

Day: _____

Political Science

Date: _____

Question

Discuss and Explain Platonic Concept of Philosopher King?

Ans:

Introduction:

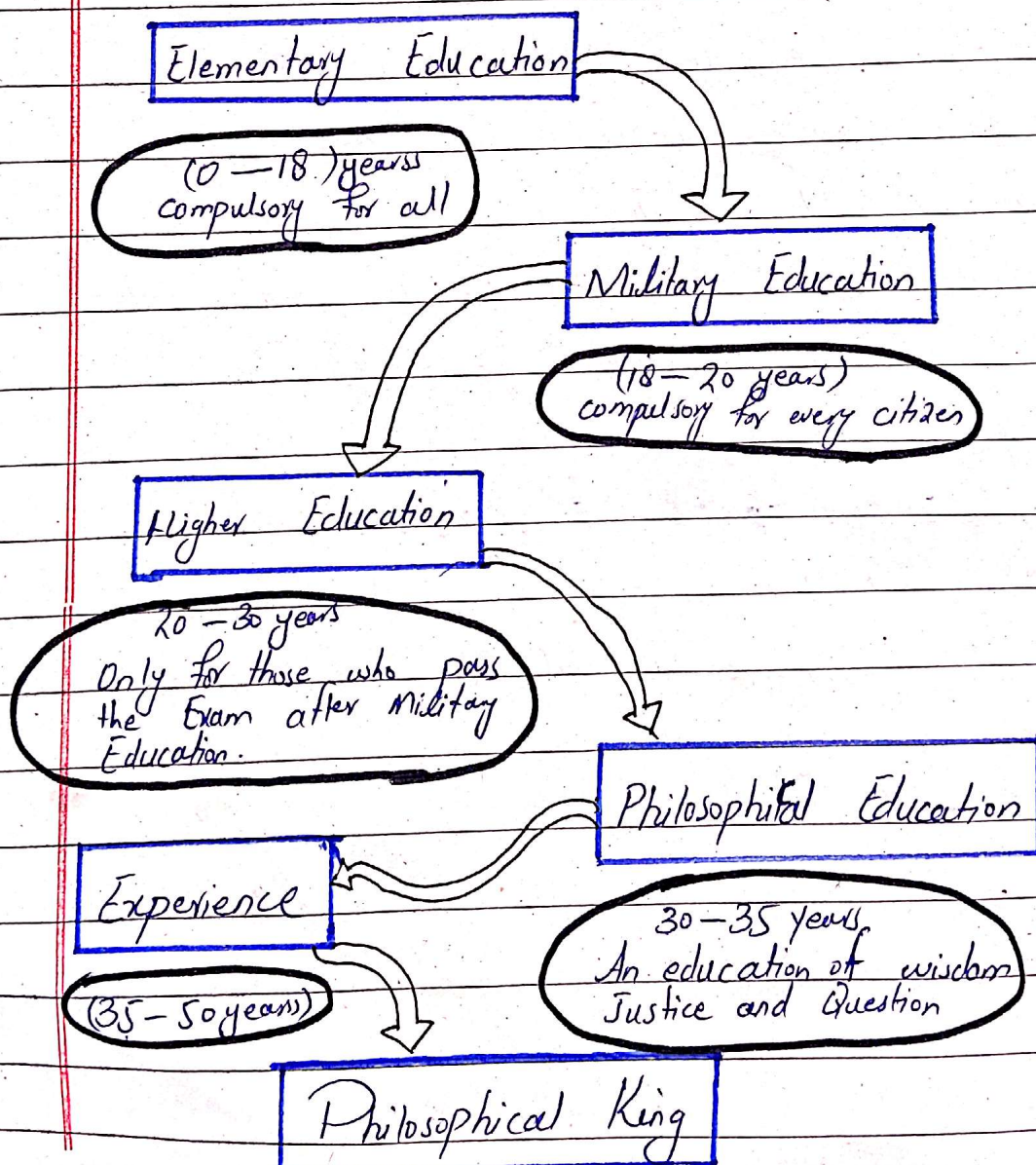
Plato a Greek Philosopher of Athenian times mainly disused about the politics as it was not satisfied with the politics due to execution of his teacher Socrates. Plato gave a new concept of state that is named as Ideal state. and ruler for his ideal state is Philosopher king. The idea is given in his book The Republic.

1. Concepts of Philosopher King:

Plato differentiates king from rest of world due to different abilities; an ordinary king could be anyone while Philosophical king from ideal state have to pass through different stages to prove him. These are

a. Education of Philosophical King:

In ideal state, all the citizens are equal and everyone have the opportunity to prove and become king. For this, there is a compulsory education for all citizen after which they are divided according to their abilities.



b. Restrictions on Philosophical King:

As Philosophical king, is the ruler of ideal state, there are some many prohibitions for smooth running of state. Plato gave communism in Republic, it is different from modern communism that is only bound to king/rule not for the producers of ideal state.

i $\Rightarrow$ No family life:

King is not allowed to have a family, as it would generate emotions of family and Favouritism.

Ideal state has division on the basis of attributes instead of Nepotism.

ii $\Rightarrow$ No Private Property:

Plato was of mindset that rulers are not allowed to have a private property. It increase lust for material thing and leads towards corruption. In Republic, Plato state all the needs

of a King will be fulfilled by produces while his only duty is to rule for state.

2. Qualities of Philosopher King:

a. Justice and Philosopher King:

Justice, the main attribute of Plato's ideal state. Philosopher King is the door for Justice. Plato argues that Justice does not mean equality but everyone doing its own duty without interfering in others work. King only duty is to work for the state with wisdom, by his knowledge of Good and also by ensuring justice by maintaining balance among the classes.

Only Philosopher is one who knows both social and individual justice so that's why ~~to~~ Philosopher is eligible to rule.

b. Knowledge of Philosopher King:

Plato states that rulers are mostly chosen by ~~op~~ opinion not by knowledge. which results in the downfall of state. An example of captain of ship, in which plato states, the one who is trained to sail a ship with experience should given the control, instead of one who know nothing about ship. Instead of failure one should choose knowledge for survival.

c. Wisdom of Philosopher King

Common man and a Philosopher have a difference of wisdom. A common man just experience a moment and thinks it as reality while Philosopher having wisdom experience the moment and finds a way out. In Republic, the allegory of cave states, common people sees

~~shadows~~ shadows in dark cave thinking it reality which mean ignorance while a philosopher, escapes from it to the world out due to wisdom and comeback. Leads # other with them that is reason Plato focused on a Philosopher to be a king.

3. Loop Holes in Plato's Philosopher King

a. Excessive Idealism and Impracticability:

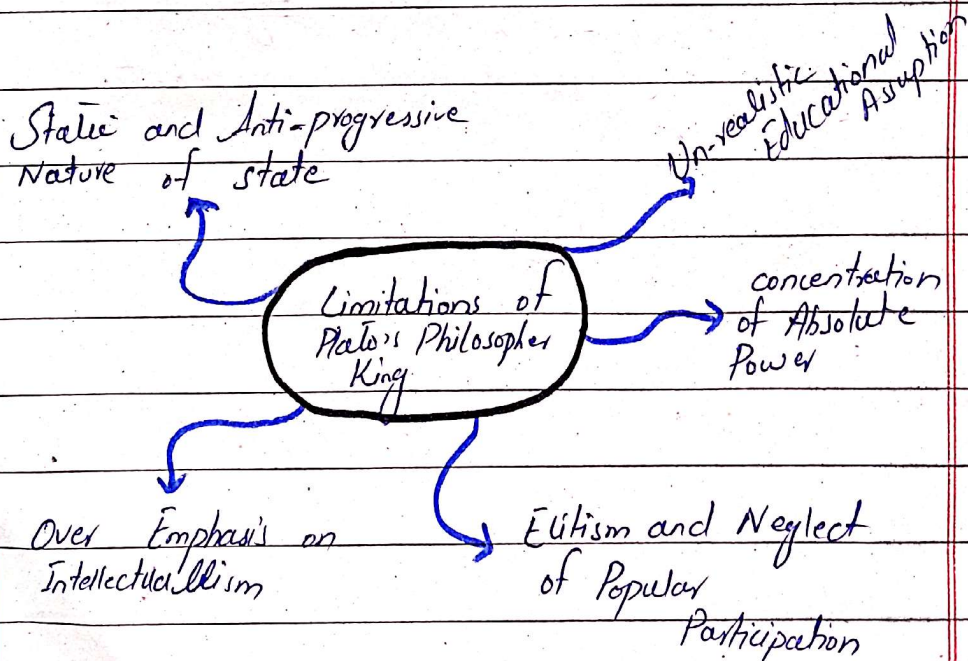
One major limitation of Plato's Philosopher king is highly idealist in nature and impractical to apply.

Aristotle in Politics, criticizes Plato for constructing an abstract ideal state disconnected from practical realities.

According to Aristotle, political system must be based on human nature as it is, not as it ought to be.

b. Suppression of individual Freedom:-

Plato's ideal state heavily restricts individual liberty, especially for guardian class through state-controlled education, censorship of art and poetry, communal property and abolition of family life. Isaiah Berlin, in two concept of liberty, would classify Plato's system as an example of excessive positive liberty, where state decides what is good for individuals, thereby undermining the personal freedom.



Conclusion:

Plato's concept of Philosopher King represents a profound attempt to ground political authority in moral wisdom, knowledge and Justice. While the idea highlights essential role of ethics and intellect in governance, it suffers from serious limitations such as excessive idealism, Absolute power, elitism, suppression of individual freedom and Impractical Education. In modern democratic world, the Philosopher king remains an enduring philosophical ~~king~~ ideal that continues to influence debates.