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TOPIC

Aristotle was a Realist and not an Idealist- explain w.r.t. his theory of the Ends and functions of the state, Aristotle was great but not grateful student of Plato” Comment.

ARISTOTLE AND REALISM:

Aristotle was a realist. Plato was an idealist. Central thread of idealism is the principle or thesis of independence. Reality, knowledge and value exist independently of the mind. Realism rejects the Idealist notion that only ideas are real. Believed form is within matter and change takes place in matter. Believed a relationship exists between science and philosophy, and that the study of one leads to the study of the other.

ARISTOTLE THEORY OF END AND FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

Explanation:

Aristotle’s theory of origin of state, its nature and the end rests on several premises.

Firstly, the origin of state depends on the triangular nature of the human soul. From this theory, he inferred that man is both rational and irrational and it is his purpose to follow the former in preference to the latter. This is in turn related to the theory of causes—the final cause being the end of the essential form, which a thing attains.

Secondly, premise is Aristotle’s theory of happiness, which he calls the quality of the soul that could be achieved only in the State.

Thirdly, Aristotle never believed in any need to distinguish between the state and the society. According to him, these two institutions are indistinguishable and complementary to each other.

Fourthly, the state is not merely the convenient machinery that raises a man above his animal wants and sets him free to follow his own lights; it is itself his end or at least a part of it. State is not merely an instrument through which the individual can achieve

specific form of human goodness within the compass of his earthly life, but it is the final form which man could attain.

The state, in fact, is mere aggregate of individuals. It is not based on an artificial device. It is not a contract. It is natural, in other words, inherent in man's nature, that is, reason and reason expressed through language. Language, in turn, is a medium of communication.

Thus, man is gregarious in nature. He is born in a society, and it is only here that he ever survives. Society is also natural because it is the consummation of man's highest nature. If there is greater cooperation between the state and the individuals, and they are mutually complementary to each other, then the freedom of individual is in tandem with the law of the region, law is an instrument of self-realization, the standard of justice.

Aristotle believed that through state and the laws, man attains his highest virtue and perfection and becomes a citizen, has a specific virtue and becomes an aristocrat capable of sharing in public activity and performing public duties.

The end of the state according to Aristotle includes:

Aim at all lesser ends, the family or the village. These two are too small to provide a man with everything he needs for a good life. This is the royal gateway of excellence.

However, everybody cannot attain this excellence. For this purpose, Aristotle excluded artisans, from citizenship of his ideal state on the grounds that they are debarred by their occupations from the characteristics excellence of man. It is for this reason that Aristotle considers slavery as natural and women as mere matter. They also achieve what they are capable of achieving only within the state. This, in brief, is Aristotle's notion about origin, nature and end of state.

ARISTOTLE WAS GREAT BUT NOT GRATEFUL STUDENT OF PLATO" **COMMENT.**

The story begins with the downfall of Athens in the generation long Peloponnesians war (430-400 BC) in which Sparta defeated Athens. Socrates attributed the fall to the corrupt democratic set up where he said everyone was ruler: "This government by the Debating Society (Ecclesiae General Assembly) is the root cause of all the ills plaguing Athens", similarly the lot system by which the Athenians took turns in the government was anathema to Socrates, It, he said, makes bribery expensive and is inefficient and indecisive therefore knowledge is virtue and only knowledge has the RIGHTFUL claim to power. "Ignorance is the ruins of states". His preaching's ultimately brought about the Oligarchic Revolution in Athens but the Revolution by the minority Rich class was crushed by the Democratic forces who finally decided the fate of Socrates, he had to

pay with his life for speaking against the democracy. Plato witnessed all this and took oath to materialize his master's proposition: Knowledge is virtue. He proposed his Ideal State where knowledge would reign. Universal system of education was introduced to achieve the goal of Ideal state where Philosophers would be the rulers. For that cause everything which hindered the project was abolished; no property, no marriage, no Law, "FOR no law is mightier than the Knowledge". Plato justified all this by maintaining that Philosopher King on account of his superior knowledge knows all what is best. Further Plato justified the rule of Philosopher King by proposing a rationalistic method which is known as his Theory of justice by which he proposed that there are three types of men: first the man of desires who dominate business, second the man of courage who love power and dominate armies, third the man of intellect who neither yearn for bucks nor for power but knowledge, these men are fit for the public office. Ruin comes when businessman becomes ruler or the General uses his men to establish government, business man is good in trade, General in battlefield both are at their worst in public office.

Now Aristotle criticized Plato's ideal state on all accounts hence not grateful student of Plato.

The reason he is known as ungrateful student of Plato:

Being an empiricist Aristotle developed a scientific methods to prove that what Plato proposed was against human nature and the ideal state would be incapable of achieving the goal of a harmonized society. Yet Aristotle agreed with Plato that only Knowledge has the rightful claim to power. They differ on means but not on ends; end is a harmonized society, whereas means differ. Aristotle sees Law as indispensable for good governance, while Plato omitted law from his ideal state. Aristotle sees private property as the source of harmless pleasures whereas Plato considers it as the apple of discord, which creates imbalance in society: "however small every city is divided into two one the city of the rich and the other of the poor", so long there is private property there would be no peace: Oligarchic revolution was the example. Further Plato abolished marriage but Aristotle condemned it as the family was the basic unit of society. Plato believes that if by the mating of best animals we get best offspring, the same principle can be applied to humans: only the best men or the Guardian class (Philosophers) will be tasked to reproduce.

To prove that Plato was wrong Aristotle collected 156 constitutions of different city states and employed historical, analytical, deductive methods. While doing this Aristotle kept the Republic before his eyes and attacked Plato where ever he found contradictions and inconsistencies. He gave examples from history as well as used the same knowledge which he got from the Republic to condemn Plato. It should therefore

be kept in mind that had there been no Republic, Aristotle might never have been the father of Political science.

Aristotle may be great but he was ungrateful!!!

Secondly Plato wrote another book: The Statesman, in which law was supreme however in Republic it was subordinate to the discretion of Philosopher King. It was the Second Ideal state of Plato but it remained the Ideal State of Aristotle.

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