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- [Q. Discuss & explain the platonic concept of the "Philosopher king"

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Ans:- 1) Introduction:

The idea of philosopher king is taken by plato at the death of his teacher socrates. He explained the concept of philosopher king in his famous book, "The Republic" as of the vision of a just city. It was influential in the Roman Empire and was even recieved in european political thought in the age of absolutist monarchs

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2) Historical Background of the Philosopher king

The concept of philosopher king rise due to the death of Socrates,

the teacher of plato. The rulers of Greeks were against the socrates, so they killed him by the poison named "Hemlock". The greeks believed that socrates was "corrupting the youth. After the death of socrates, plato was against to the democracy that was practiced by greeks

3) Defect of democracy in Athens

Athens lost the war of peloponnesian of 431-404 BCE and the democracy was overthrown. In simple words, democracy failed to protect the athenians against the Spartan aggression. After that Thirty Oligarchs rule was established. To protect Athens from the external environment, plato

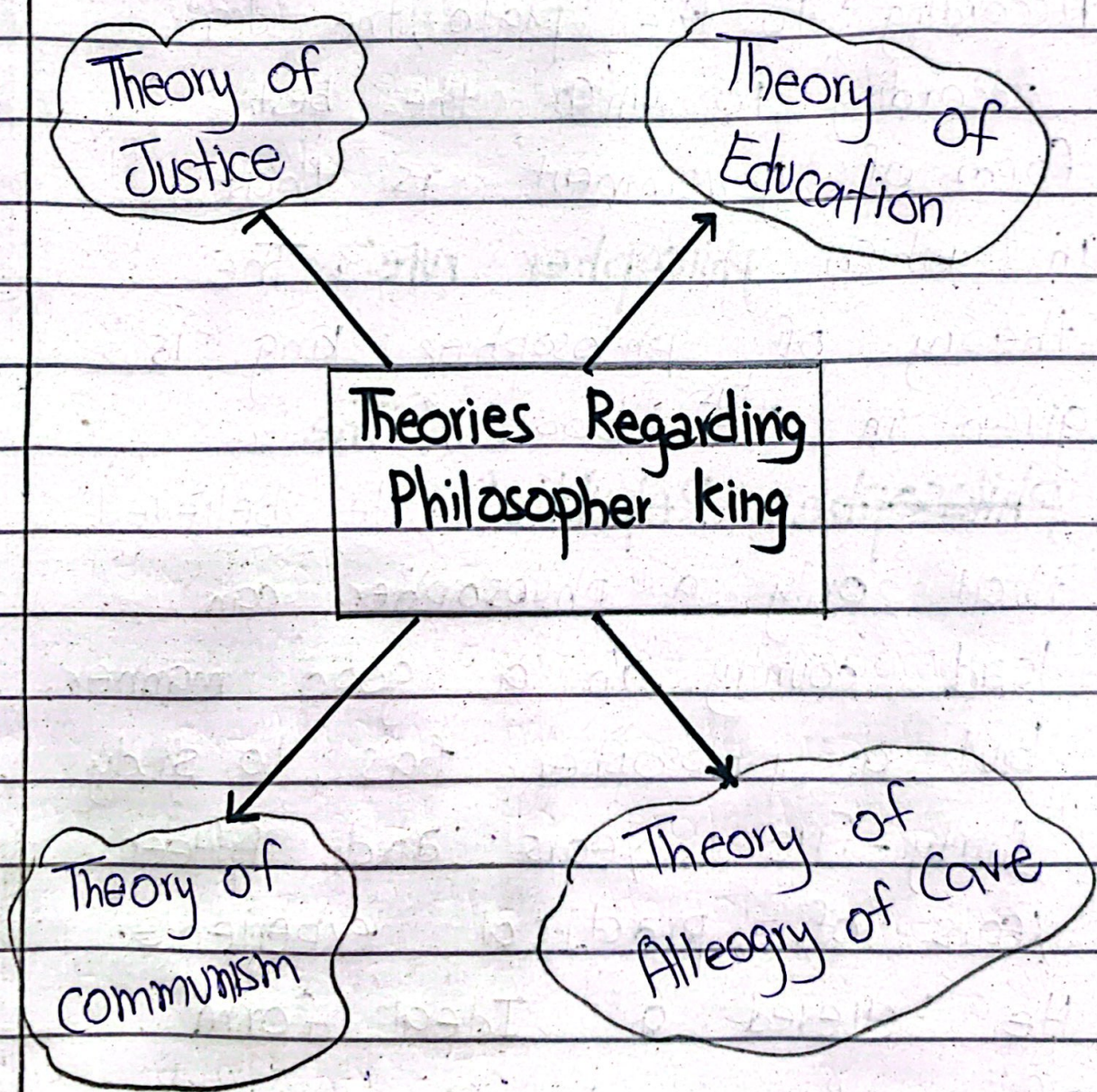
became averse to the democracy.

4) Plato's Concept of philosopher king

According to the Plato, the idea according to which the best form of government is that in which "philosopher rule". The theory of philosopher king is given in his book, "The ~~Philosopher~~ Republic". He believed that only a philosopher can lead country in a good manner but a philosopher has to study Thirty-five years and fifteen years of practical experience. He believed a Ideal form of government is monarchy and all monarchs should be

Philosophers.

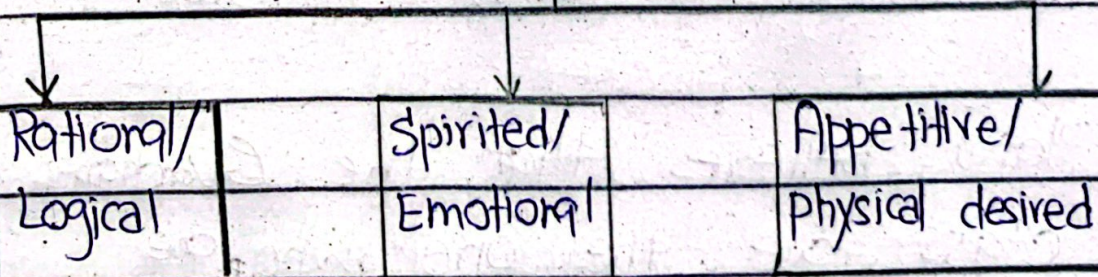
s) Theories of Plato regarding Philosopher king



i) Theory of Justice:

The outcome of the theory of Justice is the Philosopher king. The one who want to be a philosopher should have the qualities of Individual Justice. Individual Justice have three components

Individual Justice



Individual Justice demands these three components but the

'rational part' makes best decisions, they should be most superior faculty in human. Philosopher be the one who have the best rational part.

Political Justice

It mirrors the same concept of Individual Justice

Political Justice

Guardians

Auxillaries

Producers

Plato believes that the Guardian class are the one who are dominated by the Rational part of the Soul, they can make best decisions.

based on rational calculations.

Justice as the Principle of Specialization

Plato believes that philosopher king is that person who have their Spirited & Appetitive parts Submissive to the rational part. They should be only rulers & only then the country will prosper.

A famous quote by plato, "
Justice is an order & duty of the parts of the soul.
Justice is not mere strength, but it is a harmonious strength.

(ii) Theory of Allegory of Cave

In the famous plato's theory

of allegory of cave ; plato picturizes
a cave in which there are
three prisoners in such a way
that their bound bodies are tied
to some rocks and their heads
can only look at the stone wall
in front of them. They have
never seen outside the cave since
birth. Behind them is a fire and
between them is a walkway. The
people outside the cave walk carrying
different things on their heads. Prisoners
believe that these shadows are the
real thing in this world. One
of the prisoner escapes the
cave. He is surprised as he discovers
that he had been living under
the illusion his whole life. He
realizes that previous view
of reality was wrong.

Outcome of theory

The cave in the theory represents the conventional view that true knowledge came from senses. The escaped prisoner represents the philosopher who has broken free from the bondage of sensory apparatus & attempts to grasp the full nature of truth & knowledge using his mental & rational facilities. Ordinary people did not see the reality as the philosophers do. Only the philosophers has the skill and wisdom to rule an ideal society. In "the republic" plato quoted, "Until philosophers are kings, cities will never have rest from their vices".

(iii) Theory of Education

As we all know that Plato was the first to establish a University known as **The Academy**. Plato's Scheme was different as compared to other philosophers.

Plato insisted that elementary education be comprised of **10 years** which will **predominantly** be **physical education**. Every School must have playgrounds, music and **gymnasium** for better health.

At the age of 20, there would be examination for higher studies. Those who pass that exam would pursue higher education for another 10 years.

At the age of 30, students would take yet another examination, which is an elimination test. Those who

passed will pursue another 5 year education in dialectics to find out who was capable of freeing himself from sense perception. Students study another 15 years for practical experience. At the age of 50, they would be introduced in government to serve the country. These people in Plato's views are philosopher king. "Knowledge acquired under compulsion has no hold on mind"

(iv) Theory of Communism

Plato's theory of communism is different from the modern concept of communism inspired by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Plato's communism is only for ruling class and guardians.

Focus of Communism

Denial of
Buying Property.

No Wives/
Family

Communism of Property

Plato insisted that in rules, there was greed of buying property and one way to deny them any right of call anything their own so that they remained focused on civic duties. The guardians were paid higher salaries for the maintenance of their life. Examples include Sparta, where the citizens were denied the use of money and the

privilege of engaging in trade influenced plans.

Communism of wives/family:

Just like property, family also creates individual interests because if someone has a wife or children of their own, they would want to transfer their property into their wife and children's name.

This would lead king neglecting the interest of state. Plato

suggested that they should be no conception of family & individuals having a wife. The guardian class should work for the welfare of society & philosopher king should not have any wife.

6) Drawbacks of plato's Concept of Philosopher king

The beliefs of the plato regarding the philosopher as the king was **bookish**, not **practical**. Plato's philosophy is too idealistic. Some of philosopher's have critique on plato's concept of philosopher king.

(i). Aristotle Critique:

He was the student of plato but did not believe in his philosophy. He argued that 'a child born without wedlock will be a child of non one and communism cannot work as everyone has

desires which needed to be accepted.
Plato went against basic human nature
which is impossible

(ii) Karl Popper Critique:

In his book, **'Open society and its enemies'**, he
wrote that Plato created a closed,
dictatorial and authoritarian system.
This was against democracy

(iii) Plato's communism is Cold:

Plato
trying to ensure that family life
was not corrupted with selfishness,
Plato went to another extreme
and eliminated the emotional bonding
which is not possible

7) Conclusion:

Plato was the student of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. His work on philosopher king is still known today but his theories regarding the philosopher king is not realistic. He was against the democracy just due to the death of his beloved teacher Socrates. This theory of communism is outdated and has no use of in the modern era.