

Give a critical analysis of Aristotle's classification of Government?

Ans Biography:

- Aristotle (384-322) an ancient Greek philosopher.
- Born in Stagira, Greece.
- Studied under Plato in his academy at the age of 17 and later became the tutor of Alexander the Great in 338.
- Established the "Lyceum" his own school of philosophy.
- Wrote extensively on philosophy, science, mathematics and politics.
- Emphasized empirical observation and logical reasoning in understanding the natural world.
- Focused on the natural world.
- Focused on ethics, virtue and the concept of "golden mean".

His Books:

- "Politics"
- "The constitution of Athens"
- "Nicomachean Ethics"
- "The Categories"
- "Rhetoric"

Aristotle classification of state :

Introduction :

Aristotle classification of state as presented in his book "Politics."

His classification is based on the thorough study of the all constitutions and political system of his time.

• According to Aristotle, Constitution, state and government were identical.

"Constitution and government have the same meaning" (Aristotle)

• His classification of state is mainly borrowed from Plato's statement.

Basis of classification :

• Two major basis of Aristotle classification of states:

Qualitative basis :

• The qualitative basis focuses on the quality or characteristics of the ruler or the ruling class.

Quantitative basis :

• The quantitative basis refer to the number of ruler or individual who

power in the state.

• If the government aims to serve common interests of people then it is the pure form of government.

• If government serves the private or self interest it become corrupt.

Classification of state:

• According to Aristotle Pure government are:

i **Monarchy**: Rule by a single individual.

• Monarchy is a form of government where power is vested in single ruler typically a king or queen.

• The ruler holds absolute authority and governs based on their own judgment.

• Monarchy can be either a legitimate form of government or a deviant form depending on the ruler's actions and intentions.

• It considered a stable and effective form of government when the ruler act in the best interest of the people and uphold Justice.

• **Aristocracy** : Rule by a few virtuous and qualified individual.

• Aristocracy is a form of government where power is held by a select group of individuals who are considered the best or most virtuous in society.

The ruler in an aristocracy are typically wealthy, educated and possess high social status.

Aristocracy is based on the idea that those who are most capable and morally upright should lead and make decisions for the benefit of society.

However aristocracy can devolve into oligarchy if the ruling elite use their power for personal gain.

ii Polity: Rule by the people as a whole.

- polity also known as constitutional government or a mixed government as a form of government that combines elements of democracy and oligarchy.

- In a polity power is shared among the citizens and decisions are made collectively through a system of laws and institutions.

- polity emphasizes the involvement and participations of the middle class aiming to balance the interest of different social group.

- According to Aristotle Polity is the most stable and just form of government when it is based on the principle of equality fairness and common good.

⇒ According to Aristotle each pure government has its dark side whom he called as:

i. Tyranny:

- Tyranny is a form of government where power is concentrated in the hands of a single ruler oppressive and without regard for the interest of the people.
- The tyrant obtains and maintains power through force and intimidation.

Tyranny is considered a deviant form of government as it disregards the principles of justice, equality and the common good.

The ruler in the tyranny is driven by personal ambition and self interest rather than the well-being of the citizen.

Oligarchy:

Oligarchy is a form of government where ^{power} ~~people~~ is held by a small privileged elite or ruling class.