

Q1) What is the Aristotelian classification of state? (2021)

Q2) Evaluate Aristotelian classification of government in detail? (PMS 2019)

Q3) Give a critical analysis of Aristotelian classification of government? (CSS 2016)

Ans Introduction:-

Aristotle, the father of political science, discussed his political thought/theory in his book Politics. According to him, "man is a social animal" and likes to live with other human beings and cannot live alone. Man makes family, which is a village. Many villages make a city. To make an environment of peace and order, there's a need of a city state having its law to provide justice for this purpose. People elect the head of state to oversee their political, legal and economic affairs.

⇒ He studied 158 constitutions of Greek city states and classified government into six categories which are called:-

⇒ Classification of state / government by Aristotle:-

a) The number of persons in whom sovereign power is vested.

b) The end to which the conduct of government is directed. This principle makes distinction between pure and corrupt or perverted form. Serving collective interests is the pure form while directed towards the interests of few is the corrupt form.

Number of Persons with Political Powers	The end to which the conduct of govt is directed.
	Pure form
One	Monarchy with promotion of Supreme virtue as the guiding Principle
Few	Aristocracy, representing a mixture of virtue and wealth directed toward common good.
Many	Polity representing material medium virtue. Power rest in Middle class which use it for the welfare of all the members of state.
	Corrupt or perverted form
	Tyranny based on deceit and selfishness.
	Oligarchy representing the greed for wealth by serving interests of few
	Democracy Representing the principles of equality
	neglecting interests of this class only and neglect the rest.

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According to Aristotle, Monarchy-

The best correct regime is Monarchy (Kingship) which occurs when a single ruler governs wisely, in "the common divine" form of ~~kingdom~~ regime. For that reason, its deviant counterpart, tyranny, must necessarily be the worst.

Aristotle defines tyranny as Monarchy with view to the advantage of the monarch - when a single ruler governs for himself at the expense of the people, who are ruled unwillingly. Aristotle writes, "no free person would willingly tolerate this sort of rule".

=> Aristocracy is the second correct regime. This form of government entails the rule of a virtuous few in the common interest. Aristotle argues that aristocracy would be more choice-worthy for cities than kingship, whether the office brings power with it or not. Provided it is possible to find a number of persons who are similar. Oligarchy is the deviant form of aristocracy, and Aristotle well off and few in number have the offices. The philosopher oligarchies.

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Like tyrannies, are short lived regimes.
But he also writes that an oligarchy is marked by concord is not easily ruined from within.

⇒ Aristotle third correct regime, polity of oligarchy and democracy, it is customary however, to call politics those: just, that tend toward democracy and those tending toward oligarchy, aristocracies, on account of the fact that education and good birth particularly accompany those who are better off.

Democracy: The third deviant regime, democracy is one in which the poor masses rule for their own benefit and at the expense of the wealthy. The Athenian writes, Democracy exists when the free and poor, being a majority have authority to rule. And although democracy has a more positive connotation in today's world, Aristotle viewed it as deviant because it is unjust to the wealthy and successful.

⇒ Aristotle says that polity is the best practicable state, if because when rich

class work for his self-interest, it becomes

oligarchy and when poor people work for their interests, it becomes democracy.

Hence, he proposed polity the best government

because middle class will not favor

rich or poor middle class promotes law

and order liberty and equality.

Conclusions:-

Aristotle gave the concept of a mixed constitution as a solution to prevent

instability and establish a lasting form

of government in the Greek city state.

He employed his idea of the Golden mean

to create stability his solution to bring

a stable form of government is the combination

of rule by few and rule by many.

He discarded monarchy because it would

be corrupt from absolute power Aristocracy

would comprise the chosen minority who

are educated and rich. However, in case of

no checks on aristocracy, it would deteriorate,

To prevent that, Aristocracy should be satisfied

by the ordinary many. He says that the

people though individually they may be

worse are collectively as good".

Aristotle's suggestion of a judicious mixture between aristocracy and what is sometimes referred to as polity, or at other times democracy, embodies his belief in the Golden Mean formula. Hence, the competent, rich and educated would rule, but the ordinary citizen would check the aristocracy from exceeding their power by ratifying their ~~arguably~~ decision. In modern times, Aristotle's formula is ~~arguably~~ referred to as constitutional democracy.