

## Notes-2, Plato-

Plato's book *The Republic* occupies with big question, what is justice?

His answer as he says,

*I was forced in fact, to the belief that the only hope of finding justice for society or individual lay in true philosophy, and that mankind will have no respite from trouble until either real philosophers gain political power or politicians became by some other miracle true philosophers....*

(*The Republic*, p.16)

He wrote his books as *dialogues*, conversations between two and more people on the concerned topics.

While discussing, Socrates argues that ruling is a craft or skill like that of the doctor or ships captain, and like the doctor with his patients or the captain with his crew the ruler exercises his skill not in his own interest but in the interest of his subjects. The craft analogy became very important later on.

Plato thinks that politics is natural, not artificial. He says nature of justice is a very obscure subject but we can cast light on it by looking at it on large scale, in the city, before moving on to examine the nature of the just individual. Accordingly, we each born with differing capacities, talents and abilities and each of us is suited for different sort of work. For him each person should specialize in the job that they are best suited to perform. Plato's vision of just city reflects ideal division of labour by two broad classes of people, the artisans or businessmen and the guardians. The guardians class is further subdivided into soldiers and proper guardian, philosopher kings. The artisans or workers would be mixed of all sorts following various sorts and living normal lives, the auxiliaries are a kind of army or police for defense of polis, and the rulers are philosopher kings best suited to leadership.

Plato talks about four cardinal virtues, wisdom, courage, self-discipline and justice. For Plato, justice is 'minding your own business'. The state is just when each person or class strikes to his own task. After giving account of the just state Plato moves on to check that this pattern of justice makes sense when applied to individuals. He believes the soul consists of reason, spirit, and desire or appetite. Plato concludes that these drives are all type of a part of personality of each of us. These three elements of the soul are the same as those of the city.

These three-way division of the soul enable Plato to explain the existence of three classes of men. His justice involves component parts of a whole, function or act in accordance with their nature underpins the rule of philosopher- kings. Since the philosopher's soul is governed by reason, they have virtue of wisdom and to be wise is to be a lover of knowledge.

### Philosopher and the Forms-

He differences between the experienced world and the world of the forms, which is the basis of objectivity and values- the forms are knowable through the philosophical exercise of reason ..... To be continued ----By Dr Ranjay Reddy