

Q1 Discuss in detail the Plato's concept of "Justice".

Introduction:-

In Plato's Philosophy Plato's gives very important place to Justice.

He used the Greek word "Dikaisyne" for Justice which means morality or righteousness. It properly includes within it the whole duty of man.

The Republic represents Plato's idea of Justice.

Background:-

Plato was highly dissatisfied with the prevailing degenerating conditions in Athens. The Athenian democracy was on the verge

of ruin & was ultimately responsible for Socrates's death.

Sophistic teaching of the ethics of self-satisfaction resulted in the excessive individualism also induced citizen to capture the office of the state for their own selfish purpose.

Athens were divided into two groups rich & poor, oppressor & oppressed.



In Plato's Republic where Socrates was on one side & the other side there were various characters.

**Cephalus:-**

Who was a representative of traditional morality of the ancient trading class established the traditional theory of justice.

According to Cephalus:

Justice consist in speaking the truth & paying one's debt. Polemarchus also holds the same view according to him:

"Justice seems to consist in giving what is proper to him."

The simple implication of this concept is

"Justice is doing good to friends & harm to enemies."

**Thrasymachus:**

States that justice is the interest of the strong. Might is right.

Plato criticises the theories of Polemarchus, Cephalus.

**Thrasymachus.**

Plato realises that all theories contained one common element, that all them treated justice as something external.



Thus, after criticising the ideal of all Plato now gives us his own theory of justice.

## Plato's Concept of Justice:-

"Justice in the life & conduct of the state is possible only as first it resides in the hearts & souls of the citizens".

(Plato, The Republic)

Plato proposes a comprehensive theory of justice.

### ① Justice In The Individual:-

Human organism according to Plato contains three elements - Reason, Spirit & Appetite. An individual is just when each part of his or her soul performs its functions without interfering with those of other elements.

Example:-

For example the reason should rule on behalf of the entire soul with wisdom & forethought. The element of spirit will subordinate itself to the rule of reason. These two elements are brought into harmony by combination of mental & bodily training.



The Reason & Spirit have to control these appetites which are likely to grow on the bodily pleasures.

When all the three agree that among them the Reason alone should rule, there is Justice within the individual.

## ② Justice In The Society / State.

Plato extends his theory of Justice from individual to the ideal state.

a) There are three classes in social organism - philosopher class or ruled class which is the representative of Reason

(b) A class of warriors & defenders of the country is the representative of Spirit.

c) The appetite instinct of the community which consist of farmers, artisans & the lowest rung of the ladder.

The lowest of the three classes is the artisan class, whose function is to supply the community with material necessities of life.

Three Parts of the Soul & Their Correspondence :-



Plato draws parallels between the three parts of the soul & the classes in the state.

Reason corresponds to guardians,

Spirit corresponds to guardians.

& desire corresponds to producers.

Justice is achieved when every class play its due role.

Plato defines Justice as:

"Giving to everyman his due".

Justice In Geographical Division:-

In a wide spread state, it is impossible for a philosopher king to maintain justice.

Therefore state must be divided into various geographical units, with a separate subordinate executive.

So it is necessary to divide that state in various units for smooth administration of Justice.

Compensation According To Ability

And Capability:-

Plato says it is justice to compensate every individual according to his/her ability & capability.

The most intelligent & learned



Learned class should rule the country & physically strong should defend the state.

Disabled & handicapped should not be ignored.

Mutual cooperation

Justice is based on mutual assistance & happy life style

It is the responsibility of every citizen to pay due attention to his work.

If there is cooperation & honesty there will be justice & all type of differences may be ended.

CONCLUSION:-

Plato's concept of Justice is intricate & multifaceted. It extends from the individual's soul to the structure of an ideal society.

Justice according to Plato is achieved when each part performs its role in harmony with the others & classes work together to get justice.