

ARISTOTLE ON STATE

Aristotle said, "Man is a political animal, destined by nature for political life". This implies that "The state is a creation of nature and man is by nature a political man. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a state, is either above humanity, or below it." The solitary man is either a beast or a god, state is a natural institution and not a conventional institution or the creation of a contract.

1. Origin in Gregariousness (sociability): Man has the instinct of sociability which persuades him to associate with his fellow beings and form associations. The state is one such association.
2. For the sake of Life: The spontaneity of state is clear since it came into being for the bare needs of life and it continues for the sake of good life. To Aristotle man cannot realise the destiny of his life without the state. It is the state that realises his social and economic needs; desires and racial instinct.
3. Logical Development of Family: Family/Household → Association of male and female for the perpetuation of race/master and slave for the production of subsistence. Here, family has moral or social use. Urged by their nature to seek a fuller life, households are compelled to combine together into a village for the better satisfaction of their wants and then into a city or polis or state. State is top of the pyramid and a logical development of family. Family fosters human growth and which teaches virtues of civil life. It is in the family that the three elements essential to the building of a state spring up, viz., fellowship, political organisation and justice. As the state is the logical end or development of the family, it is equally natural.
4. Perfect form of Association: To Aristotle, self-sufficiency can be attained only in the state. It is the culmination (conclusion) of widening circles of human association based on human wants. It is not merely an economic association but also a moral community.
5. Moral Self-sufficiency: The state provided all the conditions and the environment necessary for the moral development of the individual (not economic self-sufficiency).
6. Natural Destination: Aristotle said, "The state is a natural association for it develops organically from the most primitive but natural associations, i.e, the household and the village. It is the end of them and is, therefore, a creation of nature. It is necessary for man who is by nature asocial or political animal. Man fully develops his personality only in the state, of which he is a natural, integral and organic part. The individual is to the state as a part is to the whole." The human faculty of speech and organised association (political) distinguishes him from animal. Membership of the state is the end or destiny of human life. Man finds true meaning and significance of his life only in and through relation to the state, without which he would decay and die.
7. Association of Association: State is an association of individuals already united as members of smaller groups. It is an association of associations. To Aristotle, state is a union of families and villages for happy and self-

sufficing life. State is the supreme association as it is the highest of all and embraces all the other associations. It is the highest form of association, because it aims at the highest good which is the good life of the citizens. State continues to exist for the sake of complete life, i.e., fulfilling the ethical and intellectual objective.

8. Community of Good Life: State is biologically a superior association embracing all the other lower forms of associations. It is the whole, of which associations and individuals are parts. The whole is prior to the parts. Only in the state can the human being rise above the brute and become a man. When isolated, man is not self-sufficient, independent or perfect. It is in the state that man finds the perfection of life. This is so because the state alone can secure social peace and order and provide diversity of interests necessary for complete and good life.
9. Abiding Place in Scheme of Things (the way things are organized or happen in a particular situation, or the way someone wants them to be organized): The state is natural, not because it is independent of human volition (desire), but because it has its abiding place in the scheme of things. All the other associations attain their full perfection only in the state. They are incapable of separate and self-contained existence.
10. Organic Theory of State: The state is an organism, according to Aristotle. Like an organism it is composed of diverse parts interdependent on each other. They share in full the life of organism and live because of the relation the whole. He drew a close analogy (similarity) between human organism and the state. It is impossible to understand the rights and duties of man apart from his relation to the state. (He is not an absolutist to view State above citizens as Hegel did)
11. Aims at Highest Good: State being highest of all institutions, aims at the highest good. Aristotle did not limit the scope of state activity to mere exchange of services. The state is there to ensure a complete and virtuous life.
12. Functions of the State: The purpose of the state is not only to extend its dominion or enrich its scope, but to widen knowledge, promote virtue and to secure justice to all. It has a positive function of promoting good life and not merely restraining or curbing the vicious tendencies of its embers. (He went beyond Green, who described the function of the state simply to remove hindrances to good life, but not to make men good.)
13. Identity of Individual and State: To him, the state must show the virtues of courage, self-control and justice. The virtues of the state and individual are the same. Both try to attain positive good and happiness, internal and external, which can be done, among other things, by conforming (compliant) to moral law.
14. Difference between the Family and the State: To him both institutions differ not in degree, but in kind. He abolished private family and property in order to make the state a large family. In state, the relationship between rulers and ruled will be same. In family, that between head of the family and others will be different. While the household fulfils their physical needs, the state fulfils the intellectual and moral needs of the citizens.