Policies being made.
- Medici return to power in 1512 with the help of Spanish Army.
- Everything Changes for Machiavelli.

Context

- After the return of Medici, Machiavelli is removed from his post.
- In 1513, Machiavelli is arrested for conspiring against Medici Family.
- He is imprisoned and tortured.
- Machiavelli is freed under the condition that he will not participate in Public life.
- Machiavelli goes to his ancestral Village.
- In the second half of 1513, he starts writing "The Prince" and "The Discourses"

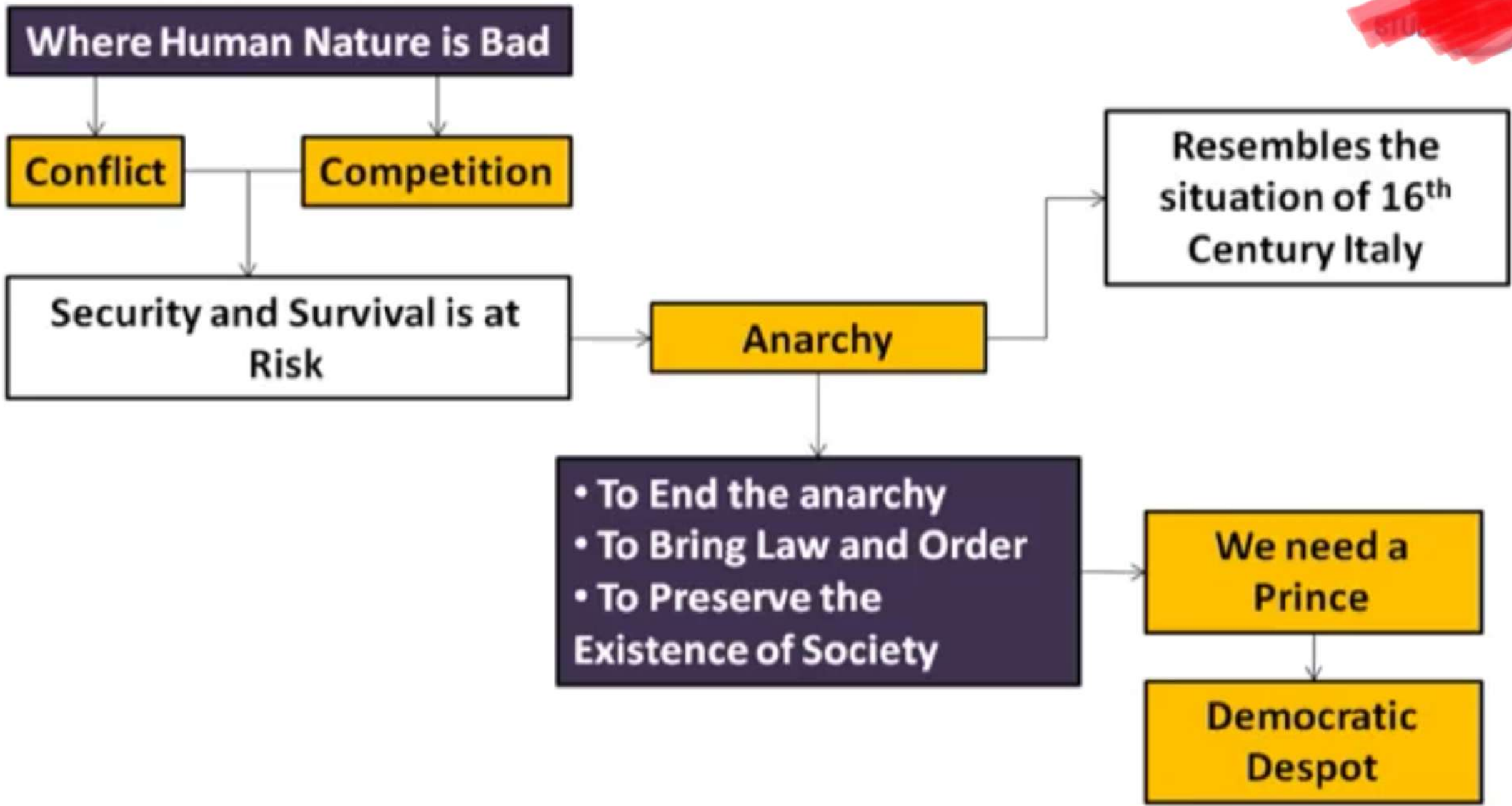


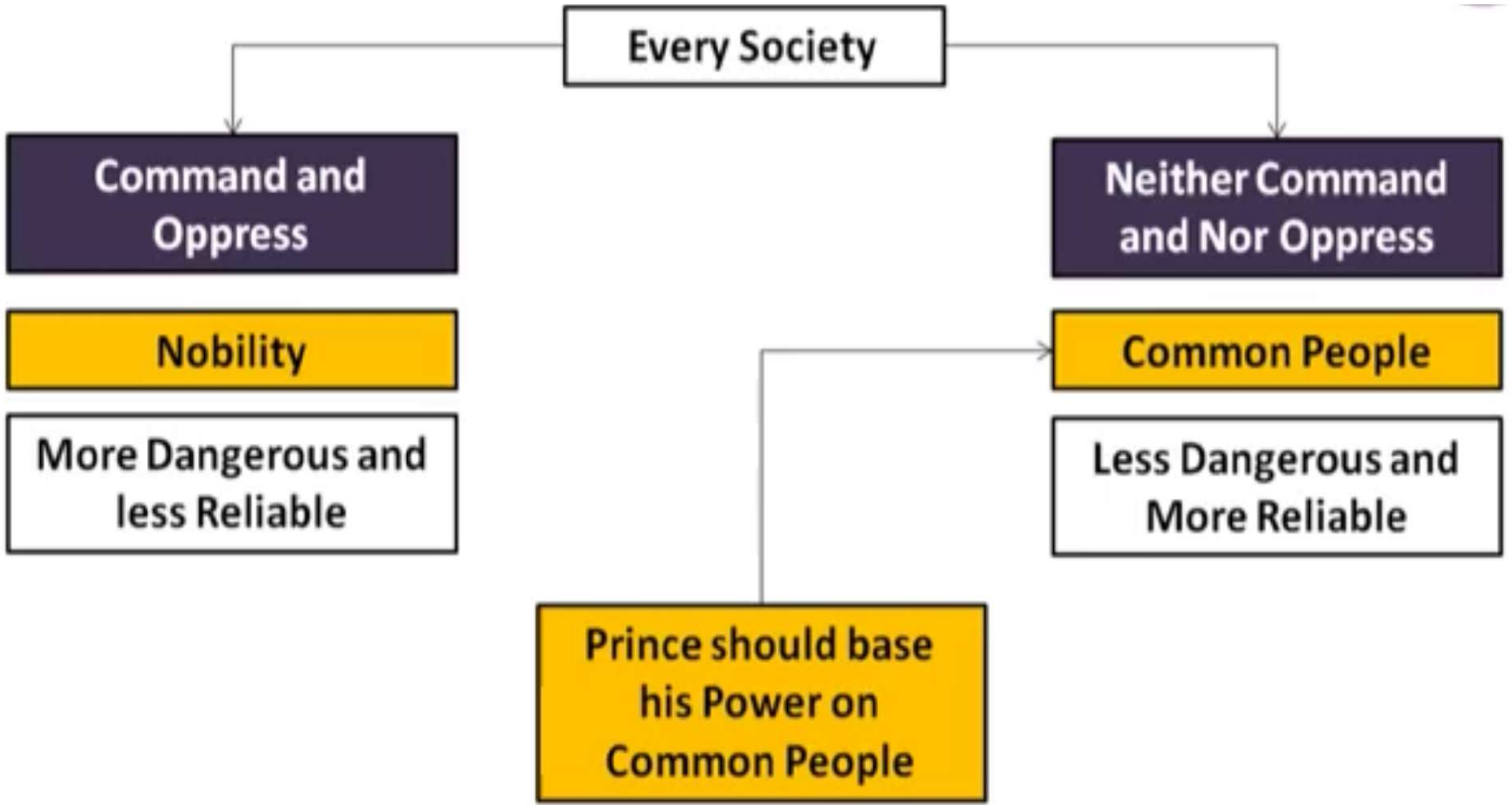
Machiavelli on Human Nature

“ For it is good general rule about men, that the are ungrateful, fickle, liars and deceivers, fearful of danger and greedy for gain.”

That Human Nature is Fundamentally Bad and Egoistic is the most BASIC ASSUMPTION of Machiavelli

- **Selfish**
- **Fickle**
- **Egoistic**
- **Run away from danger**
- **Aggressive / Possessive**





Every Society

Command and Oppress

Neither Command and Nor Oppress

Nobility

Common People

More Dangerous and less Reliable

Less Dangerous and More Reliable

Prince should base his Power on Common People

Main Objective of Prince

Quality of *Virtu*

Preservation of State

Threat to The Preservation of State



Threat to The
Preservation of State

Fortuna (Fortune or Fate)

Conventional Morality

Nobility/Elite

Common People

Neighboring States

Quality of
Virtu

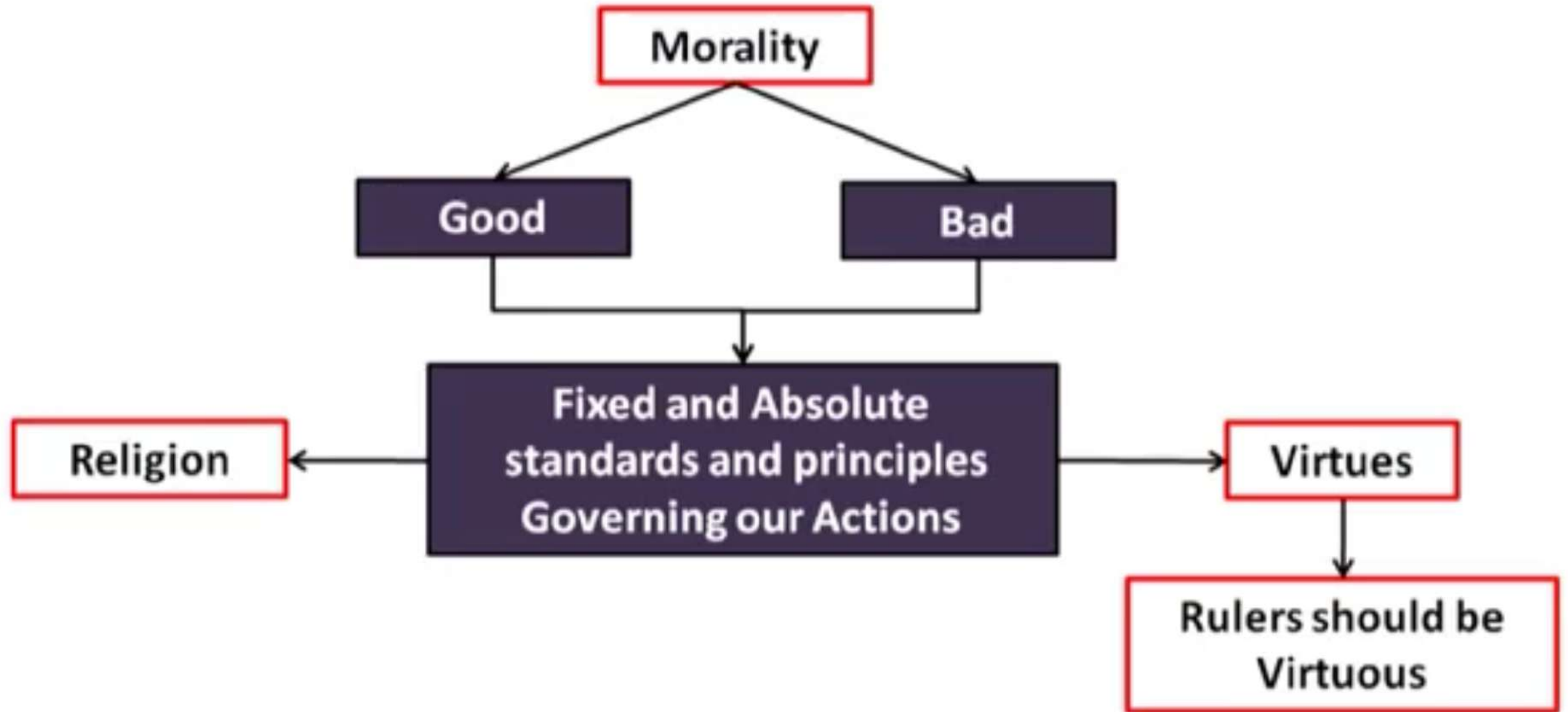
Advices of
Machiavelli

Fortuna (Fortune or Fate)

- Uncertain and Unpredictable incidents in life.
- It may provide Opportunity and may Bring Destruction.
- *Virtu* is the ability to Seize that opportunity.
- Compares Fortune with a River. It can bring floods.
- But we can prevent the destruction if we are prepared for the floods before it arrives.
- *Virtu here* is Foresightedness.

“ Fortune is the arbiter of half of our actions, the other half remaining in our hands ”

Conventional Morality



Conventional Morality



Nobility/Elite

- Close to Prince.
- Compete for share in Power.
- Can Make Conspiracies.
- Can Side with Prince's Enemies.

Keep their
ambitions under
control.

Common People

- Power and support base of the Prince.
- Can rebel and topple the government.

Keep them
Satisfied and
Stupefied.

Neighboring States



Always be
Prepared for the
War

" A Prince must not have any other object nor any other thought but war, its institutions, and its discipline; because that is the only art befitting one who commands"

- A Prince must always be ready to go to war.
- Even in the time of Peace he must be preparing for War.
- Machiavelli supports the use of "CETIZEN ARMY" in place of "MERCINERAY SOLDIERS"

Machiavelli : An Analysis

- Separates Politics from religion and ethics.
- Perfect example of a Renaissance Man : Skeptical, Secular and lover of antiquity.
- Brought Empiricism and Observation as a method of study.
- Though not fully scientific but his method was different from his contemporaries.
- His teachings are very relevant today in the field of International Politics.