

Online Course on Theories of Justice

A Survey of Major Philosophical and Jurisprudential Theories of Justice from Plato to Amartya Sen

Course Objectives

- To familiarise participants with the evolution of the concept of justice from classical antiquity to contemporary debates.
- To introduce central themes, texts, and thinkers associated with major theories of justice.
- To demonstrate how diverse philosophical traditions have shaped moral, political and legal frameworks of justice.
- To provide a broad overview that prepares participants for deeper exploration of specific thinkers and schools.

Course Structure

- **Start Date:** 02 October 2025
- **Total Classes:** 15 (Sundays & Holidays)
- **Class Duration:** 2 Hours per session (8 PM – 10 PM)
- **Course Contribution:** Rs: 2750 (single payment) **OR** Rs: $1500 \times 2 = \text{Rs: } 3000$ (two instalments payable by 27/09/25 & 15/11/25)
- **Last date for confirmation of participation by payment of contribution:** 27 September 2025

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Identify key thinkers and schools of thought shaping the idea of justice.
- Trace the historical evolution of justice from Greek philosophy to contemporary jurisprudence.
- Relate theories of justice to broader legal, political, and constitutional frameworks.

Session Plan (15 Classes)

Module I – Foundations

1. **Introduction to ‘Justice’** – Justice as a theme in moral and legal philosophy
2. **Plato & Aristotle** – Justice in *Republic*; *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*
3. **St. Thomas Aquinas & Natural Law** – Divine foundations and Natural Law philosophers

Module II – Early Modern Theories

4. **Hobbes & Locke** – Social contract theories of justice
5. **Jeremy Bentham** – Classical utilitarianism; Hedonistic Calculus; law and morality

Module III – 19th to Early 20th Century Jurists

6. **Rudolf Von Ihering** – Law as a means to an end; jurisprudence of interests
7. **Leon Duguit** – Social solidarism; rejection of subjective rights
8. **Rudolf Stammler** – Natural law with variable content; neo-Kantian approach
9. **Joseph Kohler** – Neo-Hegelian civilisation theory; philosophy of culture and justice

Module IV – Contemporary Theories

10. **Roscoe Pound** – Social engineering; balancing of interests
 11. **H.L.A. Hart** – Positivism, morality and justice; critique of Natural Law/Utilitarianism
 12. **John Rawls I** – Justice as Fairness: liberty, equality, difference principle
 13. **John Rawls II** – Justice as Fairness (continued)
 14. **Robert Nozick** – Libertarian critique; entitlement theory
 15. **Amartya Sen** – Capability approach; critique of transcendental theories
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Suggested Readings (Select Texts)

- Plato – *Republic*
- Aristotle – *Nicomachean Ethics*
- Hobbes – *Leviathan*
- Locke – *Two Treatises of Government*
- Bentham – *Principles of Morals and Legislation*
- Ihering – *Law as a Means to an End*
- Duguit – *Law in the Modern State*
- Roscoe Pound – *Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*
- Hart – *The Concept of Law*
- Rawls – *A Theory of Justice*
- Nozick – *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*
- Sen – *The Idea of Justice*