

PLATO & ARISTOTLE

HZT4U1 - MR. A. WITTMANN - UNIT 1 - LECTURE 6



The School at Athens by Raphael

“Western philosophy began with Plato. All philosophers after him were merely commenting on his philosophy.”

—Alain Badiou

“Aristotle discovered all the half-truths which were necessary to the creation of science.”

—Alfred North Whitehead

Plato (429–347 BC)

- ◆ Student of Socrates, who, after Socrates' death, studied with Pythagoreans in Egypt and Sicily.
- ◆ Founded the Academy in Athens, to teach Socratic style of reasoning and mathematical learning, for the achievement of abstract philosophical truth.

The Socratic Dialogues

- ◆ They convey the spirit of Socrates' teaching by presenting reports of his conversations, and are our primary source of his philosophy.
- ◆ They also develop and express Plato's own philosophical ideas and conclusions.

Plato's Metaphysical Ideas

- ◆ The world which we perceive is a defective, imperfect and illusionary version of the perfect real world.
- ◆ The real world is made of perfect concepts (called forms or ideals), which are eternal and changeless, and upon which the sensory world is based.

Plato's Ideas (continued)

- ◆ This theory is illustrated in the “Myth of the Cave”, from The Republic.



Plato's Ideas (continued)

- ◆ There is fundamental distinction between the observable things that appear to be beautiful, or good, or just, or equal, from the true form of beauty, or goodness, or justice, or equality (from which the names and characteristics come).

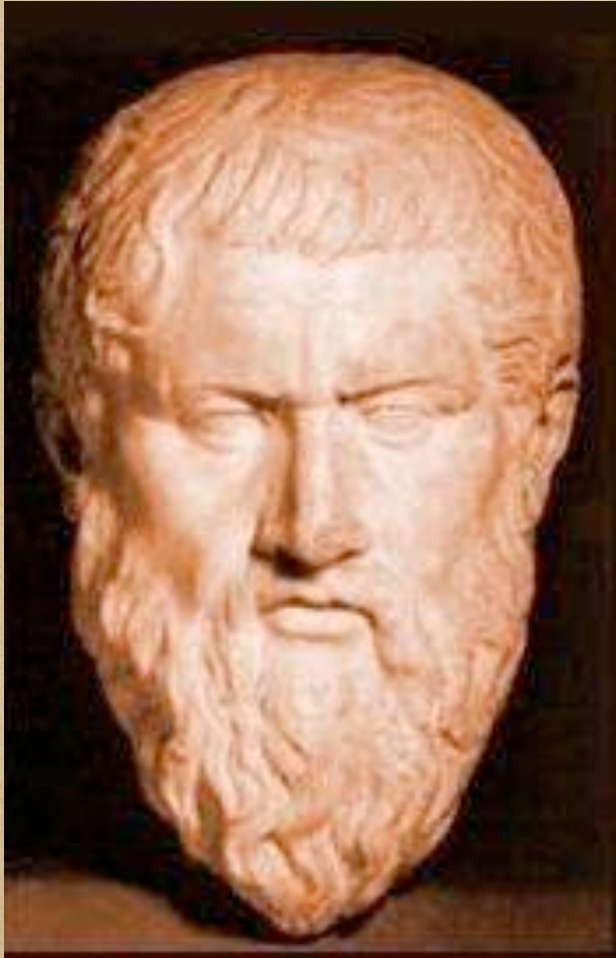
Plato's Ideas (continued)

- ◆ We must transform our morals and behaviour, via logic, reason and philosophical thought to understand greater reality & ourselves
- ◆ The true self (soul) understands the nature of the forms when detached from temporal corporeal perception of the self

Plato's Ideas (continued)

- ◆ Our reincarnated self knows everything about the perfect forms but our corporal selves do not remember correctly.
- ◆ Those who recognize how important it is to distinguish the one true thing from the many named things, may become morally enlightened.

Plato

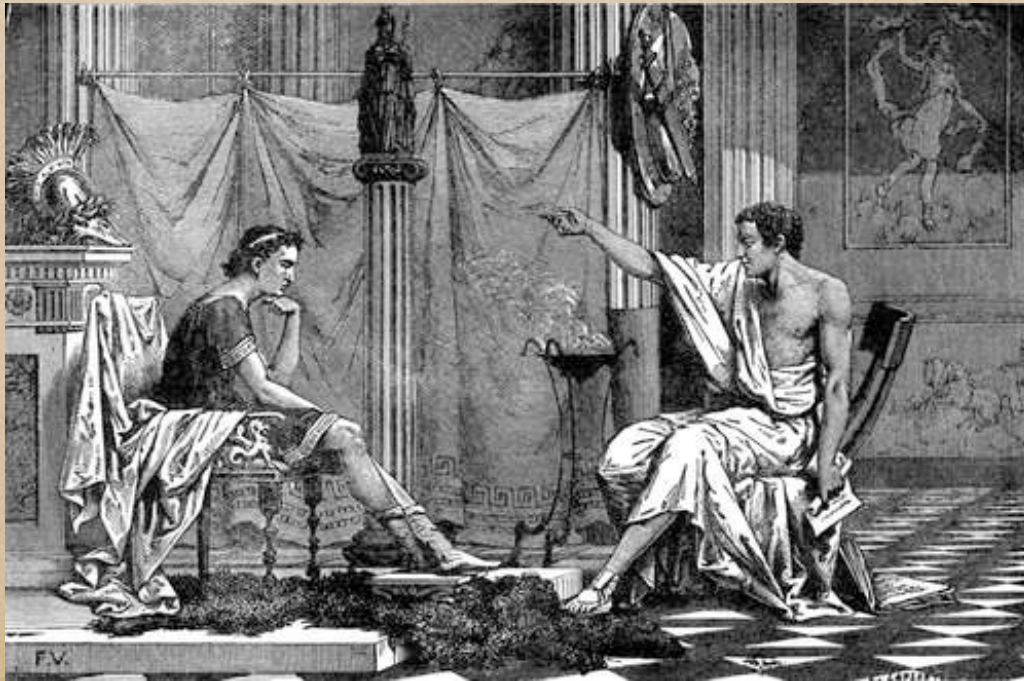


Plato

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Aristotle (384-322 BC)

- ◆ Plato's student, who founded the Peripatetic school, and became Alexander the Great's tutor.



Aristotle's Ideas

- ◆ He disagreed with the theoretical reality of forms and embraced the visible world of change and motion as real.
- ◆ He sought to describe the principles which cause change and motion in order to discover truth.

Aristotle's Ideas (continued)

- ◆ He was the first person to consider evidence...
- ◆ 1. Inductive reasoning: observing as many examples as possible of a subject and then working out the underlying principles.
- ◆ 2. Research: what was previously written or said on the subject; and a systematic study of everything else related to the subject.

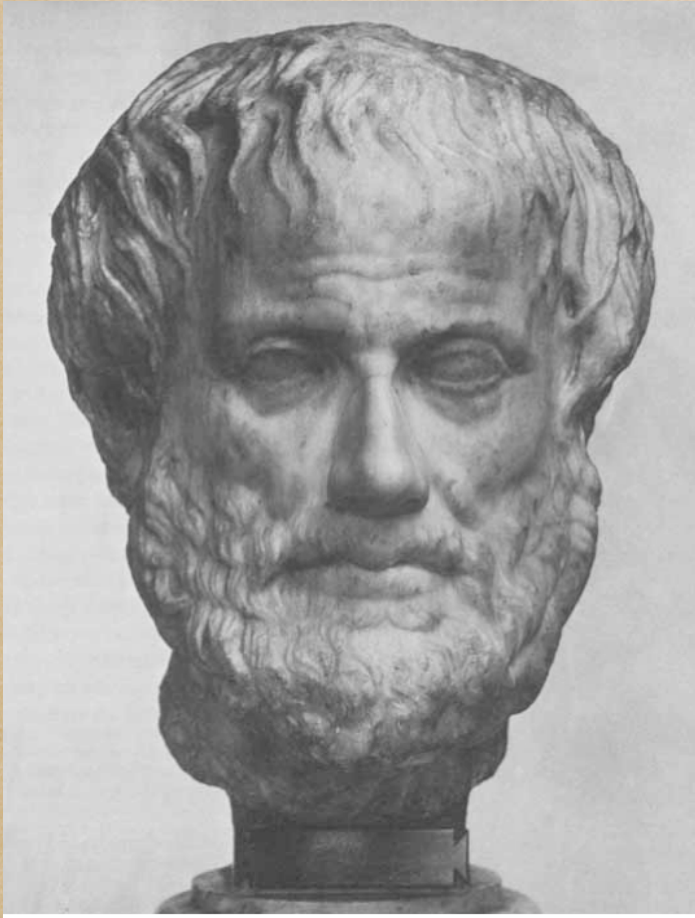
Aristotle's Ideas (continued)

- ◆ Most modern western scientific empirical thinking and the scientific method was Aristotle's invention.
- ◆ As a result of this, he wrote about everything: poetics, drama, rhetoric, economics, ethics, politics, biology, physics, mathematics, metaphysics, anatomy, physiology, logic, dreams, geometry, etc.

Aristotle's Ideas (continued)

- ◆ Classification of knowledge is based on a thing in question and how you know about that thing.
- ◆ Causality
- ◆ 4 Causes: a) the material, b) form, c) agent, d) purpose.
- ◆ All 4 causes combined, cause a thing to come into existence and to be identified.

Aristotle



Aristotle

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Plato & Aristotle's Legacy

- ◆ Both Plato and Aristotle shaped how the western world viewed and understood the universe and human nature, until the rise of modern science in the 18th century.
- ◆ Both had a great influence on Christian and Islamic theology and naturalism.



THE END
