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Subject

Philosophy Essay

**Introduction**

Plato one of the famous Greek Philosopher, as well as a mathematician belonging to the Socratic period, has played a central role in the foundation of philosophical concepts making Western Philosophy. He is one of the most widely studied and influential philosophers of all time. Plato with his mentor Socrates came up with staunch opposition to the materialistic view of the world that was presented by Epicurus and Democritus. Plato merged different disciplines such as metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, and moral psychology into a single systematic and interconnected framework of philosophy (Harper). Plato is also the founder of Platonism that is an offshoot to Neo-Platonism, along with a number of writings that can be counted in superb pieces of literature.

**Discussion**

Today, students and other philosophers divide philosophy into three major parts, Ethics, Epistemology, and Metaphysics. According to Plato, Metaphysic is a branch of philosophy that tend to answer the questions of “there”. The etymology of “meta” is termed as Greek *after* and this *treatise* is titled as “Metaphysics” (Bonazzi et al.). Metaphysics tend to specify the ways in which anything is said to or thought to exist. In a nutshell, there are three major concepts that are embedded in metaphysics, such as the subject matter of “being as such”, the “first cause of things” and “which does not change”(Bonazzi et al.). According to Plato, metaphysics is more of Platonic Realism that inverts the intuition of common sense about which things in this world are knowable and which things are real. Plato was of the view that universals such as, properties of the objects that exist in more than one place at the same time or, also called the quality of redness exist both, on factual basis as well as in reality. Plato asserted that universals exist in a different way, as compared to the existence of ordinary physical objects. This variation of existence refers to the ghostly mode of existence or the things that are out of the measures of space and time along with the objects that are outside the range of temporal or spatial distances. As quoted, *“The intellect grasps truths and lives together in eternity* (Bonazzi et al.). It would not be wrong to add, *Theory of forms and ideas* with Platonic Realism that refers to the fact that the material world is not actually in the way it appears to us.

Epistemology for Plato is more like an account of defining knowledge. According to Plato, knowledge can only be understood by the understanding of different forms because forms are innate and they are located within our minds, also illustrated in the dialogue Meno (Hetherington). The underlying concept of epistemology is the differentiation between knowledge and opinion and the justification of true knowledge. It would not be wrong to say that Plato’s epistemology is more like theory *of knowledge* that asserts that Platonic ideas are innate and learning is the development of a different idea that is buried in the soul. According to Plato, epistemology is more like a distinction between knowledge and opinion, where knowledge is certain and opinion is not certain. Also, opinions are the product of the world of sensation where knowledge is derived from different essences and forms. Plato says,  “*The opinion is something intermediate between knowledge and ignorance*” (Hetherington). It is highlighted that to some extent Plato's notion and view of epistemology is more like a modern and analytic view of knowledge that is “Justified true belief”. In addition, Plat associated knowledge with the apprehension of unchanging forms, along with an analysis of their relationship with each other. According to Plato, knowledge is also proportionate to the realms from where it is attained or gained. He gave the example of knowledge that is gained from some experimental activity or something that is experiential, he asserted that the views will only be opinions because the world of senses is always in flux (Hetherington). Plato asserts, if one has attained knowledge or an account of something with the help of non-sensible form, then the attained views will be considered pure or unchanging. The effectiveness of this claim is traced from the fact that forms are themselves unchangeable. In a number of dialogues, Plato found that knowledge is just a matter of recollection which is also called anamnesis, that is not associated with study, observation or learning. Here, it is asserted that knowledge is never empirical in fact it is the product of divine insight. In broader understanding, epistemology is more like a combination or collection of perceptions, logic, science, knowledge, beliefs, and language (Hetherington). Plato never considered the global skeptical challenge because he assumed that knowledge is conditional taking into account that there are some conditions that facilitate the possibility of knowledge. On a broader level, the rational capacities of human beings or souls are associated with staunch matrices of knowledge. On the other hand, the context of objects highlighted that forms are certainly the objects of knowledge. An exegetical view proposed by Plato highlights that there is much dispute in defining and detaining the tag of object with anything that exists in the material world, where physical world is treated as an image along with an imperfect world of change (Hetherington).

In Ethics, Plato came up with a teleological or a goal-oriented approach, where the aim of his ethics was to outline the conditions that can help a society to function with harmony and homogeneity. Plato considered virtue to be one of the excellence of soul, which is a body comprising of reason, spirit and passion (Harper). The major concept of ethics taught by Plato is found in terms of an ideal state and the components of ethics. He defined the measure of excellence of an ethical soul, such as the excellence of reason is wisdom, while the excellence of passion is the personality attributes such as courage and the excellence of spirit is defined to be temperance. As quoted, “*The body is the tomb of the soul”* (Harper). In addition, justice is also counted as one of the excellences that are the central bridge of promoting harmonious relations with the other measures of excellence (Harper). Plato promoted a virtue-based eudemonistic conception of ethics, asserting that happiness or the well being of people, accompanied by high moral conduct and thought are the requisite skills and dispositions that are required to attain harmony in the society. Plato not only defined a true understating of utilitarian but he also initiated the idea that all the members of society longs for eudemonia which can help them reach ultimate good individually as well as being a member of society (Harper). Plato merged virtue with morality by considering happiness as an ultimate necessity because the virtue that fails to promote good and give happiness is failed in its real essence and crux. In a nutshell, Plato justified Ethics as a platform for enforcing social harmony with that of personal satisfaction.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is highlighted that Plato promoted and brought into insight some interesting arguments that deals with the study of knowledge, human and actual understanding of society and the theory of knowledge that can justify credibility of knowledge. It is also highlighted that these arguments not only pave the way for an exegetical analysis of differentiation between true and untrue, ethical and unethical and certain and uncertain in fact, his work and arguments are more like the spotlight that encourages to have a critical approach to the components of society and its impact on human life.

Work Cited

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