
UNIT 1 PLATO

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we explain the Philosophical thoughts of Plato, taking in to consideration the historical background. In the course of time, we too will be touching various philosophical problems of one and many, appearance and reality, permanence and change, etc. from the perspective of Plato.

By the end of this Unit you should be able to:

- understand ethics, politics, metaphysics or epistemology in historical and political context;
- comprehend the necessary relation between ethics and politics;
- move from ethical to metaphysical and gnosological problems; and
- understand his theory of knowledge, ideas, man, state, justice, etc.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The philosophic spirit of Socrates lived among his disciples, most of whom remain unknown, some remembered, but only Plato apotheosised him. To him the words of Socrates to Crito were a plan of life: “Do you then be reasonable, Crito, and do not mind whether the teachers of philosophy are good or bad, but think only of philosophy herself. Try and examine her well and truly, and if she be evil seek to turn away all men from her, and not your sons only: but if she be what I believe that she is, then follow her and serve her, you and your house, as the saying is, and be of good cheer.” Though more than two thousand years have passed since Plato lifted the intellectual life in Greece to new heights and drew all eyes toward the new Olympus of his academy, the character of any philosophy is still identified by the relation it has to that of Plato

PLATO’S LIFE AND WRITINGS

During the fourth or fifth year of Peloponnesian war (428/27 B.C), Plato was born in Athens. By birth he was an aristocrat. He was originally called Aristocles, and only later he was given the name Plato (broad). Whether this was because of his wide forehead, robust physique, or breath of literary expression is not known. At

the age of twenty he came into contact with Socrates, and this was decisive in his life. After Socrates' death he went to Megara, where he studied Eliatic philosophy under Euclid. Later he returned to Athens, where he wrote his first works. Between 390 and 388 B.C., he travelled extensively to acquaint himself with the principle schools and to broaden his outlook. While visiting the court of Dionysius-I of Syracuse he outspokenly criticised the tyrant and was sold into slavery. Rescued from the market of Aegina by Anniceris, a stranger from Cyrene, he returned to Athens. About 387 B.C., he founded his famous school in the grove of Academus (whence the name "Academy") where he taught mathematics and philosophy by both lectures and dialogue. In 367 and 361 B.C., Plato interrupted his work in the Academy for further visits to Syracuse, presumably to assist in the realisation of his ideal state. After these frustrating attempts in practical statecraft, i.e., trying to establish his ideal state, Plato returned to Athens and devoted all his attention to philosophising, teaching and writing in the Academy. He died in 348/7 B.C. when he was 80/1 years old, and was buried in the grounds of the Academy. But his philosophy would live on and together with that of his own pupil Aristotle would lay foundations for all that would be called philosophy later. In a rather loose sense, everyone who thinks about philosophy at all either is a "Platonist" or an "Aristotelian." Not without cause did Alfred North Whitehead wrote that "the safest general characterisation of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists in a series of footnotes to Plato."

PLATO'S WRITINGS

The traditional Platonic canon, arranged in tetralogies by Tharasyllus, a contemporary of the Emperor Tiberius contains thirty-five dialogues and thirteen letters, which as a single group bring the total to thirty six works. The authenticity of some of these works is disputed.

Chronological development of his thought

Initial Socratic Period (399-388/7 B.C)

These dialogues recreate the spirit and mission of Socratic inquiry concerning *arte* ' or ethico-political virtue and his analysis of moral concepts. As a group these writings are notably anti-sophistic and, in a manner characteristic of Socrates' "non-knowing" most of them emphasise the need for seeking further enlightenment by ending without reaching a definite conclusion.

1. Apology: Socrates' trial and defence.
2. Critio: Socrates' refusal to escape after the trial, and his adherence to principles.
3. Euthyphro: On the nature of piety and impiety, of which Socrates was accused.
4. Laches: On courage.
5. Ion: Against poets and rhapsodists.
6. Protagoras: The sophist's theory that *arte* can be taught Vs the Socratic *paideia* or theory that all virtue is one and cannot be taught.
7. Charmides: On temperance and moderation.
8. Lysis: On friendship.

Transitional Period (387-380 B.C.)

With the advancement of his intellectual and literary powers, Plato not only intensified his polemics against the Sophists, but built the Socratic concept into a metaphysical theory of ideas. Where the earlier dialogues had been limited to one face of virtue, the dialogues of this constructive stage broaden and deepen the speculation concerning the more important questions of knowledge and the good life. This is the beginning of his systematic philosophy.

9. **Georgias:** On Justice, and against the rhetoric and power politics of the sophists in the city-state.
10. **Meno:** On the question of “virtue-knowledge” by *anamnesis* or recollection.
11. **Ethydemus:** On Wisdom that brings happiness, and against the fallacies of later sophists.
12. **Lesser Hippias:** Comparison between those who err voluntarily and involuntarily.
13. **Greater Hippias:** On the beautiful, and a theory of language.
14. **Cratylus:** On language, and on the difference between immutable and nonsensical realities and mutable, sensible phenomenon.
15. **Menexenus:** Parody on rhetoric in a funeral oratio

Period of Maturity (380-361)

At the height of his genius, Plato fully evolved his own ontological theory of Ideas and expressed the ramifications of this doctrine in epistemology, psychology, ethics, politics, and aesthetics. Hence, the third group is made up of dialogues which either supply the speculative insights to new fields or subject them to new facts and difficulties that are raised from other points of view.

16. **Symposium (or Banquet):** On inspiration by Eros (love) of the soul; its ascent from shadowy to the true beauty.
17. **Phaedo:** Clearer revelation of the theory of Ideas; the immortality and destiny of the soul - discussions set against Socrates' last days.
18. **Republic:** On ideal state, the primacy of Good, the four grades of cognition and the tripartition of the soul.
19. **Phaedrus:** Philosophic rhetoric, the soul, its transmigration, vision of Ideas in pre-existence, anamnesis and the structure of the world of Ideas.
20. **Theaetetus:** The relation of knowledge to unchanging objects and to other cognitional experiences, such as sense-perception and right opinion.
21. **Parmenides:** defence of the theory of ideas and introduction of mathematical and axiological concepts; the problem of one and many.
22. **Sophist:** Critical consideration of Ideas and of change, life, soul, intellection, analytic search for a definition of Sophist.

Period of Old Age

In the later period of philosophic maturity, as his dramatic powers declined and his critical acumen increased, Plato was moved by reflection upon new problems and

socio-political changes to refine his philosophy. With brilliant intellectual apperception, he critically elaborated on his logic, and found new interest in the questions of the cosmos,

- 23.** Statesman (or Politicus): Definition of a statesman by the method of division; importance of knowledge in the true ruler.
- 24.** Philebus: Development of Plato's ethical doctrine by attention to concrete conditions of pleasure to good; enhancement of the theory of Ideas by further study of unity and multiplicity.
- 25.** Timaeus: Cosmological discourse on the origin of the physical world and the role of the Demiurge.
- 26.** Critias: Contrast of the ideal state to Atlantis with its imperialist sea power.
- 27.** Laws: Modification of the Republic's ideal state according to concrete conditions of life.
- 28.** Epinomis: Continuation of the Laws; on the wisdom of the ruler and divine cult.
- 29.** Letters VII and VIII: Politics and the relevance of Ideas.

THE PLATONIC ENCOUNTER

From the question of Thales to the time of Plato different problems had risen in philosophical speculation. Such as:

- The problem of one and many
- The problem of appearance and reality
- The problem of permanence and change
- The mysticism and mathematics of Pythagoreans
- Physis and nomos
- The scepticism of the sophists.

Politically too changes had taken place such as;

- Decline of Athens
- Corruption and nepotism
- The emergence of democracy and
- Condemnation of Socrates.

Plato realises that there is some truth in all the positions held by his predecessors; all of them had valid intuition to the nature of reality.

SITUATION

Plato encountered problems of human, the world, and the divine within the ethico-political context of the Greek city-states. "When I was young," Plato wrote in his mid-seventies in the manifesto to the Friends and Associates of Dion, "my experience was the same as that of many others. I thought that as soon as I became my own master I would immediately enter into public life. But it happened that fateful change

occurred in the political situation.” Plato went on to describe the state of affairs: the tyranny of the Thirty, the unjust condemnation of Socrates by the “democrats,” the abandonment of “the principles of our forefathers,” the increase of “corruption in legislation and custom” in fine, “everything disintegrating around me.” Struck by this all-inclusive decline of Athens and the other city states, “I came to the conclusion that one and all they are badly governed.”

TRANSITION FROM ETHICAL TO METAPHYSICAL AND GNOSEOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Plato saw that no real reform of the fundamentals of politics could take place without a corresponding reform of man’s conceptions about nature and reality itself.

Do absolute justice or courage, infect, exist, or only individual just and courageous acts exist? What is really good, beautiful etc.? What is reality?

He was deeply impressed by the mathematical proportion and harmony in the universe.

Check your progress I

- Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1) In short describe the life of Plato and enumerate his important works.

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2) What were the concerns that gave rise to Plato’s philosophical thinking?

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1.2 PHILOSOPHY OF PLATO

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Plato, first of all, argues negatively that knowledge cannot be mere sensation for even the dog, which has sensation, would have knowledge then. His positive theory of knowledge is given in the famous allegory of the cave. (The Republic, Book V, ch. XXV)

THE ALLEGORY OF THE CAVE

Plato begins his presentation by describing a scenario in which what people take to be real would in fact be an illusion. He asks Glaucon to imagine a cave inhabited by prisoners who have been chained and held immobile since childhood: not only are their arms and legs held in place, but their heads are also fixed, compelled to gaze at

a wall in front of them. Behind the prisoners is a fire, and between the fire and the prisoners is a raised walkway, along which puppets of various animals, plants and other things are moved. The puppets cast shadows on the wall, and the prisoners see these shadows. They hear echoes off the wall from the noise produced from the walkway. It is reasonable to think that the prisoners would take the shadows to be real things and the echoes to be real sounds.

Suppose that a prisoner is freed and sees the things that had cast the shadows, he would not recognize them; he would believe the shadows on the wall to be more real than what he sees. Suppose further that the men were compelled to look at the fire, he would be struck blind and try to turn his gaze back toward the shadows, as toward what he can see clearly and hold to be real. Suppose someone forcibly dragged such a man upward all the way out into the sunlight, he be distressed and unable to see anything at all. Slowly he could see reflection of stars etc., in a pool of water in front of him. After some time on the surface, however, the freed prisoner would acclimate. He would see more and more things around him, until he could look upon the sun. He would understand that the sun is the “source of the seasons and the years, and is the steward of all things in the visible place, and is in a certain way the cause of all those things he and his companions had been seeing”.

THE MEANING OF THE ALLEGORY

The allegory of the cave symbolises four grades of knowledge through which the mind can ascend to the Ideas, each level being represented by the particular state of men inside and outside the cave.

Men in chains: Conjecture

This is the first level of knowledge. The shadows and echoes are only reflections of other things. People in this situation are subjected to prejudices, passions, and sophistry, grasping even the fleeting shadows in an inadequate manner. Chained and without desire to escape they cling on to their distorted visions.

The men unbound in the cave: Belief

The men unbound but remaining in the cave symbolise the second stage of knowledge - belief. When the prisoners turn toward the fire, a visible figure of the sun, and see physical bodies along the way, they recognise that the shadows are merely for dreamers.

Men out of cave: Reasoning

When one leaves the realm of cave he finds the third degree of knowledge - reasoning. The objects of reasoning, symbolised in the reflections on water of the stars and sun are primarily geometric and arithmetic entities.

Men fully liberated -Understanding

Men who fully free their minds from the bonds of changing sensibilities and of particular intelligible ascend to the highest grade of knowledge -*noesis* or understanding.

The Four grades of cognition

Plato puts forward the theory that knowledge is nothing but remembering of what we have contemplated before our birth.

THE PROCESS OF REMEMBRANCE

We pass through four basic steps and eventually arrive at perfect knowledge: full

remembrance - an explanation which Plato develops by way of the simile of the line, also in the Republic. At first our knowledge of things are but vague, shadowy and blurred. Then we gradually pass from inferior knowledge through our “imagination” to clearer, more direct experience of objects. This is the level of firm assent of faith. Next is the stage where our faculty of reasoning comes into play, as we begin to argue and make comparisons. Finally, the highest level of knowledge, the realm of pure intellectual activity, where we contemplate the Ideas and their interconnections. In all this process, it is love which provides the essential dynamism and impulse in our ascent to the contemplation of the beautiful. This latter idea is constructed in the *Symposium*.

THE THEORY OF IDEAS

The basic inspiration for this celebrated theory was Plato’s observation that there are various individuals who share a common form of basic nature. Thus there are various individuals men, horses, plants, minerals. He also got the idea from watching artisans at work following a model or ‘type’ that each individual was fashioned after an ideal type or pattern or model which some ‘demiurge or active spirit made use of in fashioning the world around us.

Where later thinkers would give these “forms” a mere existence, Plato conceived of them as really existing somewhere, in another mysterious world of “shining light” Each ideal form is ideal in every sense of the term: that is, it is perfect, and all we see in the world around us are but poor imitations or “shadows’ of it, as he preferred to say. For some time, Plato seemed to hesitate to say that there existed an “ideal form” of everything in this world, including such mundane realities as dirt and mud. Finally, he accepted the logical demands of that theory and admitted that these too had their place in the ideal World of Forms.

Participation

As he went deeper into this theory, Plato began to remark that the ideas in themselves are not completely unrelated and unconnected. Thus for instance, the idea of dog would participate (literally “take part of” or “have part”) in the idea of mammal, the idea of sparrow in the idea of a bird and both in turn in the idea of animal. Ultimately all the ideas participate in the Supreme Idea of Form that of the Good. The artists are copiers of copies. Plato would banish them from his ideal state.

Check your progress II

- Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

- 1) Describe in your own words the allegory of the cave.

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2) Describe Plato's theory of Ideas.

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PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN

PRE-EXISTENCE OF SOULS

Before birth, the souls of humans used to contemplate the pure and perfect forms in the ideal world. Due to some mysterious fault (fall?) they are born here, imprisoned in the body and prevented from soaring up to the contemplation of those ideas. Knowledge is when we are able to triumph over forgetfulness and recall - be it ever so dimly - those forms we had once contemplated.

THE TWO HORSES

Plato noticed the evident fact of conflict within the depths of human beings. And in *Phaedrus* he gives his classic comparison of the charioteer who struggles to control two troublesome steeds who tend to pull in different ways. The character is the rational element in man which struggles to bring about a harmony between opposing pulls of the spiritual and appetitive elements in man, the two horses. The spiritual element is really a good horse: it is docile and is obedient to reason and would lead straight up to the Good. But appetitive element is unbridled and unruly and can only be driven by the whip.

THE AFTER LIFE

If the body is the prison of the soul, then death is the moment of its joyful release. It is the moment when the soul is set free at last from the body. The immortality of the soul is argued from the fact that it is, unlike the body not made of parts. In the myth of *Er* in the *Republic* Plato presents his eschatology. He believed in the transmigration of souls and finally settles for an ultimate and irrevocable retribution where the good enter a kind of paradise and the recalcitrant are consigned to the torments of Tartarus.

PHILOSOPHY OF GOD

The world is becoming and that must have a cause, thus he argues to a demiurge. The demiurge, makes things after the model of the eternal ideas. Plato speaks of the highest form, the Form of Good and Beautiful. He does not explicitly call this form God.

PHILOSOPHY OF MORALS AND POLITICS

From Socrates, Plato inherited the great problem of determining the foundation of ethical life. Was it nature (*physis*) or convention (*nomos*)? In earlier days they were considered to be of nature, they were supposed to have divine origin, but the all too human gods could no more provide it. The Sophists had suggested that laws were made by men and might as easily be unmade. Slowly these ideas gained momentum. The storms of social unrest that arose in its wake undermined the stable moral traditions on which the orderly development of the city-state largely depended. As the influence

of the anthropomorphic gods declined, the regeneration of the city-state required some new transcendental principles as a basis for the order of its political structure and the validations of its laws.

THE NATURE OF LOVE

In *The Symposium* Plato describes the nature of Love. He asks the question; who is a lover? A lover is someone who lacks that which will make him or her happy. What will make the lover happy is to possess the beautiful and the good forever. And the lover is resourceful (Love is the son of Poverty and Resource) in seeking what he or she lacks. It is the resourcefulness propelled by longing that moves the lover up the ladder of love. At each stage the lover is only partially satisfied and is therefore powerfully motivated to discover whether there might be something still more satisfying. Being in the world one starts with the beauty that he or she sees in the world. A beautiful girl or boy falls in love. But discovers that this beauty is not unique. Slowly the lover moves to the more beautiful soul, character, the beauty of laws and institutions and finally the idea of Good itself.

JUSTICE

In his philosophy Plato gives a prominent place to the idea of justice. Plato was highly dissatisfied with the prevailing degenerating conditions in Athens. The Athenian democracy was on the verge of ruin and was ultimately responsible for Socrates' death. Sophistic teaching of the ethics of self-satisfaction resulted in the excessive individualism also induced the citizens to capture the office of the State for their own selfish purposes. According to the Sophists rules of justice are mere conventions. Ideal justice according to them is 'high-minded foolishness'. What is just is what is advantageous to the self, most profitable to one's life seems to be the view held by many. Plato however holds the view that there is an ideal of Justice which we should try to appropriate. The condemnation of Socrates though legal was not just according to him. In the myth of the Ring of Gyges the shepherd boy who went to the underworld and found a ring on a corpse which would make him invisible when turned towards himself and visible when turned outside had adultery with the wife of the King, killed the King and later took over the kingdom. The shepherd boy was not just; he had no control over his desires. The ideal society according to Plato is one in which "Justice" reigned supreme. The nature of justice as propounded by Plato is the fundamental principle of a well-ordered society. According to Plato justice is a 'human virtue' that makes a person self-consistent and good; socially, justice is a social consciousness that makes a society internally harmonious and good.

THE STATE

Plato's philosophical views had many societal implications, especially on the idea of an ideal state or government. Some of the most famous doctrines are contained in the *Republic* as well as in the *Laws* and the *Statesman*. Plato asserts that societies have a tripartite class structure corresponding to the appetite/spirit/reason structure of the individual soul. People differ in their abilities and capacities. They can be grouped into three classes:

1. Some best suited to be labourers, carpenters, farmers etc. In them the appetite dominates.

2. Others who are adventurous, strong, brave and in love with danger, these form the protective part of the state, in them spirit dominates.
3. Some who are intelligent, rational, self-controlled, in love with wisdom, the governing part, rational part of the soul.

According to this model, the principles of Athenian democracy (as it existed in his day) are rejected as only a few are fit to rule. Instead of rhetoric and persuasion, Plato says reason and wisdom should govern. As Plato puts it:

Until philosophers rule as kings or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is, until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, while the many natures who at present pursue either one exclusively are forcibly prevented from doing so, cities will have no rest from evils,... nor, I think, will the human race. (*Republic* 473c-d)

HIS CRITICISM OF DEMOCRACY

The rulers in democracy are not chosen because of their character, but because of their manners, voice, handsome appearance etc. They are like cooks who claim to know what the best food is needed for a patient, whereas a physician must be the one to decide it.

However Placing supreme power in the hands of a specially trained elite would be desirable only (1) there were irreducible difference in men's intellectual capacities, (2) if these differences could be discovered early in life, (3) if there is a truth about politics that can infallibly be known; and (4) the elite, knowing what is good for all, would act on its knowledge. As we know there is very little chance of this and Plato's ideal state will always remain a utopia whose ideal is questionable.

PHILOSOPHY OF ART

The theory of art is also determined by the theory of forms. A thing is beautiful to the extent it participates in the form of beauty. Order anywhere in the universe for him was beautiful. The artist who glorifies the imitation is like the cook and the rhetorician, who by tickling men's fancy palms off inadequate imitations on an unsuspecting public. The paintings that we prize as works of art are but shadows of shadows.

1.3 LET US SUM UP

- St. Augustine based his philosophy on Plato.
- St. Thomas took Augustine's philosophy and combined with Aristotle, which in turn became the official philosophy of the Church.
- Augustine's *Two Cities*, Thomas Compenellas's *City of the Sun*, Thomas More's *Utopia* and even *The Manifesto* of Karl Marx show the influence of Plato.

Whitehead's statement that "the European philosophical tradition is ... a series of footnotes to Plato" is a delightful hyperbole. It would be more exact to say that every page of the history of European philosophy reflects the undiminishing brilliance of Platonic thought. Platonism is the image of Plato the philosopher and the extension of his personality. Whatever be one's personal appraisal of Plato's reflections, it can hardly be doubted that *the Dialogues* contain one of the most exalted philosophies

envisioned by the human mind. Nor can it be questioned that Plato himself is one of the most noble embodiments of the philosophical ideal. He unites the thoughts of his predecessors in one profound mind, and their myriad concepts in one supreme harmony. For Emerson, it is so true that “Plato is philosophy, and philosophy is Plato”. He said of the Republic: “Burn the libraries, for their value is in this book.”

Check your progress III

- Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1) What is Plato’s theory of love?

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2) Discuss the Platonic concept of ideal state and government.

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1.4 KEY WORDS

Ideal (Platonic) : Ideal means the universals that exist independently of particulars in a world of its own.

Universal : A universal is anything that can be predicated of a particular.

1.5 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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1.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) Plato was born around 428/27 B.C., in Athens. At the age of twenty he came into contact with Socrates, and this was decisive in his life. After Socrates' death he studied Eliatic philosophy in Megara. Later returning to Athens, he wrote his first works. Between 390 and 388 B.C., he travelled extensively to acquaint himself with the principle schools. He was sold into slavery by Dionysius-I of Syracuse for criticising him. Rescued from the market of Aegina by Anniceris, he returned to Athens. About 387 B.C., he founded his school in Academus (whence the name "Academy") and taught mathematics and philosophy. In 367 and 361 B.C., he interrupted his teaching and visited Syracuse, presumably to assist in the realisation of his ideal state. After these frustrating attempts he returned to Athens and devoted himself to philosophising, teaching and writing in the Academy. He died in 348/7 B.C. when he was 80/1 years old.

Some of his works are Apology, Critio, Euthyphro, Laches, Ion, Protagoras, Charmides, Lysis, Georgias, Meno, Ethydemus, Lesser Hippias, Greater Hippias, Cratylus, Menexenus, Symposium (or Banquet, Phaedo, Republic, Phaedrus, Theaetetus, Parmenides, Sophist, Statesman, Philebus, Timaeus, Critias, Laws, Epinomis, and Letters VII and VIII.

- 2) The philosophical concerns that gave rise to Plato's philosophical thinking are the followings:

The problem of one and many

The problem of appearance and reality

The problem of permanence and change

The mysticism and mathematics of Pythagoreans

Physis and nomos

The scepticism of the sophists.

The political concern that gave rise to Plato's philosophical thinking are the followings:

Decline of Athens

Corruption and nepotism

The emergence of democracy and

Condemnation of Socrates.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) The cave is inhabited by prisoners whose hands and legs are chained and their heads are fixed, compelled to gaze at a wall in front of them. Behind the prisoners is a fire, and between the fire and the prisoners is a raised walkway, along which puppets are moved. The puppets cast shadows on the wall, and the prisoners see these shadows, hear the noise from the echoes of the wall and take the shadows to be real things and the echoes to be real sounds. Suppose a prisoner is freed and sees the things that caused the shadows, he would not recognize them; he would believe the shadows to be more real than what he sees.
- 2) According to Plato, various individuals share a common form of basic nature. Each individual is fashioned after an ideal type or form by some 'demiurge or active spirit. These "forms" really exist somewhere, in another mysterious world. They are perfect, and all we see in the world around us are but poor imitations or "shadows" of it. The ideas in themselves are not completely unrelated and unconnected. Thus for instance, the idea of dog would participate (literally "take part of" or "have part") in the idea of mammal, the idea of sparrow in the idea of a bird and both in turn in the idea of animal. Ultimately all the ideas participate in the Supreme Idea of Form that of the Good.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) According to Plato, a lover is someone who lacks that which will make him or her happy. What will make the lover happy is to possess the beautiful and the good forever. And the lover is resourceful (Love is the son of Poverty and Resource) in seeking what he or she lacks. It is the resourcefulness propelled by longing that moves the lover up the ladder of love. At each stage the lover is only partially satisfied and is therefore powerfully motivated to discover whether there might be something still more satisfying. Being in the world one starts with the beauty that he or she sees in the world. A beautiful girl or boy falls in love. But discovers that this beauty is not unique. Slowly the lover moves to the more beautiful soul, character, the beauty of laws and institutions and finally the idea of Good itself.
- 2) Plato asserts that society and its people can be grouped into three classes corresponding to the appetite/spirit/reason structure of the individual soul: Some best suited to be labourers, carpenters, farmers etc. In them the appetite dominates; Others who are adventurous, strong, brave and in love with danger, these form the protective part of the state, in them spirit dominates; Some who are intelligent, rational, self-controlled, in love with wisdom, the governing part,

**Greek Philosophy :
Classical Period**

rational part of the soul. According to this model, Plato rejects the then principles of Athenian democracy and advocates the rule of a philosopher king. Philosopher king is the one who loves truth. He has the moderate love for wisdom and the courage to act according to wisdom. Wisdom is knowledge about the Good or the right relations between all that exists.