# Article information:

Identity and Difference: Plato and Aristotle on Democracy | M.A.R. Habib | Rutgers University  
<https://habib.camden.rutgers.edu/talks/plato-and-aristotle/>

# Article summary:

1. Plato and Aristotle both critique democracy, anticipating problems that modern democracies have encountered such as relativism, excessive individual license, disorder in family life and the state, and inordinate indulgence in appetite and sensation.

2. Plato's indictment of democracy is rooted in the notion of unity, which he sees as intrinsically positive while multiplicity is associated with disorder, indulgence, and evil. He believes that unity should be achieved by suppressing all difference and positing itself as the constant inner structure of a given type of variety in the physical world.

3. Aristotle's method is to begin with the notion of a composite whole which is broken down into its smallest parts to understand its nature. He sees democracy as a form of government where power lies with the people but warns against excessive individualism and emphasizes the importance of moderation and balance in governance.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The article by M.A.R. Habib provides a detailed analysis of Plato and Aristotle's critiques of democracy, focusing on their metaphysical notions of unity and plurality. While the article offers valuable insights into the philosophical underpinnings of these critiques, it also exhibits certain biases and limitations.

One potential bias is the author's tendency to view Plato and Aristotle's critiques as prescient warnings against the problems of modern democracies. While it is true that some of the issues they identify, such as relativism and excessive individualism, are still relevant today, it is important to recognize that their critiques were shaped by specific historical contexts and political realities that may not apply to contemporary societies.

Moreover, the article tends to present Plato's idealized vision of an aristocratic state as a more desirable alternative to democracy without fully acknowledging its authoritarian implications. The emphasis on unity as a teleological principle in Plato's thought raises questions about how much individual freedom and diversity can be tolerated within such a system.

Another limitation of the article is its narrow focus on Plato and Aristotle's views on democracy without exploring other perspectives or counterarguments. For example, while Habib briefly mentions Marxism and feminism as theoretical attempts to undermine liberal dogmas, he does not engage with these perspectives in any depth or consider how they might challenge or complicate Plato and Aristotle's critiques.

Overall, while Habib's article provides a useful overview of Plato and Aristotle's critiques of democracy from a metaphysical perspective, it would benefit from a more nuanced consideration of their limitations and biases.

# Topics for further research:

* Marxist critiques of democracy
* Feminist critiques of democracy
* Liberal critiques of Plato's ideal state
* Individual freedom in Plato's ideal state
* Historical context of Plato and Aristotle's critiques
* Alternative perspectives on democracy

# Report location:

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