

What is the Aristotelian classification of state?

Introduction:

Aristotle is one of the greatest and influential Greek philosophers. He classified the state on the basis of two basic principles i.e. qualitative and quantitative. And the governance was of six types i.e. Monarchy, Tyranny, aristocracy, Oligarchy, polity and democracy. According to Aristotle, state is not static but is in continuous form of dynamics. It means that all the six forms of gov. states are interchangeable and continuously changing from one form to another.

Classification of State

Aristotle classified the state into six forms and on the basis

of two principles i.e.

Quantitative: The number of people who exercise maximum power in a political system of a state

Qualitative: These are the self-interest and the interests of community e.g. wealth, greediness

Classification:

State is classified on the basis of number of rulers, it is being ruled by, ~~and~~ resulting in a good form of government ~~and~~ when they perverted from the virtuous path, getting involved in selfishness and greediness, bad form of government is resulted.

different people

No. of Rulers	Bad form of governance	Good form of Governance
1	Tyranny	Monarchy
Few	Oligarchy	Aristocracy
Many	Democracy	Polity

Rule by 1

Monarchy:

When only one person i.e. king is the head of state and takes care of all the functions of the state. He is wise, selfless and virtuous man who sacrifices his desires for the interest of state. According to Aristotle, king can do anything but for the interest of the state.

Tyranny:

King has all the absolute powers under the monarchy.

as he can take any decisions for the state. A point comes when he becomes selfish and think about himself, sacrifices his self the state for the fulfillment of his desires. In this way, monarchy is turned into tyranny, as he overshadows the public's rights for the fulfillment of his own desires.

Rule by Few

Aristocracy:

When king attains the power of dictators and public is facing tyranny, a group of wise people take over the state and start working for the welfare of state. They are virtuous and responsible group of people who are sincere to the public and state.

Oligarchy:

When power is accumulated in few hands, they become corrupt. They start using the rights and resources of people for their self-interest. At this point, aristocracy is converted into oligarchy.

Rule of Many

Polity:

When few people who are controlling the state become corrupt, then a group of people who take administrative control in their hands, supported by the public and they start working for the self-interest of the public. In this way, different people control the state and good form of governance come into action.

Democracy:

Many people control the administration of state in polity when they start corruption and work for their self-interests, Democracy ~~form~~ or mob-cracy come into action, in this, poor do not get their rights and rich get enjoy maximum refreshments.

Monarchy Tyranny

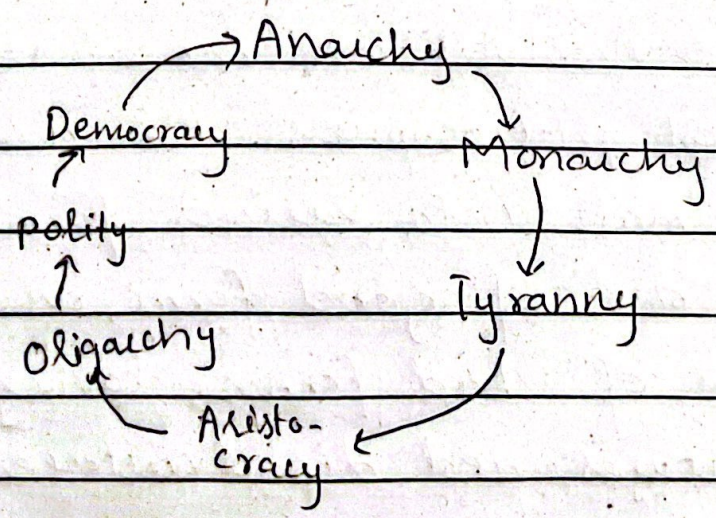
Aristocracy Oligarchy

Polity Democracy

Cycle of Political Change

According to Aristotle, state is not a static entity, but continuously going through a political change. A king administers the entire country in his monarchy, all the

powers are vested in him. When
 he start thinking for his self-interest,
 tyranny come into being. Then,
 state is over-taken by a few
 people called aristocracy who are
 wise and responsible. Oligarchy
 come into being, when these people
 start corrupting. Then, a group
 of people representing public take
 over and polity is formed. When
 they become selfish, Democracy
 is come into being. Again,
 it is taken over by Monarchy
 and this cycle continues



Critical Analysis:

Aristotle does not talk about the differentiation of state and government.

State is an entity which is static while government is dynamic which changes with time to time. Aristotle signified democracy as perversive form of government, but modern political scientists regards democracy as a best form of government.

And Aristotle, gave the idea of multiple forms of governance which is difficult to apply in recent times.

Conclusion:

Aristotle was one of the greatest philosophers. He classified the state into various forms.

Some are of good form, while other of bad forms, having advantages and disadvantages.

Aristotle's classification of state holds significant importance in modern political science.