

Question:

Analyze the Ideal State of Plato.

There were two factors that influence the Plato to write the theory of Ideal state, these factors include the bad condition of politics in Athens and his wish to find real justice for people and society. The politics of Athens consist up of wrong decisions and unrest which caused the trial and death of his teacher Socrates. This experience hurt him and therefore he tried to build an ideal state where wisdom and justice lead both the individual and society. He gave Ideal state to criticize and reject the direct democracy. Its key features are discussed below:

THEORY OF IDEAL STATE

Plato begin his theory of Ideal state by saying that

"An ideal state must be established on the principle of justice"

Justice is Key in Ideal state :-

According to him every human being must have 3 main instint. These instint include

lust or desire, courage and bravery and wisdom.

However anyone is dominant ~~at~~ and other are lesser in influence. In our society majority of people are ~~there~~ those in which lust

is dominant, few have courage and rare people
to are wise. Those people having lust dominate
must play the role of workers or producers.
and those in which courage is dominate they
must be in the roles of military and
wise must be the rulers. If in a society
people perform the role in a state according
to their instincts, this is called justice.

Functional Specialization must be there in Ideal State :-

As Plato clearly says that

"Justice means minding your own business
and not meddling with others' concerns"

This is the golden rule for political
justice. Rulers should rule, warriors should
only defend and producers should only
provide resources in the ideal state.

Non Interference :-

Each class of the society must work and
perform the duty according to their
dominating force. No one is allowed to interfere
in others' concern. So in this way
he rejects the idea of direct
democracy as present there is Athenian
state.

Rule of Philosophy :-

According to him, the ruler must be the wisest man from the state. He argues that only the philosophers are fit to govern. Ordinary people are driven by many other desires but a philosopher king rule for the welfare of whole society and not for personal benefit.

State as human body :-

He compares ideal state with human body. He ~~compare~~ ^{State} the producer class as a stomach of state, soldiers as a head of state and ruler as a brain of state. According to him, ^{ideal} state must be according to the human's representation.

Public & Equal Education for all in state :-

According to Plato, equal education must be given to both men and women for their economic, social, intellectual and political uplift. He also enunciate the justice in ^{providing} opportunities to become the ruler ~~for~~ ^{to} everyone. Based on abilities not than gender. He is ~~is~~ considered as the pioneer of feminism.

Strictly Merit based selection :-

In the Ideal state of Plato the selection of ruler must be on the basis of abilities and merit rather than favouritism, gender or social status.

Communism in Ideal state :-

The Communism of Plato is actually the rules that are applied in the social classes. There are two aspects of communism & these rules are applied only on upper two classes.

Communism



Communism of property

- Rulers and Warriors cannot have private property or land.
- Producers provide them what they need.

Communism in families

- Both of 2 upper ^{are not} ~~classes~~ ^{are not} allowed to marry. They have common wives, and their childrens are the childrens of state.

Criticism on IDEAL STATE

Although Plato's Ideal state has many good features, justice, harmony and wise leadership but its ideas are highly idealistic and impractical.

Impracticable class division :-

Plato permanently divide society into three classes but in reality people can develop new skills and fallent beyond what they showed in childhood and also wisdom comes with maturity and experiences so his class division ignores the dynamic of nature.

Suppression of Individual Freedom :-

As plato fix people in 3 classes and once the classes are fixed for people they can't change it. This suppress the individual freedom and ignore the possibility that people can improve themselves.

Denies the right to life to disable child :-

Plato's Ideal state only contains strong and fit children. If a person born with disability he/she must be executed from the state and this is against humanity.

Lengthy Educational system :-

According to him person has to go through the training, music, art, philosophy, military service and only after the age of 50 he can be qualified as a leader. Moreover the curriculum is incomplete because he ignore the natural science in his education system.

Fault in Communism :-

In the Plato's Ideal state, the upper two classes have no right to own property and have common families. It is human nature to work hard & honestly and human ~~is~~ is worried about his/her family, home and children. If a ruler have no family means he has no worries at all so there are chances the rulers ~~will~~ not work honestly.

Lack of Check & Balance System :-

As there is absolute separation of power in Plato's state so there is no check and balance system. It will lead to corrupt, chaos and unrest.

As Lord Acton said

"Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely"

Negligence of Economic & social growth:-

Plato's Ideal state talks more about politics and morality but it ignores the social and economic development of people. He gave little importance to trade, industry and improving economic growth.

In short, plato's ideal state is built on the idea of true justice where every person plays their role according to ability and rulers govern with wisdom. His political thoughts reflect a harmony, morality but at some points his Ideal state seems impractical. He strongly rejects the idea of direct democracy and gave a holistic solution for the ~~At~~ Athenians.