

A critique of aristotle politics

[Profession](#), [Philosophers](#)



Introduction This paper aims to discuss the thoughts of Aristotle as the philosopher of his time. The paper will examine the applicability of his ideas in the world today. It will analyze the ethics of Aristotle against the way today's governance. This paper will offer an informed critique of Aristotle's politics. The paper will discuss the prepositions of Aristotle and the merits and demerits associated with each leadership. Discussion Aristotle politics looks at the world scientifically and can differentiate the ideal and the practical.

In his book one of politics, Aristotle outlines the different types of governments that he perceives. In each of these types of governance, he gives the sound and the bad. According to Aristotle, the philosopher king is the ideal governance. In this form, the kings' interest is in the welfare of his people (Tacitus & Benario 18). The highest form of governance is the monarchy. It is hereditary in nature, and people can associate freely with the royal family. In a monarchy, the interests of the nation take priority above all other matters. When the respectable leadership of a monarchy becomes rogue, Aristotle terms it as tyranny.

When leadership becomes self seeking the citizens of this state, suffers thus; cannot achieve happiness (Chuska 277). Aristotle considers aristocracy of philosophers to be the second best leadership. When this form of leadership gets crooked, it becomes oligarchy. Further, he views democracy as the worst form of leadership. In his opinion, the third best form of leadership is one whose polity would combine all the noble forms of leadership. According to Aristotle, a polity is a constitution. Aristotle is of the opinion that, for a polity to be viable, it has to consider the stability and security of its people.

The aristocracy as Aristotle puts it is the rule of several. When a virtuous rule of law prevails the society enjoys solidity. In this rule, the needs of the wealthy get priority while the rest of the population gets neglected. This brings about class division, and discrimination on the basis of riches. The elite in the society protect and guard their status making it difficult to join the elite group from low class people. According to Aristotle, who was advocating for fairness, elitism in the society is wrong (Chuska 278). Polity is the rule of the majority. This is what Aristotle refers to as the rule of many.

In the better form, it concerns with the needy. The leaders take office through an election. It is the citizens of the state who decide the person to rule over them. When this form of leadership becomes fraudulent, Aristotle refers to it as democracy. As Aristotle puts it when the mob rules the minority group suffers. However, in the opinion of Aristotle this corrupt form of polity is the best form of governance in the long run (Aristotle et al 297). In Aristotle's analysis of the best form of a leader, he says it is that person who pursues virtue. To him virtues are decent habits acquired through legislation and moral education.

According to Aristotle, leaders should not work; it is the state to provide for their needs. They should have property and sufficient time for leisure. This will enable them to pursue virtues. This practice is only possible in a monarchy. The views of Aristotle about a monarchy are noble. In the history of Roman Empire, there is a short duration when there was monarchy. The leaders commonly known as the five good empires operated a monarchy with success. The rule was successful without turning to dictatorship. Their

interest was in the subjects. They resisted the allure of abusing the unlimited power of their rule.

The emperor who took over from the last of the five was Commodus. He started out well following the ideals of a monarch. However, he gradually became corrupt. He started to make laws that were not pleasing to the people. The rules he made were not logical, and the people of the empire were unhappy. He disregarded the virtues of a leader and started barking orders at a whim. He died by assassination by strangulation in his bath (Aristotle et al 300). This classic example gives reality to the opinions of Aristotle. Monarchy is a worthy form of leadership; however, when corrupt it is the worst form.

According to Aristotle the second best form of government is aristocracy. Before the formation of the Roman Empire, there was the Roman republic. There was the rule of law in the republic; it lasted for four hundred years, an unusually long duration. Aristocracy may have succeeded within this duration, but it has the weakness that people do not choose the person to lead them. However, it finally failed when power became centralized. Aristotle advocates for balance between the one, few and many. This is a form of mixed government where the virtues of all the six forms of government combined.

According to him this would bring stability and avoid the dangers that a monarchy poses to the society. In the world, today this form of government can be seen in the United Kingdom and the United States. There is a power balance among the three basic components stated by Aristotle. This brings about stability in the society (Chuska 278). Aristotle, in his politics, discusses <https://assignbuster.com/a-critique-of-aristotle-politics/>

how a state associates with its members. He maintains that the legitimacy of a government remains through serving its people and offering them a healthy life. According to Aristotle the happiness of the citizens of a state is crucial.

In his discourse, Aristotle talks of the contentment of the entire state, not just a segment of the state. The perfect society is one whose citizens show moral virtues; this is achievable through an ideal government (Chuska 279). Aristotle puts emphasis on human beings achieving their potentiality. According to him the successful government has to have citizens who choose the needs for their lives. A critical evaluation of the politics of Aristotle shows an inclination towards communism and authoritarianism. However, in today's world the most successful forms of government are the representative democracies.

This is because they include all the groups within the state without leaving out the minority. The form of government that Aristotle proposes is practical. His concern is in the stability and security of the citizens. The members of a state need security in order to run their day-to-day activities. Thus, if there is a lack of order in the leadership the citizens suffer. Aristotle proposes a constitution which he calls a polity. He sees it as a longlasting solution to leadership problems as it offers a concrete form of governance. In the contemporary world, we have all forms of governments as discussed by Aristotle.

The most successful ones are the democracy. Though they have their shortfalls, they are more practical compared with other forms of governments. The state has a duty towards the people; however, the people also have a responsibility for themselves. The world is competitive, and people cannot

wait for the state to take care of them (Tacitus ; Benario 19). In conclusion, Aristotle's politics have an influence on political philosophy up to the present time. They contain thought provoking concerns about politics that governments should consider the quality of the life of their subject. He questions who should be the ruler of the people.

Aristotle is keen to emphasize on the moral expectation and obligation of the state and their citizens. A state has to have citizens and the citizens have to have a state. The two must exist together and for that to be, there must be rulers. Works cited Chuska, J. (2000). Aristotle's best regime: A reading of Aristotle's Politics, VII. 1-10. Lanham, Md: University Press of America. Tacitus, C. , & Benario, H. W. (2006). Agricola, Germany, and Dialogue on orators. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Aristotle, . , Bekker, I. , Bolland, W. E. , Lang, A. , & Aristotle, . (1877). Aristotle's Politics: Books I. III. IV. (VII.). London: Longmans, Green.