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ignorance, which means that the object of opinion is something that is between the object of knowledge and object of ignorance, and therefore between what is and what is not. In the earlier argument in the same book, Socrates has already proven that Form of X is always X. It is also true that things which are beautiful are also ugly, which are short are also tall, and so on. This entails that a particular thing X is both X and non-X. Thus, a particular thing is at the same time both is and is not, where as we already know that the form of a thing is always *is*. And since, knowledge is always of what is, the form is the object of knowledge while a particular thing is the object of opinion.

The extension of the same argument also proves that no knowledge is possible because of the sense perception of physical things. Knowledge of a thing X is only possible when X is always X. And we have seen earlier that an individual thing X is both X and non-X at the same time, and therefore no knowledge is possible of an individual thing X.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

5. Enumerate the points Plato considered were not knowledge?
6. What is the main argument of Plato about knowledge in the Republic?

1.2.4 Plato's Communism

Plato's communism opened the practicality regarding human nature and the ruling governance virtues. Virtue and principle should be affected while running the government. No doubt, it sounds bizarre, but this is true, in all accounts. Precisely on that assumption, it is essential that communism should have a better place and not be allowed to mix with the common understanding with the common citizens. Running the administration requires great skill and wisdom. General copulating might not produce the desired generation to rule the country, hence communism.

Nevertheless, Plato claims, the just state is one ruled by philosophers. It clearly cannot exist unless desire is eliminated in the ruling stratum. He, therefore, called for two kinds of communism within one frame of a communal life for the guardians.

The guardians would live in communes. They will not marry. Instead, they will mix freely with women. Their children will not know their father as the guardians will not know their children. Children will be taken care of in the commune by the state. This will stop the guardians from favouring their kin. Similarly, they will not have private property. They will be free from all worldly temptations.

It must be remembered that Plato's communism applies only to the ruling elite, not to the vast majority of the population. The artisans will be allowed to own private property and to have families. Moreover, there is no relationship between Plato's communism and its contemporary meaning. Plato was not an ancient Karl Marx. Plato proposes an ascetic communism, the purpose of which is to remove objects of desire, not to distribute them more equitably.

- To enumerate all the elements of the thing of which the account is to be given. This definition is also problematic for it entails an account of something is simply the listing of its elements, for instance an account of a name would be listing of its syllables. Socrates says it is same as someone listing the parts of wagon when asked what a wagon is, which would be absurd.
- To give an account would be 'to tell some mark by which the object you are asked about differs from all other things'. For instance, an account of sun can be given as the brightest of celestial bodies that circles the earth. But this definition is also problematic as it refutes the hypothesis that knowledge is true judgement with Logos. If someone is asked what differentiates one man, of whom we have true judgement, from everything else, the answer would not help in distinguishing the man from everyone else. But if the means of distinguishing was not already there, one would not be able to recognize that man when he is next seen.

Thus, Socrates proves that addition of Logos to the true judgement does explain the nature of knowledge, and therefore is meaningless. And also to say that Logos is the knowledge of difference is problematic, for it implies that knowledge is true judgement accompanied by the knowledge of difference, which further begs the question: what is knowledge?

The dialogues ends here as Theatetus has nothing more to add. It is interesting to note that Plato does not evoke his theory of forms in *Theatetus*, especially because it was composed after *Republic* and *Phaedo* in which Plato had already expounded the theory of Forms. This could mean that either he had lost faith in the theory of Forms or it was a well calculated move on his part to show that without considering the Forms it is impossible to explain the nature of knowledge.

Let us now look at the how Plato defines knowledge while considering the theory of Forms in his most famous dialogue *Republic*.

1.2.3 Idea of Knowledge in *Republic*

In *Republic*, Book V, Plato through Socrates once again evokes the concepts of form, and then goes on to talk about the difference between knowledge and opinion. It is true that in this argument, Socrates does not explicitly mentions the idea of forms, but indirectly he is arguing for its existence. The argument implies that no ordinary experience can lead to knowledge, and that if at all knowledge is possible then it must have forms as its object, and therefore, the nature of forms is the same thing as the nature of knowledge.

The argument can be summaries as follows:

Knowledge is always of what is, and ignorance is always of what is not. Opinion is fallible and knowledge is infallible, therefore, opinion is not as same as knowledge. As knowledge enables us to know, opinion enables us to opine, therefore, both opinion and knowledge are power. And since both are power, they must be identical if and only if their objects are same, and the objects of opinion and knowledge are not same, for opinion is darker than knowledge but is clearer than what we call

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