

ARISTOTLE - REALIST

Theory of Ends - Functions of State

The practical man, the political scientist, Aristotle the great student of Plato, is indeed a realist rather idealist. The greatest proof to this claim is his inculcation of scientific methods in the political philosophy.

As Renan says:

"Socrates gave philosophy to mankind and Aristotle gave Science to it"
(Renan)

Through his scientific methods, he finally gave his theory of ends. Which then, he employed in proposing the functions of the state. Aristotle's realistic views, rational thinking and logical conclusions are all evident in these realms.

Theory of Ends:

Aristotle says that, everything in this universe is striving to achieve an 'end' that it is meant to achieve. Meanwhile, different Tools and things are used as some 'means' to achieve those ends. For example, man strives to achieve his end that is **goodness**. For this purpose he creates different levels of organisations like family and villages. The top most of that those organisations is the **State**. It acts as a "means" for the man to achieve his "ends of goodness". Thus, the **end of state** is to excel its citizens towards their ends. While striving for the ends, state performs several functions. But Aristotle being a realist, sets achievable and rational functions of the state.

Functions of The State - A Means towards an End

Aristotle describes the real reason for the existence of a state. According to him:

“A state exists for the sake of good life and not for the sake of life only”

Aristotle

Thus, the state must perform such functions which act as the best ‘means’ to achieve the ‘end’ that is a ‘good life’. These functions are discussed as below:

Inculcation of Morality:

Through critical analysis and empirical thinking, Aristotle claims that there are 3 types of ‘goods’ that humans tend to achieve.

External goods



excess leads to greed - Materialism

goods of soul



True end of human concern

goods of body



physical conditions

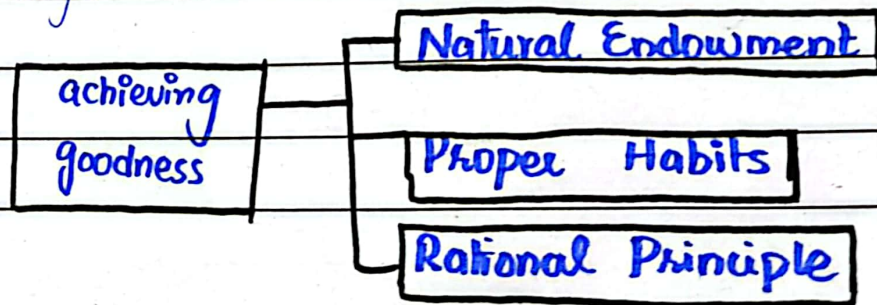


The "goods of the soul" are the real 'ends' a man strives for. Thus, ^{a good} state being a 'means' should operate to enunciate morality and goodness in its citizens. It will bring peace and internal improvement in the state.

Following his realistic approach, Aristotle doesn't disregard the need of **strength** and **defense**. Apart from moral goodness and internal improvement, a state must keep up enough strength for its defense. But it should not be to annoy its neighbors. Now, to achieve such standards ^{ends}, the state must use education as a means.

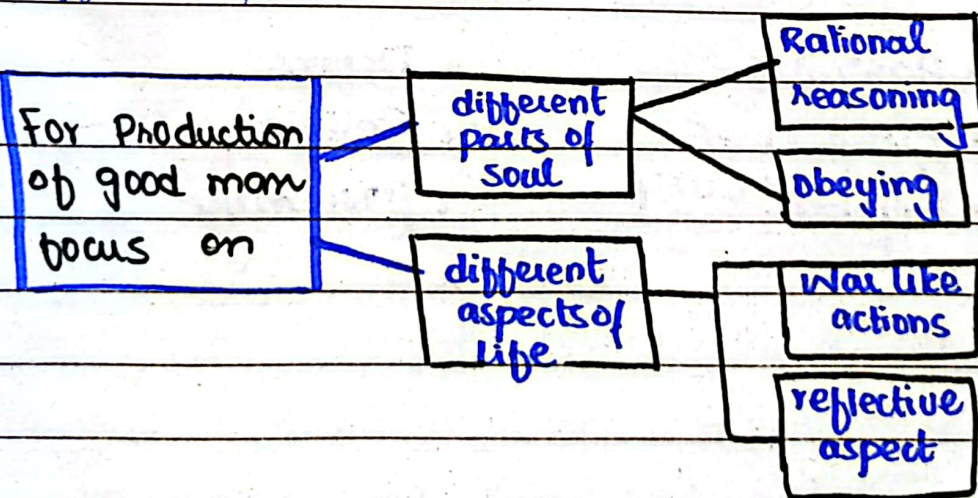
Providence of Education:

Education is a crucial means for a state to put its citizens on the right track. Aristotle says that man can achieve goodness through three means.



Plato Aristotle accepts realistic facts. He admits that men are not born equal. Everyone might have different 'natural endowment'. One cannot change it. But, inculcation of proper habits and moral values along with logical thinking can be induced in the citizens. A state must do that through proper educational strategies. And for the good results, the educational institutions must be **publicly** owned rather **private**.

The state's end is to produce a good man. Aristotle rationally segregates ways to produce achieve that end. There are different parts in it



Without any hesitation, Aristotle being a

a realist, declares the cause of fall of sparta. He says, sparta's educational system only focused on the war like activities and obeying aspects. for him, a good state must function to give ~~state~~ relative importance to all of these aspects in order to excel its citizens towards the needed end.

When the citizens get required education, the state then directs them to perform functions within the state.

Functions Within State:

Aristotle applied his scientific methods to segregate the functions that are to be performed within state. These are:

- Agriculture
- Arts & crafts
- Land ownership
- Defense
- Defense
- Religion
- Governance

Aristotle disposes off idealistic segregations. He understands that one man is not fit for all. But, he doesn't limit people to one domain only as well. He ~~says~~ proposing that

young should opt defense, middle aged for governance and the old ones should lead religion. In this way, every individual will act as the proper 'means' towards the 'end' but on a specific age and particular experience.

Also, he justly distributes the land by proposing the two lands owning strategy. One in centre and one at the borders.

Thus, equalizing the risk for all. This division segre- advocates for Aristotle's realistic and rational thinking.

Now, that the functions have been divided, Aristotle proposes the appropriate ruling class. The one's who will manage these affairs among the masses. He follows the principle of moderation.

Principle of Moderation:

In order to accept the realities of practical life,

Aristotle quickly disposes of Plato's

despotism. For him, Despotisms are extreme governments and he was an apostle

of moderation. He says, the best working government is the one with balance of liberty and authority. And to achieve this end, the best 'means' will be the middle class. This is because, Aristotle accepts the reality that, middle class is more inclined to reasoning. This class is logical receptacle of power. They are

Not so poor to be degraded,
neither so rich to be factious

Thus, the middle class will be the best means for the state to achieve its ends. Once, a ruler from middle class arises, Aristotle wants him to follow constitutionalism

Constitutionalism:

Aristotle being a realist, rejects Plato's "Philosopher King" by calling it ideal. He thinks that there are no man or men perfect. And even if there were, an absolute

an absolute authority of one ruler will limit the citizen's freedom. But the function of a state is to give true freedom because one of the 'ends' of state is to bring up **unity**.

Complete unity can only be achieved at the cost of individual liberty
(Aristotle).

unlike

Plato, Aristotle advocates for setting realistic laws. And he supports the idea that all men should collectively make laws which they are compelled to obey. No ruler is above the law. He is realistic enough to admit that **men** are **not** born **equal** but he is also rational enough that all men are entitled to **stand equal** before law.

Thus, the ruler should not rule arbitrarily just like Plato said. He must follow the dictates of laws only then a state will achieve the ends of goodness.

Distributive Justice:

Aristotle admits that **exercise of power** and **receipt of rewards** must be **unequally distributed**. But Aristotle being the **practical man**, the **scientific philosopher**, divides them **not as unequal** as idealist **Plato** neither as **radical** as **democrats** advocate. He never took refuge in wishful thinking and asked the state to function ^{in order} to distribute things accordingly. This is the distributive justice of Aristotle.

Conclusion:

Idealist Plato's student, the **realist** Aristotle, defines the state as a means to achieve goodness in its citizens. For the very purpose, he realistically proposed different functions of state such as following distributive justice and constitutionalism, principle of moderation, within state functions, providing proper education and inculcation of morality in its citizens. By performing these realistic functions, the state will finally accomplish its end, i.e. **bringing a good life** for its citizens.