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Philosophy

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Was Socrates an Enemy of the State?

Introduction

As philosophy records, the contribution of Socrates to address elements of justice in pursuing of truth if not right, there are many questions that do arise and need answers in accordance to Socrates' attributes to address justice and pursue truth. To an extent, one may think that Socrates was an enemy of the state and at some level; he was not an enemy of the state. In relevance to the same, the discussion of the efforts of Socrates in his pursue of freedom and justice for citizens. This will have to take into consideration one's definition of state and enemy.

In philosophy, state can be defined to be a political community that is governed by the laws of the same community. The community sets laws and regulations under which they are to be followed to the letter. Similarly, an enemy can be defined as an individual or group of people who abide by the regulations and laws of a given state (community) with some open attention to address some ethical issues that deal with the society directly or indirectly (Mcpherran 45).

Discussion

Socrates happens to be a Greek citizen, who was in the forefront to see that the people of Greece attained justice. By so doing, some of his ideologies were against the ruling laws (government) as he advocated humanity, which could go against the state. In this way, one could confidently say that Socrates was an enemy of the state.

Consequently, the history of the Athenians records that Socrates was a teacher. It was the mandate of the state to ascribe regulations as to what should be taught. In order to make students think for themselves, one can motivate them by giving them rewards. It is from the same perspective that Socrates treated his students in order to make them think for themselves. The state viewed this to be an act of corruption that was meant to mislead students. This can be evident when the state sentenced him to death. By the fact, it is the state that governed Socrates's life; the state dictated when Socrates should live and when he should die. It comes out clear that in one way or the other, Socrates committed a crime, and he was made to face the law by being killed.

Nevertheless, according to Socrates teachings, he suggested that it was immoral to commit murder. By the fact that the state could kill someone irrespective of his or her meeting his/her obligations like paying taxes, one had the right to advocate humanity as the western philosophers advocated. This was in accordance with some of the Socrates teachings; hence he can be viewed to be an enemy of the state, as he did not abide by the laws. Instead, he advocated humanity that was against the state (Rosano 23).

Subsequently, in pursue of truth, one has to have facts. Socrates enlightened his students of the facts dealing with the state. Those times, the state wanted citizens to follow and obey the law without questioning as to why some practices are done. Given that Socrates was in the forefront to enlighten citizens about some facts, the state viewed him to be an enemy. For instance, Socrates was opposing the act of collecting taxes from citizens. He viewed this to be theft; hence he discouraged people to make their payments. It is clear that this was against the laws of the state; thus one can confidently mention.

However, considering the trials that Socrates was subjected to, it proves that Socrates was not abiding as per the state's demands. The state demanded that Socrates should worship

the conversational gods and that he should not go astray. Instead, Socrates did not abide by the same needless to mention that he introduced new deities and corrupted the young/youths.

Socrates believed that humankind has freedom to choose as to whom he/she should adore/worship. He urged that it was not the mandate of the nation/state to dictate one's faith (Roochnik 41).

In some other context, Socrates was in the forefront to convert some traditional institutions to meet the demands of a dynamic society. State many a times are ever conservative of traditions; they do not easily accept changes, hence anyone who steps into the government/state in a way to direct it, is considered to be an enemy. Socrates as a philosopher tried to address some changes that the state should take, and he was considered to be an enemy of the government. As much as Socrates was tried and proven to be guilty, in my opinion, justice can never be found in a vacuum. By the fact that Socrates was tried in the absence, externally did not valid outset justice. Socrates was found guilty and made to face Athenians practices. This was not so far of the constituted justice for the society that he deserved, in this perspective; it is evident that the state was somehow revenging against Socrates. From this context, it is obvious that Socrates had issues with the government, hence view him as an enemy.

As a matter of fact, Socrates advocated much of democracy in his teachings. It is from the teachings that some of his students advocated and claimed democracy paving way for a democrat in the government. This was marked by many changes that gave the Athenians a new look to justice. Initially, before the Democrats came to power, any efforts for democracy were seen to be against the state. From the view that Socrates advocated, was in the forefront to address democracy, which was against the conservatism, he was regarded as the enemy of the nation. Similarly, according to the ruling laws and regulations of Athens then, Socrates was considered as an enemy of the government (Morgan 61).

Conclusion

According to the philosophy, the state is a community that is marketed with some political or religious attributes. If one does not abide by the attributes, then an individual is pronounced to be an enemy of the government. Socrates happens not to abide by the laws, thus regarded as an enemy to the Athenian state. He manipulated the young/youth to develop a sense of their wellbeing by thinking on their own; this was possible following his position of being a teacher. On the same note, the state then was against democracy and by the fact that he was in the forefront to address the same; he was regarded as the enemy of the state. This is capable of changing depending on the way one will define state and enemy in reliance to the historical context.

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