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### Aristotle and Plato

Plato and Aristotle were great philosophers who shared some of the same ideas. Plato was Aristotle's teacher, so Plato was someone Aristotle looked up to and respected. Although Aristotle looked up to Plato, that does not mean he agreed with all Plato's ideas. "Forms" were the main components of Plato's philosophy, and Aristotle believed them to be real but also disagreed with Plato on many important things about "Forms." **I will explain both Plato's and Aristotle's views, and I will argue that Aristotle's philosophy makes better sense than Plato's.**

Plato believes that there are two worlds; the unchanging world, which is the world of Forms, and then the world of constant change, which is the world that we live in. He describes the world of Forms as the world of Being and the world of constant change as the world of becoming (Plato, 63). Plato also says the world of Forms is eternal because it never dies or changes. Forms are like definitions, "they are what different things of the same kind have in common and what makes them things of the same kind" (Solomon, Higgins, and Matin, 68). Plato gives an example by explaining the Form of a horse. He says that all horses "participate" in the Form horse no matter their color or shape (Plato, 68). He also explains that even if you have never seen a horse, you have learned what a horse is by recognizing the Form of a horse (Plato, 68). Plato believes that the world of Forms is the real world and that our world is just a shadow of the real world (Plato, 67). Another main view in Plato's philosophy is that we cannot learn Forms from experience. Plato says that Forms are already "in us" and need to be woken up

(Plato, 71). He says that our souls already contain knowledge of the world of being at birth (Plato, 71). The big question is, “How is it possible to learn a truth about the world of being?”. (Solomon, Higgins, and Matin, 71). Plato answers, “We already know it; it’s just a matter of recalling it.”

Aristotle agreed with Plato that Forms exist. However, he disagreed with what Plato said about “participation.” Aristotle believed that Plato failed at explaining the connection between Forms and particular things and that “participation” was just an empty phrase that Plato used. (Aristotle, 75). Although Aristotle believed that Forms were real, he did not think there were two separate worlds like Plato said. Aristotle thought that this world we live in is the only reality (Aristotle, 75). He also disagreed with Plato that the human soul was separate from the human body and that humans were just creatures of nature (Aristotle, 75). Unlike Plato, Aristotle’s metaphysics focused on nature and the physical world around us. Aristotle did not believe that nature or anything in it changes, so he did not believe in evolution (Solomon, Higgins, and Matin, 77). Another big part of Aristotle’s philosophy was his four different kinds of cause. “All of which together explain why a thing is as it is at any given time” (Solomon, Higgins, and Matin, 80). There is the material cause which is what it is made of; there's the formal cause, which is the blueprint, the efficient cause which is the person that does an action to it, and the final clause, the telos, which is its purpose (Solomon, Higgins, and Matin, 80).

The reason I think that Aristotle’s views make more sense than Plato’s is because he found flaws in Plato's beliefs. There is no way of proving that the world of Forms exists, and so Aristotle believed we should learn more about the world around us. I also don’t think that our souls are born with a knowledge of Forms like Plato believed. It is more important to focus on gaining knowledge of our world than of a world of common sense. Aristotle’s metaphysics gave

knowledge on essential things like biology that we still focus on today. That is why I believe Aristotle's views are more accurate than Plato's.

### **Works Cited**

Aristotle. *Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings*, twelfth ed., Oxford University Press, New York, 2020, p. 75.

Plato. *Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings*, twelfth ed., Oxford University Press, New York, 2020, pp. 63, 67, 68, 71.

Solomon, R., K. Higgins, and C. Martin. *Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings*, twelfth ed., Oxford University Press, New York, 2020, pp. 68, 71, 77, 80.



