

Q. No. 01: (Political Science)

Explain Plato Theory of Justice. How he tries to implement it through the Education System?

## 1. Introduction:

The concept of justice occupies the most important part of Plato's philosophy. In his famous book "The Republic" he has treated justice as the bond which holds the society together. Hence it is a true principal of social life. The Republic deals with the bond and true principal of social life. For this reason Republic is called "A treatise concerning Justice". By elaborating the doctrine of justice Plato wanted to combat the false notions which the Sophists spread. Ideal state is the highest manifestation of the society. Different social classes are combined by the bond of justice and

this make the ideal state a perfect one state.

"Justice is the virtue of great souls"

~ Plato. ~

## 2. Background of Plato's Justice:

The "Republic" represents plato's idea of justice. He mentioned a dialogue in his "Republic", where Socrates was on one side and there were various characters.

(a) According to Cephalus:

"Justice is doing one's duties and paying one's dues."

Plato's criticize his point of views about justice and said whether it would be right to return a weapon to a person who has turned mad, this is not justice.

(b) According to Polymarchus:

"Justice is do good to friends

and harm to the enemies."

Plato does not accept the justice to harm anyone, Plato suggests it is not easy to know what our enemy is. So Plato rejected Thrasymachus' concept of justice by pointing out that justice is a virtue so how can a virtue be harmful to someone.

(c) According to Thrasymachus:

"Justice is the interest of the stronger, Might is Right."

Plato does not agree with his concept and says justice is not for the stronger and the true function of a physician is to cure the patient and not make money.

(d) According to Glaucon:

"Justice is the child of a fear." It is the need of the weak who constitutes the majority of the society.

Plato's Criticism:-

Justice cannot be established through fear of power. It should be done naturally.

## Justice According to Plato:

So what is justice, if it is not speaking the truth, paying debts, good to friends and harm to enemies, the interest of the stronger or an agreement to obey the laws? All these explanations define justice as something apart from human's soul.

"Justice is an integral part of the soul."

So its definition requires a dissection of man's soul. Thus Plato arrives at the point of his real task, the construction of the just state and so the discovery of the principles of justice in an individual.

"Nothing is to be preferred before Justice."

~ Socrates ~

### 3- "Plato Theory of Justice"

#### Plato Justice at Two levels:

→ Justice at individual level.

→ Justice at Society level

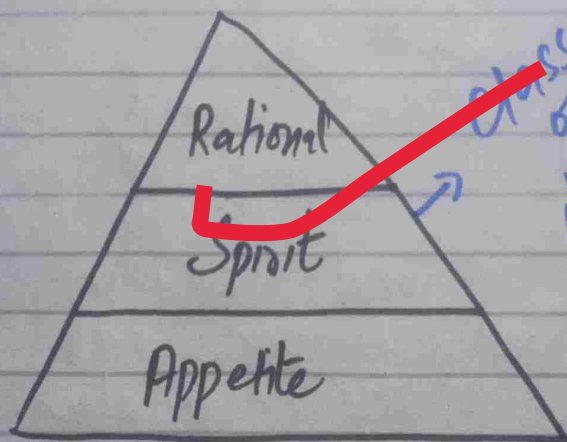
#### (A) Plato's Justice at individual level:

Plato's justice at individual level based upon human soul, and it has three elements

(a) Reason/Logic → Brain

(b) Courage/bravery → Heart

(c) Hunger/Appetite → Stomach.



Classes of Human's Soul.

All three elements are present in human soul but not in equal proportion in every soul. Each is present in varying amount, but still one is always predominant and to establish justice at individual level people should choose their profession on the basis of dominant element of their soul.

## (B) Plato Justice at Society Level:

Plato's justice at society level based on three classes of society based on predominant element.

### Classification of Society:

Society may be divided into three classes according to the relative amount of each force present in the individuals who comprise the community. The three classes are

- (a) Producers.
- (b) Soldiers.
- (c) Rulers.

### (a) Artisan class/Producers:

The men who are motivated by largely by the appetite will constitute the largest class and they are known as "Artisan Class" whose function is to supply the community with material necessities of life. They are largest in number and they are also called "Men of copper."

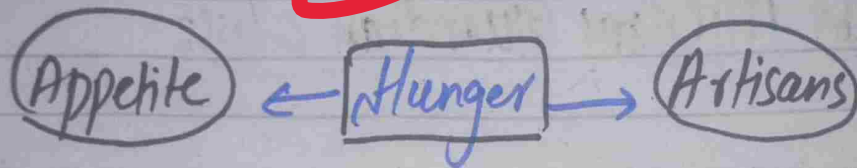
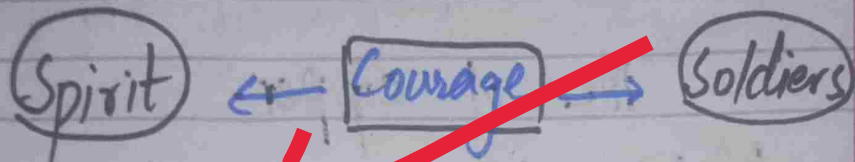
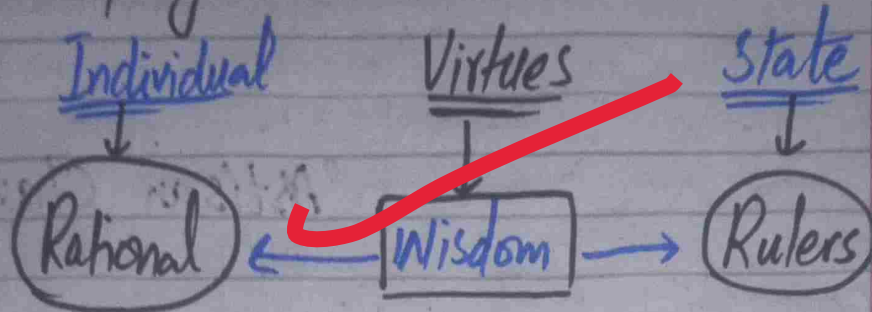
### (b) Military Guardian class:

Since fewer will be motivated by the courage but they will still be dominated by the reason. They are called military guardian class, consisting of those who are dominated by the courage. They are also known as "Men of Silver."

### (c) Ruler class/Philosopher Kings:

The last class will be dominated by the reasoning and wisdom and they are very smallest in number. They are called as Ruling class and also known as philosopher kings.

They are also known as the  
"Men of gold."



## "Classification of Society"

However Plato is searching for the justice. To Plato, Justice is the product of class division and specialization of functions. He defines Justice as "giving to everyman his due". and this due is to be assigned the particular task which is best qualified by his aptitude and training to perform. The definition has no legal or juristic connotation. It is not concerned with the rights



on an individual against a state  
It has nothing to do with  
the judicial procedures. To Plato,  
it is obvious that the state which  
arranges matter so that each person  
ruler, soldier, artisans is doing  
what he ought to be doing  
is the superior state.

#### 4- Important Features of Plato Theory of Justice:

Following are the features  
of Plato theory of Justice.

##### (i) Division of Society:

Plato's Justice was based  
upon division of society. He  
divided the class into three  
main classes higher class, middle  
class and lower class. In higher  
class philosopher kings are present,  
in middle class soldiers are  
produced and in the lower  
class Artisans are produced.  
This is the important feature of  
Plato theory of Justice.

## (ii) Functional Specialization:

Based upon the dominant character of the soul, the state is divided into three classes. Every individual in the state will only perform assigned duty. It is the founding principle of the state that each individual in the state should practice only one thing, and the thing should be the one to which the individual nature is best adapted.

Use elaborate and self explanatory headings

## (iii) Non-Interference:

Moreover these three classes should not interfere with each other functions. For Plato, the principle of the true justice is non-interference. He views that state as a perfect whole in which each individual component function not for its own sake, but for the well-being of the whole.

## (iv) Communal Harmony:

The preceding two conditions contribute to the creation of the harmonious atmosphere in the society. Thus Plato justice theory is precisely this harmony.

## 5- Implementation of Plato's Justice in Education System:

Plato attacked Athenian system. In Athens even though education was compulsory but it was privately administered. To Plato, the welfare of the state depends upon the educational system and it should be in the hands of state not privately education. Moreover there was only elementary education in Athens which according to Plato was not adequate to train statesman properly.

Education plan has two phases

- ↳ Elementary education
- ↳ Higher education.

### (i) Elementary Education:

The first phase is consist of elementary education, for citizen upto the age of 18, and it

it is followed by two years of military training.

The subjects for this phase are **Gymnastic** and **Music**.

Gymnastic is to include not only the exercise but all training in the body care including diet. The essential purpose of physical education is the development of sound physique -

Training in Music is to be directed less towards singing and instrumental music and more towards the study of poetry and literature in general. All existing literature is to be revised to confirm the accepted standard -

## (ii) Higher Education:

After 20 years of education selective screening test will be conducted. Those who will pass go to the higher education and those who fail will remain producers - This group begins the programme at the age of 20 and remains in it for 15 years if its members prove fit.

The first 10 years of 15 years are devoted to the study of Mathematics and Astronomy. The final 5 years are spent in the study of dialectic or philosophy. Here the first principles are exposed and the search for truth is launched.

## Next Screening Test:-

At the age of 35, next screening test will be taken. Those who pass will go to further education and those who do not survive must be sent to civil and military administrative services in order to get benefit from their educational training.

→ Those who survive go to practical training and become Rulers or philosopher kings until the age of 50. For Plato, at the age of 50, Rulers are produced who are full of wisdom and they do not need any law and they are better understanding than laws.

Educational scheme of Plato is as follows.

"Plato Educational Scheme"

Birth to 6-years

Elementary education (7-18 years)

2 years Military Training 18-20 years

1st Screening Test

Pass

Fail

producers

I class

Higher education → 21-35 years

2nd Screening Test

Pass

Fail

Soldiers

2nd class

Rulers

3rd class

Rulers for Practical Training → Pass

## 6- Critical Analysis on Plato's Justice Theory:

Although Plato Theory of Justice was towards ideal approach and for the welfare of the state, but it has some criticism, they are-

- (i) Division of Society is not possible:
- (ii) Non-interference is impossible
- (iii) Ignores Human Rights
- (iv) Static concept of Life.
- (v) Lack of opportunities.
- (vi) Too lengthy educational system.
- (vii) Anti democratic
- (viii) Ignore some important subjects.

## (b) Positive Aspects of Plato's Justice

- (i) Equal opportunities for men and women in every field.
- (ii) Stress on education / favour in education.
- (iii) Division of society
- (iv) Specialization of society.
- (v) Focus on wisdom and logics.
- (vi) Concept of Justice in society.

Overall a good answer!

## 7. CONCLUSION:

Although Plato's Justice is a principle of non-interference that keeps various members of each class, various class of society and various elements in the soul of individual with proper boundaries, therefore Justice in a state is a principle of specialization. Conclusively Plato's Ideal State is based upon Justice and good education system.

But is lengthy and will affect your time management. So shorten it a bit!