

Plato's Theory of the Justice in the Ideal State: Function and class.

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Abstract

There are numerous interpretations of Plato's theory of justice as it relates to the ideal state, deeply intertwined with his political philosophy. This complexity makes understanding his interlocking ideas challenging, as he seeks to construct a theory of the ideal state. Plato's philosophy of justice, particularly in its political dimension, emphasizes integration as a fundamental factor in grasping his theory. This paper aims to elucidate the original concept of justice in Plato's state by delving into the roots of the Republic, analyzing its historical context. Plato's predictions reflect values and truths connected to politics and philosophy, emphasizing integration as essential to understanding his theory of justice, which lies at the core of his philosophy. This essay compares the relationship between the functions and class structure of the state. Plato classifies human nature into three components: reason, courage, and appetite, which correspond to three major classes in the state. The ruling class, educated in philosophy, governs the state. The military class, characterized by courage and strength, defends the state, while the professional class manages the everyday affairs of governance. Plato's theory posits functional specialization across all classes as fundamental to his ideal state. In essence, while Plato's imagined city may lack historical existence, it holds significant relevance in the realm of speculative human thought.

Keywords: *Justice. State. Function. Class. Rulers. Guardians. Producers.*

Introduction

There is an ongoing controversy in politics and philosophy about the relationship between ideas and facts. Also, there is a symbiotic relationship between idealism and realism, where facts can provoke new thoughts and new views can undoubtedly shape future events and theories. For past centuries, Plato his ideas about, justice, state, classes, function, and soul, they have played a critical role to build politics and philosophy. As a result, if we trace the impact of the concepts of Plato about justice down to the present day, we will find ourselves are still living under the same circumstances when we remarkable the consequences and influence of these ideas in our philosophy and political life.

Accordingly, a just man in an unjust society would always be at risk unless he could persuade others to share his justice, but problems immediately begin to arise when one begins to ask whether or not all men are capable of being just. If the answer is that all men are capable of being just, then the additional question has to be asked: If that is so, why is it the case that so few are just in fact? If justice is so generally accessible, why is it so rare? Wisdom, courage, and temperance, if not exactly common, are spread relatively wide, so why is the same not true of justice? Justice is the most difficult of all the virtues because the whole man practices justice. In Plato's view of it, justice is the whole man. Plato divides the human personality (psyche) into three faculties (reason, passion, and appetite), and he thinks that there are virtues appropriate to each.⁽¹⁾ For this reason, Plato says in the Republic that people are living in his day who still believe that all aspects of life should regulate according to precepts derivable from the Homeric poems. That tells us that there are also people living in Plato's day who thought nothing of the kind. Men cannot live without a value system which orders their lives, so it follows that Plato's

⁽¹⁾ J.S.McClelland. *A History of western political thought*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1996). P. 22.

world is one in which many different value systems compete for the attention of thinking men. That plurality of possible value systems easily led to the Sophist position that value systems are matters of convention only in a world where it was the strength which counted. ⁽²⁾ However, things are not always as they seem to be; the strong do not still proclaim that what they say justice is, is only their self-interest, where ideological forms can easily conceal the reality of power, and power itself can always find proxies. It can be difficult in the state to get to the bottom of the question: Who rules? We sometimes forget that the oppressiveness of government is not the only thing about it which causes discontent.⁽³⁾ In fact, portrays several dialogues between the philosopher Socrates and several observers in which they discuss a political theory for a just state. The central belief is that “justice and happiness stand and fall together. Not because good consequence follows from being just, but because justice itself is so great that nothing gained by injustice could be greater”.⁽⁴⁾ In consequence, That Citizens with harmonious souls will no doubt create a harmonious city, and Demos maintains that citizens with harmonious souls are not incompatible with Plato's 'just' city based on the division of functions. The picture that Plato provides of this city reveals that the counterpart in the individual of the 'justice' of this city must be a kind of balance or harmony of parts. But it also reveals that there is a higher kind of virtue, known in Plato's commonwealth to the Rulers alone; in the perfect state, it would presumably know to all citizens. And Plato has succeeded in showing, at least by implication, that the ideal individual, he who is to have the highest kind of justice, must have achieved apprehension of the Form.⁽⁵⁾ In this paper, we will explore Plato's intellectual activity in the Republic, focusing on his theory of justice within the Ideal State. We will analyze three key

⁽²⁾ Ibid, p 17.

⁽³⁾ Ibid, p 27.

⁽⁴⁾ Boyle, B. *Platonic thoughts*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Autumn, 2007), pp. 107-108. P 107.

⁽⁵⁾ R. S. Bluck. *Plato's 'Ideal' State*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Nov), 1959, pp. 166-168. P. 168.

aspects of Plato's political theory: the concept of political justice through the organization of functions and classes, the specific functions assigned to each class within the state, and the hierarchical structure of these classes.

I. The Conception of Function and Class.

Among the causes of the various events which make up human history is political thought. Even when it does not immediately result in political action, the thinking of political philosophers is often found to lie behind significant social and political changes.⁽⁶⁾ Hence, Greek political thinkers were consciousness of some of the powerful factors in human nature which run counter to civilization and to the ideals of order and harmony which the Greek associated with it.⁽⁷⁾ In this respect, Plato's Republic is not a description or analysis of the government of Athens in his time or an account of its historical development. Its purpose is to describe, in general terms, the main characteristics of a perfect system of government, one that would serve the welfare of the citizens, create civic unity and suppress conflict, provide just social order, and once established, require no future alteration.⁽⁸⁾

In fact, that concept of function and class in Plato state based on claims that political associations formed because "none of us is self-sufficient." (369b).⁽⁹⁾ Thus, even in Plato's political theory, the best state, is mostly dependent on his historicism; and what is true of his

⁽⁶⁾ T. A. Sinclair. *A history of Greek political thought*, (London: Ltd, 1952). p 1.

⁽⁷⁾ Ibid, p. 3. Also see, if Plato does not keep on referring directly to contemporary events of conditions, he has two good, but entirely different, reasons; one is that the problem of political Theory are for him at bottom always the same and always more; on the other is that the Socratic dialogue, the form which he used for most of this writings required a dramatic sitting within the lifetime of Socrates.p118

⁽⁸⁾ Scott, Gordon. *The history and philosophy of social science*, (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 1991). P 59. According to *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (final cause, IV.1.1289a17–18). To sum up, the city-state is a hylomorphic (i.e., matter-form) compound of a particular population (i.e., citizen-body) in a given territory (material cause) and a constitution (formal cause). The constitution itself is fashioned by the lawgiver and is governed by politicians, who are like craftsmen (efficient cause), and the constitution defines the aim of the city-state.

⁽⁹⁾ Plato, the Republic, (369b).

philosophy of the state can be extended, to his general philosophy of all things. So, according to Popper analysis, the theory of Forms or Ideas has at least three different functions in Plato's philosophy, (i) it is an important methodological device, for it makes possible pure scientific knowledge. Thus, it becomes possible to inquire into the problems of a changing society politically. (ii) It provides the clue to a theory of change and decay, to a theory of generation and degeneration. (iii) It opens a way, in the social realm, and it suggests designing a 'best state ' which so closely resembles the Form or Idea of a state that it cannot decay.⁽¹⁰⁾ In next passage, we will explain both conceptions in Plato theory of justice that related to the ideal state, functions, and classes.

1. Concept of the State's Function.

Fundamentally, for function definition in the state there are two anticipations of the Platonic State: first, each man is considered not as a person but as a functionary, the embodiment of a particular skill or craft which he exercises for the benefit of the community. Second, though there's no talk yet of formal government, the protection of the state is stated to be in the hands of a professional body of men, endowed not only with skill and courage but with intellectual ability and a love of wisdom.⁽¹¹⁾ For this reason, Plato's approach describes the problem of political instability through the idea of the instability of individual character can easily seem naive to us because we are so used to seeing the political and social values associated with a political system as mediating between individuals and the political arrangements with which they live. Accordingly, Plato's interest in individual character stems from the straightforward perception that men are difficult to rule, where he accepts that three different character types are depending

⁽¹⁰⁾ K. R. Popper. *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, (London: Butler & Tanner Ltd., 1944). Pp. 20-25.

⁽¹¹⁾ T. A. Sinclair. *A history of Greek political thought*, Ibid, p. 147.

on which faculty of the reason, spirit or appetite predominates.⁽¹²⁾ In the same context, there is an analogy between state and individual virtues and structure in the mind of Plato, which is controversial. They think he starts from the structure of the individual and argues to the state. Hence, individuals were members or even servants, their function being to lead lives which contributed to the total life of the state, much as the brain, limbs, and muscles of a man have each their function to play in maintaining his life. Plato presupposed an account of justice in the construction of his state during his principle of specialization which related to one man, one job. (423.d) It is perfectly compatible with this statement that Plato looks at the state, see its structure independently of that of the individual soul, and then be led to look for a similar structure which he takes to be the cause of the same qualities. Indeed, this is what Plato claims to be doing.⁽¹³⁾

In that event, functionally, there are perform distinct tasks (ruling, protecting, desiring), but not at all that each person performs one function only. So, the power of the soul is analogous not to the individual, but the peculiar excellence of each of the three classes. But now Socrates says that it is hard to know if we perform the three separate functions of the ruling, soldiering, and making money or desiring with separate parts of the soul, or whether the soul fulfills each function. This question seems to cast doubt on the analogy of the city and the soul, which up to now has sustained the entire argument virtually. If we do everything with the whole soul, then there is no basis in human nature for justifying the tripartite division of the city. (436a–b). In this inquiry, Socrates employs what has sometimes been called the principle of non-contradiction. “It is plain that the same thing will neither do nor suffer opposites concerning the same part and about the same thing” (436b–c). We normally think of a contradiction as holding between two

⁽¹²⁾ J.S. McClelland. *A History of western political thought*, Ibid, P40.

⁽¹³⁾ Jerome Neu, *Plato's Analogy of State and Individual: "The Republic" and the Organic Theory of the State*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 46, No. 177, 1971. pp. 238-254. P243.

propositions, but the reason why one proposition contradicts another is that the two simultaneously affirm and deny that one thing is another or that a property belongs to an owner. Socrates gives three examples, of which we need examine only the first. If a person stands still and moves his hands and his head, we cannot say that he both moves and is still but rather that he moves one part of himself and remains motionless in another part. Socrates shifts here to what we can say, but it is plain that this, in turn, is determined by what is the case (436c–437a).⁽¹⁴⁾ To illustrate the importance of the function conception of the state we quote from the Republic the following: "And what about this: you could cut a slip from a vine with a dagger or a leather-cutter or many other things?" "Of course." "But I suppose you could not do as fine a job with anything other than a pruning knife made for this purpose." "True." "Then shall we take this to be its work?" "We shall indeed." "Now I suppose you can understand better what I was asking a moment ago when I wanted to know whether the work of each thing is what it alone can do or can do more finely than other things." "Yes, I do understand," he said, "and this is, in my opinion. (353.a).⁽¹⁵⁾

2. Concept of Class in the State.

For Plato views, there are three classes in the state: Rulers or Guardians, who are the supreme protectors, the Auxiliary protectors organized as a military and police force and carrying out the ruler's orders in a variety of ways. And thirdly, the general citizen- body, who carry on their trade, profession or craft but do not participate in the government. Thus, that is intended to demonstrate that, although all members of the state have a common origin and are therefore all kin, some have gold in them, some silver and the rest only iron or bronze.⁽¹⁶⁾ Hence in the same

⁽¹⁴⁾ Stanley, Rosen. *Plato's Republic a Study*, (Yale University: US, 2005). p152

⁽¹⁵⁾ Allan, Bloom. *The Republic of Plato*, (New York: Basic Books, 2016), p 32

⁽¹⁶⁾ T. A. Sinclair. *A history of Greek political thought*, Ibid, p. 149.

context, Plato unified a just person and a just city, claiming that an individual's soul contains three parts (three desires). The first part is the desire for wisdom and truth, the second for honor, and the last for gains. The individual's parts correspond to those of a city. The portion of the soul that desires wisdom and truth is the principal role of the guardians of a city. The portion that desires honor is the principal role of the auxiliaries. The last portion that desires gains is the principal role of the producing class. Socrates believes that "guardians" should run a city because they are the only ones with the knowledge and the desire to do so.⁽¹⁷⁾

Accordingly, Plato himself also in his class concept asserts on a principle of specialization (369d-370a), suggesting that our needs more efficiently met if the given individual focuses his/her efforts on one product to share with all. A minimal political entity of four or five persons might thus exist, in which we find a farmer, a builder, a weaver, a cobbler, and a physician (369d). That Plato does not see the state as having any interest independent of individual interests. When he says, "the object on which we fixed our eyes in the establishment of our state was not the exceptional happiness of any one class but the greatest happiness of the city as a whole." (420b, 519e), the good of any one class is not contrasted with that of a super-individual that goes marching purposefully through history, but with the good of all the classes and individuals.⁽¹⁸⁾

Thus, Plato assumes, unrealistically, the harmony of all goods. The full development of capacities is assumed to lead to no conflict. The state grows because each individual thinks the result better for himself (369c). The functional theory of justice in the soul is carried over (using the division of labor as the principle of construction) to a functional theory of justice in the state.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Boyle, B. *Platonic thoughts*, Ibid, p 108.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Jerome Neu, *Plato's Analogy of State and Individual: "The Republic" and the Organic Theory of the State*, Ibid, p 246.

There are rights, but only those justified regarding function. A whole range of values thus ignored. It based on a doctrine of real interests and desires. The real will has deep roots in Platonic and even Socratic doctrine when the knowledge is a virtue. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Based on the argument of Plato that state's interest is the individual's interest, and that state's interest linked to the class origin. Hence, the system is "better for everyone" and aims at your good. If not really good, you don't really want it. Only the philosopher-king knows what is really good. ⁽²⁰⁾ But the fundamental question here is: How does Plato solve the problem of avoiding class war? Popper answered: Had Plato been a progressivist, he might have hit at the idea of a classless, equalitarian society; for, as we can see for instance from his parody of Athenian democracy, there were strong equalitarian tendencies at work in Athens. But he was not out to construct a state that might come, but a state that had been the father of the Spartan state, which was certainly not a classless society. It was a slave state and accordingly, Plato's best state based on the most rigid class distinctions. It is a caste state. The problem of avoiding class war is solved, not by abolishing classes, but by giving the ruling class a superiority which is unchallenged, and which cannot challenge. For, as in Sparta, the ruling class alone is permitted to carry arms, it alone has any political or other rights, and it alone receives education, i.e., a specialized training in the art of keeping down its human sheep or its human cattle. (In fact, its overwhelming superiority disturbs Plato a little; he fears that they may worry the sheep', instead of merely shearing them, and act as wolves rather than dogs). As long as the ruling class is united, there can be no challenge of their authority, and consequently no class war.⁽²¹⁾ In this respect, as Popper explained, Plato distinguishes three classes in his best state, the guardians, their armed

⁽¹⁹⁾ Ibid, p 247.

⁽²⁰⁾ Ibid, p 248.

⁽²¹⁾ K. R. Popper. *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ibid, p 39.

auxiliaries, and the working class. But there are only two classes, the armed and trained rulers and the unarmed and uneducated ruled, for the guardians are old and wise warriors who have promoted from the ranks of auxiliaries. That Plato divides his ruling class into two classes, the guardians, and the auxiliaries, without elaborating similar subdivisions within the working class, is primarily because he is interested only in the rulers. The workers do not interest him at all, they are only human cattle whose sole function is to provide for the material needs of the ruling class, and Plato even forbids his rulers to legislate for them and their petty problems.⁽²²⁾

The direct criticism to Plato from Popper here is: If anyone should maintain that 'justice' means the unchallenged rule of one class, then I should simply reply that I am all for injustice. So, behind Plato's definition of justice stands, fundamentally, his demand for a totalitarian class rule, and his decision to bring it.⁽²³⁾ In short, Plato, then, regards it as essential that in a state constructed on natural principles its members should be classified according to their ability to perform the work required of them. Thus, the goodness of a Ruler is wisdom, of the Auxiliaries courage, of the rest obedience. But apparently there can be no rigid separation of these virtues; the Rulers must have the courage and the Auxiliaries, though not requiring supreme wisdom, must have a love of knowledge and acquire right beliefs; they must also be obedient.⁽²⁴⁾ To illustrate the importance of the class conception of the state we quote from the Republic the following: "But in truth justice was, as it seems, something of this sort; however, not with respect to a man's minding his external business, but with respect to what is within, with respect to what truly concerns him and his own. He doesn't let each part in his mind other people's business or the three classes in the soul meddle with each other, but really sets his own house in good order

⁽²²⁾ Ibid, p 56.

⁽²³⁾ Ibid, p 78.

⁽²⁴⁾ T. A. Sinclair. *A history of Greek political thought*, Ibid, p 152.

and rules himself. He arranges himself, becomes his friend, and harmonizes the three parts, exactly like three notes in a harmonic scale, lowest, highest and middle. And if there are some other parts in between, he binds them together and becomes entirely one from many, moderate and harmonized. (443d, e).⁽²⁵⁾

II. Functions of the Ideal State.

In reality, that most substantial objection to the political theory of the Republic lies in the nation of an absolute government by a set of the person (Philosopher-king) whose claim to superior wisdom and infallible knowledge must never be questioned.⁽²⁶⁾ That result above is related according to Plato, by a soul that has three distinct parts: appetite, a “spirited” part, and reason. As Neu, describe that Plato's political theory does not derive from an analogy which makes the state a monster individual with interest’s superior to and independent of those of ordinary citizens. It derives rather from a doctrine of objective interests discernible by those with special training and ability, interests which later thinkers have taken to be the object of a "real will," unerring even where a person's mere empirical desires short-sightedly misdirected. Plato identifies the interests of his ideal state with the objective interests of its citizens (so they are not independent), and in his harmonious world, metaphysics, moral psychology, and political organization combine to ensure that those interests need never override individual mundane interests (not superior) for they never conflict: they coincide. That the whole theory is dubious should not prevent us from seeing that just what the theory it may clarify by examining the arguments which putatively lead to it, and that those arguments provide grounds for not confounding Plato's theory with others which may reach similar conclusions about political

⁽²⁵⁾ Allan Bloom, *the Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p 123.

⁽²⁶⁾ T. A. Sinclair. *A history of Greek political thought*, Ibid, p 166.

organization and obligation. The alleged beast grows in what I shall distinguish as three stages: (I) the state as analogous to the individual. (II) The state of super-individual. (III) The individual is subordinate to the state. ⁽²⁷⁾ Based on the above, the basic assumption of Plato based on the city is founded upon human nature, its needs, and its limitations. In this regard means that each man in our city should do one work only; namely, that work for which his nature is naturally best fitted. From this Plato concludes that everyone should mind his own business; that the carpenter should confine himself to carpentering, the shoemaker to making shoes. Not much harm is done, however, if two workers change their natural places. But should anyone who is by nature a worker (or else a member of the money-earning class). Manage to get into the warrior class; or should a warrior get into the guardians' class, without being worthy of it; then this kind of change and underhand plotting would mean the downfall of the city. From this argument, Plato draws his conclusion that any changing or intermeddling within the three classes must be an injustice, and that the opposite, therefore, is justice. When each class in the city attends to its own business, the money earning class as well as the auxiliaries and the guardians, then this will be justice. This conclusion is reaffirmed and summed up a little later: The city is just if each of its three classes attends to its work. That means that Plato identifies justice with the principle of class rule and class privilege. For the principle that every class should attend to its business means, briefly and bluntly, that the state is just if the ruler rules, if the worker works, and if the slave slaves. ⁽²⁸⁾

Thus, for the benefit of the city-state, says Plato, we find that the appeal to the principle of collective utility is the ultimate ethical consideration. Totalitarian morality overrules everything,

⁽²⁷⁾ Jerome Neu. *Plato's Analogy of State and Individual: "The Republic" and the Organic Theory of the State*, Ibid, p 238.

⁽²⁸⁾ K. R. Popper. *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ibid, p.78.

even the definition, the Idea, of the philosopher. If the ruler catches anyone else in a lie, then he will punish him for introducing a practice which injures and endangers the city. Only in this slightly unexpected sense is Plato's philosopher king a lover of truth.⁽²⁹⁾ To illustrate Plato's idea about the essential functional purpose of the state we quote the following: "Well, then," I said, "a city, as I believe, comes into being because each of us isn't self-sufficient but is in need of much. Do you believe there's another beginning to the founding of a city?" "None at all," he said. "So, then, when one man takes on another for one need and another for another need, and, since many things are needed, many men gather in one settlement as partners and helpers, to this common settlement we give the name city, don't we?" "Most certainly."⁽³⁰⁾ (369 b,c).⁽³⁰⁾

1. Rulers (Rational Soul of Thought).

Without a doubt, the higher education where the stress laid on the teaching of rulers will come as no surprise to readers of Socrates or Plato's, though its content strikes a new and unexpected note. But the concern with nursery and elementary education is striking, its stress on the environment, on the learning of the good by imitation and the exclusion of all that is unseemly.⁽³¹⁾ From this respect, and while the track record of ruling individuals, or classes, is somewhat spotty, the concept of a ruling elite finds a strong proponent in the philosopher Plato. While recognizing the fundamental flaw in humankind so clearly manifested in the (e.g., Hitlers) the world, Plato believed in the appointment of one supreme guardian (the philosopher-king), an individual, who with the proper education, was competent enough to decide on legislative policies. In the Republic, such a knowledgeable being determined the laws in the city. Plato

⁽²⁹⁾ Ibid, p 121.

⁽³⁰⁾ Allan Bloom, *The Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p49.

⁽³¹⁾ T. A. Sinclair. *A history of Greek political thought*, Ibid, p 144.

believed that the philosopher king was incorruptible since his only desire was knowledge (his thirst for knowledge surmounting that of any vice).⁽³²⁾

Consequently, Plato concludes that the soul of the properly educated guardian is a harmony of fierceness and gentleness and is therefore temperate and courageous. Since wisdom has not yet mentioned, it would seem not to be necessary for the acquisition of the virtues above. It is the founding fathers or philosopher-kings who must be wise, to devise the proper nurture and education of the guardian class. The avoidance of music and philosophy, on the other hand, produces not merely excessive fierceness but also the weakness, deafness, and blindness of the soul. Once again, the theory associated with temperance, gentleness, and orderliness. That helps us to clarify the initial reference to philosophy. Those who are fierce rather than courageous have defective intellectual powers. Regarding a later stage in the argument, such a spiritedness is unable to listen to or obey the commands of the philosopher-kings. As the present passage shows, the separation of the three powers in the soul (intellect, spiritedness, and desire) is not the total isolation of each. Spirit and desire must be sufficiently intelligent to carry out their roles within the city, and the same is true of the individual soul (410e–411d).⁽³³⁾

Thus, according to the rational soul that represent philosopher-king, we can understand the analogy between city and soul who used to demonstrate the superiority of justice to injustice. Only if reason rules in a soul will all elements receive satisfaction. Unlike the other parts, reason recognizes the legitimate needs of the other elements and pursues a balanced plan of life that works to the benefit of the soul as a whole. That is analogous to how the ruler's function in the

⁽³²⁾ Ogochukwu Okpala. *Plato's Republic vs. Democracy*. Okpala, O, A (2009, January, 25) [Interview with Chukwuemeka Okpala] (Unknown), (2008). What is democracy? Retrieved September 24, 2008. P 51. Okpala says, e.g, in democracy, “[where] the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must”.

⁽³³⁾ Stanley, Rosen. *Plato's Republic a Study*, Ibid, p 123.

just city, ruling in the interests of all classes, not their own. Looking at the city as a whole, we can see the superiority of the balanced, harmonious, just city to the four unjust cities timarchy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny in each of which the rulers rule by force.⁽³⁴⁾ For this reason, we can accommodate an outline of Plato's theory of the best or most ancient state, in which the human cattle were treated just as a wise but hardened shepherd treats his sheep. As an analysis both of Spartan social institutions and of the conditions of their stability and instability, and as an attempt at reconstructing more rigid and primitive forms of tribal life, this description is excellent indeed.⁽³⁵⁾ To sum up, the first and the most important function of the philosopher that of the city's founder and lawgiver. For this purpose, a philosopher needed. If the state is to be stable, then it must be a true copy of the divine Form or Idea of the State. But only a philosopher who is fully proficient in the highest of sciences, in dialectics, can see, and copy, the heavenly Original. This point receives much emphasis on the part of the Republic in which Plato develops his arguments for the sovereignty of the philosophers. Philosophers love to see the truth', and a real lover always loves to see the whole, not merely the parts.⁽³⁶⁾ To illustrate the importance of the role of the Philosopher-King we quote the following: "Well, it was on account of this," I said, "foreseeing it then, that we were frightened; but, all the same, compelled by the truth, we said that neither city nor regime will ever become perfect, nor yet will a man become perfect in the same way either, before some necessity chances to constrain those few philosophers who aren't vicious, those now called useless, to take charge of a city, whether they want to or not, and the

⁽³⁴⁾ J. M. Cooper, ed., *Plato: Complete Works*, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997). p7

⁽³⁵⁾ K. R. Popper, *the Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ibid, p 47.

⁽³⁶⁾ Ibid, p 127.

city to obey or a true erotic passion for true philosophy flows from some divine inspiration into the sons of those who hold power or the office of king, or into the fathers themselves. (499, b).⁽³⁷⁾

2. Guardians (Spirited Soul of Will).

According to Plato, the just city composed of three classes: rulers, and auxiliaries or soldiers, who, together, are the city's "guardians," and an unnamed class of craftsmen and farmers. The city's virtues turn on relationships between the classes, with justice defined as an overall principle that each class should stay in its proper place and do its job. The soul is analogous to the city in being composed of three parts or aspects: reason, which corresponds to the rulers; the spirited part corresponding to the auxiliaries, and appetite, which corresponds to the workers. In arguing for parts of the soul, Plato may appear to be relying somewhat arbitrarily on the analogy with the city, but he has strong arguments for his position, based on the phenomenon of psychological conflict.⁽³⁸⁾ Through these arrangements above, the just city is cleverly constructed to give each class what it wants. That is essential for the virtue of temperance, that each class willingly stays in its place, thereby allowing the city to remain just. The farmers, who oriented towards the satisfaction of their appetites, control the state's wealth. Since moving up to the ruling class would require them to renounce property, they should prefer to remain where they are. Something similar is true of the auxiliaries, who are honored for their military service, thereby receiving what they desire. The philosophers, on the other hand, are to some extent forced to set aside their desires. Although they would prefer to focus on their studies, they must serve as rulers, not for their benefit but for the sake of their fellow citizens.⁽³⁹⁾ In this respect, the guardian function is acting as the essential task in the ideal state, and as Rosen says that

⁽³⁷⁾ Allan Bloom, *the Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p 178.

⁽³⁸⁾ J. M. Cooper, ed., *Plato: Complete Works*, Ibid, p 6.

⁽³⁹⁾ Ibid, p 11.

underlying sequence of thought is that when temperance fails, as it must, human beings need the courage to expand their possessions and so to satisfy their desires. The need for an army will increase the size of the city dramatically. That is guaranteed by the principle of one man, one job because the number of special tasks and different weapons required by an army is considerable. Furthermore, we cannot simply turn our citizens into soldiers when war occurs, because war is itself an art or profession. One must possess the requisite nature for it, and one must practice the attendant skills (373e–374e).⁽⁴⁰⁾ To illustrate Plato's idea about the functional role of the Guardians class we quote the following: "In my opinion," I said, "after having considered moderation, courage, and prudence, this is what's left over in the city; it provided the power by which all these others came into being. And, once having come into being, it provides them with preservation as long as it's in the city. And yet we were saying that justice would be what's left over from the three if we found them.". "Yes, we did," he said, "and it's necessarily so:" "Moreover," I said, "if one had to judge which of them by coming to be will do our city the best, it would be a difficult judgment. Is it the unity of opinion among rulers and ruled? Or is it the coming into being in the soldiers of that preserving of the lawful opinion as to which things are terrible and which are not? Or is it the prudence and guardianship present in the rulers? Or is the city done the best by the fact that the case of child, woman, slave, freeman, craftsman, ruler and ruled-each one minded his own business and wasn't a busybody?"(433 c,d).⁽⁴¹⁾

3. Producers (Appetitive Soul of Feeling).

Finally, the functional role of the class producers, according to Plato view is based on many ideas. For example, internal strife, class war, fomented by self-interest and especially material or

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Stanley, *Rosen, Plato's Republic*, Ibid, pp. 82-83.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Allan Bloom, *the Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p 112.

economic self-interest, is the primary forces of social dynamics. (e.g., The Marxian formula). As Marx says, the history of all hitherto existing societies is a history of class struggle, which fits Plato's historicism nearly as well as that of Marx. Hence, the four most conspicuous periods or landmarks in the history of political degeneration ', and, at the same time, the most important. Plato describes varieties of existing states in the following order. First, after the perfect state comes timarchy or timocracy ', the rule of the noble who seek honor and fame; secondly, oligarchy, the rule of the rich families next in order, democracy is born,' the rule of liberty which means lawlessness, and last comes tyranny. The fourth and final sickness of the city.⁽⁴²⁾ For this reason, the first form into which the perfect state degenerates, timocracy, the rule of the ambitious noblemen is said to be in nearly all respects similar to the perfect state itself. It is important to note that Plato identifies this best and oldest among the existing states with the Dorian constitution of Sparta and Crete and that these two tribal aristocracies did indeed represent the oldest existing form of political life within Greece. Most of Plato's excellent description of their institutions given in his description of the best or perfect state. The main difference is that the latter contains an element of instability; the once united patriarchal ruling class is now disunited, and it is this disunity which leads to the next step, to its degeneration into the oligarchy.⁽⁴³⁾

As a result, as mentioned above says Plato, speaking of the young timocrat, he hears his mother complaining that her husband is not one of the rulers. Thus, he becomes ambitious and longs for distinction. But decisive in bringing about the next change is competitive and acquisitive social tendencies. We must describe ', says Plato, how timocracy changes into the

⁽⁴²⁾ K. R. Popper, *the Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ibid, p 33.

⁽⁴³⁾ Ibid, p 34.

oligarchy. Even a blind man must see how it changes. It is the treasure house that ruins this constitution. They (the timocrats) begin by creating opportunities for showing off and spending money, and to this end, they twist the laws, and they and their wives disobey them; and they try to outrival one another.' In this Way arises the first-class conflict; that between virtue and money, or between the old-established ways of feudal simplicity and the new ways of wealth. The transition to oligarchy completed when the rich establish a law that disqualifies from public office all those whose means do not reach the stipulated amount. Force of arms imposes this change, should threats and blackmail does not succeed. With the establishment of the oligarchy, a state of potential civil war between the oligarchs and the poorer classes reached: 'just as a sick body is sometimes at strife with itself. So is this sick city. It falls ill and makes war on itself on the slightest pretext, whenever the one party or the other manages to obtain help from outside, the one from an oligarchic city, or the other from a democracy. And does not this sick state sometimes break into civil war even without any such help from outside? This civil war begets democracy: Democracy is born. When the poor win the day, killing some, banishing others, and sharing with the rest the rights of citizenship and public offices, regarding equality.⁽⁴⁴⁾ To illustrate Plato's idea about the functional role of the Producers class we quote the following: 'All of you in the city are certainly brothers,' we shall say to them in telling the tale, 'but the god, in fashioning those of you who are competent to rule, mixed gold in at their birth; this is why they are most honored; in auxiliaries, silver; and iron and bronze in the farmers and the other craftsmen. So, because you're all related, although, for the most part, you'll produce offspring like yourselves, it sometimes happens that a silver child will be born from a golden parent, a golden child from a silver parent, and similarly all the others from each other. Hence the god

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Ibid, p 35.

commands the rulers first and foremost to be of nothing such good guardians and to keep over nothing so careful a watch as the children, seeing which of these metals is mixed in their souls. And, if a child of theirs should be born with an admixture of bronze or iron, by no manner of means are they to take pity on it, but shall assign the proper value to its nature and thrust it out among the craftsmen or the farmers; and, again, if from these men one should naturally grow who has an admixture of gold or silver, they will honor such ones and lead them up, some to the guardian group, others to the auxiliary, believing that there is an oracle that the city will be destroyed when an iron or bronze man is its guardian.' So, have you some device for persuading them of this tale?" (415 a,b,c).⁽⁴⁵⁾

III. The Construction of the Ideal State.

Methodologically, Plato is constructing his idea on the state, which he proposes while understanding the nature of the soul. Hence, the state is a product of the human soul. Accordingly, for Plato, there are three classes' lovers of wisdom, lovers of Honour, and lovers of the wealth; and this doctrine possibly implied a correlative doctrine of the three parts of the soul Reason, Spirit, and Appetite. In this respect, the state which Plato constructs will grow under his hands in three stages: the constructed state will mark by the presence of three classes or function. Plato takes each the three elements of the human mind, beginning with the lowest and proceeding to the highest, and shows how each of these in its turn contributes its quota to the creation of the state.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Thus, the Republic is concerned with man in action, and therefore, is occupied with the problems of moral and political life. Hence, the Greek obvious that a good

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Allan Bloom, *the Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p 9.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Ernest Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and his predecessors*, (Oxford: LTD, 1947). pp 163-164.

man must be a member of a state and could only be made good through membership of the state. And linked to moral philosophy, where Socrates said a good man must possess of knowledge.⁽⁴⁷⁾

In fact, that the citizens of Plato ideal state would do what are commonly considered just acts and do them because of that internal well-ordering which Plato identifies with justice. It may be helpful at this point to distinguish four uses of "justice": State external, internal Individual, external, and internal Justice is what has called the "Platonic" sense, a harmony in the soul. Justice is the sense in which Plato speaks of the state as just (harmony among classes, each "doing its own" function). The point of the analogy is that both are conditions of harmonious interrelations of parts within the entity which is said to be just: the just soul is like the just state in that the "parts" of a just soul are as harmonious.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Thus, to ensure political harmony and stop class-conflict, the one thing you must ensure is a certain condition of soul in the citizens. Conversion is the sufficient condition of political transformation, but it is the kind of transformation which requires vast institutional machinery to be affected and sustained.⁽⁴⁹⁾ For this reason, Plato uses the postulate to make plausible the discovery of a corresponding tripartite soul, but he does not argue from it to the division. The soul divided by reference to conflict and the principle of contradiction. The structure of the city emerges because of the mutual dependence of men and the growth of the city by the principle of division of labor. The division of the state and its virtues are rather arbitrary, and rests on a principle, the division of labor (specialization of function), which turns out, curiously enough, to be "a sort of adumbration of

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Ibid, p145

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Jerome Neu. *Plato's Analogy of State and Individual: "The Republic" and the Organic Theory of the State*, Ibid, p 293.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Ibid, p 240.

justice."⁽⁵⁰⁾ To illustrate the importance of the role of the classes we quote the following: "Then the just man will not be any different from the just city concerning the form itself of justice but will be like it." "Yes," he said, "he will be like it." "But a city seemed to be just when each of the three classes of natures present in it minded its own business and, again, moderate courageous, and wise because of certain other affections and habits of these same classes." "True," he said. (435, b).⁽⁵¹⁾

1. The philosophical Factor in the State (Philosopher - King and wisdom).

That the rulers, like the soldiers, should be a distinct and specialized class, naturally follows upon this view of the attitude of mind which government expresses. It is not in all that this reason issuing in love is to find, and those in whom it is most to found are carefully, and by an elaborate system of moral tests, to be selected from the ranks of the soldiers, and set to govern the state. The real ruler of Plato ultimately tells us, must be a philosopher, and the philosophic nature reserved for a few rare souls: "a whole people cannot be a people of philosophers." (494, a). The ultimate test of the true ruler is, therefore, an intellectual test of his philosophic.⁽⁵²⁾ For all the guardians, one philosopher is needed to govern the city: the philosopher-king. In the Platonic system, guardians were subjected to several tests to determine which of that select group could be that king. The most important test was their grasp of the idea of the "Form of the Good" (described by Socrates as "beyond being"- the origin of life). Through their understanding of this idea, the selected guardian would reach the highest level of knowledge and be capable of becoming the philosopher-king. This ruler described as the supreme ruler who is at the top of a hierarchy, followed by the auxiliaries, and finally the producing class. For Plato, this explained

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Ibid, p 242.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Allan Bloom, *The Republic of Plato*, I bid, p 114

⁽⁵²⁾ Ernest Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and his predecessors*, Ibid, p169.

the perfect society—a leadership capable of, and a system designed to optimize the happiness of its citizens. Where it differs is that the guardians were not to reward with private wealth, given their natures (carefully selected individuals) their reward was what they most desired, that is truth and wisdom. Such a city was designed to be free of corruption. A potential strength of a Republic as envisioned by Plato is that a small group governs it. With few in leadership roles, it is easy to congregate, set an agenda and come to a united agreement. This government of small numbers allows for order and unity. Weaknesses are of the Platonic Ideal and Democracy. The weakness of Plato's vision is that it requires exceptionally high standards for the moral nature of human beings.⁽⁵³⁾ Accordingly, Plato is determined to apply the principle of the division of labor as completely as possible. He will make a significant exception in one crucial case, the education of the philosophers, who must understand all aspects of knowledge and statesmanship. Why is the division of labor so important to Plato? It has to do with the attempt to divide the soul and the city into three parts.⁽⁵⁴⁾

To sum up, we know from Plato's sociological theory that the state, once established, will continue to be stable as long as there is no split in the unity of the master class. The bringing up of that class is, therefore, the great preserving function of the sovereign, and a function which must continue as long as the state exists. How far does it justify the demand that a philosopher must rule? To answer this question, we distinguish again, within this function, between two different activities: the supervision of education, and the supervision of breeding.⁽⁵⁵⁾ To illustrate the importance of the role of the philosopher-king we quote the following: "It must be tried," I said, "especially since you offer so great a Talliance. It's necessary, in my opinion, if we are

⁽⁵³⁾ Boyle, B, *Platonic thoughts*, Ibid, p 55.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Stanley, *Rosen, Plato's Republic*, Ibid, p 103.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ K. R. Popper, *the Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ibid, p 129.

somehow going to get away from the men you speak of, to distinguish for them whom we mean when we dare to assert the philosophers must rule. Thus, when they have come plainly to light, one will be able to defend oneself, showing that it is by nature fitting for them both to engage in philosophy and to lead a city, and for the rest not to engage in philosophy and wisdom to follow the leader." (473, c).⁽⁵⁶⁾

2. The Military Factor in the State: Guardians and courage.

In fact, war now enters as one of the functions of the state, which must acquire and defend a sufficient territory; and thus, the element of spirit next appears, and expresses itself in the organization of the state by constituting a military force of gardenias. (373, d. 374, d). For this reason, the vital question, which arises about the military organization of the state is naturally the question of specialization will a professional and trained army be created or will the body of the people act as a general military in time of need. The answer is already given in what has said of the division of labor in economics. So, if efficiency is to be gained by specialization anywhere, it must certainly be gained by specialization in a matter so around and important as war. There must be soldiers whose business it is to make war, and nothing also but war; and they must pick for their work in virtue of a special aptitude of an abundance, that is to say, of the element of spirit and trained for their work in a way that will develop that aptitude properly.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Therefore, we would be right to expect that the most important institutional arrangements in Plato's state would be those devoted to the training, and so to the perpetuation, of the ruling group. There would always be Guardians-in-training in Plato's state and preserving that training unchanged would be the state's priority. That training aims to produce just men in the double sense that

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Allan Bloom, *the Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p 154.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Ernest Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and his predecessors*, Ibid, p 167.

Plato understands justice: men who are in fact just and who know what justice is. The training of Guardians, like all training, is a process of selection. Plato does not tell us whether everyone in his state will begin the training process, but his concern that there will be no wastage of talent makes it a reasonable inference that nobody will in principle be excluded, and certainly not women.⁽⁵⁸⁾

In this regard, Rosen says, we may expect the shortcomings of the guardians to supplement by the virtues of the philosopher-kings. By way of summary, let me give just a critical example of the overall problem. The guardians, exemplars of temperance and courage, are, not to beat around the bush, deficient in practical intelligence. Their efficacy, as far as it goes, depends upon the preposterous assumption that the citizens of the city will always keep at the highest possible level of control by the rulers. Furthermore, they will be spending the bulk of their time, once they have completed their education, in the practice of war. If we honor the principle of one man, one job, the auxiliaries will have no time and will not be permitted to attend to actually legislating, governing, and tinkering with the forms of education.⁽⁵⁹⁾ On another regard, Popper drew his criticism to Platonic stratification, where the breeding and the education of the auxiliaries, i.e., of the ruling class of Plato's best state, is, as their carrying of arms, a class symbol and therefore a class prerogative. And like arms, breeding and education are not empty symbols, but instruments of class rule, and necessary conditions of the stability of this rule. They treated by Plato solely from this point of view, i.e., as powerful political weapons, as means for the herding of the human cattle as well as for the unification of the' ruling class.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Popper also adds that the main difficulty which besets Plato is that guardians and auxiliaries must endowed

⁽⁵⁸⁾ J.S.McClelland, *A History of western political thought*, Ibid, p 30.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Stanley, Rosen, *Plato's Republic*, Ibid, p 138.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ K. R. Popper, *the Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ibid, p 43.

with a character that is fierce and gentle at the same time. It is clear that they must be bred to be fierce since they must meet any danger in a fearless and unconquerable spirit. Yet if their nature is to be like that, how are they to be kept from being violent against one another, or against the rest of the citizens? Indeed, it would be simply monstrous if the shepherds should keep dogs who would worry the sheep, behaving like wolves rather than dogs. The problem is important in the political equilibrium, or rather, of the stability of the state.⁽⁶¹⁾ To illustrate the importance of the role of the Guardians we quote the following: "If then, we are to preserve the first argument-that our guardians must give up all other crafts and very precisely be craftsmen of the city's freedom and practice nothing other than what tends to it-they also mustn't do or imitate anything else. And if they do imitate, they must imitate what's appropriate to them from childhood: men who are courageous, moderate, holy, free, and everything of the sort. And what is slavish, or anything else shameful, they must neither do nor be clever at imitating, so that they won't get a taste for the being from its imitation. Or haven't you observed that imitations, if they are practiced continually from youth onwards, become established as habits and nature, in body and sounds and thought?" (359 c.d).⁽⁶²⁾

3. The Economic Factor in the State: Producers and temperance.

Naturally, when Plato proceeds to build the state and occupies himself first with the economic structure necessary to its life, he implies in advance the very doctrine of justice which his construction is intended to prove. That doctrine which involves that each man should "do his own," and every man should fulfill a single specific function, already appears in the shape of the division of labor in the first rudiments of the state. Hence, the state first finds its binding force in

⁽⁶¹⁾ Ibid, p 45. Popper himself said: The political principle that determines the education of the soul, namely, the preservation of the stability of the state, also determines that of the body. Ibid, p 46.

⁽⁶²⁾ Allan Bloom, *the Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p 74.

human need. The result is an inevitable division of labor or specialization of function, which involves as its other side, a combination for the reciprocal exchange of the several products.⁽⁶³⁾ Therefore, Barker views the economic moment is not the life of the state. Every state is, in one aspect of its nature, a great economic concern; and wherever a protective system reigns or has resigned, it has made this aspect prominent, by making the state a self-centered and self-sufficient unit in respect of its economic life. Thus, to Plato the state, viewed merely as an economic concern contains features valuable not only in themselves, and from an economic point of view, but also as types and foreshadows of political truths.⁽⁶⁴⁾ In this context, the individual ruler has not only intellect but also spiritedness and desire; the soul of the auxiliary possesses intellect and desire as well as spiritedness, and the money makers have intellect and spiritedness as well as desire. Yet, as a member of one and only one class, each person exemplifies wisdom, courage, or temperance. In short, the three parts of the city do not mirror the three faculties of the soul, but each part of the city is identified as the political function to be performed by persons of such-and-such a type.⁽⁶⁵⁾ From Popper perspective, where the ruling class alone has political power, including the power of keeping the number of the human cattle within such limits as to prevent them from becoming a danger, the whole problem of preserving the state reduced to that of preserving the internal unity of the master class. How is this unity of the rulers preserved? By training and other psychological influences, but otherwise mainly by the elimination of economic interests which may lead to disunion. That economic abstinence achieved, and t controlled by the introduction of communism, i.e., by the abolition of private property, especially in precious metals, which were forbidden in Sparta too. (This communism confined to the ruling class,

⁽⁶³⁾ Ernest Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and his predecessors*, Ibid, p165.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Ibid, p 166.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Stanley, Rosen. *Plato's Republic*, Ibid, p 151.

which alone must be kept free from disunion; quarrels among the ruled are not worthy of consideration.) Since all property is common property, there must also be common ownership of women and children. No member of the ruling class must be able to identify his children or his parents. The family must destroy, or rather, extended to cover the whole warrior class. Family loyalties might otherwise become a possible source of disunion; therefore, each should look upon all as if belonging to one family. But even this common ownership of women and children is riot quite sufficient to guard the ruling class against all economic dangers. Avoiding prosperity as well as poverty is important. Both are dangers to unity; poverty because it drives people to adopt desperate means to satisfy their needs; prosperity, because most change has arisen from abundance, from an accumulation of wealth which makes dangerous experiments possible. ⁽⁶⁶⁾

To illustrate the importance of the role of the Producers moderation we quote the following: "we divined pretty accurately a while ago that moderation is like a kind of harmony." "Why so?" "Because it's unlike courage and wisdom, each of which resides in part, the one making the city wise and the other courageous. Moderation doesn't work that way, but actually stretches throughout the whole, from top to bottom of the entire scale, making the weaker, the stronger and those in the middle-whether you wish to view them as such in terms of prudence if you wish, in terms of strength, or multitude, money or anything else whatsoever of the sort-sing the same chant together. So, we would quite rightly claim that this unanimity is moderation, an accord of worse, and better, according to nature, as to which must rule in the city and each one." "I am," he said, "very much of the same opinion." (432 a).⁽⁶⁷⁾

⁽⁶⁶⁾ K. R. Popper, *the Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ibid, pp. 40-41.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Allan Bloom, *the Republic of Plato*, Ibid, p 110.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Plato's idea of the state involves functional specialization, reflecting his classification of human nature into three parts: reason, courage, and appetite. Plato views the state as a living organism where the individual mirrors the larger society. Just as a soul cannot exist without a body, individuals cannot thrive outside the state. The state consists of distinct classes, each fulfilling specific roles. Plato's ideal state revolves around three main classes: the ruling class, educated in philosophy to govern; the military class, possessing courage to defend the state; and the professional class, managing daily affairs. These classes are also known as the guardian, auxiliary, and artisan classes, respectively. Thus, central to Plato's theory of justice in the state is the division of classes, ensuring each fulfills its designated function. His political philosophy aims to cultivate virtue among citizens, achieved through a meticulously controlled environment focused on education. The ideal state, existing theoretically, strives for ultimate truth and eternal perfection, untouched by change or corruption.

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