

PART-II

SECTION-A

Question #2

"Aristotle was great but not greatful student of Plato"...

1. Introduction

Plato is dear to me
but dearer is the truth.

~ Aristotle

Aristotle, a great philosopher, was a student of Plato and he highly respected him but still he was also one of the biggest critique of Plato due to a number of reasons including his method of studying, his ideal state, communism of family, communism of property, separation between the guardians and the people to be guarded (artisans) etc.

2. Aristotle; the Biggest Critique of Plato

2.1 Plato's Imagination of Ideal State

When Aristotle first came to "Academy"

of Plato, Plato was studying the ideal state that what could be the ideal state. Plato was just studying it in mind. Aristotle who was grown up by observing and experimenting things under the family of his father, considered it unusual and impossible. How could you study a thing without observing it.

22 Plato's Communism of Family

In Plato's ideal state, Plato used the concept of communism of family. That family would be a common property.

Aristotle was totally against this idea as "the child of all will get love from nobody". Moreover, it was against the human nature to have communism of family.

23 Plato's Communism of Property

In Plato's ideal state, property was also common for the upper two classes that is guardians and the philosophers.

Aristotle also criticized this concept because property is the thing which motivates people to develop it and work on it. It is also against the human nature as possession of something keeps people motivated.

2.4 Exclusion of Lower Class

Plato's ideal state excluded the lower class of artisans and workers from even his two main proposals of communism of family and communism of property. He did not allow them to marry but they could own property. Aristotle also criticized this.

2.5 Rule of Philosophy by Plato

In Plato's ideal state there was rule of philosophy which is against Aristotle's **rule of Law**. Aristotle considered rule of law to be a necessary element of a state to save the state from converting into tyranny or oligarchy.

2.6 State is the End and Rest are Means

To Plato, state's interest were paramount and individual is just a means. It was also against Aristotle's views who considered state as means not an end.

2.7 Separation of Guardians and Guarded (Artisans)

Plato's ideal state separated the Guardians (Army) from the people being guarded (Artisans) who are great in number in any society. This was criticized by Aristotle for not including these people as an essential part of his ideal state.

2.8 Aristotle preferred pragmatism over idealism

Aristotle was the biggest proponent of pragmatism, that is, to consider things sensibly and practically over Plato's idealism, that is, to find solution of things by just imagining it.

3. Aristotle being a Great Student of Plato: A Great Platonist

3.1 Monarchy as Philosopher King

Aristotle studied almost 158 constitutions and visited many places around him. He then divided the forms of govt. on the basis of selfish gains and common benefits or public gains.

Type of Rule	For Public Gains / Benefits	For Selfish Gains
Rule by One	Monarchy	Tyranny
Rule by Few	Aristocracy	Oligarchy
Rule by Many	Polity	Democracy

From this, Aristotle suggested the best form of govt. is monarchy which is almost similar to Plato's concept of Philosopher King - a single person's rule.

3.2 Focus on Education for State Benefit

Aristotle also considered education important for the people in state except for slaves (who don't have the mental capacity) to better serve the state. Same were the views of Plato about education who made education compulsory to serve the state in better way.

3.3 Respect for Plato's Legacy

Aristotle never displayed personal animosity toward Plato. His all criticism was

philosophical and not personal. He always showed great respect towards Plato.

3.4. Plato provided Foundation for Aristotle

On Plato's philosophy, Aristotle started his work. Plato's work provided basis for him to agree or disagree upon. Aristotle considered him to be the first philosopher.

4. Conclusion

The relationship of Aristotle and Plato was a beautiful student-teacher relationship. Though Aristotle was a critic of Plato but this independence of thought also came from Plato that made him to think independently. So, the saying 'Aristotle is the great but not grateful student of Plato' is not fully true.

Question #4

"Montesquieu to be the Aristotle of 18th Century."

1. Introduction

Montesquieu has created the science of politics much better than Aristotle. He is the true heir of Aristotle in our time.

~ J. J. Rousseau

The above quotation clearly indicates the greatness of work by Montesquieu whose work has made him comparable rather much advance than Aristotle. Montesquieu like Aristotle used the empirical evidences to base his theory. Both relied on practical examples around to deduce certain conclusions and not relied on idealistic approach.

Similarly, the best form of govt and to save it from converting into tyranny both worked upon it with one course up with the idea of "Rule of Law" and the other with "Separation of Powers".

Both influenced the philosophers of upcoming times. In this way they both are the same.

2. Montesquieu: The Aristotle of 18th Century

2.1 Separation of Power to Avoid Tyranny

According to Aristotle, the best form of government was monarchy but it was least practicable because of its high chances to convert to tyranny — the worst form of government. This problem was also realized by Montesquieu, who in order to avoid tyranny gave the concept of separation of power because it was the concentration of power that is the actual problem. For this he suggested 3-tiers of government

① Legislature ② Executive ③ Judiciary
and all to be kept separate.

① Legislature

Montesquieu suggested two branches of legislature; a bicameral legislature in order to avoid the dominance by either house. Legislation will be done by both

② Exec houses.

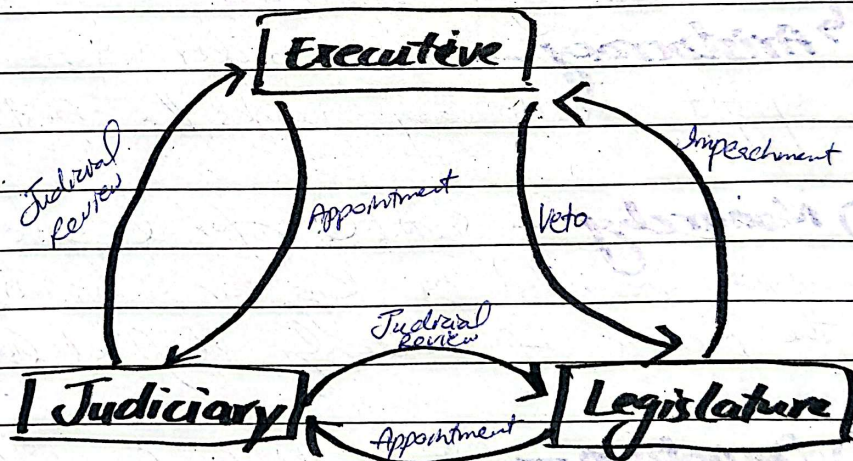
② Executive

Executive branch to be kept separate from the legislative branch. This branch enforces the law and make foreign policy. This branch to act swiftly and decisively separate from the legislative branch.

③ Judiciary

Judiciary being the interpreter of law should be made independent and away from the influence of executive and legislature.

System of Checks and Balances



All the three branches work on the system of checks and balances. Each branch has a check on other branch so that no branch could exceed its limit and influence other. This was the idea given by Montesquieu.

2.2. Comparative Methodology

Montesquieu like Aristotle used the idea of comparison for the forms of govt. which he finds best on the basis of geography, population, nature of people and other circumstances. However, he argues that best form is that where "separation of power" is practiced.

Forms of Govt. Best Suited to Where Suited

① Republic → Democracy

Democracy ensures equality and it is best suited for republics.

↳ **Aristocracy** — where ruler is morally upright, aristocracy works the best.

② **Monarchy** — Suitable for large empire which are ruled by king or queen in the presence of clearly defined laws.

③ **Despotism** — It is kind of absolute rule by a single person who is above law. It is the worst form of govt as it leads to tyranny and not suitable in any case.

23. Contribution to Political Science

① Ethical and Political Philosophy

Aristotle and Montesquieu both believed that political systems must align with ethical and moral values and moral well being.

② Focus on Laws and Political Structures

Both viewed structure of govt and its laws as central to understanding political liberty.

Montesquieu — Separation of Power.

Aristotle — Rule of Law

③ Legacy and Influence on Political Theory

Aristotle's work influenced philosophers for centuries.

Montesquieu's work influenced James Madison and Hamilton who made his separation of powers theory as the basis to US constitution.

Judicial Independence is a corner stone of modern day political systems.

④ Liberty defined by Montesquieu

"Liberty is the right to do whatever the law permits."

~ Montesquieu

⑤ Scientific Approach to Politics

Both Aristotle and Montesquieu use the scientific method of observation, experiments, induction and deduction for politics. Using examples to deduce laws was made by both of them in politics which converted the politics into political science.

3 Conclusion

Montesquieu due to his lot of work in politics on the lines of Aristotle is rightly considered as the Aristotle of 18th century. His theory of separation of powers makes him even more respectable.

Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Laws* is a work of genius, unparalleled in his time. He created a science of politics much as Aristotle did.

~ Voltaire