

Political Science

Section-A

Qno:2

"Aristotle was great but not a grateful student of Plato"- Explain this statement with references to notions where Aristotle went against Plato's ideology.

Introduction:

History of philosophy is marked by some of the most remarkable teacher and student relationships such as Aristotle and Plato. These two personalities whose ideas shaped Western intellectual tradition. Aristotle studied in Plato's academy for almost twenty years. However, Aristotle respected Plato but did not agree with many of his basic theories. The saying Aristotle was a great but not a grateful student means that while Aristotle respected Plato, he was not afraid to correct his teacher's ideas. He went on to build his own philosophy, often opposed to Plato's views. (The) Aristotle was greatness on own thinking to build a new system of philosophy based on observation and common sense. However, the Plato's theories based on abstract and ideological.

Aristotle and Plato: A student who changed his Teacher's Ideas

① The Critique of the Theory of Forms:

Plato believed that perfect ideas exist in a separate world. Our world only has poor copies. Aristotle disagreed on his stance. He said the real world is the one where we live.

② Concept of Knowledge: Empiricism vs. Rationalism

For Plato, knowledge is recollection of pre-existing ideas. The true knowledge is remembering what our souls knew before birth from the world.

Aristotle stressed on empirical observation. He said that we learn by using our senses such as seeing, touching, hearing. Knowledge comes from experience.

③ Political System

Plato's political system was based on the ruled by philosopher-kings where they have no private property for rulers. Whereas, Aristotle is too idealistic. He studied over 150 real city governments. A good state is one where the middle class is strong, and laws are

practical - He thought Plato's plan was unrealistic.

④ Difference in Ethical Thought

Plato saw virtue as knowledge and defined the good as the form of the Good. Aristotle rejected a single universal good. He said that good life (eudaimonia) is achieved by building good character habits like courage and honesty.

⑤ Concept of State and Citizenship.

Plato's ideal state was rigidly structured and hierarchical. Aristotle preferred a pluralistic society. He emphasized to recognising the role of middle class and mixed constitution.

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Plato's state is a moral organism where the good life is realized through cooperation.”

“
(Ernest Barker)”

⑥ Epistemology: Plato's Dialectica Vs. Aristotle's Logic

Plato relied on dialectical reasoning to reach higher truths. Aristotle constructed formal

logic and creating syllogism. This provided a rigorous, rule-based framework for demonstrative science. Aristotle's logic was the first systematic logical method in history.

⑦ Rejection of Plato's Communism of Women and People

Plato proposed communal sharing of wives, children, and property is only for guardian class. Aristotle sharply criticised this calling it against natural affection and responsibility.

⑧ Psychology: The Soul as the Form of the Body

Plato viewed the soul as a pre-existing, immortal, and separable entity temporarily imprisoned in the body. Aristotle's soul was the form of the body which is inseparable from the living organism. Aristotle, in *De Anima* defined the soul as:

"The first actuality of a natural body that has life potentially."

Conclusion

In conclusion, Aristotle's philosophical trajectory vividly illustrates the dictum attributed to him: "

Plato is dear to me, but
truth is dearer still.

"

Aristotle respected Plato as a teacher but disagreed with many of his main ideas. He challenged Plato's view on reality, knowledge, politics, ethics, the soul, and the state. Plato focused on ideal and perfect worlds, whereas Aristotle focused on the world we live in. This disagreement created the two main paths of Western thought ^{that is} in which idealism and realism. The hope is that students and thinkers' today also develop the courage to question, refine and improve the ideas they inherit just as Aristotle did.

Qno:4

Montesquieu is considered to be Aristotle of the 18th Century. Explain with reference to his contributions to political science, especially his theory of separation of powers and comparative ~~methodology~~ ^{methodology}.

Introduction:

The title "Aristotle of the 18th Century" for Baron de Montesquieu is a profound acknowledgment of his foundational role in modern political science. Aristotle is known as the Father of Political Science because he studied states scientifically, compared different constitutions and developed clear principles of politics. In the 18th century, Montesquieu played a very similar role. His two monumental contributions such as theory of separation of powers and comparative methodology linking laws to a society's environment and spirit. "The spirit of law (1748) introduced the theory of separation of powers which has become a cornerstone of liberal democracies. Montesquieu aimed to safeguard individual liberty by ensuring that political power is divided and balanced among distinct

organs of the state.

“ Montesquieu was the first to treat political institutions with the spirit of scientific detachment.”

(Sabine)
1937

Montesquieu's Theory of separation of powers

① Separation of Powers Guarantees Liberty and Rule of Law:

According to Montesquieu, liberty is not license but security under law. This is his most famous contribution. He argued that the independence of each branch ensures that laws are applied equally, citizens are protected, and despotic rule is prevented.

“ There is no liberty if the power of judging is not separated from the legislative and executive.”

“ (The spirit of the laws) ”

② Three distinct functions of Government

He classified state power into three categories.

i) Legislative Power

the authority to make laws

ii) Executive Power

the authority to implement laws

iii) Judicial Power

the authority to interpret and apply the laws.

He argued that each should be functionally and institutionally independent to preserve liberty.

③ Inspiration for Modern Constitutional Design

His doctrine deeply influenced by the U.S. Constitution (1787), where the founding fathers adopted separation of powers and checks and balance. Later, democratic constitution across the world followed similar lines.

“Montesquieu's ideas became the foundation stones of modern constitutional democracy.”

Why Montesquieu is called the Aristotle of the 18th Century?

① Scientific and Empirical Study of Political Institutions:

Like Aristotle, Montesquieu treated politics as a scientific inquiry based on observation and analysis rather than speculation. He studied political systems in the light of geography, economy, and culture.

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He turned political speculation into a comparative science.

”(Donning)

② Comparative Approach Similar to Aristotle

Aristotle compared 158 constitutions: Montesquieu compared republics, monarchies, and despotic states.

Both used comparative analysis to discover general laws governing the political life.

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Montesquieu revived the Aristotelian method in the modern age.

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(Barker)

③ Founding the Science of Modern Politics:

Aristotle founded ancient political science, while Montesquieu laid the foundation for modern political analysis through his rational and empirical method.

“Montesquieu was to the eighteenth century what Aristotle was to the fourth—the scientific interpreter of political life.” (Barker)

④ Harmony, Balance, and Moderation in the State:

Montesquieu, like Aristotle, emphasized moderation and balance as the key to political stability. Both believed that the best government is one that avoids extremes and maintains harmony among its elements.

“His concept of equilibrium in government is Aristotelian in spirit.” (Judd Harmon)

⑥ Classification of governments based on Principles

Montesquieu classified governments according to the principle driving them by virtue in republics, honor in monarchies, and fear in despotisms. This resembles Aristotle's moral and structural classification of states.

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The Principle of democracy is
virtue; of monarchy, honour;
of despotism, fear.

”

(The Spirit of the Laws)

Montesquieu's symbiotic Contribution: How Comparative Methodology Birthed the Separation of Powers.

Montesquieu's dual contribution to political science - the theory of separation of powers and the comparative methodology - are not separate achievements but deeply interconnected pillars of a single intellectual project. His comparative analysis of global legal-political systems was the method. The separation of powers

was its most famous discovery and prescription.

Conclusion

Montesquieu's contributions form a coherent whole. His comparative methodology provided the diagnostic tool to understand the diverse ailments of political bodies. One cannot understand without the other. The method discovered the principle, and the principle gave practical, institutional form to the method's insights. His doctrine of separation of powers remains the backbone of democratic constitutions. In both method and substance, he stands as the Aristotle of the 18th century. He combined reason, moderation, and scientific inquiry in political thought.

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Montesquieu's achievement
was to translate Aristotelian
analysis into the language
of modern liberty.

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(Sabine)