

## Section-A

### Q No.2

#### a) Introduction:

In classical philosophy, Plato and Aristotle are seminal thinkers. They explored politics as a means to achieve justice and the good life. While Plato envisioned an idealistic state grounded in abstract philosophical ideals, Aristotle approached politics pragmatically, focusing on what works in practice. Their contrasting methodologies and principles offer profound insights into the nature of power and societal organization.

#### b) Similarities in their political ideas:

## 1) Focus on the ideal state:

For both philosophers the state was a moral entity aimed at promoting the welfare of its citizens.

i) In "The Republic", Plato states that justice in the state mirrors justice in the individual, achieved when every class performs their designated role for the common good.

(ii) In "Politics", Aristotle asserts that the purpose of the state is to allow individuals to achieve eudaimonia through virtuous living.

## 2) Virtue as the basis of politics:

Both philosophers regarded the cultivation of virtue as the primary goal of governance.

i) Plato argued in "The Republic" that rulers must possess the highest virtues of wisdom and

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justice to create a harmonious state.

- (ii) In "Nicomachean Ethics", Aristotle emphasized that good governance requires virtuous leaders and citizens, linking ethics and politics.

### 3) Hierarchical Society:

Both philosophers' conception of state was stratified and roles in society were to be assigned according to certain inherent qualities.

- (i) Plato divided society into rulers, warriors and producers corresponding to the presence of inherent qualities such as wisdom, courage and appetite.

- (ii) Aristotle proposed a natural hierarchy in which some individuals are suited to governance while others such as women and slaves were not.

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## The role of education in Politics:

Both philosophers placed a lot of importance in the role of education in preparing people to fulfill their roles in the state.

(i)

Plato emphasized rigorous training for philosopher-kings and stressed the importance of moral and intellectual education.

(ii)

Aristotle saw education as essential for cultivating virtue in citizens and rulers.

(5)

## Criticism of Democracy:

Both were critical of democracies for different reasons. Plato believed that it led to mob rule and the rise of demagogues. Aristotle also criticized direct democracy, but supported it in a mixed system.

(C) Differences in their  
= political ideas:

(1) Rationalism vs Empiricism:

Plato's rationalist approach is evident from his belief in the forms and the form of the good. Inherent in these beliefs is the idea that real knowledge can be grasped by using reason alone. Aristotle was an empiricist and preferred studying what was actually being practised. His solutions were practical whereas Plato gave an ideal interpretation of what a state might look like in the world of the forms.

(2) Governance Structures: Plato advocated a hierarchical system with philosopher-rulers at the top while Aristotle preferred a mixed government, combining monarchy, aristocracy and democracy to balance powers and prevent corruption.

(3)

Ownership of property: Plato

proposed a communal ownership of property among the ruling class to avoid greed and personal interest to inhibit just rule.

Aristotle on the other end defended private property as a natural right, arguing that it leads to productivity and responsibility.

(4)

Inclusion in Politics: Plato believed that only

a select few were fit to govern excluding the masses entirely from decision-making. Aristotle supported broader participation of free citizens in governance but excluded women, slaves and non-greeks.

(5)

Purpose of Education: Plato argued that education would lead to

knowledge of the forms or the ultimate truth. Aristotle, on the other hand, emphasized that education fosters virtue and practical wisdom for all citizens.

## Relevance of their political ideas

- (i) Plato's idea of philosopher-kings corresponds to technocratic models of governance where decision makers are expected to be qualified and professional. This idea has meritocratic emphasis inherent in it. Plato's warnings of democracy leading to 'mob rule' and 'demagoguery' are still relevant as the world has seen a sharp rise in populism. Finally, his emphasis on justice serves as a foundation of modern discussions of ethics in politics.
- (ii) Aristotle's emphasis on rule of law forms the basis of all modern constitutions today. His preference for mixed government system is evident in U.S constitution which attempt to check power concentration in one branch. Finally, his idea of active "greek" citizen participation informs modern attempts to enhance civic engagement.

Their relevance is also evident by the fact that they inspired the entire western philosophy and all subsequent discussions continues where they left off.

## Q No. 3:

a)

### Introduction:

Machiavelli is considered the citizen of all states and all ages because his account of handling the affairs of the state is timeless. In "The prince", he advised rulers on how to gain, consolidate and maintain power. He also made a non-religious and non-dogmatic argument. He had spent time as a diplomat in the court of Cesare Borgia, a ruthless dictator. But Machiavelli was impressed from the effectiveness of his methods. Machiavelli's principles of politics are derived from his observations and experiences. They are timeless and are relevant to present-day populism.

b)

### Key Principles of Machiavelli's politics:



1) The primacy of power: Machiavelli believed that politics revolved around power and was the ultimate goal of a ruler. Its acquisition justified the means used to achieve it.

2) Realpolitik: Politics should be based on human behaviour, not on idealistic and moralistic principles. E.g: He gave the idea that a ruler should be prepared to act immorally to protect the state.

3) Virtu and Fortuna: Virtu was a ruler's ability to adapt and make bold decisions. It also included qualities like cunning, decisiveness and strength. While fortuna represents the circumstances that cannot be controlled, a skilled ruler can manipulate circumstances to their advantage.

4) The importance of fear over love: Machiavelli said that the ruler, if not capable to inspire love and obedience, must use fear because fear is more effective.

### 5) Military Strength and self-sufficiency:

He argued that a ruler must prioritize a loyal army and avoid reliance on mercenaries.

### 6) Adaptability and Pragmatism:

He insisted that flexibility and adaptability are essential traits for a ruler to survive in changing circumstances.

7) Necessity of Deception: He argued that a successful ruler must be able to engage in deception.

8) Role of Religion: He viewed religion as a tool to create and maintain social order and unity.

(C) Relevance of Machiavelli's principles in present-day populism

1) Cultivation of fear: Modern day populist leaders cultivate fear in people by using external threats, economic crisis or cultural decline as reasons for them to yield more power to the leader. Donald Trump's "Build the wall" rhetoric is an example of this. America was being presented as a country that should be afraid of immigrants because they will take jobs. This cultivation of fear is often followed by consolidation of authority.

2) Use of Deception: Populist leaders use deception to outsmart their opponents. They oversimplify complex issues and distort facts to appeal to popular sentiments. Hitler used German anger at post-versailles settlements to use scapegoats such as Jews to oversimplify a complex problem of economic depression. This deception is also followed by promises of a revival; "Make America great again".

### 3) Appeal to the masses: Populist leaders

often present themselves as servants of the people or common man.

They create narratives to align themselves with the masses against "The elite", "The corrupt" or any otherization of the forces that might stop the populist leader.

### 4) Exploitation of "Fortuna": Populist leaders take advantage

of crises caused by external circumstances. After the 2008 financial collapse, several populist leaders used anti-establishment narrative to come to power.

### 5) The Necessity of Strong leadership

Machiavelli's emphasis on a strong ruler is still relevant today. 'Strongman' figures like Recep Tayyip Erdogan or Hungary's Viktor Orbán, justify their centralization of power as a means to achieve stability.



## Section - B

### Q No. 6:

a) Introduction: Populism, is characterized by mass appeal, mass mobilizations, anti-establishment rhetoric, tampering of well known facts to construct grand narratives, and using those emotionally charged narratives to advocate a toppling or revision of the existing order.

Liberal democracy, on the other hand, is the dominant form of political organization since the end of cold war. It is characterized by individual liberty, popular sovereignty and rule of law.

Since 2016, the world has seen a wave of populist leaders get elected and this has prompted a debate about whether populism represents a threat to liberal democracy. Arguments for and against are presented below:

b) Arguments supporting the statement:

1) Populism and political polarization : One of the most consistent

features of the current wave of populism is that it has led to intense political competition leading to highly polarized politics. The use of charged rhetoric by populist leaders to regard the opponent as "the other", "the corrupt", increase polarization and leads to politics of intolerance. Tolerance is necessary for smooth functioning of a liberal democratic system. Polarization can lead to radicalization as seen by the storming of trump supporters of the capital hill after perceiving a loss of mandate.

2) Populism and False narratives : Liberal democratic norms are threatened once a populist leader comes to

power on a mandate that is built on false or deceptive framing of information. E.g: The claim by U.S president Trump that American manufacturing jobs have been lost to immigrants is false. In reality, U.S companies found it cheaper to operate in countries like China. However, the narrative led to a significant rise in hostilities towards immigrants. Populism can hence lead to loss of actual rights.

### 3) Populism and Centralized

#### control:

Turkish president has justified his authoritarian rule by explaining the threats Turkey is facing. Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro used populist rhetoric to centralize power. This tendency in populist leaders to centralize power is a threat to political pluralism and liberal democracy.

## (C)) Arguments against:

### 1) Media Bias:

In the October issue of Foreign Affairs magazine, an author wrote that populist leaders are often not as dangerous as the media makes people believe. The media places undue emphasis on what populist leaders are doing. This often creates a situation where the existing coalition panics and yields more power to populist parties than they should.

### 2) Institutionalization of populism and business as usual:

A lot of populist leaders maintain business-as-usual approach once they acquire power. This is because populism is now institutionalized in political parties and is regarded as one of the ways to come to power. Practical consequences are little. E.g.: Biden continued most of Trump's policies when Trump was impeached and Biden won the new election.



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So, populism by itself doesn't pose a threat to liberal democracy, although the term has a lot of variety and there are different leaders with different purposes. The consequences of populism in the form of a society split along issues such as immigration, war, economy is dangerous as the same people can be radicalized easily.

## Issues of liberal democracy:

1) Rising inequality: Liberal democracy promised equality but even in the world's most advanced liberal democracies such as U.S., inequalities are rising to dangerous levels and people are less likely to go from one socioeconomic class to another.

2) Rising Conflicts: Although democracy is the most popular form of government today, the promise of democratic peace theory hasn't been fulfilled.

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The genocide of palestinians and the war in ukraine has exposed the complicit nature of liberal democracies' support for these conflicts instead of peace.

3) Perception of elitism: liberal democracies are often viewed as being controlled by the "elite". This elite can differ from place to place but this idea that its elite interests not popular sovereignty that holds sway in decision-making, has caused further support for populism.



Q: 8:

(a)

Public opinion and  
propaganda

Differences:

- 1) Public opinion is the aggregation of collective views, beliefs, and attitudes on political, social or economic issues. Propaganda is a deliberate way or effort to influence public opinion towards specific political, ideological or other goals.
- 2) Public opinion is truly reflective of genuine public beliefs whereas propaganda is artificial and is not representative of real public beliefs.
- 3) The purpose of public opinion is to provide a sound basis for collective decision-making.

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Whereas propoganda aims to persuade or influence public opinion for specific objectives.

4)

Public opinion forms organically through informed discussions and debates where freedom of speech serves critical perspectives. Propoganda is formed and sustained through misinformation campaigns.

5)

Example of public opinion include student strikes across Finland against inaction against climate change.

Example of propoganda is Nazi documentries regarding superiority of the german army.

(b)

Differences between political parties and pressure groups

- 1) Political parties directly participate in the political process by acquiring power through elections whereas pressure groups exert indirect influence on public policy.
- 2) The objective of a political party is to form government and implement programs or policies. Pressure groups advocate for a specific issue.
- 3) Political parties have a broad membership base, whereas pressure groups are closed off and have a narrow base.
- 4) Political parties have a broad scope covering national and international issues, while pressure groups focus on narrow interests.
- 5) Political parties use elections to achieve their objectives while pressure groups use lobbying or targeted campaigns to achieve their goals.
- 6) The Republican party in U.S is an example of political party while "Workers Trade Association" is an example of a pressure group.