

## Differentiate Between Plato's Theory of Justice And Aristotle Theory of Justice.

**Introduction:** Plato and Aristotle, two towering figures in western philosophy, offered distinct views on justice. Both approached justice as a fundamental element for well-functioning state and individual life, but their interpretations differ in significant ways. Plato's Republic presents justice as an ideal, rooted in the harmony of the soul and the state. Aristotle, on other hand, viewed justice more practically as a virtue focused on fairness and proportionate distribution in human interactions. This comparison will highlight the key differences between their theories of justice.

### Plato's Theory of Justice:

Plato's theory of justice is based on the idea of harmony within both the individual and the state. He believed that justice occurs when each part of the soul and the state performs its appropriate function without interfering with others.



# Plato's Theory Of Justice.

| Justice As Harmony  | Universal Justice   | Justice And the Ideal State   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Plato defined justice as "doing one's own work and not meddling with what is not one's own".</p> <p>In the State, justice is achieved when each class - rulers, soldiers, and producers - performs its proper role. Similarly, in the individual, justice is when reason, spirit, and appetite are in balance, with reason guiding the soul.</p> | <p>Plato's concept of Justice is universal, aiming for the overall good of society. It is abstract and transcends particular situations, focusing on the collective harmony of the state.</p> | <p>For Plato, justice exists in an ideal state ruled by philosopher-kings. He proposed a tripartite division of society: the rulers (wisdom), the soldiers (courage), and producers (moderation). When these classes fulfill their functions harmoniously, the state is just.</p> |

## Aristotle's Theory Of Justice:

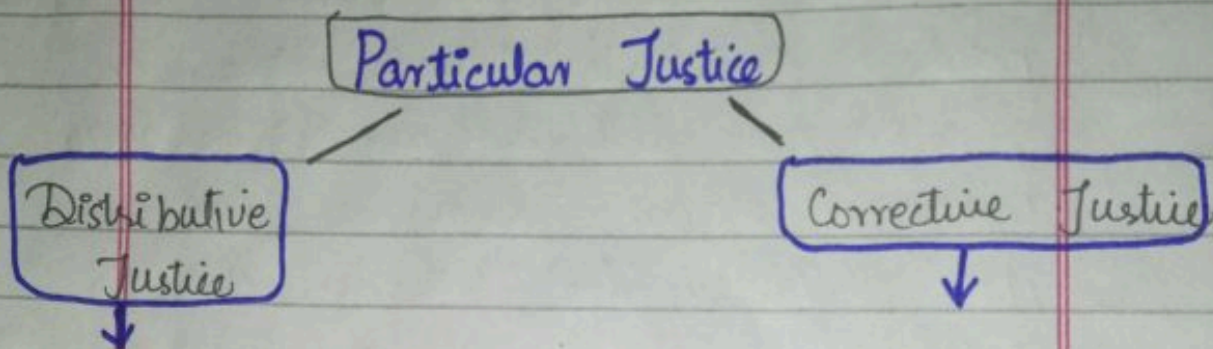
Aristotle's Theory, unlike Plato, took a more grounded and practical approach to justice, focusing on fairness in individual and legal matters. His theory of justice is divided into two types: (i) Universal Justice.

(ii) particular Justice



## 1 Universal Justice:

For Aristotle, universal justice is equivalent to lawfulness and virtue. He believed that justice is "the complete virtue in relation to others" and represents law-abiding behavior that promotes the common good of the state.



This refers to the fair allocation of goods based on merit. Aristotle argued that justice demands proportional equality, stating that "equals must be treated equally and unequal unequally." It is merit based, unlike Plato's ideal of harmony.

This form of justice deals with rectifying wrongs in transactions, whether voluntary or involuntary. Aristotle focused on fairness in exchanges, ensuring that individuals are compensated in cases of harm or loss.



# Difference Between Plato And Aristotle

## Theories of Justice:

### Idealism Vs Realism.

Plato's approach to justice is idealistic, envisioning a utopian state where justice is rooted in the balance of social roles and individual virtues.

Plato seeks an ideal society

Aristotle on the other hand, is more realistic, concerned with justice in daily human interactions and institutions. ~~Plato~~

whereas Aristotle looks for practical justice in existing political frameworks.

### Justice as Harmony Vs Justice as

Plato sees justice as the harmonious functioning of the whole, with each class or part performing its designated role.

Aristotle's Fairness Justice, by contrast, is about fairness, focusing on proportional distribution and rectification of wrongs in particular cases.

### Philosopher-king. Rule of Law.

Plato's just society

Aristotle, however, places



is governed by philosopher-kings who possess superior knowledge.

importance on the rule of law, believing that laws, when applied justly, create fairness for citizens.

#### ④ Universal Justice

Plato focuses mainly on universal justice - an overarching concept of justice that ensures societal harmony.

#### Particular Justice

Aristotle, while also acknowledging universal justice, which involves practical concerns like distribution of wealth and rectifying wrongs in transactions.

### Criticism of Both Theories:

#### Plato's Utopian Ideal

Plato's vision of justice has been criticized as too abstract and utopian, difficult to implement in the real world. His emphasis on rigid social roles, where people are locked into specific

#### Aristotle's Merit

#### -Based Justice

Aristotle's focus on merit-based distribution has been critiqued for potentially justifying inequality. The idea that the people should receive based on their merits can be subjective, and in practice, it might



classes, also limits personal freedom.

reinforce existing social hierarchies.

## Conclusion:

Inhile both plato and Aristotlle offer profound insights into Justice, their theories reflect different approaches. Plato's idealism emphasizes harmony and the role of the philosopher-king in achieving Justice, while Avistotle's realism focuses on fairness, lawfulness, and proportional equality. plato's Justice is about maintaining fairness in daily life. As Avistotle himself said "Justice is the bond of men in states", encapsulating his belief in the practical and binding nature of Justice for society.