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Critically analyze the salient features of Plato's Republic. Do you think that some of its features are valid, even today?

Introduction:

Plato had devised some features of his ideal state, which he described in his book "The Republic". Some of the ideal state features are specialization in functions, promotion of communism in property and family, Monarch, Aristocracy etc. But there is a lot of criticism on it. As, people's rights were abolished, dictatorial rule was promoted, impracticable features etc. Even though, ideal state was theoretical, but some of its features are valid, even today. These can be the rulers are prepared through training, equality between men and women etc.

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Salient Features of Plato's Republic

1) Functional Specialization:

Plato had devised the features of ideal state in such a way that specific functions had to be performed by specific group of society. Some people are dominated by ~~the~~ appetite and ~~weaker~~ desire, so they would belong to producers or workers. While, people having courage would belong to soldiers and people of reason and wisdom would be the rulers or philosophers.

2) Education system:

Education system would be the state's responsibility. It would be divided into elementary and higher education on the basis of which, it would be decided, who will belong to workers, warriors or rulers category.

3. Communism:

Plato promoted the communism of family and property. Warriors and Rulers were not allowed to keep private property and cannot remain in monogamous relationship.

4. Monarchy:

Plato was against the Athen's democracy. According to him, rulers must be trained, not elected. But he liked monarchy, as they are immune towards making mistakes and the king should be above law.

5. Equality for women:

Plato abolished the differences between men and women. Anyone can be the ruler and so while through the stages of training.

6. Restriction of Art and literature:

Although, Plato promoted music, but

he restricted Rulers and soldiers to be away from certain type of art and literature like poetry

7. Justice:

Plato thought justice is a part of human soul. It means that everyone should be given according to his due.

Critical Analysis

1. Abolition of Rights:

Even though, Plato talked about the justice in all levels of society, but he had abolished the rights of two communities of society i.e., soldiers and rulers, & restricted from having private property and keep monogamous relationships and producing their own offsprings.

2. Ideal state is Impracticable:

Features described by

Plato were impracticable, as it wanted so much sacrifices from people which were difficult to apply in reality.

3. Sacrifice of individuality at the altar of society:

Individual had to self-control and self-abnegation, so the ideal state demanded a lot of sacrifices at the expense of development of society.

4. Deprives of variety of life:

Functional specialization had deprived people of enjoying the richness and variety of life. They would be doing the same things lifetime.

5. Authoritarian Rule:

Plato was of the view that rules would be above rule of law. Due to excessive powers, the

authoritarian and dictatorship can prevail.

6. Half Communism:

Plato's foundation of the state is self-contradictory. At one hand, he preaches justice and on the other hand, he restricted two communities from having private property and personal relationships.

Features which are valid

1. Justice should be prevailed in society:

One of the many features of Plato's ~~justice~~ ideal state features is justice, which must be prevalent in all societies. Justice system is important for the development of any society.

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2. Rulers must be come through training/Aristocracy:

Plato's theory was that anyone cannot be a ruler, but the people of wisdom and reason should be the ruler or philosopher. It can be valid nowadays, as ruler is elected, not investigated, as he is a person of reason or wisdom.

3. Equality between Men and Women:

Plato promoted the equality between men and women, as anyone who come forward through the system can be a ruler, either a man or a woman. So, his feature of equality for women is valid today.

4. Carefulness with Democratic values:

Plato was of the belief that rulers must come through

education training and military training
and then philosophical training

Conclusion:

Some of ideal features of Plato's republic can be applied today to achieve the some sort of ideal state. But, some its features were ethical incorrect like the concept of common wives and the owning of ^{children} ~~state~~ by state. People were restricted to do the same work lifetime, which would deprive people of richness and variety in life. But, the justice he talked about must be flourished.