

## The Concept of Justice in the View of Socrates

Thet Naing

### Abstract

This research paper is an attempt to answer the question “Should the Socrates’ view on Justice be used by government for finding out the peace and tranquility of human societies?”<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this paper is to show that Socrates’ view on Justice is an idea that should be applied by government for the peace and tranquility of human society. This research paper will attempt to solve the research problem why Socrates’ view on Justice can be accepted as an appropriate idea for the peace and tranquility of human societies.<sup>2</sup> The hypothetical solution will be that Socrates’ view on Justice is closely connected with social and moral philosophies and ethical values.<sup>3</sup> This hypothetical solution will be proved by using of the descriptive method<sup>4</sup> to represent the facts of which collected by literature review and will be evaluated by the principle of fairness<sup>5</sup>. This research paper will contribute to the constructing the mutual understanding of the political culture between the people and the government.<sup>6</sup>

**Keywords:** Justice, Fairness, social and moral philosophies, ethical values, mutual understanding

### Introduction

This research paper is an attempt to study the concept of justice in the view of Socrates. This view on Justice will be focused as a main theme but the literature survey and other data collections will be primarily based on ancient Greek political philosophy.

A culture of a society is always dependent upon its philosophical history, mythology and religious beliefs. The concept of justice can be different from different culture and society. The idea of justice can usually be influenced by each cultural and philosophical value of societies. Some principles of justice can be found in one and the same in all or most of the cultures but these principles cannot be considered to create a sufficient unitary justice apprehension.

The purpose of this paper is to show that Socrates’ view on Justice is an idea that should be applied by government for the peace and tranquility of human society. The scope of this research includes ancient Greek political philosophy and Western political thought. Research always begins with research question.

#### (a) Research Question

Every country has the same altitude to live peacefully in this world. But there are some places of some countries which have not got the peace and tranquility of society yet. The main purpose of life is to get the development and peace. In order to get the peace and tranquility of a state or country Justice is essential. The research question, “Should the Socrates’ view on Justice be used by government for finding out the peace and tranquility of human societies?” will be answered and inquired on positive view which will be a research statement.

---

<sup>1</sup> Research Question

<sup>2</sup> Research Problem

<sup>3</sup> Hypothesis

<sup>4</sup> Research method

<sup>5</sup> Research principle

<sup>6</sup> Contribution

**(b) Research Statement**

Research statement is a statement that is answered from research question to search the reason. To give the reason of the research statement that the Socrates' view on Justice should be used by government for finding out the peace and tranquility of human societies research problem should be constructed in relevant and logical relation.

**(c) Research Problem**

In this way, why the Socrates' view on Justice should be used by government for finding out the peace and tranquility of human societies becomes the research problem in this research paper. In solving this problem and giving the reason of it a tentative solution can be speculated as a hypothetical solution or an expected result of this research.

**(d) Hypothetical Solution**

The hypothetical solution is that the concept of Justice in the Socrates' view is closely connected with social, moral philosophies and ethical values. It would be proved by using the some logical thinking. Socrates' view on justice and his political philosophy will be studied and described by using the method of description always used in studying the philosophy of politics.

**(e) Research Methods and Principle**

In doing so, the hypothetical solution will be proved by using of the descriptive method to represent the facts of which collected by literature review on some ancient Greek political thoughts. In evaluating the research result the concept of fairness as a principle will be used in order to get the contribution of the research.

**(f) Contribution**

This research paper will contribute to the constructing the mutual understanding of the political culture between the people and the government. Without fairness, the mutual understanding can never be constructed. In conclusion, the Socrates' views on political thoughts will be emphasized through the common denominator of political or social conception of Justice which is crucial importance for sustainability of peaceful societies. In constructing the research problem and in proving it to define the keywords would be essential.

**(g) Defining Keywords**

In this research paper, the keywords will mainly be defined and discussed are (1) Justice, (2) Fairness and (3) Government. Hence firstly the word 'Justice' will be defined and the word fairness should be considered.

**What Justice is and Fairness**

In the book, *The Great Political Theories*, edited by Michale Curtis, Justice is an idea that can improve the state or the country. In democracy, justice can be considered as equality.<sup>7</sup> The word '*justice*' comes from Greek word '*dikaisyne*'. It means 'morality' or 'righteousness'.<sup>8</sup> Morality or righteousness can be said as the duty of a just man. Justice can be defined as the morality of fairness that can improve the society. In fact, the word justice cannot precisely be defined. Philosophers, politicians, theologians and legislators have often used it in different points of views. In general, Justice is often defined as the word "fairness".

<sup>7</sup>Michale Curtis (edited by), 2008, *The Great Political Theories, Volume I; A Comprehensive Selection of the Crucial Ideas in Political Philosophy from the Greeks to the Enlightenment*, New York: Harper Collins Publisher.p.82.

<sup>8</sup>Sevinceyan, *Platonic Justice*, [www.studymode.com](http://www.studymode.com) › Home › Philosophy, Last modified: March 21, 2007.

John Rawls who was an American philosopher and a figure in moral and political philosophy said in his book, '*A Theory of Justice*'.

I begin by describing the role of justice in social cooperation and with a brief account of the primary subject of justice, the basic structure of society. I then present the main idea of justice as fairness, a theory of justice that generalizes and carries to a higher level of abstraction the traditional conception of the social contract. The compact of society is replaced by an initial situation that incorporates certain procedural constraints on arguments designed to lead to an original agreement on principles of justice. I also take up, for purposes of clarification and contrast, the classical utilitarian and intuitionist conceptions of justice and consider some of the differences between these views and justice as fairness.<sup>9</sup>

When 'what justice is' is considered it can be assumed that the function of Justice has two parts. One is the part of attainment and second is the philosophical discussion. There could be also various kinds of Justice. Some are Formal Justice, Substantive justice, Retributive Justice, Corrective justice, Commutative Justice, and Distributive justice etc. *Formal Justice* is concerned with the impartial and consistent application of principles, whether or not the principles themselves are just. *Substantive justice* is closely associated with rights. *Retributive Justice* deals with when and why punishment is justified. Justice has commonly been identified both with obeying law and with treating everyone with fairness. It can be considered that law and justice are on the frontier. Thus Howard Abadinsky wrote in his book, '*Law and Justice*' as follows;

In many areas there was little law, justice being decided in a rather crude fashion by persons having rather limited knowledge of law and legal process and often acting on their own instinct.<sup>10</sup>

Hence justice has become very essential in order to create the rules of Law. The rules of law depend on fairness of the different kinds of justice. *Corrective justice* is concerned with the fairness of demands for civil damages. *Commutative Justice* is concerned with the fairness of wages, prices, and exchange. *Distributive justice* is concerned with the fairness of the distribution of resources. *Commutative justice* is related with *Distributive justice*.<sup>11</sup> In this respect it can be said that the concept of justice is based on various fields, and many differing viewpoints and perspectives. It can be also said that the concept of Justice is including the concepts of moral rightness. Justice is based on ethics, rationality, law and fairness.

The justice can be seen in the two points of views such as social justice and procedural justice. Social justice can be found in philosophy and procedural justice can be found in the law. In this paper the concept of justice will be studied from the philosophical point of view. Hence social justice will be emphasized.

It is sure that the concept of justice differs in every culture. Some scholars always use the term "culture" to refer to a universal human capacity. In ancient Greek culture, Plato who helped to lay the foundations of Western political philosophy set out an early theory of justice in his *Republic*. Socrates said to Glaucon;

And the different forms of government make laws democratically, aristocratically, tyrannical, with a view to their several interests; and these laws, which are made by them for their own interests, are the justice which they deliver to their subjects, and him who transgresses them they punish as a breaker of the law, and unjust. And that is what I mean when I say that in all states there is the same principle of justice, which is the interest of the government; and as the

<sup>9</sup> John Rawls, 1971, *A Theory of Justice*, Harvard: Harvard University press.p.3.

<sup>10</sup> Howard Abadinsky, 1991, *Law and Justice*, New York: Nelson- Hall Inc. p. 49.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Audi, General Editor, 1999, the *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy (Second Edition)*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 456- 457.

government must be supposed to have power, the only reasonable conclusion is, that everywhere there is one principle of justice, which is the interest of the stronger.<sup>12</sup>

Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems, such as those connected with *reality, existence, values, knowledge and reason* including *Justice*. Some religious philosophers think that justice issues from God. Some theorists said that justice is for the theory of natural law. It is a system of law that is determined by nature and refers to the use of reason to analyze human nature. Natural law is often contrasted with the manmade laws of a given political community. Some social philosophers said that justice is derived from the mutual agreement of everyone concerned. Some Utilitarian philosophers like John Stuart Mill said that justice is what right is and what has the best consequences.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless the concept of justice is importance for a society. Justice can provide the chief criterion for the legitimating and every society with the fundamental rule of social order. The main theme of justice is to describe the basic structure of society. Justice can be defined as fairness in the context of social justice. Justice can be defined as equality of power in society.<sup>14</sup> Justice and injustice possess four distinguishing features. The first feature is quality. The second is the will. Third is the accountability and responsibility. And forth is the freedom of will. They are the actions of individual.

In general, it can be understood that justice can only exist within the coordinates of equality. Thus John Rawls who was an American political philosopher shows that justice is a form of fairness. The word fairness can also been used in any situation. The people always wish to be treated fairly. They wish to have equality and fairness. Therefore the assurance of justice is usually a prerequisite for a peace society. Hence in this paper the hypothetical solution will be evaluated by the principle of fairness through the common denominator of political or social conception of Justice which is crucial importance for sustainability of peaceful societies. Moreover, the concept of justice consists in the meaning of peace.

### **What is Government?**

Government is a group that preserves and develops a state through the sustainability of peaceful societies. Government always has responsibility to serve three powers in each constitution for finding out the peace and tranquility of human societies. These three powers are (1) the deliberative power (2) the power of the magistracies, and (3) the judicial power. The deliberative power is sovereign. It depends on four situations. The first sovereign is on the issue of war and peace. The second is in the enacting of law. The third is in cases where penalty of death, exile, and confiscation. And fourth is in the appointment of magistrates.

To define what government is difficult. A large number of political systems originate based on socio-economic movements. Every country in the world is ruled by a system of governance. A government is the system by which a state or community is governed. In the Commonwealth of Nations, the word *government* is also used more narrowly to refer to the collective group of people that exercises executive authority in a state. A government can be called as an administration. Government normally consists of legislators, administrators, and arbitrators. A Government belongs to the sovereign or supreme power in a state or nation. Sovereign power in a state expresses its will and exercises. Its functions are the framework of political institutions, departments, and offices, the executive, judicial, legislative, and administrative business of the state. State policy is enforced by the Government. Government

<sup>12</sup> Benjamin Jowett (Translated by), 2013, *The Republic by Plato*, Pennsylvania: An Electronic Classics Series Publication. p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), [www.justiceharvard.org/resources/j-s-mill-utilitarianism](http://www.justiceharvard.org/resources/j-s-mill-utilitarianism).

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Patrick Burke. 2011. *The Concept of Justice*. New York: Continuum International Publish Group.p.3.

is a mechanism for determining the policy of the state. A form of government, or a form of state governance, refers to the set of political systems and institutions. Political scientists always say that government should not be studied by itself but should be studied along with anthropology, economics, environmentalism, history, philosophy, science, and sociology.<sup>15</sup>

Government should practice the regulation, restraint, supervision and control upon the individual members of an organized society. Government should take exercising supreme political power or control for the good and welfare of the politics. The system of politics can be called as a form of fundamental rules and principles. A constitution can be written by the rights and duties of citizens and public officers. A nation or state is governed in accordance with a constitution to regulate social actions.

Generally there can be two kinds of Government. First is a monarchical government and second is a republican government. An empire, kingdom and state are independent political community. It can be known as independent governments. Government is a group of people who control and make decisions for a country, state. According to Dr. Harold Dame row, a professor of government and history, government is 'responsible primarily for making public policy for an entire society and 'the steering mechanism for a given society.'<sup>16</sup>

The aim of Government is to form a more perfect Union. The government should keep the country united and helps to form a sense of community, patriotism, and national pride. The essence of Government is to establish Justice on people.

### **The Concept of Justice in the Socrates' View**

If the concept of justice will be studied, the western views on the theories of Justice should be studied. Western philosophies began with Greek thoughts. In the same way the western political thought originated in ancient Greece. Western ideals of equality, justice, liberty, law and government had been considered in Greek politics and city-state. So it can be said that political philosophy began with the Greeks. Ancient Greek philosophers like as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had been speculated the various ideas of politics. Hence some scholars said that the most political ideas had been the footnotes of Plato. Before Greek there also were fragments of political ideas and problems. Nevertheless it may be understood that the Greek philosophers had really created the term of politics which came from Greek word, *polis*. Socrates is also an essential Greek philosopher if the conception of justice will be investigated in political nature and discussion of some political problems. So Socrates' view on Justice will firstly be studied in some conceptions of justice in western thoughts.

### **Socrates' View on Justice**

Socrates is a classical Greek philosopher. He is also essential in the modern Western philosophy. He is well known for creating the Socratic Method. Socrates did not write any philosophy. There were four famous Greek philosophers. They were Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, and Aristophanes. The philosophy of Socrates derived from the work of them and through the works which Plato wrote such as 'The Apology'. The views and ideas which Socrates thought are reflected through Plato's dialogues to philosophical discussion. In Plato's dialogues the philosophies of Socrates which Plato portrayed can be found.

<sup>15</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government>, May 25, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> [http://thelawdictionary.org/government/What Is Government?,](http://thelawdictionary.org/government/What%20Is%20Government%20%3F) May 282015.

The concepts of Good and Justice were clarified by the Socratic Method. Any problem was solved by using a series of questions and the answers which could be called the Socratic Method. It can be said that the Socratic Method is designed to help examine one's own conception and idea. Socrates said that wisdom was parallel to one's ignorance. A result of this level of intelligence and ignorance can be called wisdom. The love of wisdom is connected with the art of love. Humans can become wise in a clear line between wisdom and ignorance. He said that he knows one thing and it is that he does not know anything. This is the source of his views on what justice is. For Socrates, what justice is depends on virtue. Professor Seymour Martin Lipset described the views of Socrates and John Rawls concerning with the concept of justice in his book, '*Political Philosophy: Theory, Thinkers, and Concepts*'.

Socrates argued that justice is fundamental to any concept of living well and that living according to justice is intrinsically good. Rawls claims that justice is the first virtue of social institutions.<sup>17</sup>

For Socrates, self-development than material things must be concentrated on. Friendships and love amongst must be developed. Certain basic philosophical or intellectual virtues are possessed by humans and the valuable of all possessions are virtues. Acting the good and doing the truth are different. Virtue is related to the Goodness of the soul or mind. The nature of justice can be deduced from virtue or goodness of the mind which can create the fairness of the politics.

According to Socrates, justice is a cardinal human virtue. Virtue is a state of the human mind. What justice is depends upon human consideration. There can be three conditions in human mind. They are reason, spirit, and appetite. Human Mind can be seen as human soul that is immortal and disembodied. In fact Human mind also consists of beliefs, emotions, and desires. They also are parts of the human soul. They must carefully be controlled. The certain cases of psychological conflict cannot coherently be explained. Reason, Spirit, and appetite are distinct subjects of psychological states and the parts of the subjects of psychological attitudes. It can be said that every embodied human being has just one soul that comprises these three parts. But no embodied soul is perfectly unified. The virtuous person can make his soul in to a unity that has these three parts. In human soul, reason, spirit, and appetite constitute a single soul that is a unified source of human life and is a unified locus of reliability. These three parts can be explained as the broader patterns of human thought and actions.

The Reason can be taken to be good for the soul. The wisdom can also get this right. The value of wisdom is crucial to discover what is good for one. So it can be said that wisdom is a fundamental constituent of virtue. Virtue is a fundamental constituent of what is good for a human being. Therefore it can be concluded that wisdom becomes to be a fundamental constituent of what is good for a human being. The reason in the human soul tracks and pursues what is good because the human reason also admires wisdom. The Spirit tracks social importance and honor. Appetite seeks material satisfaction for bodily urges. Human is ruled by appetite and spirit. Human reason originates what is good. Reason has to get what is in fact good for the human soul. Human soul is perfectly ruled by spirit. Reason begins for truth and wisdom.

Socrates did, morally, intellectually and politically not like with the Athenians. Socrates' view on justice based on the idea that ideals belong in a world that only the wise man can understand. Justice can be achieved from wise man. It seems to be that Socrates did

---

<sup>17</sup>Seymour Martin Lipset, 2001, *Political Philosophy: Theory, Thinkers, and Concepts*, Washington: A Division of Congressional Quarterly Inc.p-403.

object to democracy and disliked its Athenian form. Basically, he objected to any government that did not run on the basis of his ideas of perfect governance. Socrates refused to enter politics because he could not tell other people how to lead their lives when he didn't know how to live his own. He had received that he was a philosopher of truth which he had not fully discovered.

For Socrates, this world can be understood by only the wise man. Philosophy means love of wisdom and philosopher is lover of wisdom. So the only type of person like as philosopher is suitable to govern the state. Socrates denied the democracy used in Athens. Socrates in the *Republic* of Plato seems to be illustrated by Plato's own perspectives. Whether Socrates opposed to democracy or not is one of the biggest philosophical debates. In the book, *The Great Political Theories*, edited by Michael Curtis a philosophical debate can be seen.

Unless either philosophers become kings in their countries or those who are now called kings and rulers come to be sufficiently inspired with a genuine desire for wisdom; unless, that is to say, political power and philosophy meet together, while the many natures who now go their several ways in the one or the other direction are forcibly debarred from doing so, there can be no rest from troubles for states, nor yet, as I believed, for all mankind; nor can this commonwealth which we have imagined ever till then see the light of day and grow to its full stature.<sup>18</sup>

Socrates refused to pursue conventional politics. Socrates often said that he could not tell people how to live because he did not yet understand how to live his own. Socrates said that he was a philosopher who engaged in the pursuit of Truth but he did not know it fully. Socrates' acceptance of his death sentence after his conviction can also be seen to support this view. For Socrates what *justice* is can be found as '*wisdom*'. In other word it can be said that Justice is in wisdom. If there is no wisdom, there is also no justice. The way of democracy cannot be just because this way can be wrong and bad. Thus, professor Mel Thompson, in his book, '*Understand Political philosophy*, described the famous example of the fate of Socrates.

The most famous example of this was the fate of Socrates, who was condemned to death by a Jury in 399BCE for impiety (i.e.not recognizing the established gods of the city) and 'corrupting the young men' of Athens. Such a trial and punishment was the exception rather than the rule, however, and probably reflects the climate of suspicion and fear at the end of the fifth century which was the legacy of the rule of the Thirty Tyrants.<sup>19</sup>

In short, according to Socrates Justice always takes time, morality, and perseverance. Injustice is shrewd, deceptive, and manipulative. While it is not easy to be a justice, it is a justice as difficult to be an injustice. Instead of using justice and injustice, the words good and evil may be used. Good is the opposite of Evil.

### Conclusion

The concept of justice in understanding can be different from each culture. Cultures are usually dependent upon a shared history, mythology and religion. Ethical conducts in a culture can create values of a society in the concept of justice. There can be found some principles of justice that are one and the same in all or most of the cultures. These are insufficient to create a unitary justice apprehension.

<sup>18</sup>Michael Curtis (edited by), 2008, *The Great Political Theories, Volume I; A Comprehensive Selection of the Crucial Ideas in Political Philosophy from the Greeks to the Enlightenment*, New York: Harper Collins Publisher.pp-54-55.

<sup>19</sup>Mel Thompson. 2008. *Understand Political philosophy*. London: McGraw- Hill Companies, Inc.p.25.

The Western concept of Justice started from the Plato's idea of Justice which based on an ethical virtue. For that reason, it can be understood that Eastern views on Justice is primarily associated with their ethical thoughts. There can be said that justice is an ethical virtue. Justice is justly acting to an internal state of the person. The just individual refrains from social actions such as lying, killing, and stealing. Harmonious and justice mind will not lie, kill, or steal. The virtue of individual justice is a matter of respect and promotes just social arrangements. A just individual has rational insight into own merits in various situations.

The concept of justice is the most important in western contemporary political philosophy. John Rawls claims that "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought."<sup>20</sup> Justice is the concept of cardinal virtues. Therefore, the concept of Justice is closely connected with their social and natural philosophies which derived from the interweaving of applied value of religious or social thoughts. In this sense, the concept of Justice rooted in the ethical philosophy of respective cultures. Justice always represents as the individual or social rights of people in society.

Justice is a philosophical concept of rightness in Ethics. Justice is fundamental to any ethical system. The definitions of 'justice' and what is 'just' are widely disputed among philosophers, ethicists and political thinkers. What justice is will ultimately depend on one's ethical position, and one's approach to normative ethics in response to that position. Consequentiality approaches to morality and will consider justice based on the impact that ethical decisions have been on people and their environment. In general, the concept of justice is independence of a legal system and concerns with equality or fairness, religious teachings or human rationality.

Moral values are put into the meanings of justice both in the Eastern and Western cultures. They share a common basic spirit. In fact Eastern culture and Western culture are different. It can be found that in traditional Chinese culture, justice is a more comprehensive concept. In the Western thought, justice combined with the knowledge of the law and more clear analysis of the meaning. These meanings can be clarified with the help of philosophical analysis. Justice plays an important role in Western philosophical and political ideology. To some extent, the Western concept of justice shapes their political and legal system.

### **Result and Finding:**

In this research process the hypothetical solution is that the conceptions of Justice in the Socrates' view is closely connected with social and moral philosophies. Various views on the concept of justice can be found as an ethical concept.

For Socrates what *justice* is can be found as '*wisdom*'. In other word it can be said Justice as wisdom. If there is no wisdom, there is also no justice. According to Socrates, justice is a cardinal human virtue. Virtue is a state of the human mind. What justice is depends upon human consideration.

### **Discussion:**

The development of the Western concept of justice was started by Plato and Aristotle. The word justice has maintained basic semantics such as integrity, impartiality, and fairness. In fact, Plato was the first one to discuss justice in a systematic approach. He interpreted the concept of justice as "*Carrying out one's duty to one's station.*" This interpretation also became the origins and theory of justice. Plato thinks that justice is a state of morality and not a

---

<sup>20</sup>John Rawls, 1971, *A Theory of Justice*, Harvard: Harvard University press. p.32

guideline on being moral. Each individual performing his own duty reflects a harmonious order of life with justice as the prerequisite for its maintenance.

Aristotle had a different point of view on justice. He philosophized that justice is the need to safeguard common interests and personal interests. So he made discrimination between Universal Justice and Particular Justice. Aristotle described Universal justice as lawfulness. Therefore justice is the lawful and the fair, the injustice is the unlawful and the unfair. Justice is a proportion of equity. Justice refers to the most perfect virtue and the point of all virtue.

Augustine is a representative of medieval Europe. He said that true justice could not be found in the secular community, because justice is an eternal standard. It exists prior to the country. The state law must be consistent with justice and natural law. The main relationship is not just the relationship between people, but the relationship between man and God, which is the representative theory of the theology of justice.

The selected concepts such as freedom, equality, and fraternity are always defined as the primary values of justice. Hobbs also defined justice in concerning with these concepts. For him justice is based on man's interests and security. In order to obtain personal safety, people have to transfer some rights and to make contracts with each other and then to establish the State and to develop communities in which where justice and fairness take place.

American political philosopher John Rawls gave the most systematic and most reasonable analysis of the theory of justice. Justice is known as the leading figure in the theory of justice. He believes that the goal of justice is to achieve the rational allocation of the burden and benefits derived from cooperation by establishing the basic structure of society and arranging the basic rights and obligations of citizens.

Every country has attempted for constructing the mutual understanding between the East and the West through the common denominator of these political or social conception of Justice. This is a crucial importance for sustainability of peaceful societies.

## **Evaluation**

This research paper has attempted to answer the question “Can the concept of Justice in the view of Socrates be an appropriate idea for finding out the peace and tranquility of human societies?”. This paper answers that the concept of Justice in the view of Socrates is an appropriate idea for finding out the peace and tranquility of human societies.

In attempting to solve the research problem why the concept of Justice in the view of Socrates can be accepted as an appropriate idea for finding out the peace and tranquility, the reason is the fact that the concept of Justice in most political traditions is closely connected with their social and natural philosophies which derived from the interweaving of applied value of religious or social thoughts. Social thoughts are concerned with the social justice. The justice is a procedural concept and cannot give any particular aim for society. The Justice is a mere virtue of individuals. In other words, justice is a quality of will respect for the freedom of will of individuals.

The concept of justice can be understood that justice is fairness because this conception depends on philosophical claims such as universal truth, essential nature and identity of persons. The task of political philosophy is to survey the idea of justice as fairness into a political conception of justice for a constitutional democracy. So this conception of justice can be understood as an idea that avoids certain philosophical claims. The public conception of justice in a constitutional democracy should be independent of philosophical claims. In formulating the public conception of justice to be political, the principle of

philosophy is applied. Hence justice is defined as fairness. In other words fairness is the essential principle in order to become real justice in every situation in every society.

Fairness can be called as a virtue and a moral obligation. It is necessary to attention that fairness is not the same as Justice at all but mere just a principle to evaluate whether justice or injustice. Whatever is unjust is unfair. Not everything that is unfair is unjust. Fairness is a moral claim. A fair action is not mere absence of kindness.<sup>21</sup>In evaluating the research result the concept of fairness as a principle has used in order to get the contribution of the research.

### **Contribution:**

Stability and peace in relations both between and within societies are essential for sustainable development. The mutual nature of the interrelation is between peace, stability and development. Peace and security, development and human rights are the foundation for collective security and well-being. Some progress of the international community hesitated with conflict and violence within societies. An attempt to rebuild a society must face the conflict that refers beyond silencing the guns, restoring trust and reconstructing the social unity. The conflict itself is complex. The process of promoting development depends on the conditions for restoration and reconstruction. External stresses can also undermine peace and development progress. The international community becomes to intend the goal of poverty eradication. It will also have the good quality, good governance, the rule of law, gender quality and human rights, including the right to development for all.

A deliberate set of strategies must be contemplated to protect the benefits of the growing numbers of persons. It needs to continue to be affected by the tensions and instability persisting in the knowing of conflict and violence. A building stable and peaceful society is an essential part of the international effort to achieve sustainable development. The sustained efforts to ensure stable and peaceful societies are today more important. Thus it requires that hardness of efforts sustain at all levels, national, regional and global in order to improve social unity and remove the demarcation, alienation and other forms of social and economic inequities which may have contributed to the conflict in the first place.

This research paper will contribute to the constructing the mutual understanding of the political culture between the people and the government. The comparison between the philosophical conception of Justice in Western and Eastern political thoughts are emphasized through the common denominator of political or social conception of Justice which is crucial importance for sustainability of peaceful societies in those cultures.

### **Recommendation**

This research paper could generally describe the concept of Justice in the views of Socrates, Aristotle and Plato. The findings and results can be concluded from generalization of mere some their conceptions of justice. Hence these results and findings cannot be confirmed and completed totally but only in part. The Philosophy always examines the ideas of past thinkers to understand the world and people's experience of it. The research problem in this paper is an attempt to guide and enhance the understanding of the concept of justice in ancient Greek political thoughts. These thoughts are speculated to construct the common denominator of political or social conception of Justice in order to get the mutual understanding of the every country as well as between the East and West. In fact this research

---

<sup>21</sup>Thomas Patrick Burke, 2011,*The Concept of Justice: Is Social Justice Just?* London: Continuum International Publishing Group, p.178-179.

paper has been mere a general speculation on the concept of justice in some Greek philosophers, like as Socrates, Aristotle and Plato. The detail studies concerning with the concept of justice in ancient Greek political thoughts will be proceeded to doing the philosophical research of justice in future research.

### Acknowledgements

Special thanks are due to the Dr. Aung Win, Acting Rector of Hinthada University and Dr. Theingi Shwe, Pro-Rector of Hinthada University for their encouragement to do this work. I am also grateful to Dr. Thinn Thinn Lei, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Hinthada University for her critical reading and suggestion to the research paper. Finally, I am grateful to my colleagues and staffs of the Department of Philosophy, Hinthada University, for their understanding and supports during the preparation of this paper.

### References

- Abadinsky, Howard. 1991. *Law and Justice*, New York: Nelson- Hall Inc.
- Audi, Robert, General Editor, 1999. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy (Second Edition)*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Curtis, Curtis, Michale, (edited by), 2008. *The Great Political Theories, Volume I; A Comprehensive Selection of the Crucial Ideas in Political Philosophy from the Greeks to the Enlightenment*, New York: Harper Collins Publisher.
- Eric, A. Havelock, 1978. *The Greek Concept of Justice*, London: Harvard University Press.
- Havelock, Eric A, 1978. *The Greek Concept of Justice*, London: Harvard University Press.
- Huard, Roger, 2007. *Plato's Political Philosophy*, New York: Algora Publishing.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin, 2001. *Political Philosophy: Theory, Thinkers, and Concepts*, Washington: A Division of Congressional Quarterly Inc.
- Lord, Carnes and David K. O'Connor, edited by, 1991. *Essays on the Foundations of Aristotelian Political Science*, California: University of California Press.
- Martin Lipset, Seymour, 2001. *Political Philosophy: Theory, Thinkers, and Concepts*, Washington: A Division of Congressional Quarterly Inc.
- Patrick Patrick, Burke, Thomas 2011. *The Concept of Justice: Is Social Justice Just?* London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Rawls, John, 1971. *A Theory of Justice*, Harvard: Harvard University press.
- Thompson, Mel., 2008. *Understand Political philosophy*. London: McGraw- Hill Companies, Inc.
- Schofield, Malcolm, 2000. *Plato: Political Philosophy*. London: Oxford University Press.

### Online References

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government>, May 25, 2015.
- [http://thelawdictionary.org/government/What Is Government?](http://thelawdictionary.org/government/What_Is_Government?) May 28, 2015.
- Mill, John Stuart [www.justiceharvard.org/resources/j-s-mill-utilitarianism](http://www.justiceharvard.org/resources/j-s-mill-utilitarianism).
- Sevinceyan, *Platonic Justice*, [www.studymode.com](http://www.studymode.com) › Home › Philosophy, Last modified: