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50 min

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Q. Discuss in detail the Plato's concept of Justice. (20 marks)

Ans

1)

INTRODUCTION

"Justice is giving everyone what is due to him and what is due from him"
- Plato

As stated above, the Plato's concept of justice is based on functional specialization. It means that everyone should be treated according to their abilities and everyone must perform his duty well. Moreover, no one must interfere in anyone's function. He supported rule of the philosophical king, communism, geographical division, gender equality, and collectivism to ensure the justice in the state.

2)

BACKGROUND: DEFINING PLATO'S CONCEPT OF JUSTICE

The pre-platonic platonian philosophers like Cephalus gave the external dimension of justice. But Plato gave inner self-concept of justice. He stated that "the justice is giving and treating everyone according to their capabilities and that everyone must perform their duties properly in the state." Moreover, he divided justice into two aspects.

- i) Individual aspect of justice; It means self control and refrain from the selfish impulses of oneself one's self.
- ii) Social aspect of justice; It means social control and performing one's duties well and do not interfere in others business.

3)

FEATURES OF PLATO'S CONCEPT OF JUSTICE

3.1)

Differential Functional Specialization to ensure justice in the state

Plato entails that justice can be ensured by dividing functions in the society as per everyone's capabilities. His concept of functional specialization is influenced by his view of human soul, which he believe is divided into appetite, spirit and reason and belly, heart, and brain represent these respectively.

(1) Tripitite division in the state for functional specialization.

In his state, there are three classes. Producers; They fulfill society's basic needs like food, shelter. They are driven by appetite.

2) Auxillaries; They protect the state. They are driven by courage.

3) Guardians; They are the rulers, and are driven by reason.

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- (ii) Education system given by Plato to prepare functionally specialized administrative classes in the state.

Plato's education system aims at producing these three classes.

- (a) First Elimination test; In which 1st class i.e. producers are eliminated
(b) Second Elimination test; In which auxiliaries are eliminated
(c) Final stage; In final state philosopher king is created to rule the state.

3.2) Non-interference between these classes to ensure justice;

Plato says that the three classes must mind their own business and do not interfere in others function. This assists in ensuring justice.

3.3) Communism must be in the state for ensuring justice

Moreover, he says that the justice in the society can be ensured through

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equitable distribution of wealth by
state controlled means of production.
He deprived the guardians of property
of wives for proper functioning of state.

3.4) Geographical division to ensure
efficient deliverance of justice

He entails that the large state
must be divided into smaller units
for proper deliverance of justice to
each and every individual

3.5) Rule of philosopher king to ensure
justice

Plato states that the highest virtue is
the highest knowledge of philosophy.
Therefore, he supported the rule of
philosopher king as he is wise and
prone to mistakes for a justicable state

3.6) Sexual equality is necessary for justice

Plato suggests that the gender equality
must be ensured for a just society.
That is the reason, he has philosopher
king can be male or a female.

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3.7) Collectivism in the form of state to ensure justice.

Plato is of the view that the individual alone can not fulfill his needs. Thus he requires to live with other members of the society for his needs, to form state. He says that justice demands the reciprocal fulfillment of needs.

4)

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Plato's concept of justice has many drawbacks. For instance, his philosopher king is unaccountable which is against the norms of justice. Moreover, he supports gender equality on one hand and treats women as a breeding machines on the other hand. Furthermore, he demands an individual to his liberty and right for the sake of state and does not give appropriate rights to him.

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PLATO'S
CONCEPT
OF

Geographical
division of
state

JUSTICE

Rule of
philosopher
King

Social and
individual
aspects of
justice

Gender
equality

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5)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the plato's concept of justice is based on inner factors of individual. He supports the idea that everyone must be treated according to his abilities. Therefore, he divided his state into three classes for assigning them specific tasks. Moreover, his idea of communism, gender equality, and collectivism also focused on justice.
