

## Political Requisite of a Republic Apropos of Classical and Modern Theorist of Mixed Government

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### ABSTRACT

Many political scholars believe that a powerful political-administrative is obligatory for a good political system/government as a legislature responsive to well-accepted demand. They also note that the accurate form of government is where the many, or the one, or the few, can govern the political system which is based on common interest, which forms mixed political system/government. This paper will explain: the concept and political philosophy of the government by highlighting the role of a mixed political system/government as a central point between both classical and modern theories of political system/government within these eras of republican practice. The first part of this research paper will explain the concept of a mixed political system or government by highlighting its probable consequence in the contemporary political system/thought. The next part of this paper covers the argument-based analysis of different theorists: Cicero, Guicciardini, Aristotle, Aquinas, Mosca and Machiavelli.

**Keywords:** Mixed government, Separation of powers, Republic

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of the Mixed Government finds its roots in the classical and modern political thought of the republic. “The concept of mixed government originated in the second century BC with the Greek historian Polybius’ attempt to account for the outstanding stability of the Roman Republic” (Pinelli, 2016). These roots can be originated back in the works of a roman and an ancient Greek philosopher. The word republic came from the Latin expression “*res publica* refers to the government of a state meant to be accessible and

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accountable to all citizens, its goal being the goals not merely of certain classes and factions, but society as a whole” (Matic, 2016: 179).

“The system of government of the Roman Republic, Polybius noted combined aspects of each of the three Aristotelian classes of government: monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Owing to its structural indeterminacy, the concept proved sufficiently adaptable to be reworked by political thinkers over the ages and has survived into modern times” (Pinelli, 2016). At present, republicanism is related to the parliamentary democratic political systems of European countries, the US, and the British Commonwealth. To contest the perils of absolutism, the monarchic system of government was introduced. Moreover, to discourage the prospects of its recurrence, separation of powers, comprising of three government branches namely, legislative, executive, and judiciary, was developed. The primary aim behind this division of branches was to establish checks and balances on the executive against overreaching its authority. It prevents the lawmakers from making laws suitable to their benefits and at the same time inhibits its involvement in the procedures of the judiciary (Kuehnelt & Leddihn, 1952). States with a successful implication of the concept of separation of power distinctly identify themselves by the principles of political and economic stability, ideas of human rights like the statute of law, freedom of an individual, and safeguarding of the rights of other religious groups. Still, many of these states struggle with the drawback of inadequate political representation due to economic disproportion (Ibid, 1952). Some Political thinkers and a prominent Machiavellian intellectual John McCormick asserted that; the foundations of political veracity contradict with the notion of an elected government of majority having will of the general public to represent the benefit of citizen on an equal basis. McCormick claimed that most of the democratic theorists and political analysts find difficulty in answering, “What institutions will prevent wealthy citizens from dominating a government that is supposed to serve the entire citizenry?” (Matic, 2016:180). Therefore, McCormick recommended accumulating political equality on the theoretical guidelines of early and modern political theorists.

The research paper will look into the similarities of prominent political philosophers from ancient times who gave the ideas of introducing a kind of mixed governing system taken up by the political theorists of modern times of the late eighteen and early nineteenth century republics. A comparative methodology has been used to study and point out the similarities between the political and philosophical ideas of Aristotle, Cicero, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Francesco Guicciardini, Thomas Aquinas and Mosca in their theoretical suggestions for a good political system in a republic.

### **HYPOTHESIS**

The hypothesis of the paper is that a political system of a mixed government in a republic would ensure that the governing body or ruling person does not exceed their power limits and neither do they interfere in the processes of other government branches. Therefore, many political theorists from ancient and modern eras despite the historical gap share similar views on the establishment of a republic with a political system of checking the political instability and economic inequality by counteracting the dominating trends of authorities.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

A descriptive method will be employed to discuss the theorists' work which will help to analyze the study. Secondary sources based on Focus sheets, articles, and statements will be used to explain the concept and philosophy of the mixed government in a republic from ancient time to modern ages through a hypothesis will analyze.

### **THE CONCEPT OF MIXED GOVERNMENT:**

The concept of a mixed political system/government has been a criterion to bring out a difference between the bad and good forms of government. In the modern era of Enlightenment, the concept of democracy on the foundations of separation of powers has been differentiated from a mixed government. The differences, arguably coined by Plato, are categorized as monarchy, democracy, and, aristocracy under the good type of political

system or government while anarchy, tyranny, and oligarchy under the bad government type.

The categorization of government systems has been done due to the consequential outcomes of these forms of the government system. Under the Monarchic government, mainly the richest and politically influential families often out of hereditary convention hold powerful positions in the government. These leading people can not only be from royalty like kings and princes but in modern times be head of state and government such as chancellor, the prime ministers, and the president. The Aristocratic political system/government mainly comprises of the noble from the council of elders or senate, usually elected or hereditary. The democratic structure comprises of widely held assembly or council of legislative bodies that have elected members from the general public.

Therefore, in this society, the mixed government is considered as a concept for attaining the desired goal of impartiality or righteousness, stability, and autonomy, a system of check and balance exists in all three forms of the political system mainly in a single type. The aim behind forming a mixed government incorporating all three is to impinge upon their inherent qualities and protects them from their respective iniquity. The merits of the monarchy are; the superlative political facts, ability, and desirable quality of the few in authority or the one in power; the qualities of the aristocracy are; the aptitude and knowledge of the reigning minority for handling the most difficult and challenging political matters; and finally, the good features of democracy is; the majority of people have liberty and equal opportunity from the lawful outcome of its consensus (Matic, 2016: 180-182).

While these types of government are possibly liable to fraud and deviance hence, the mixed systems prevent their deterioration and maintain them to be the good form of government that aims to endeavor the welfare of the entire social order in comparison to the bad one that caters to the narrow interests of those in power. For good governance, good constitutions are there to make a distinction between bad laws, to establish a free, stable, and just society. Therefore, the mixed governmental system is realized as the only

republican solution based on realistic principles. These realistic foundations refer to establishing a legitimate based good constitution; pursue an appropriate conglomeration of the merits of all three forms of government, while keeping a check on the deviating vices by repeatedly safeguarding representation of all social strata, and participating in the government for meaningful recognition of their political interests (Ibid, 2016: 180, 182).

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Mixed Government and Political Theories**

The paper will focus on the theories and their analysis based on the individual understanding of political scholars on the concept of mixed government is carried out. The consideration of political and social contextual has been observed as it played a significant role in impacting the philosophers' theoretical discoveries. Their global perspective has been descriptively looked upon which were the basis of their political recommendations. Finally, the emphasis has been made on the theories to analyze their understanding of the way a good government should be established.

### **Aristotle**

Aristotle coming from a privileged family got educated from Plato's academy and became a teacher and researcher. Aristotle challenged some of the social and cultural beliefs of the time. He criticized the political structure proposed by Plato and presented his ideas in his work Politics. The Politics propose practical prescriptions for reforming the prevailing constitution of the time based on the comparative historic analysis for future benefits. During his time, Greece was not a united state but a formation of independent city-states stretched across Italy with wide social disparity and political enmities frequently end up in form of large-scale war. These city-states while attached through cultural and religious similarities had different political systems ranging from monarchies, oligarchies, democracy to mixed regimes. At that time; political rights were given based on property

assessments excluding women and slaves who were not institutionally recognized (Aristotle, 1998: 08).

Aristotle's theory creates a distribution between bad and good types of government based on two principles; their justice and the visible goals of the state. The good constitutions, therefore, no matter whoever in the authority is a king (kingship), or the poor (polity), the rich (aristocracy), are associated by the just law and a lucid focus of the government to provide benefit to the entire society instead of having narrow interests for the society. Contrary to this, deviating elements are usually unlegislated, or the ignorance of laws, the leader either a single character (tyranny), a minority of rich (oligarchy), or a majority of poor (democracy) holds authority, struggle for their advantages rather than of the society (Ibid, 1998: 78). Following these lines, Aristotle branded tyranny as the worst form of government, whereas he put oligarchy in the second-worst government, but according to him the most moderate government is a democracy because it's the rule of the free. Therefore, the need for a mixed constitution has been preferred to combat bad forms of constitutions like oligarchic.

Aristotle proposed a political solution that is based on the combination of different strategies of oligarchy and democracy for assisting the participation of ruling strata's in the government. Likewise, mixed constitutions should be combined with all elements from whether aristocracies, polities or in between, to create a middle path for existing legislative practices, ensuring a balance in political authority to prevent any kind of social section's symbolization from acquiring undue power and transforming the constitutional form (Ibid, 1998: 115).

Aristotle emphasized a city-state based on moderation and equality where the middle class tends to have durability due to the absence of property desires of others and for themselves. A political community having a dominant middle class, in Aristotle's opinion, the class will be the most excellent and most well-governed. Hence, such class is looked upon as the stronger one in comparison to both the rich and poor. The unmixed oligarchy and the

extreme democracy have a propensity to increase factionalism, which frequently results in form of tyranny. Therefore, Aristotle looks for a state having law and a mixed political system/government that establish upon the middle class in form of a constant and durable system. It would preserve liberty & prosperity besides safeguarding political privileges via depiction to all the social stratum (Ibid, 1998: 120).

### **Cicero**

Cicero, a prominent nationalist and devoted defender of republicanism, witnessed a shift towards imperialism as an utmost threat to political organizations and he added that; “the society of Rome to stop the influence of aspiring individuals and discordant factions by returning to the roots of country’s free and stable republic” (Cicero & Featherstonhaugh, n.d.: 02).

Cicero initiates the concept of the main Greek school of philosophy into the Roman notion. His foremost political discussion was *On the Commonwealth*, where his discourse written form historically and based on the outcome of republicanism establish on realist conventions about society and man; having a similarity to the political theories of Aristotle to be considered from the similar school of political thought to establish the republican tradition (Matic, 2016: 185)

Cicero’s theoretical analysis is based on Roman history with twofold goals, where Cicero, on the one hand, offers a hypothetical outline of the government which similar to Aristotle is greatly applicable to republics; on the other hand, to find salvation from “Roman’s decay was his main goal in returning to the republic’s early constitution, a well-balanced system of institutions, ensuring every social section’s political interest” (Cicero, 1829: 53)

Cicero in his discussion explains a republic by outlining that, "a republic or commonwealth then, is the wealth or common interest of the people. To ensure its permanence, it must be governed by that authority which has a strong relation to the causes by which the republic came into being, namely the three modes of government” (Ibid, 1829: 57). Therefore,

while recognizing the traditional divisions among the three main types of government and its particular variations, Cicero pointed out the inadequacy of such types of government.

Cicero regarded democracy as the best among the other forms because of its equal rights of freedom. He believed that under kingdoms people are vastly deprived of their common rights; under aristocracy, people are not interested to go to public offices also lack realization of their welfare; in this way under majority; equality in opportunity becomes unfair as no grant for the degree of ranks comprised on dignity and good quality (Ibid, 1829: 58). Cicero shares similar beliefs with Aristotle regarding both intense democracy and unmixed oligarchy having tendencies for rising tyranny. Though, both have their views that differ when Aristotle looks upon normal aristocracy as an ideal structure while Cicero believes monarchy is best for stability and draws an outline of an ideal constitution similar to Plato's republic.

Hence, Cicero upholds that the most stable form of government is monarchy whereas aristocracy holding the utmost level of political ability and skills between its leadership and democracy to be the freest. The disappointment for Cicero comes from their inadequacy even from their good type of government. For that reason, Cicero suggested a fourth kind of government founded on mixed and moderated lines, preferably a government comprised of all three mentioned above (Ibid, 1829: 60). He does not approve each form separately while pointing out the circumstances of state during the early Roman republic's historical period when all alone senate governed and under empires, and its results were bad due to monopoly over political power. Cicero, thus strongly believes strong law rest in a sentence, not in normal justice, if there is no justice rights of people do not exist. Dangers of extreme democracy are there (Matic, 2016: 186-187).

### **Niccolo Machiavelli**

Niccolo Machiavelli belonged to Florence during the leading cultural and social transformation era of the Renaissance but entangled in old centuries internal fights among



various groups holding authority in Italy. Florence has relatively been a constant oligarchic system for many centuries, but its political arrangement got traumatized by the then government. Machiavelli being a part of the evolving group of proficient establishments deeply felt the visceral end of nobility's nepotism. The republic's richest families were so influential because of the democratic change, that the leader Gonfalonier was pushed to succumb to their needs. This turn of events led to Machiavelli's oust from political life which made him resentful towards the offense against the republic and him (Ibid, 2016: 187).

"Machiavelli's political theory in *The Discourses on Livy* encompasses political philosophy rooted in historical analysis, abandons the particular goals of contemporary politics and prefers to establish a system based upon timeless laws of the state and society" (Ibid, 2016: 189). Influenced by the discourse of Cicero, and, Aristotle, Machiavelli aimed at establishing an arrangement of organizations in compliance with the decree of political veracity, besides utilizing the republic's contemporary and historical examples. The Roman Republic has been the source of inspiration for Machiavelli where institutional practice and governmental restructuring are seen as republicanism examples based upon realist postulation about the reality of politics (Ibid, 2016: 189).

The central part of Machiavelli's *Discourse* focuses on the institutional development that carried Roman's last emperor ousting, later shaped the republic's politics for centuries. He compared and analyzed different ways in which the republic was created and how the law evolved and enacted over a long period to adjust with the changing political situations (Machiavelli, 1996: 09). Machiavelli came up with a conclusion which is parallel to the discourse of Cicero and Aristotle, by praising "the Spartans of establishing a mixed government through a clear and just system of laws that ensured state's endurance, and criticized Solon of Athens for creating a popular government that reverted into tyranny" (Matic, 2016: 189). Hence, his emphasis on well-planned legal organizations was a persistent belief that Roman's practice of public accusation was valuable in examining the

power of the aristocracy and also in retaining the order within society. In such situations, the legal institutions function under just order by ensuring justice is served and instigate fear among the conspirer who work against the common good (Machiavelli, 1996: 24).

### **Francesco Guicciardini**

Francesco Guicciardini was born in a noble and influential family that was well-groomed. After receiving a degree of *doctorate in law*, he joined as *opposition against Gonfalonier*. Afterward, he was appointed as an ambassador to *King Ferdinand of Aragon* (Matic, 2016: 190). During his appointment as an ambassador, Guicciardini witnessed the decline of Florence that impelled Guicciardini to write dialogue, *Discorso di Logrogno*, to introduce an order for popular government. Guicciardini praised the democratic reforms of “*Piero-Soderini* particularly the creation of the Great Council which provided constitutional balance” (Moulakis, 1998: 83)

While following an exclusive approach to the government, Guicciardini emphasized; “the significance of qualified majorities for the elections of officials and also in the decision-making process of Senate” (Ibid, 1998: 102). Guicciardini was of the view that many officials lacked the ability and qualifications necessary to handle the intricacy of government even during the debate within the Great Council where legislation originates. Therefore, based on the realist principles, Guicciardini founded his reforms centering upon aristocracy and its related office, the Senate. Guicciardini discarded the idea of the tripartite distribution of the government because it is vulnerable to manipulation.

His distribution of government concept is mainly based on the old/traditional system, which encompasses all three modes in the office, the Great Council, the Senate, and in their relevant roles entrenched with the social stratum they symbolize. Guicciardini identified that; “many and not few are the embodiment of the worst in humanity, observing the Great Council as ambitious, evil, and ignorant” (Matic, 2016: 191). Most important challenge to halt the decision of any other office like the Senate is based on power. The deeper

involvement in the decision-making process would lead to confusion. Guicciardini holds *many* and *not few* as the representation of the most horrible in humanity due to the assembly (council) full of ambitions, evil, and ignorance (Ibid, 2016: 191).

Guicciardini suggested “The system lies in withholding participatory powers from the Great Council by limiting its role to legitimating and ratification of laws. No decision made by society’s elite should be considered as legitimate without the consent of the majority that gets affected” (Guicciardini, 1998: 139).

The main debating and lawmaking body is the Senate, which represents balance by bringing the extremes and many officials of the Great Council together and safeguarding freedom through laws. The entire heft of government relies on few (Ibid., 1998. P. 137). The working of the Senate and their formal terms with the ruling elite and government officials should be centrally dependent on well-informed thought, to ensure that Senate’s members have both comprehensive and detailed proposals with sufficient time to debate on (Matic, 2016: 192).

### **St. Thomas Aquinas:**

Italian philosopher and theologian Thomas Aquinas was known as the Angelic Doctor. Aquinas was born in a wealthy family at Roccasecca, which is near to Naples, Italy. In 1244 Aquinas joined a poor order of preachers through his family got disappointed who followed the Rule of Dominic and for that reason known as Dominican. Aquinas started his study with Albertus Magnus in 1245, in France who counted him as his favorite student (Oxford Reference, n.d.).

Aquinas accompanied Albert to Cologne in 1248 and from there, he returned to Paris in 1252 where Aquinas was regarded as the greatest stature of scholasticism, great theologian and teacher (Aquinas College, n.d., Aquinas, et al., 2000). He also invented official Roman Catholic code of belief which was affirmed by the Pope Leo XIII (Oxford Reference, n.d.). His most notable work includes the Summa Contra Gentile (based on four books) proposed

a manual for individuals who disputing with Jews and the Spanish Muslims and commentaries based on Aristotle (Ibid, n.d.). Most notable achievements of Aquinas are his metaphysics, description about Human mind and existence of God, and he also made Aristotle's work acceptable in European Christians (Internet Encyclopedia of philosophy, n.d.)

Aquinas presented four laws natural law, external law, divine law and human law and the essence of all four laws are human are more inclined to live in a society and political society (*civitas*) appears from the aspirations and needs of creature nature itself which is mainly an extensive commentary of Aristotle's view (Murphy, 2002). Aquinas described in his On Kingship letter about the political system that the best and just form of government is a monarchy where some boundaries set by democratic elements and an aristocracy. Aquinas also highlighted that this is the duty of monarch to sustain the natural law and divine law also the monarch tolerates the limitations imposed by existing and custom law.

### **Gaetano Mosca**

Gaetano Mosca was born Palermo, Kingdom of the two Sicilies on April 1858, which is a part of Italy. Mosca is known as a political theorist and an Italian jurist who had applied historical methods and ideas to the political institutions. Educated at the University of Palermo, Mosca taught constitutional law at the University of Palemero, the Universities of Rome and Turin from 1885-1888, 1888-1896, and 1896-1908 respectively. He was also the member of Italian Chamber of Deputies in 1908, during 1914 to 1916. He was undersecretary of state for the colonies and in 1919 he served as a senator for life by King Victor Emmanuel III. The Italian fascist leader Benito Mussolini attacked the senate on his final speech (Mingardi, 2017). Mosca theory mainly covers the apology from despotism who misunderstood his arguments. "His work, along with that of Vilfredo Pareto and Robert Michels, inspired subsequent studies by political scientists of the process of the 'circulation of elites' within democracies and other political systems" (Britannica, n.d.).

Most notable theories that Mosca presented are; *“Theory of Governments and Parliamentary Government”* and *“The Ruling Class”* (which was originally published in 1896 in Italian language) in which he emphasized that societies should be governed by the minorities mainly by preachers, or military, or heritable oligarchy or by aristocracy (based on merits or wealth). According to Mosca will of people, creatures will, will of sovereign state and the dictatorship of the proletariat is all imaginary (Agha, 2011).

Mosca is not convinced from the Machiavelli’s political views based on racist elitism sermonized by the Nazi’s of Germany and also thinks that mistrusted democracy is a big challenge to liberal institutions where the suffrage extended to the uncultured strata of the population”(Duignan ,2012). Mosca observed that the “most lasting social organization as a mixed government (partly autocratic, partly liberal) in which the aristocratic tendency is tempered by a gradual but continuous renewal of the ruling class” (Ibid, 2012) where the ability and the will to rule will be considered.

### **MIXED GOVERNMENT: AN IDEA FROM THE PAST**

An overview of the six theories revealed that the primary role of the mixed government has been undisputedly emerging from the good government mode to the perils of bad governance; each political philosopher has criticized the three forms of the political system in their theoretical discussions. All of the above-mentioned political thinkers proposed the significance of fair laws as a guarantee of a durable political system directly connected with the concept of mixed government, as it enables checks on unlimited power in any social stratum which threatens the legality and stability leading towards the arbitrary rule.

If we look back at the time, the separation of powers has not proved to be of much use. The executive has its role in rulemaking and the legislature plays its role in performing some judicial functions, we may say for instance that impeachment which comes under the role of judicial functions is done by the legislature. The fluent running of modern government system does not claim for the separation of political system/ powers in form of

synchronization of power, because it is seen that the separation of powers results in administrative complications and it becomes very difficult to frame “cooperation, coordination and harmony” as the government’s parts where there is an inequality. Whereas in a mixed government system; there ought to be a balance between or equality in the autonomy of an individual and his/her betterment and safeguard.

The legal and governing institutions ensure just laws and prevention of arbitrary rule while dealing with the minute differences each theorist’s distribution and directive of political power points out. Thus, checks and balances against each other are served in the system by preventing limitless power acquisition. Therefore, both classical and modern republicanism bring forth key weaknesses in comparison with our era because of the unclear roles and different modes of government play especially under the division of authority. The preference for choosing a mixed government takes precedence among the theorists (Ibid., 2016: 193). On the subject of ideal good constitution, Aristotle preferred innate aristocracy because he considers it as an ideal means of political system/government; Thomas Aquinas also preferred most of Aristotle’s view; Cicero gave preference to a sort of faultlessly structured monarchy; Guicciardini and Machiavelli offered no perception about the ideal constitution (Ibid., 2016: 194); whereas Mosca idealize the socioeconomic change and individual’s ability should be consider for ruling.

## **CONCLUSION**

The theories offered by early developers have unanimous agreement on many significant issues and very few differences. And so, they may hold a key in solving problems that are present in the foundation of later currents and within the tradition. The early modern and the classical republican have initiated the concept of mixed political system/government which is already exceeded in the area of exclusively defined forms of the government and will also deal with the problems related to the lack of political symbolization due to economic disparity (a key element discussed by Mosca).

John McCormick has started investigating this notion, proposing that the democratic aspect is missing in the modern political system, especially in the United States of America, and gives a possible solution via a contemplation experiment (McCormick, 2011. P. 179). By proposing the institution of popular tribune through the constitutional amendment, this idea if implemented or not; still provides hope.

When the mixed political system/government is dejected with the division of powers; in this context; the division of government into good and bad offers a special but very companionable solution to the problems which were caused by the political veracity. The deficiency of the current government could eventually lead to discontent and hence it will eventually be replaced, however, the mixed government defects will lead to the union of two (both systems) as predicted by few theorists of all ages that will combine the benefits of both political systems.

These changes to the existing system will be very much complex that will cause political balance between social groups and will require first knowledge of the individual system, however, the general characteristic contains the introduction of elections in many offices, which will contradict political privilege of affluence and designation, the formation of an institution for public accusation as proposed by Machiavelli, which will be level at any community official, irrespective of their position & a public entity, like Piero-Soderini (Great Council). Its function will not only cause the political balance in representation but will also amplify the authenticity of the decision-making process.

In short, the hypothesis of this study is proved that despite differences among the theorists of classical, contemporary and modern era republicans due to the social, financial and cultural circumstances, theories presented by the early thinkers received broad consensus on several issues and assisted in finding a solution to the inherent problems within traditional structures. All thinkers build consensus on the idea of a mixed government which enables to beat the concern of political representation is lacking that emerges from economic disparity. The mixed government offers a union of system projected by all six

theorists by combining merits of all types of government for a good solution while surpassing their vices would highly enhance the sense of balance in the political decision-making process and political representation.

### **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The work of few famous theorists discusses in this study who had worked on Ancient Greek, Roman, Renaissance, middle ages and modern ages. In light of historian, contemporary modern theorist views and arguments, hypothesis is analyzed whereas there are many theorists who discuss some additional aspects and made extension on the work of the above discussed theorists are not considered in this study. In this way, this study is limited to the views of few theorists of all ages.

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