

{ Political Science }

Question # 1

Critically examine plato's theory of justice. How does it differ from modern concepts of justice

{ Solution }

Plato was a student of Socrates. He was born in Athens. His early education included music and poetry for mind and gymnastics for body. Important events for molding his outlook include:-

- a) Defeat of Athens by Sparta
- b) Influence of Socrates on his personality
- c) Death of Socrates

He founded a school The Academy with the aim of turning his students into philosophers. Members of The Academy were invited to different Greek city-states to frame constitution

for them. Plato's notable work include "The Republic"

Concept of justice

Plato presented his concept of justice in his book "The Republic". It may be noted that his concept of justice was different than our modern concept of justice.

Justice according to Plato is everybody minding his own business and not interfering in others work. Plato divided his ideal state into three classes. He believed that justice could prevail if people reconcile into their classes and perform their work diligently. His concept of justice aims to prevail harmony within an ideal state.

Criticism on Concept of justice

Plato's concept of justice was criticized on the following grounds

- 1) His concept of justice was too rigid.

2) According to Bernard Russel

"Plato tried to make everyone happy and ends up making happy none"

3) Plato's concept of justice is self contradicting. The affairs of government would require collective work of all.

4) His concept of justice would only cause strife in the society

5) Such an approach would not lead to any innovation, industry, etc

6) Plato did not give any laws for upholding his concept of justice

7) His concept of justice is abstract

Modern Concept of justice

Modern concept of justice is based on laws. When these laws are upheld justice prevails. Furthermore, modern concept of justice also

provides for a judge who decide each matter according to law. Modern concept of justice has given rise to judiciary which is one of the most important organ of the state.

Modern concept of justice is based upon giving everyone his due share. It also comes with a set of punishments. This system of justice is important in maintaining the writ of the state.

Difference between Plato and Modern Concept of justice

<u>Plato's concept of justice</u>	<u>Modern Concept of justice</u>
1) It is based upon everyone minding his own business	1) It is based upon giving everyone his due share
2) It is abstract	2) It is concrete
3) Did not provide any laws to uphold justice	3) Based on laws

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4) Did not give any criteria to measure justice | 4) Provides for judge who decides between right or wrong. |
| 5) His concept of justice is rigid | 5) Modern concept of justice is flexible |
| 6) Self-contradicting | 6) Logical |
| 7) Only applicable in ideal states | 7) Applicable in all modern states |

Conclusion

Plato's concept of justice and modern concept of justice are totally opposite. Plato's concept of justice was developed and influenced by social and political conditions of his time. Plato's ideal state is an abstract notion. Within his ideal state his concept of justice is also abstract. It lacks laws, judge, and a criteria for justice and injustice. Furthermore Plato did not provide any punishment or methods to enforce his concept of justice.

Question #2

Discuss Aristotle's classification of constitutions. How relevant is his framework in contemporary political system

{Solution}

Aristotle was born in Macedonnia. His father was a physician to the King of Macedonnia. At the age of 18 he came to Athens and joined Plato's Academy. He studied there for 20 years. He was a brilliant student of Plato. He opened his own school "The lyceum".

Aristotle's classification of Constitutions

Aristotle studied the constitutions of more than 150 states before giving his concept of classification of state. He used empirical method in his study. Unlike Plato who confined himself to the ideal state, Aristotle also provided for bad states

and the art of governing them.
Aristotle classified the states
on two basis

- 1) Number of people who govern
- 2) The manner in which they govern.

Types of government

Aristotle provided for
following types of governments

a) Monarchy

If the government consist
of a single person who
works for the welfare of the
people, then the form of
government is Monarchy

b) Tyranny

If the government consist
of a single person who
works for his selfish
interest then the form of
government is Tyranny

c) Aristocracy

If the government consist
of few people who work
for the welfare of the masses

then the form of government is
Aristocracy

Oligarchy

If the government consist of few who work for their own selfish purpose, then the form of government is oligarchy.

Polity

If the government consist of many who work for the welfare of the masses, then the form of government is polity.

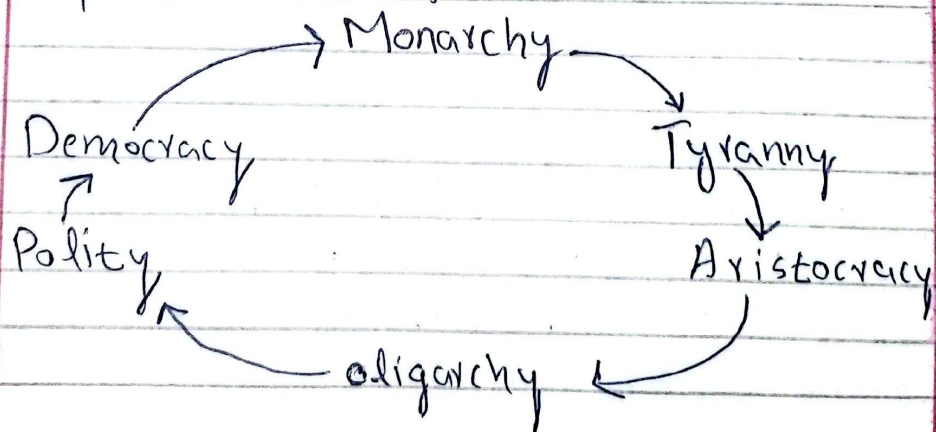
Democracy

If the government consist of many who work for their own selfish interest, then the form of government is Democracy. It may be noted that Aristotle's concept of democracy is different from our modern concept of democracy.

Aristotle's classification of government can be summarized in the table as follows:-

<u>Number of People who rule</u>	<u>Pure form</u>	<u>Corrupted form</u>
a) A single Person	Monarchy	Tyranny
b) A few	Aristocracy	Oligarchy
c) Many	Polity	Democracy

Aristotle believes that a single monarch rules. When that monarch becomes corrupt, he is overthrown by a few people and aristocracy is established. When these few people become corrupt, they are overthrown by many and the form of government becomes polity. These many people are overthrown and a single person comes to power, thus again establishing monarchy. This whole cycle repeats itself.



Relevance in Contemporary Political System

In today's political system Monarchy is still present in countries like Saudi Arabia. Aristocracy is present in countries like China with one party rule. However, Aristotle's concept of democracy is inconsistent with modern democracy. His classification of states is relevant to some extent in our contemporary political system.

Question #3

Analyze Montesquieu's doctrine of separation of powers. How has his theory influenced modern constitutional design

{ Solution }

Montesquieu was one of the notable & philosopher of 18th century. He was born in France. He was also known as Aristotle of 18th

century. Just like Aristotle, he also used empirical method in his study. He also presented his own classification of states. However, his most important contribution to political science was his theory of separation of powers.

Theory of Separation of power

Montesquieu was a strong supporter of the liberty. He was against the despotic form of government. In order to safeguard liberty and prevent the government from despotic tendencies, he gave the theory of separation of powers. According to this theory, the three branches of the government should be separate from each other. These three branches of the government include legislative, executive, and judiciary. According to Montesquieu

"If the legislative and executive powers are combined in a single person or body, there can be no liberty".

Similarly if the power to judge is combined with

executive or legislative organ, liberty shall not be able to prevail. Montesquieu's theory of separation of powers was inspired by the Constitution of UK.

Power corrupts men. Giving too much power to a single individual or body would definitely lead to tyranny. A person cannot be a judge and a legislator at the same time. The legislative branch should only deal with law making. Judiciary should only interpret these laws and dispense justice in their light. Executive should deal with the implementation of these laws.

Criticism on Separation of power

Montesquieu's theory of separation is criticized on following grounds

- a) Complete separation of powers is not possible in the affair of state
- b) Montesquieu's interpretation of constitution of UK was

Wrong. There is no complete separation of powers, rather there is sharing of powers in UK constitution.

- c) Separation of power would lead each organ to pursue its own aims rather than collective aim
- d) Absolute separation of power would lead to lack of checks and balance
- e) Professor Laski holds that "Montesquieu's separation of power gives equal importance to all three organs of state. However, legislative organ is more important than the other two organs"

Influence on modern constitutional design

Montesquieu's theory of separation of power greatly influenced the constitution of USA, Pakistan, India etc. However complete separation of power is not absorbed among these constitutions. The concept of separation of powers has been transformed into sharing of

powers with appropriate system of checks and balances. For example, in Pakistan, the prime minister cannot remain in office with the majority in parliament.