

What is justice?

[Law](#), [Justice](#)



Plato was a Greek philosopher a student of Socrates and a teacher of Aristotle. The three laid down the western philosophy. Plato was a mathematician and a writer of philosophical dialogues, was the founder of the first institution of higher learning in the western world. Plato was equally influenced by his mentors thinking just as what he saw as his teacher unjust death. Aristotle was a student of Plato and a teacher of Alexander the great. He was the man who created a comprehensive system of western philosophy, which was inclusive of aesthetics, morality, logic and science and finally politics.

Plato who attended all Socrates' trial got a trauma which led him to desire to design an idea society. Following his death Plato traveled wide in search of learning after which he established the Athens academy. Socrates appears as a character in most of Plato's dialogues. Most of his writings are in form of dialogue it enabled him raise several points of view and let the Reader decide which is more varied. Plato had a great influence in philosophy as well as social and cultural science. Plato grew up in a family setting that enabled him have an interaction with city affairs.

And desired to become a master of his own self and find out the state of public affairs then as many were discontented with the constitution and a revolution took place. Having brought up in a family that had a hand in leadership, who asked him to join them what he desired most. Plato expected the family to exercise justice instead of injustice. What is Justice? Justice is the concept of moral uprightness based on ethics, law and natural law. Justice can be equitable to fairness and equity. It is a key feature in the society.

It is the fair ordering of this and persons and the first virtue of social institutions. It can be elaborated to be ones right to be protected and treated fairly according to the law; either in good or in wrong doing. Also as deciding carefully and fairly if one is guilty of what he or she is been accused of.

Referring to shame I strongly agree that shame enhances the truthfulness of individuals due to fear of disrespect. In this way justice is achieved to the individuals concerned. This also enables many to develop the acquired virtue of justice.

On other hand shame can make people be denied justice when the person involved fears to offer something to avoid disrespect. About females and justice they should be equally handled with men they shouldn't be discriminated assuming they are sub-species. In the current world we have seen some women do better than their male counterparts meaning even the rest given a chance can do it. Justice should be ensured equally to all classes of people to the poor and the rich. Slaves are people like any other hence should not be eliminated when it comes to some matters.

They can vote and those with leadership qualities should be allowed to go ahead and exercise them. State leadership is not for a chosen few families any one from which ever family as long as they have the capability can be given the mandate and not discriminated due to where they come from. As justice in the state is been sought, justice for individuals should also be sought. The state affair shouldn't be run on the expense of the individual's welfare. The individuals are the components of the society and state hence negligence on their affairs means neglecting the states justice. Justice

according to Plato and Aristotle I have italicized philosophers' remarks to distinguish them from the rest of the discussion] [In brief, Socrates says writing would bring harmless pleasure to old men and memories against the forgetfulness of old age] A pastime, Socrates, as noble as the other [wasting seeds during youth] is ignoble, the pastime of a man who can be amused by serious talk, and can discourse merrily about justice and the like. He meant as the idea of Socrates that the best and true way of writing is the in bold letter the principle of justice is communicating orally for the sake of instructions and engraving in the souls.

This makes the principles become ones own and his legitimate offspring; though writing would keep the exact information for future generations. Justice is an old concept in existence and was discussed by several philosophers of the past. According to Plato justice is harmony of three things of the soul which includes desire, appetites and reason. Reason is what reign over both desires and appetites. ' Plato likened it to a chariot pulled by to joined horses towards the sun where the horses are desire and appetite and the driver represents the reason that reigns.

The sun represents the truly important goal in life. They have to be monitored not to fly too low or too close to the sun and doing so give a true balance to all elements. He believes through this balance justice can be achieved to all individuals. ' Plato believed justice is implemented when the three types of human character performed their functions. Likewise justice of a state is not found in a part of it but the whole of the state; which only

occurs when its systems are balanced. Also the justice of an individual is found when his elements are balanced.

He refuted the fact that just was that which was mandated by the powerful, and that might is right as opposed to Thracymachus. Plato saw a just society as one that meets the needs of all its individuals not a few or some (Hooker, pp234). Taking the ideal of Plato's mentor as his major ideal that justice would be an excellent character, he sought to explain that no excellence would be achieved through destructive means. He argued that the role of justice was to improve human nature, which involved only constructions. Justice according to Socrates implies superior character and intelligence while injustice is deficiency in these two areas.

Hence just men are effective in action due to these two traits and are better and happier. In addition Plato defined justice in an excellent way as morality or righteousness, this includes the whole duty of man and involves individual conduct towards others. In deed justice can be a quality of the soul, which most men set aside and fight for selfish desires and satisfaction. Aristotle denoted that the purpose of every human action was for achievement of good things. The things carried out by individuals are sought to give pleasure and happiness, others for the sake of honor and justice.

He also distinguished between moral virtue and intellectual virtue; moral virtues are acquired and not inborn. He emphasized that people with virtues act virtuously and this is not deniable. According to him justice is a moral virtue which includes lawfulness and fairness. Fairness calls for all privileges and responsibilities of individuals be equally and proportionally distributed.

Aristotle concludes that pleasure is not the aim of human action because not every pleasure is good. He described happiness, as the unity between will and action, of intellect and reason. He concluded that human beings are happiest when guided by reason.

Perfect happiness there of is gained by a unity of practical and theoretical wisdom (Scott, Para 4, 5 &10). In reference to justice, shame and reputations were termed as motivators of action in justice. Many people are able to express truth when unimpeded by shame. According to Aristotle shame was a pain concerning things that caused individual disrespect. Aristotle concluded that a true expert is the one who challenges city's conventional justice and not constraint of shame and concern of reputation. In view of Aristotle he spoke of justice as a virtue, individual traits which have a lot of ground insocial justice.

On the contrary Plato terms justice as an overarching of virtues of individuals, meaning every thing that he would term as ethical came under the notion justice. In the modern usage justice only covers a part of morality, and we don't count people as unjust when they neglect their children or lie. Plato builded around the idea of philosopher rulers which was his primary point. This led to the question, ' then why do you need ideal state to begin with? The discussion begins with the key term justice which leads to creation of an ideal state. He says the reason for an ideal state is to guarantee the existence of justice.

This never denoted that there can be no state without justice because human being are not self sufficient so they need a social environment and each

person has specified tasks on which they should build on (republican, pp56-62). Though a person is not self sufficient combination of person – a state should fulfill the need of all its members. Plato condemned the fact that only the auxiliaries are got a chance to state leadership and the poor had no where near. His aim was to define justice though he used politics to do that. On the other hand Aristotle used politics to define politics itself.

He begins his text by asking, why does the state exist? ' His answer was a state is a culmination of natural groupings that begins with the coming together of a man and a woman- a pair, get a family and form a household, which units form a village and villages into a state. ' Lack of sufficiency just like in Plato's view is the catalyst to rising up of unions among people. In politics he is not up to breaking down the society, he argues that there are different classes in society which are naturally defined. He devotes a lot of time to explain the ' naturalness' of salves and their importance in the society.

Both Plato and Aristotle agree that some people can't play an active role in politics. They upheld benefit of the community above those of individuals; today's constitution includes a bill of rights that guarantee the rights of every individual. This is good for today's citizens. In accordance to the three elements in human nature equally there are three classes in the society- Philosopher class or the ruling class which denotes reason; auxiliaries, a class of warriors and defenders of the country implying the spirit; and the appetite instinct of the community which includes farmers, artisans the lower class people of the society.

Thus, weaving a web between the human organism and the social organism, Plato said this to assert that every person had a role in seeing that justice is done to all. Slavery is a contradicting issue between the philosophers and today's society. Aristotle considered slavery natural when it came to politics; and in relation to slavery he undermined female population. Plato was a lot less discriminatory but this didn't stop him from believing women were sub-species. This made woman fight endless battle to gain recognition they deserved, today its well acceptable that what men can do women can do better.

Plato discussed the possibility of a luxurious state. Where the needs of the people are met and there is division of labor. And there is existence of military protection that is not a threat to the state itself and offers successful military protection. Plato asks if an unqualified good human being must appear to fall to bad now and then. This would be a person who is neither perfect in virtue and justice, nor one who falls into misfortune through vice and depravity; but rather, one who succumbs through some miscalculation.

He must also be a person who enjoys great reputation and good fortune. Enjoying a reputation means finding happiness which Aristotle on the other hand liken to performance of ones duty and is determine by ones degree of evolution. He disagrees with Plato's view of sacrificing ones happiness for the interest of the community. Plato contrary to the theories of his student, like cephalous justice out to be treated as internal not something external. It is not an importation, or an accomplishment. He proved that justice is not dependent upon chance or an external force.

He termed it as the right condition of a human soul. He concluded his debate by saying justice is the bond that joins men together in society. Aristotle on the other hand recognized the role of deliberations in a government, in particular democracy and the extent to which real justice depended on good deliberations (politics, pp410). He argued that democracy supports good life. Aristotle proposes that the private and the government assistance should be given to the poor as a way of trying to achieve self-sufficiency which denote justice.

Aristotle's ideal of justice appeared superior, upon further investigation but Plato's was stronger. In conclusion both Plato and Aristotle had good points of view they agreed in most of their debates. This was as a result of originating from the same roots academically. These deliberations they made were for the good of the society. On the other hand they differ on several topic or views which enabled the society to take the better view as emphasized by their mentor Socrates. Justice should be for the good of the individuals and also the society.

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