

**A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY ON HOW VIRTUES BECOME THE
FOUNDATION OF A JUST AND HAPPY LIFE IN PLATONIC ETHICAL
THEORY: ANY RELEVANCE FOR OUR CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY?**

ASO, Williams Olorunfemi, PhD

Seminary of All Saints

Uhiele-Ekpoma, Edo State

asoawoc@yahoo.com; olorunfemi6697@gmail.com; 08131533931

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Abstract

The centre of Plato's ethical system is located in his attempt to find objective answers to some moral fundamental questions like why it is necessary for anyone to be morally virtuous, the reliable knowledge on which moral virtue should be based, the merits of a just life as against unjust life, the real meaning of justice and how man can be morally just and live a happy life. He used various moral dialogues to inquire and determine the nature of virtues and their roles in the attainment of a just and happy. He discovered that a genuine just and happy man is an enlightened and rational moral agent that has the absolute degree of harmony in his soul through constant practice of virtuous activities. The skills that such a man attained from the practice of virtues disposed him to have ardent desire for universal and immutable form of order and justice. A man or woman that has this requisite characteristics is identified by Plato as philosopher king that has a stable system of justice and balanced moral principles as foundations for his or her moral conduct. Anyone with such personality becomes a moral agent and pacesetter that can successfully govern the affairs of his life and that of the society. Anything contrary to this will certainly lead to internal chaos which often manifests externally in forms of frustration and misery either in the life of an individual or in the state.

Keywords: Virtue, Courage, Temperance, Wisdom, Justice, Happiness

Introduction

Generally speaking, Plato's ethical theory is derived from the ideas of Socrates who defined and lived a life that is worthy of emulation. Plato like Socrates was a moral revolutionist that opposed the *status quo* of Greek ethical institution and attitude to life. He saw the Greece of his time dominated by pride, ignorance, myth, and absurdity. All these aberrations exercised a great influence in the moral conduct of an average Athenian of his days. Hence, he wanted a radical change from the Greek established moral disposition to determine the characteristics of a just and fulfilled life in the society. He made use of dialogical

method to discover the real meaning of the nature of fundamental virtues and their roles for a just and happy life. He illustrated how justice and happiness are achievable by man within himself and in the society.

The series of dialogues he employed helped him to realize that the order of moral probity depends on the use of three cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage and temperance, to get the skills necessary for a reasonable life that brings about the virtue of justice.¹ His ethical theory underscored the fact that human happiness is the highest aim of moral conduct. He considered the virtues of wisdom, courage and temperance as necessary tools needed by a man that wants to achieve unpretentious just and happy life. His method of inquiry into the meaning of just life, happiness and how to attain it is based not only on psychological and sociological foundations alone, but also on metaphysical reflection on immutable realities like justice, truth and happiness. Hence, his notion of justice and happiness is significantly different from common understanding of justice and happiness notable among the Sophists.

Plato instituted a reasonable hierarchy among the three identified virtues with wisdom as intellectual virtue that is outstanding among them. He strongly believed that intellectual virtue of wisdom has the requisite to govern the activities of other parts of the soul as philosopher kings are equipped with long years of training to govern the actions of other members of the society.² Therefore, the dynamism of a just and happy life rest squarely on the principle that the upper part of the soul where wisdom or reason is associated strictly keeps to its function of governing the lower parts (courage and appetitive) that are obliged to obey the rule of reason. Plato tried to demonstrate that the harmony that exists among the three virtues is the basis of the virtue of justice and vice-versa.

This paper examines the nature of the three virtues Plato considered as essential tools for any man that wants to live justly and happily in the society. It is pertinent to discover these virtues, their nature and indispensable role for moral justice and the well-being of man and his society. The write up surveys Plato's understanding of justice and its relationship with other three virtues in human soul and in the society. Besides, the paper equally explores how the three virtues play the role that sustain the basis of morally just and happy life. The paper ends

¹Dario Composta, *History of Ancient Philosophy*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1990, pp. 156-164.

²Plato, *Republic*, bk. IV, 428-444e.

with evaluation to determine the contributions and practicality of his ethical theory in our contemporary society. The method employed for this research is expository to demonstrate how Plato determined and arrived at his moral theory; and also evaluative to determine the credibility of his arguments.

The Nature of Virtues and their Roles in Platonic Moral Foundation

In Platonic ethical theory, virtues are considered as good character traits that are generally found among human beings for approval and disapproval of moral action. They are inherent in human nature in most cases and they can be cultivated through education, commendation, incentive, sanctions and constant practice. This implies that they are basically grounded in natural principles evident in human traits and not conventionally formulated. They are naturally recognised by the enlightened human beings and applicable to them without any exception to navigate the moral path of attaining a just and happy life. Any natural virtue is understood and automatically approved as what nature gives to humans and necessarily makes valuable for a civil society. Examples of virtues include, wisdom, prudence, temperance, courage, patience and any abstract quality that makes a person to act excellently and honourably in human society.

In his demonstration of the relevance of virtues to moral uprightness, Plato identified four virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance and justice as the instruments that man needs to live a just and happy life.³ He divided the soul into three different parts and associated each part with the three cardinal virtues he identified as wisdom, courage and temperance. Moreover, he illustrated how they work together harmoniously to achieve the virtue of justice for the moral good of the soul. As Joseph Omoregbe implies from Plato, "wisdom is the virtue of the rational part of the soul (reason); courage is the virtue of spirited part (the higher emotions), while temperance is the subordination of the spirited and the appetitive parts (both the higher and the lower emotions) to the rule of the rational part (reason)."⁴ Plato persistently maintained that a proper co-ordination among these diverse parts and functions of the soul serve as the foundation for moral uprightness and happy life of human beings. As a matter of fact, he instituted a reasonable hierarchy among the virtues with wisdom as most

³Plato, Bk. IV, 427e; David Carr, "The Cardinal Virtues and Plato's Moral Psychology", *The Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 38, No. 151, April, 1988, pp. 186-200.

⁴Joseph Omoregbe, *Knowing Philosophy*, Lagos: Joja Educational Research Publishers, 1990, p.100.

outstanding among them.⁵ He discovered that wisdom has the requisite to govern the activities of other parts of the soul as philosopher kings have the ability derived from their practice of virtues to govern the actions of other members of the society. As Plato upheld, “then it would be reasonable to conclude that the soul is composed of at least two distinct parts. One is the reasoning part. The other is appetite or desire, where hunger, thirst, and sexual passion have their abode along with other irrational drives.”⁶ Plato made it clear that it is when each part of the soul fulfil its function properly without intrusion into the role of another part that the virtue of justice and harmony can be attained and *vice versa*. As Omoregbe derives from Plato, “all virtues are fundamentally one, for they are different expressions of the rule of reasons over the whole man and all human activities. Hence, it is impossible in Plato’s view to have one virtue and lack another, for to have one virtue is to have all and to lack one is to lack all.”⁷ In Plato’s conviction, he identified and maintained acquisition of the three cardinal virtues as the only means by which man can attain a just and happy life. Therefore, the appreciation of the three cardinal virtues become the source of knowledge by which a man can know what is really good, just, rational, moral and how to attain it. In other words, virtues help man to overcome the ignorance which serves as the root of unjust, bad, wrong, irrational and immoral conduct that can make a man unjust and sad within his soul and in the society. At this juncture, there is need to examine the relationship between the virtue justice and the three cardinal virtues.

The Importance of Justice to Platonic Moral Foundation

In Plato’s days, there are two different meanings of justice in Greece that are opposed to his notion of justice. The first one is associated with the Sophists like Thrasymachus who claimed that “justice is simply the interest of the stronger.”⁸ Plato repudiated this notion of justice because there is no way the stronger can live according to his personal interest in the midst of the weak without internal conflicts in the various components of his soul. As a matter of fact, anybody with such attitude fails to undergo training in virtuous activities or refused to allow the training of virtues to make any impact in his life. The second meaning of justice that Plato opposed is based on the thesis that “justice consists in doing

⁵Dario Composta, *History of Ancient Philosophy*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1990, p. 213.

⁶Plato, *Republic*, bk IV, 439 c.

⁷Joseph, Omoregbe, *Knowing Philosophy*, Lagos: Joja Educational Research Publishers, 1990, p. 101.

⁸Plato, *Republic*, bk I, 338c.

good to one's friends and doing evil to one's enemies."⁹ Again, Plato rejected this type of justice because a just man is not expected to worsen the moral insufficiency of the man lacking harmony in his soul. He believed that any attempt to do this will surely makes the just man become unjust, the two will now manifest the consequences of disorderliness in their souls. In his dialogues with his interlocutors like Thrasymachus, Adeimantus and Glaucon, Plato discovered that justice is the proof of excellence of the soul to attain harmony of purpose among its parts for the wellbeing of the individual that owns the soul.¹⁰ While in his opinion, injustice is an evidence of inadequacy of the soul to achieve the order that is necessary among the different parts of the soul. The failure on the part of the soul to achieve internal harmony is reflected externally in confusion and melancholy for the owner of such soul.¹¹ One can easily deduce from Plato that the just will live well and happy because of the harmony or justice that exist in his soul while the unjust will live badly and remained unhappy because he lacks justice in his soul. By this, we know that genuine happiness enriches human life while misery leads to unfulfilled life.

The relevance of the virtues of Wisdom and Courage to Platonic Morality

One of the fundamental pillars of Platonic ethical theory is that the attainment of justice in the soul is not possible without the help of the three cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage and temperament. The three virtues formed the dynamic structures on which a morally just and happy life can be built for the well-being of man and his society. Hence, Plato tenaciously insisted that their roles are indispensable for man to attain his highest goal in life. In his words,

when reason and spirit have been trained to understand their proper functions, they must aid each other to govern the appetites that constitute in each of us the largest and most insatiate part of our nature. Here is where we must be wishful lest the appetites wax strong and overbearing by dint of constant indulgence and gratification to the point where they are tempted to defy all limits.¹²

This implies that reason that serves as the seat of wisdom is expected to do the planning while the spirit behind the virtue of courage do the fighting against the

⁹Joseph, Omoregbe, *Knowing Philosophy*, Lagos: Joja Educational Research Publishers, 1990, 101.

¹⁰Plato, *Republic*, bk. IV, 427e.

¹¹Plato, *Republic*, bk I, 353d.

¹²Plato, *Republic*, bk. IV, 442 a.

indulgence of bodily desires so that the strategy and goal set by reason can be attained effectively. In actual fact, a man is considered wise, prudent, just and happy when the small element in his soul called reason governs the other parts with mutual agreement. Plato repeatedly stressed the fact that this ultimate goal of man is unattainable when man fails to cultivate the essential virtues that can make the ruling of the reason over other aspects of his life becomes naturally easy. Hence, a virtuous life is unattainable unless the four virtues: wisdom, courage, justice and temperance are in harmonious relationship. The process involve in the harmony begins with emotions that serve as the root of courage and temperance that tames the appetites.

The virtue of wisdom has the responsibility to moderate the function of the appetites and justice is attained when courage and temperance are submissive to the governance of wisdom. The point that Plato tried to make clear is that “when the entire soul submits to the government of the wisdom loving part, it will be liberated from internal dissension... Each will enjoy the pleasures proper to it; these will be the best pleasures and the truest.”¹³ The pleasure in this context transcends ephemeral inclination and satisfaction to the happiness and fulfilment associated with the gods. A cursory look at his ethical theory shows that the virtues of temperance becomes necessary for justice to maintain harmony in the soul and to achieve a moral and happy life. The philosopher that loves moral principles does not in any way attract fear, chaos and frustration. This background serves as the basis of peaceful life that is free from negative desires. Again, it is necessary to discover the significance of the affinity between justice and temperance before a man can live a just and happy life.

Temperance as a Condition for Justice in Platonic Moral Foundation

Justice is quite different from temperance because Plato underlined the fact that temperance is not part of intellectual excellence. It is a mere orderly disposition about who has the right among the parts of the soul to rule over others and who supposed to obey.¹⁴ As a matter of fact, temperance helps to achieve the harmony by which wisdom has a control over the better part of the bodily pleasures and desires. On the other hand, justice has intellectual excellence to determine and insists on who should necessarily rule and be ruled. In Plato’s opinion, justice is not a mere disposition of the need for order in the soul, it has a wider intellectual ability to see that all parts of the soul are faithful to their functions. Hence,

¹³Plato, Republic, Bk IX, 587a.

¹⁴Plato, Republic, bk. IV, 430d-432a.

temperance becomes a vital tool for justice to exercise its functions effectively as the *primus inter pares*, the first among the four virtues. It is apparent that, in the individual soul, justice is achieved when each part of the soul carries out its own function dutifully. This is possible because Plato strongly believed that the two upper parts of the soul have been trained to govern the lower or appetitive parts of the soul against any irrationality.¹⁵ Justice provides justification for each part of the soul to stay within the frontiers of their specific function and follow the direction of the reason for harmonious relationship in the soul. The justification that justice has over other virtues is that, “justice in the individual depends on each of the various elements in his nature doing its own work. It is proper that the reasoning element should rule because it is wise and capable of foresight in planning for the whole. It is clearly appropriate that the spirited element should be the servant and the ally of reason.”¹⁶ Therefore, justice becomes the unifying characteristic of the soul of a just and happy man. For better understanding, we need to look into the criteria that Plato used to determine a man that lives a moral and happy life.

The Moral and Just Life as Defined in Platonic Moral Tradition

Plato continuously insisted during his life time that the moral and just life that served as the foundation of genuine happiness and fulfilment in human life consists in the ability of a man that freely chooses to govern his conduct with reason. This implies that his appetites or emotional desires will become the servants and not the master of his rational and deliberative choice of action. In such a man, reason learns how to govern, the spirit acquires courage to go for what is good and the appetites are directed on how to benefit the man instead of causing disharmony in his personality. According to Plato, “it is when self-government fails that men becomes slaves to their appetites. Then reason degenerates into cunning, and spirit becomes savage. Both are degraded to the role of servants in the employ of an anarchy of desires.”¹⁷ It is clear from the above that justice and happy life is unattainable when man lost self-governance and allowed his appetites to lead his moral decisions. Any man that disregard the principle of self-control will surely find it difficult to rise above animal instincts in his conduct and relationship with others in the society. According to

¹⁵Plato, Republic, bk. IV, 441d-442a.

¹⁶Plato, Republic Bk. IV, 441e.

¹⁷R. W. Sterling and W.C. Scott, Trans., PLATO: The Republic, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1985, p. 17.

the standard of Plato, just and moral men are both wiser and more effective in action while unjust and immoral men do not possess such intelligence as evident in their respective lives.¹⁸ The soul that function excellently governs the conduct of human life to realise happiness. It is often the case that the person with a bad soul will certainly govern his life badly while the person with a good soul will govern his life very well.¹⁹ In book four of his Republic, Plato illustrated why somebody with good soul will govern his life harmoniously and verse-versa. In his articulation of the justification for this claim, Plato has this to say,

it appears to me that temperance is the ordering or controlling of certain pleasures and desires. This is what is implied when one says that a man is master of himself. It is a curious expression because it suggests that a man is both his own master and his own servant. But I believe the proper meaning of the phrase is that there is both good and bad in the soul of man. When the good part governs the bad, a man is praised for being master of himself. But if bad education or bad company subjects the good (and the smaller part) of the soul to the bad (and larger) part, a man will be blamed for being unprincipled and slave of self.²⁰

Therefore, for a moral and just life to be achieved, a man needs to learn how to employ the service of his reason to tame the excesses of his emotions or else he will lack the ability to have coherence in the actions that can make him just and happy. The just and happy man is also considered a wise man by Plato because “the wise man...always care for the harmony of his body in order to further the harmony of his soul.”²¹ What Plato tried to make clear is that a just and happy man is intelligent enough to avoid whatever pleasure, possession and honour that can disrupt the justice in his soul but appreciates and accepts whatever can help him to sustain the ultimate goal he has attained in his life.²² As Plato rightly affirmed, “in all the public activities in which he is engaged he will call just and beautiful only that conduct which harmonizes with and preserves his own inner harmony... And the knowledge that understands the meaning and importance of such conduct he will call wisdom.”²³ In this sense, the justice in the soul is not

¹⁸Plato, Republic, bk. I, 352c.

¹⁹Plato, Republic, bk. I, 353d.

²⁰Plato, Republic, bk. IV, 431b.

²¹Plato, Republic, bk. IX, 591e.

²²Plato, Republic, bk. IV, 592a.

²³Plato, Republic, bk. IV, 443e.

based on any external force but rather on the moral authority of a man that personally governs his conduct.

The man with this kind of moral disposition will never allow any part of his soul either to interfere with the function of other parts or arrogate the role of others to itself. By this standing order, the man “is his own master and his own law.”²⁴ This implies that he does not need any external supervision and reminder before he knows what to judge personally as good and morally just to do within himself and with others in the society. In Platonic moral tradition, a man that maintains this moral standard will be full of honourable characters and has proved himself to be gotten by the gods and prepared himself to unite with them after his earthly life. Nevertheless, there is possibility for him to experience misfortunes in life but the gods will not abandon him either in life or death because of his ardent desire to be just like them. Hence, the life of a just man that involves some misfortunes and dishonours is more profitable than the life of an unjust man enriched with ill-gotten fortunes. The desire to be like the gods has actually set a just man apart from those who are morally unjust and miserable because of their level of ignorance on how to attain a true happiness through the justice that supposed to exist in their souls. As a result of this, Plato recommended that everyone in the society ought to strive assiduously to be just and moral so as to be in harmonious relationship with the gods.²⁵ It is evident that only those who allowed themselves to be nurtured by the virtues have natural disposition and yearning to be like the gods. There is need to explore how Plato articulated his arguments on how man can attain a moral happiness and fulfilment of life.

Attainment of Moral Happiness in Platonic Moral Tradition

The main concern of Plato on morality is found mostly in his book, *The Republic*. In this book, he engaged in dialogues with some personalities to derive a reliable meaning of basic moral concepts like justice, virtue and what constitute genuine happiness. In the book, he reaffirmed Socrates ethical conviction, that the ultimate desire of man is happiness. This type of happiness is attainable only through the practice of virtues to achieve a just life similar to that of the gods. For him, the suitable way to cultivate appropriate virtues for a happy life is based on approved poetry, music and other arts combine with physical training to imbue the right temperament and attitude that can help man to attain inner harmony in his soul. It is observable that a just man externally avoids meddling in what does

²⁴Plato, Republic, Bk IV, 443d and e.

²⁵Plato, Republic, bk. X, 613b

not belongs to him and harmonizes internally the functions of the three parts of his soul. The attainment of justice leads to a good state of the soul that actually gladdens the owner of such soul. If this claim is incontrovertible, one can see why "justice like health, depends upon the presence of a natural order governing the soul in the relations of its parts and in the conduct of the whole. With injustice, as with illness, the natural order has vanished from the soul, giving place to its opposite."²⁶ The implication of injustice in the soul is responsible for disorderliness in the personality of an individual and the same injustice in the soul is the cause of misery and unaccomplished life.

One can easily deduce from Plato that a just and happy man indeed is an enlightened and moral agent that has the highest degree of accord in his soul because a thorough cultivation of necessary virtues have nurtured him to be so. The level of the skill he attained from constant practice of virtuous activities disposes him to have ardent desire to participate in universal and immutable form of the good and justice. The category of these men and women are pacesetters that Plato identified as philosophers who have a stable system of justice and reliable moral principles that have become natural to them. Plato maintained that such people have the requisite acumen to govern successfully not only the affairs of their lives but also that of the state. Moreover, he believed that human beings are happy and fulfilled when achieved the goals they appreciate so much. And for him, a genuinely happy man is the one that have effective control over his emotions and bodily desires. Any attempt to give in gratuitously to the demands of the appetitive part of the soul will certainly leads to frequent internal chaos that can lead to frustration, sorrow and eventually depression.

Evaluation

There is no doubt that Plato's ethical theory is basically stands on the dynamics of four virtues: wisdom as the pre-eminent among the virtues for its role of governance, courage as the virtue that goes out to look for the good of the soul, the virtue of temperance that moderates the desire for the good of the soul and the virtue of justice or harmony achieved in the soul when every part of the soul works within the frontiers of their duty. In other words, a just and fulfilled life is accomplished when the temperance and appetitive parts of the soul cordially submit themselves to the direction of reason, the seat of wisdom. We observed in Platonic moral tradition that whoever that can achieve this goal is described as a

²⁶Plato, Republic, Bk. IV, 444d.

philosopher king that has all it takes to govern other people in the society excellently well. Nevertheless, we observe that Platonic moral philosophy created both positive and negative impacts in the minds of those that examine his moral principles and recommendations as evident below.

The positive impacts of Platonic Moral Foundation

In his moral philosophy, Plato concerned himself, especially in *The Republic*, with the arguments to justify the transcendental value of justice as a criterion for moral conduct and happy life. The articulated arguments of Plato on the foundation of how to attain a just and happy life showed that justice and morality are intrinsically interwoven before it can effectively help human beings to achieve their moral goal in life. In our contemporary world, we discover that Plato's moral theory is philosophically enlightening because his moral theory helps us to discover better ways to understand and approach fundamental issues concerning the nature of virtues and their roles in morality. For instance, we see that in *The Republic*, Plato tried to provide justified answer to complicated questions about justice and its relevance to moral and happy life. He gave a comprehensive explanation and analysis of what justice really is, the meaning and necessity of virtues for the attainment of just and moral life. The analysis and explanation of Plato is very necessary for our society of today as a way of heighten the relevance of some virtues as fundamental requirements for a just and moral fulfilment in human life. We appreciate the gradual process he emphasized to show how the morally good people acquired the skill that equipped them to cherish and practice the real justice and morality. Besides, we see how he demonstrated the fact that moral life that is based on the virtue of a good life is a replica of a well organised society. It is apparent that Plato's moral theory is embedded in abstinence and self-renunciation to sustain the harmony in the soul. For this purpose, he underlined the fact that human soul needs to remain indifference to bodily pleasures so that genuine happiness and fulfilment in life can be attainable.

The Negative Impacts of Platonic Moral Foundation

A proper assessment of Plato's moral theory is somehow difficult because he continued to modify his moral thought until his death. The method Plato employed in the presentation of the nature of virtues and their roles in human life subjected his readers to the pain of going through all his ethical thoughts to articulate what looks like fragmented materials that are available here and there. As noted by E.M. Albert and T.C. Denise, "the writings of Plato are in dialogue

form, which is admirably suited to show the strength of the Socratic Method. Plato himself does not appear as a character in the dialogues, but in almost all of them, he speaks through Socrates. As a result, it is not always possible to distinguish with historical accuracy the Socratic from the Platonic conceptions in the dialogues."²⁷ The dialogue method used by Plato to determine and define ethical realities involved psychological, epistemological, socio-political and metaphysical issues that lack any central theme.²⁸ His ethical inquiry began from his dialogue concerning the traditional virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. He moved gradually from socio-political criteria of morality to apparent logical, metaphysical and epistemological foundations of a justified moral theory. Although, all the issues involved in his various dialogues are intertwined to form a whole. However, the diverse interlocutors in the dialogues are not the same; hence, articulation and combination of their contributions are very cumbersome. This reality often makes it difficult for anyone to distinguish Plato's view from that of Socrates he personified in some of his writings. It is the secondary authors on Platonic ethical theory that gathered and reconstructed the ethical principles on which his moral philosophy is built. Perhaps, Aristotle was aware of this clumsiness in Platonic ethical theory and avoided Socratic Method employed by Plato in his research on morality²⁹. As a matter of fact, he articulated his arguments for moral theory discretely in two books: Eudemian and Nicomachean Ethics.

Conclusion

The necessity of moral and just life for genuine happiness to be achieved and for man to fulfil his purpose in the harmony of the universe cannot be overemphasised. The Platonic ethical structure build on the nature of virtues and their roles for the attainment of harmony and fulfilment in the life of individual and the society is credible and indispensable especially now that some individuals are building their moral life on relative and mutable ethical realities. It is guaranteed that anyone who governs his appetites with reason will surely live a moral and responsible life in human society. It is evident that Plato projected an intellectual ethics that has no room for sentiments, emotions and

²⁷E.M. Albert and T.C. Denise, Ethel M. Albert and Theodore C. Denise, *Great Traditions in ETHICS*, sixth edition, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988, p. 9.

²⁸Dario Composta, *History of Ancient Philosophy*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1990, pp. 164-167.

²⁹Dario Composta, *History of Ancient Philosophy*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1990, pp. 129-130.

bodily desires to hold sway both in the society and in individual life. This Spartan controlled life can make human beings easily agitated for a moral change just as Plato initiated a moral revolution of his time. Without mincing words, the fundamental foundation of Platonic moral philosophy overemphasized the place of reason in morality while emotional aspect of human life is subservient to reason. The anthropological understanding of human nature categorically confirms that human beings are subsistent beings in which rational and emotional feelings are complementary for moral judgment and none is subservient to the other. Therefore, there is need for constant review and modification of scholars in Platonic moral tradition to make Plato's ethical principles and all its prospects acceptable to our contemporary society.