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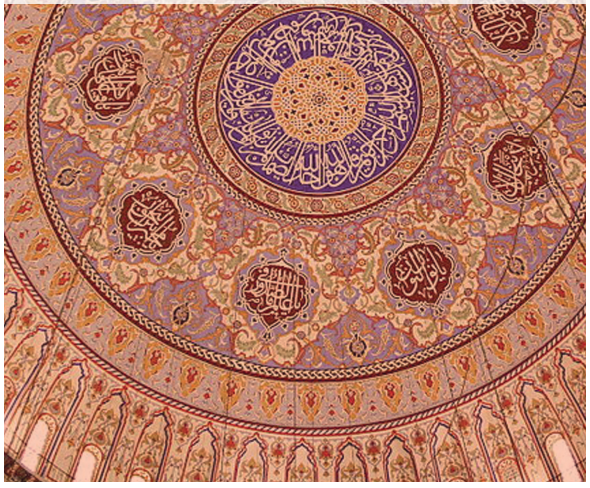




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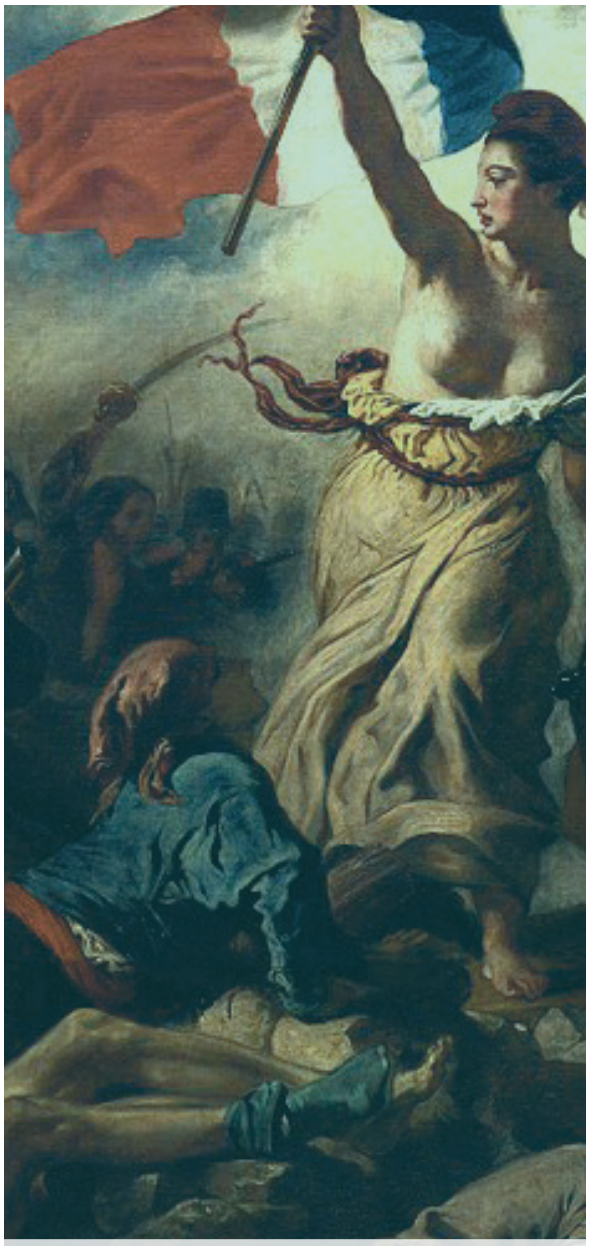





ANADOLU UNIVERSITY

Political Thought

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Chapter 2

Political Thought in Ancient Greece and Rome

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the differences of political developments in Sparta and Athens.
2. Explain Plato's political philosophy.
3. Explain the relationship between the general and political philosophy of Aristotle.
4. Analyze the philosophical origins of contractarianism and cosmopolitanism.
5. Analyze the practical contributions of Polybius and Cicero.
6. Explain the political problems and solutions of an imperial state.

Chapter Outline

Introduction

Birth of Political Thought in Polis: Sophists, Socrates, and Cynics

State as A Result of Social Life: Political Thought in Plato

State as The Only Ethical Form of Life: Political Thought in Aristotle

Intermediate Rings Between Greek and Roman Politics

Political Thought of Roman Res Publica: Polybius and Cicero

Imperial Rome

Key Terms

Egalitarianism
Non-Egalitarianism
Contractarianism
Polis
Citizenship
Ethics
Res Publica
Free Will



INTRODUCTION

The rise of the political thought is related to the birth of society and thus the state. This is perhaps one of the least controversial asseverations in the field of political thought due to, not the simply endorsable characteristic of that claim for any social scientist, but the inevitable derivation of what we call as politics from what we call as societal relations. In spite of the fact that early examples of a civilised society and political thought can be observed in Mesopotamia, Egypt as well as India; the birth of the western political thought, which is the most influential one in contemporary era, is usually dated back to the ancient Greece and Rome. In this regard, Greek and Roman philosophers have particular significance for their effects on the modern western political philosophy.

A comprehensive understanding of the western political thought requires a careful reading of the early Greek and Roman tradition in this field. Political institutions in ancient Greece started with the birth of *polis* that is today literally known as *city*. However, *the polis*, beyond various concrete structures, represented a particular social organization where a vivid and secure atmosphere for social, political, and cultural opportunities as well as discussions about them were being provided to residents. In polis, Sophists, Socrates, and Cynics were the early scholars, who theorized their ages. Plato and Aristotle, whose names frequently appear in many branches of social sciences, were also influential figures of early political thought of the western tradition. They developed their political understanding in a fluctuant society where ideas and contending discussions are quite vibrant. Although ancient democracy was seen as a role model for modern democracies, Greek "democracy" was not a fully-desirable regime for such early philosophers. They expressed their discontent in many different sources and discussed how a better society and governing method can possibly flourish. In doing so, Plato developed a state theory that arose from the social life of *polis* whereas Aristotle offered an ethical form of life.

One of the most influential and well-known discussions of political thought, namely the social contractarian philosophy, became very famous at the beginning of the modernity, hundreds of years later than ancient times. The origin of the social contraction philosophy, however, can be found in ancient Greece. To illustrate, Epicurus, an influential figure of the political thought in ancient times, offered a contractarian state theory. Following this, Stoicist, a branch of Hellenistic school in ancient political philosophy, came in sight and developed a theory of state as empire.

Roman history has several phases. Among these phases, the most important ones in terms of the development of the political thought are the republican Rome and the imperial Rome. Although the actual theoretical contributions of scholars of these eras are limited, practical implementations and solutions of their contributions can be seen as another step in political thought. Contributions of Polybius and Cicero, for example, underpinned the idea of republican Rome, while Seneca's contributions maintained the idea of the empire. Last but not least, the ring that connects the antiquity to Christianity is also important for a comprehensive understanding of the development in political thought. Saint Augustine can be recognized as the last caesura before the *allegedly* dark mediaeval ages.

Political thought illustrates a long journey of humanity. Now, at the beginning of this part of the book, we are on the first phase of this journey without which there is no possibility to reach a comprehensive understanding of the existing dominant political ideas of nowadays.

BIRTH OF POLITICAL THOUGHT IN POLIS: SOPHISTS, SOCRATES, AND CYNICS

Ancient Greek civilization is well-known for its specific political, social, economic, and cultural habitat that is known as "polis". *Polis* is both the name of a social milieu and its political institution. This in fact underlines an important initial point that political administration is not something detached from the social life. On the contrary, it is an indispensable part of it in ancient Greece.

The members of the *Polis*, in other words city-state, consist of *polites*, namely the citizens; and the citizens of the *polis* consist of free Greek men among which foreigners, women, and slaves are not included (Eco, 2017, p. 61).

Important

The citizenship status was not given to those who were foreigners, women, and slaves in ancient polis of Greece.

Considering existing archival information, it is not possible to specify a precise date for the birth of the *polis*. We already know that there were settlements on the Greek geography starting from the 2nd Millennium B.C. On the other hand, *polis*, as a social settlement with its ideological and political institutions, appears at the 5th Century B.C., at the middle of the classical age. The very early discussions on *polis* can be traced back to the *Odysseus* and *Iliad* of Homer. In Iliad, -indeed it is a story, which appears in the 8th Century B.C.- *Troia* is described as a classical Greek city-state. It has city walls, *portcullis* and *agora* that is public square or market-place. But, of course, the city-state was something beyond these concrete elements. When the primitive agricultural economy started to transform from collective ownership to the individual ownership of lands by the chiefs of small tribes, stratification of the society between the *aristocrats* and others was an inevitable outcome. Farmers, who lost their lands, started to gather around the centres that have specific market-places. These were counted as the core of cities. Thus, *polis* was an output of economic and social division of labour and stratification within the society.

Homer

Homer is the name ascribed by the ancient Greeks to the legendary author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* that are two epic poems which are the central works of ancient Greek literature. The Iliad is set during the Trojan War, the ten-year siege of the city of Troy by a coalition of Greek Kingdoms. It focuses on a quarrel between King Agamemnon and the warrior Achilles lasting a few weeks during the last year of the war. The Odyssey focuses on the journey to home of Odysseus, the King of Ithaca, after the fall of Troy.

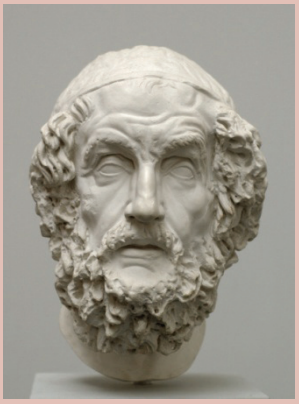

Figure 2.1 Homer

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Polis was a stratified organization of the society around an *agora* included a *gymnasium*, an institute for education, and an *amphitheatre*, also an institute for education but also for ideological and cultural re-production of the society. *Agora*, *gymnasium*, and *theatre* all together were institutions of ideological re-production of the society since they served for helping people to realise that they lived in a *society*. Indeed, the ancient Greek was described by its *oikos* that is a household. *Oikos* was the smallest unit of the society. Even the beliefs of the people were shaped according to their *oikos*. They all had their own Gods. Religion, like the society itself, was not institutionalised at that time. Economy, through several social institutions, contributed to the institutionalisation of the society. The Gods of *oikos* constitute of a tribe of Gods, living on the top of the mount of *Olympus*, and presenting the similar features with the people and their society. The stories about the "social life" of the Gods are called *myths*. Therefore, *mythology* is the collection of these *myths* and associated with the beliefs of society. As can be understood, there was an organized society in *polis* which arose form of a structured economy and with its own institutions, such as education, religion, family, and so forth.

Important

Resemblances of the mythological Greek Gods to the human-being is a commonly portrayed issue of popular culture today. Terminologically, this resemblance is given the name of anthropomorphism.

Institutionalisation of the politics arose upon social and political struggles within the *polis*. Indeed, the term *politics* originally means "related to the *polis*". Since there was an organized society, the process of decision-making for the sake of this organization was called as *politics*. So, the purpose of politics was about the questions such as "how the decisions related to the common good of the society must be taken?", "who decides what common good for the society is and how people shall behave within a society?", "how these decision-makers take these decisions?" Thus, we see that although modern politics seems to be determined as a separate professional field of knowledge and occupation, for the ancient Greeks, the questions above were the common ones that had to be engaged in by each citizen.

Political and Social Developments in Ancient Polis of Sparta and Athens

As we look at the institutionalisation of politics within ancient Greece, we notice that there were two stereotypes that illustrated the institutionalisation, namely *Sparta* and *Athens*. *Sparta* was a city on the south of Peloponnesus peninsula and consists of few villages. Since the *Laconia* region, where Sparta settled in, had very productive lands but no seaport access, main economical facility was based on farming. The ownership of the land was collective. The warrior *Doric* tribes appropriated not only the lands but also the people living on these lands as they occupied a village or settlement. Thus, slavery was one of the main features of the economy in Sparta. Political system of the Sparta was based on a simple arrangement. Chiefs of the two main tribes of the Sparta were the kings known as *arghagetes* of the *polis*. They were honourable, *albeit* lack of power. During the peacetime, they were only entitled to the power of settling down disagreements, taking part in the meetings of *Gerousia*, a council of the elders, and fulfilling certain religious duties. But, during the war time and outside of the Sparta, they were accepted as the commander of the army and entitled with almost a limitless power. In addition to the *arghagetes* and *Gerousia*, another political institution was *Apella*, something similar to the popular assembly. The drafts, prepared by *Gerousia* were approved by *Apella*. The members of the *Apella* were Spartans who were over thirty-years old and they were not allowed to debate about the drafts. But, they were exclusively entitled to approve or deny the drafts discussed. The last political institution was *ephoros* who were controllers of the five villages of the Sparta (Ağaoğulları, 2011, p. 31).

Social stratification was based on three strata; Spartans or *spartiats*, *perioikos*, and *helots* (Ağaoğulları, 2011, p. 31). Spartans were the dominant class. They were the only social group, who can be a member of *Apella*. They were soldiers and did not take part in the productive activities of the society. Since the community was based on collective ownership, they were not named as "landlords". But, they were given lands (*Kleros*) for which they had right of disposition. The people living on these lands were also given to Spartans. The stratum of *Perioikos* was more crowded than the stratum composed by Spartans. They were living at the outside lands of Sparta. They were entitled to hold their own lands but had to pay a fee for that. They did not have a political right for joining in administrative duties of the state. They were sometimes used as soldiers, but as a separate unit of army from the Spartans. Lastly, *helots* were the most crowded stratum of the population. They were tied to the land on which they were living in. Therefore, they were the productive groups for the society and responsible with producing the goods for the consumption of Sparta. The conditions in which they lived were harsh, and sometimes unbearable, and they were often oppressed by the Spartans who were the most privileged stratum as mentioned above. An important point to make is that a sequence of uprisings of the *helots* influenced the administrative and social structure of the Spartan community to a certain extent. Certain regulations were applied in order to protect the main structure

of Spartan society. The *polis* of Sparta became more closed and martial in time thanks to the various regulations in order to prevent uprisings of *helots*.

Against to the closed, disciplined society and agricultural economy of Sparta, the *polis* of Athens, on the other hand, represented a trade-based economy and a developed cultural-political social life. The *Attika* peninsula was an infertile region, but had a seaport access. Thus, the civilisation of the region was bound on the sea and commerce.

> **Important**
>
> There were three strata in Sparta: spartiats, perioikos, and helots.

Free population of Athens had four strata: *Eupatrides*, *geomores*, *demiurgus*, and *thetes* – the nobles, small farmers, craftsmen, and poor peasants, respectively (Ağaoğulları, 2011, p. 36). Both inter-class and intra-class struggles between these groups had led to different types of administrations such as *Aristocracy*, *oligarchy*, *plutocracy*, and *democracy*. Contrary to the Sparta, political debates and competition were very vivid in Athens and participants were also large in numbers. The reason behind the prosperous philosophical and political tradition of the ancient Greece is demonstrated in association with this background that someway illustrates a form of what we call today as democracy.

The term democracy comes from the words *deme* and *demos*. Deme was the term that referred to a particular location similar to a neighbourhood. Organization and political representation of the citizens were based on demes. According to Ağaoğulları,

> *"Tribes were divided into sub-districts called deme or demos. There were supposed to be at most 174 demes that were indeed local units of the administration, and they formed the foundation of Athens' political society. Citizens were organised in demes; each deme had its own assembly and judiciary. The lists of the citizens were recorded by the president of deme known as demarkhos. Citizenship of the polis of Athens was related to citizenship rights that were decided in the demes. Thus citizens used the name of their demes, instead of old tribes, clans, or families, as their surnames" (Ağaoğulları, 2009, p. 38).*

Deriving from this historical background, democracy can be specified as a term that emphasizes the power of *demos*. In democracy, *demos*, such as the people, has the power of governing the state. Greek democracy was shaped through the internal and external conflicts. Internal conflicts were results of class relations of the Greek society. We already discussed about the class positions of several sects in society. It can be noticed that the Greek society was very conscious about the social affairs. Even the members of the lowest social stratum were aware of their rights. Thus, when oppression was felt by one of the sects and the sect claimed upon its rights against to the others, enormous political consequences were usually witnessed. The Greek society was very fluctuant in terms of these kinds of internal conflicts. External conflicts were mostly results of the Persian attacks. The Persian Empire was actually the greatest rivalry of Greece during the ancient times. In the 5th Century B.C., there were two great attacks of the Persians toward Greek peninsula. Both attacks were repelled by Greeks through solidarity with Spartans. Although Greek society had internal conflicts (between and within several *polis*es), they found a way to unite and had a chance for resisting against to the Persian occupation.

Persian wars had important positive and negative effects on the development of the Greek democracy. Surprisingly, while a minor group deepened its ruling powers, the lower classes had a chance for participating in political life. The war demonstrated the necessity of powerful and talented governors. But also, the need of citizens' participation in defending the country had a consequence of including them in political issues of the polis.

From the Order of the Cosmos to the Order of the Social: Sophists

The early philosophy of the ancient Greece was called as "philosophy of nature". These philosophers were considered as early "scientists" who were attempting to deal with the laws and the order of the nature. The first philosophers were those who speculated on natural events. They aimed to explain the principles of the order of *cosmos* and to understand the order of society. Thus, while some philosophers, such as Pythagoras from the *Elea* school, sought the order in mathematical

principles, some others, such as the material monist like Thales, Anaximenes, Anaximender, found it in some material elements, such as earth, water, air, or fire. Although the latter group of philosophers was materialist rather than idealist, they were called as "abstract materialists". Finally, there were also some philosophers, such as Democritus and Epicurus, who tried to understand the transformation of the universe and the movement of *cosmos*. These early investigations only partly aimed to deal with the social life.

Important

The transformation from the "philosophy of nature" to "philosophy of society" started with Sophists who were (A brief identification of who the sophists were should be given here)

The first *social philosophical* school of the ancient Greece was *Sophists*. Since the term sophist also meant "quibbler", it has been said that philosophers of nature underestimated the sophists due to their name and philosophy. Indeed, they were laying the foundations of social sciences. By them, the main theme of Greek thoughts, rather than being the order of universe, began to be problematic for humanity and society. While the Persian wars caused the participation of masses in social affairs, new ideas were required in order to explain and describe the new socio-political order. But also, for the first time in history we know, masses were interested in philosophical thoughts in order to be an active participant of politics. Thus, sophists became active in mainly Athens where daily political life was quite vivacious. The reasons for the birth of sophist thought in Athens, then, can be associated with three factors:

1. A relatively liberal atmosphere, which was the result of development of democracy
2. An interest in explaining the transformation of society
3. The need of mass for social knowledge in order to take an active role in politics.

When an interest for politics emerges, it can never be limited only with politics. Following the politics; economy, education, arts, and ethics became attractive issues of public debates in ancient Greek life. This was a search for the rules of all aspects of social life. Once the rules were discovered, the form of the application of the rules in society was another main theme. Before such understanding, behaviours of people in social life were mostly derived from the traditional customary rules called *thesmoi*. But then, the man-made rules, *nomoi*, became prevalent. During the period of philosophers of nature, the main subject was the rules of the nature or *cosmos*, that is to say *physis*; but then, main subject turned to the rules of society or *polis*, that is to say *nomos*.

Not only the object and the content, but also methods of investigation changed with *Sophists*. Previously, methodological understanding of philosophers of nature was based on the method of deduction. When a philosopher decided on the founder principle of the *cosmos*, henceforth, he was searching for the particular phenomenon which was in accordance with the abstract principle. *Sophists* started to collect particular observations and phenomena. They were accepted as the early *Encyclopaedists* and so-called "walking libraries" (Copleston, 2009, s. 76). They achieved to reach some factual and practical conclusions through these particular observations. Thus, the methodology of the Sophists was inductive.

One of the main separations of *Sophists* from the traditional Greek philosophy was the aim of their investigation. Till to *Sophists*, the Greek philosophy was a search for the objective reality. However, the aim of the *Sophists* was not contemplative, but practical. Hence, they became an educational movement in Greek *polis*. They were teaching the art of life and how to control it to the youth. Lectures given by several sophists included grammar, commentaries of poets, mythology, philosophy of religion, and rhetoric. These were also the themes that an ordinary Greek citizen needed to participate in the socio-political life.

Important

The aim of the Sophist investigation was to foresee the needs of Greek citizens and additionally to educate the youth about the art of life, practically.

In summary, it can be said that *Sophists* were lecturers, who earned their life through teaching rhetoric or politics and "the trappings of culture".

Serving also to the youth of nobles in Athens, Sophists provided them a significant advantage to be successful in politics and social life. However, they were criticised for giving lecture for earning and inciting the youth against to the conventional rules of society.

The Founder of the Non-Egalitarian Philosophy, Socrates and His Egalitarian Successors, Cynics

The first celebrity of Greek philosophers, obviously, is *Socrates* who gained his fame through help of his students, namely through Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle. Unfortunately, each of these philosophers presents a different picture of Socrates. According to Xenophon, Socrates was seeking nothing more than being a good human as well as a citizen. He was not interested in dealing with logic or metaphysics. On the other hand, the portrait of Socrates, as presented by Plato, was a high-level metaphysician and founder of the transcendental philosophy. Aristotle also presented Socrates as a philosopher dealing with theoretical issues, but not in a manner that Plato offers.

Socrates was an admirer of knowledge and wisdom. According to him, everyday life of society should not be governed by ordinary citizens, who do not have adequate wisdom and knowledge. Related to this view, he was an opponent to the idea of democracy and the government of people. After meeting with Pythagorasists, he cleared his mind for the government of wise men.

His way of sharing his own knowledge is known as the "Socratic method" that was, briefly saying, launching a dialogue with someone and only asking questions to that person. He was demonstrating various contradictions of them just by steering them to answer his questions. Those dialogues were entertaining activities; thus he gained a number of audiences and followers. These followers were usually children and youths of the nobles. His popularity within the youth disturbed the powerful rulers who were counterpart of the Socratic dialogues. In 399 B.C. due to the accusation of perverting the youth, turning them into persons unrespectable to the Gods of Athens, and fabricating new Gods, he was sentenced to death by the People's Court. His defence in the court is today known as the beginning of the legal philosophy.

Socrates was also known for his modest life style. His way of appearing in public and his personality were miles away from being noble. But still, his political views were against to the idea of democracy and thus to the Sophists who were accepted as the supporters of democratic politicians. Instead of the idea of democracy, Socrates believed in the governance of a wise minority.

According to him, the harm of the democracy was resulting from the people's personalities. People were pursuing their individual interests and those who govern could lead the system of democracy to become a way of allowing them to pursue their own interests instead of that of the public. Not only their personalities but also their abilities and skills to govern could be absent. The main problem with the Athens' society was lack of "virtue" that was identified as the ability of distinguishing the good from the bad and the right from the wrong. Thus, virtue was a form of knowledge. Since it was a form of knowledge, then it could be achieved by everybody. But, this was not the conclusion that Socrates arrived. He defended that some people were apt to have virtue and some not. According to Socrates, those who are given the power of ruling must have been the most virtuous citizens. However, in Athenian democracy, many officers were elected only by ballots. This was unacceptable for Socrates since in searching for an experienced master, even for the least important daily issues, it was not right to be ruled by those who got their office only by chance. However, a detail should be pointed out here that the difference between an aristocratic fashion of governing and Socratic view of eligibility of governing is about "virtue". While in the former one, right to govern others is given by birth, it is gained by virtue in the Socratic view. Some of his followers, namely Plato, took these views further, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Looking at the successors of Socrates, we can see an important ancient school of political thought that is usually pointed out

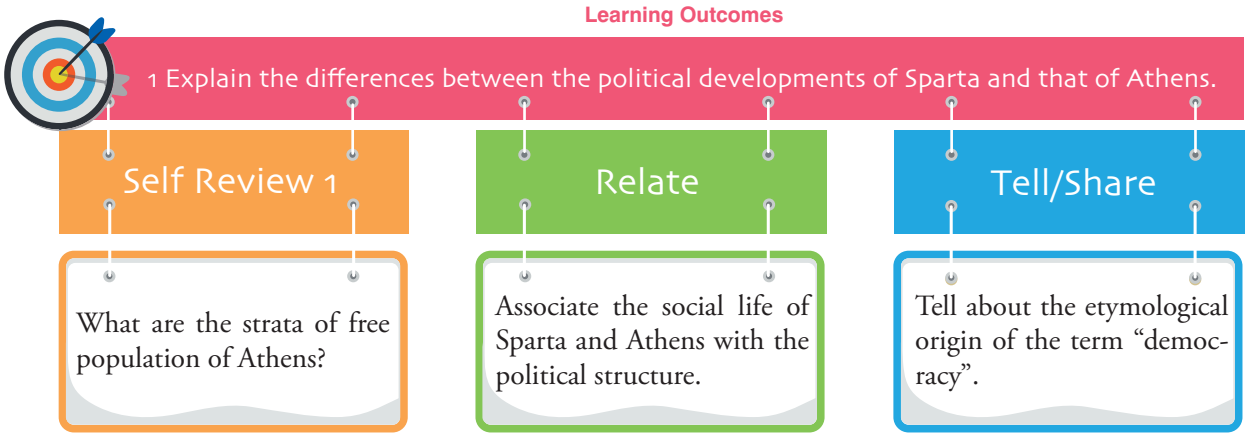
Important

According to Socrates, virtue was a form of knowledge and thus something that could be taught to people. Only the virtues citizens should hold is the power of ruling.

as one of the oldest versions of egalitarianism: Cynicism. The word cynic, in fact, is from an ancient word used to imply dog. Cynics' primitive life style was resembled to life of a dog and, therefore, the name of "cynic" was given them by their political opponents. Cynicism was a reactive movement against to the highly non-egalitarian society. The members of the movement were the lowest part of the society who was supported by the foreigners and exiles who were not given a right to citizenship. However, their egalitarian reaction to stratified society was not considerably successful in spreading among the poor.

Cynics were a group that pursued happiness and, according to them, only virtuous people could be happy. Socrates was a good example for that. He was living simply and only trying to be virtuous, nothing else. Beauty, wisdom, glory, fame, richness, and so forth would not bring happiness. The only thing that would bring happiness and open the door for virtue for human beings was being away from passions, complicated needs, fame, and richness. Thus, a free and happy person could achieve to stay away from politics (Copleston, 2009, p. 110).

It can be noticed that this philosophy had nothing to do with society. It was a kind of internal transcendentalism and a form of monkhood. However, it is still a crucial cornerstone in terms of development of the modern egalitarian political thoughts. This is because of the fact that human beings first time in the course of human history demonstrated a collective uprising with the Cynics achievement of raising awareness against to the non-egalitarian life style.



STATE AS A RESULT OF SOCIAL LIFE: POLITICAL THOUGHT IN PLATO

Plato was one of the followers of Socrates. Plato systematized Socrates' view of the rule of virtuous wise man. He broadened his political understanding to the general philosophy. "The political theory was, for Plato, the major consequence of that central human activity -the contemplation of the foundations of the ethical life- to be carried out by the philosopher" (Coleman, 2000, p. 68).

Plato was from an aristocratic family whose roots were believed to lie down to the God Poseidon. He was a successful Olympic sports player and also a poet. When he met with Socrates, he gave up sports and poem. He devoted his entire career to pursue of a good governance for Greece. But instead of going into politics, in 390 B.C. –when he was thirty-seven-, went to a trip for South Italy and Egypt. He also went to Syracuse based on the invitation of the King.

He was the founder of *Academia* -the first academic institution of Europe-, where he taught his philosophy and political views. The institution was sponsored by some rich friends of Plato himself. He had two options for the salvation of Greece: Either the philosopher should be the king or the king should be a philosopher. It has been said that he was waiting for an invitation for the governance of Athens. It is supposed that Plato had at least thirty dialogues, in which mostly Socrates appeared as the main character. Among these we can point out Apology, Charmides, Crito, Euthydemus, Euthyphro, Gorgias, Hippias Major, Hippias Minor, Ion, Laches, Lysis, Protagoras, Republic Bk. I., Cratylus, Menexenus,

Meno Phaedo, Republic Bks. II-X, Symposium, Parmenides, Theaetetus, Phaedrus Sophist, Statesman, Philebus, Timaeus, Critias, and Laws. Republic (*Politeia*), Statesman (*Politikos*), and Laws (*Nomoi*) were his most important dialogues to understand his legacy in the political philosophy.

Plato's general philosophy can be considered as an introduction for his political thoughts. It always should be kept in mind that the Platonic philosophy is based on a non-egalitarian belief. His philosophy usually starts with underlining the importance of reason (*logos*). Therefore, he splits the being into object (material) and idea (thought). The human being has material and ideal sides. The ideal side should govern the material side, namely the body. However, since some has little *logos*, the body tries to govern everything and the result would be a disaster. These people shall not govern the society, since they cannot even govern themselves. Thus, the society should be ruled by wisdoms, philosophers. As being parallel to splitting the being into two sides, Plato also accepts two universes: The universe of objects, which is perceived through senses; and the universe of ideas, which is comprehended through the reason. The real universe is the universe of ideas; the former one is only a copy or shadow of it. Thus, the real knowledge is about the ideas. Each being has only one idea in the universe of ideas; and not only ideas that are conceptions of objects, but also the ideas that have no objects, such as justice, love, and the good take place in the universe of ideas.

Plato's conception seems *dualist* and *idealist*. It distinguishes material and spiritual worlds, so it is dualist; and considers the spiritual world as superior, so it is in this sense idealist. The human spirit achieves the knowledge of the ideas when it is living in the universe of ideas. When it is materialized in a human body, human beings sometimes remember the knowledge from the universe of ideas. Thus, knowledge turns into the action of remembering. The true knowledge of universe of ideas, which is achieved through reason, is *episteme*; and the knowledge of universe of objects, which is achieved through sense, is *doxa*. We, human beings, are required to establish the order of the universe of ideas within the universe of objects. This is the main aim of Plato's political philosophy. Indeed, according to him, the republic, good society, good human or good citizen have no differences from each other. A good human is only a good citizen; and a good citizen is the consequence of good society, which is the result of the good state (republic). There is not any difference between the individual and public lives of the humans.

For Plato, republic (state) was not something that the Sophists defended; it was not contractual or artificial. Republic was natural, as the public itself. Since human beings were incapable of living by themselves, society and the state were natural beings. But, forms of societies and states were up to wills and conditions of humans. On the other hand, social life requires a division of labour. This division of labour does not mean a completely segregated society. Indeed, the society is portrayed as an *organism*. Thus, each elements of this organism, according to Plato, has their own functions. Upon this organisational understanding, an ideal state is based on a stratified society, which has three occupational sections. These sections are production, protection, and administration. These are also three different classes of the society, namely producers, protectors, and administrators. They all have different features and virtues. Accordingly, the first one, namely the producers, is the lowest part of the society. They look for material satisfaction. The virtue that corresponds to them would be moderation. They would be accepted as virtuous, if they are sufficiently moderate. The second main group, namely the protectors, has noble wills. They pursue fame, admiration, and honour. The virtue that corresponds to them would be bravery. The last group, namely the administrators, is hierarchically on the top of the society. They represent the logic and reasoning. Thus, they pursue for knowledge and wisdom. Their virtue is wisdom. They are philosophers identified as the one who loves knowledge. So, there are not only three occupational classes but also three virtues for an ideal society: Moderation, bravery, and wisdom. But Plato adds a fourth one, which influences the relationship of these three classes; this is justice. A state is just as long as all classes fulfil their duties. Justice occurs if all other three virtues occur simultaneously in a society.

Important

According to Plato, public and republic were both natural beings, rather than being artificial or contractual. But their forms were depended on people's will.

The scheme presented by Plato portrays a static societal structure. Indeed, he was aware of the fact that ordinary states cannot achieve all these virtues and thus turn into a just organisation. It has to be kept in mind that this is a scheme for the ideal state. Thus, a state would be classified according to its distance to this ideal type. In addition to this, Plato draws a very detailed picture of educational system, in which protectors or the soldiers are educated and trained. This is a very authoritarian type of education. Even the games and songs of children are determined by the state in this form of education.

Interestingly, Plato was an egalitarian on gender issue. Indeed, he was against to the marriage. He argued that especially the top two classes of the society would be negatively affected by the family issues. Thus, except the producers, members of the top two classes of the society shall not be married. Plato prescribes an equal education for the boys and girls of protector class. According to him, the women of the protector class could also be warriors. The life of protector class, as described by Plato, was communitarian. They were not allowed to have private property. They were supposed to live in common houses and have their dinner altogether. Plato believed that there were two disturbances for wise men: Richness and poorness. Thus, protectors were not allowed to become rich or poor.

Administrators were culled among the youth of protectors. They were educated in philosophy as well as other social arts and examined several times. At the end, only the very best of this group would become the philosopher-administrators and the top would be the philosopher-king/queen. They were considered as semi-Gods by Plato. They were usually supposed to have a noble or aristocratic family.

As it is understood, equality was not a virtue for the society. But of course, for Plato, it was hard to confess that inequality was virtuous. Indeed, he distinguished two types of equality: General equality and proportional equality. General equality accepts no difference between the citizens. Since they are citizens they are supposed to be equal. The true equality, however, is the proportional that stipulates the ability for the equality. Thus, each citizen has rights and duties according to his abilities.

As mentioned before, there was a state idea at the world of ideas. The actual state was only degenerated images. Historically, all states were non-ideal states. Each has advantages and disadvantages. But as a general rule, it can be said that types of governments reflect a kind of circuit, from good to bad and from happiness to unhappiness. It starts from *patriarchy*, which is mentioned only once by Plato and due to conditions, it is impossible to return to the patriarchal period. In patriarchy, the power belongs to the leader of the tribe or clan. Since it has a very high ethical level, patriarchy is the closest for the ideal state. Then, *monarchy* and *aristocracy* come to the agenda. The tribes have different traditions, and morality. When they unite and construct a new society, they need to have new rules or law. The leaders of the tribes form an administrative committee. Thus, society is governed by a group of leaders. Both monarchy and aristocracy are legitimized by Plato. The degenerated types start with *timocracy*. Instead of prioritizing wisdom of monarch or aristocrats, if an inutile fame and celebrity are minded, a group of warriors can capture the power. Since only fame is prioritised, this group would only pursue for more and more fame and richness; and when the richness start to rule, the *oligarchy* occurs. These two were degenerated forms of aristocracy in Plato's thought. On the other hand, when the poor population triumphs over rich, it is called as *democracy*. Democracy is the rule of majority and since aristocracy is the minority in society, the ordinary people compose the majority against to them. Democracy, however, is a chaotic atmosphere, for Plato; rather than being an order. Although it can represent generally equal ones, the proportional democracy is a regime of inequality. Excessiveness ends with a strong reaction. The rule of majority disturbs the aristocracy and in order to re-establish aristocratic regime they elect a strong and rigid member who cruelly penalise oppositional behaviours. The rule of this unmerciful man is called tyranny. According to circular understanding of Plato, *tyranny* is supposed to be followed by monarchy or aristocracy.

It has to be kept in mind that ideal state of Plato is not a historical one. It has not become concrete

Important

Plato was not favourable for democracy. He accepted democracy as a degenerated form and chaotic way of rule.

in any period of history. It is timeless. Four elements affect the degeneration of the states: disappearance of internal harmony of society, violation of division of labour within the society, emergence of economical class conflicts, and finally, moral corruption and destruction of unity of the rulers.

Learning Outcomes

2 Explain Plato's political philosophy.

Self Review 2	Relate	Tell/Share
What is the difference of Sophists' and Plato's conceptions of state?	Associate political philosophy of Plato with that of Socrates.	Tell about the types of equality in Plato's thought.

STATE AS THE ONLY ETHICAL FORM OF LIFE: POLITICAL THOUGHT IN ARISTOTLE

Aristotle was a follower and student of Plato. However, he followed a different methodological path. Instead of emphasizing a dualist world order, idealism and *episteme*; he rather preferred to follow an empiricist methodology (Coleman, 2000, pp. 120-1). He constructed his philosophy on experimental and observational conclusions. Still, politically, he followed Socrates and Plato. According to him, politics was a supreme activity, related to virtue, and the good of polis, general interest, was the supreme aim of individual life.

Aristotle was interested in natural sciences from early period of his youth. When he was seventeen he travelled to Athens in order to attend to the *Academia* of Plato. Since he was not a son of citizen of Athens, his statue was *metoikos*. After the death of Plato, Aristotle left the *Academia* and Athens to move to the place known today as Assos. He stayed there till the end of kingdom of his fellow friend. Following this, he turned to live in Mytilene for a while. By the invitation of the Macedonian King Philip II, he went to Macedonia and trained the young Alexander the Great. This brings to mind the influence of Aristotle on the politics of Alexander. After the death of Philip II, he returned to Athens and established a new educational institution, known as *Lyceum*.

Alexander the Great

Alexander III of Macedon, known as *Alexander the Great*, was a king (*basileus*) of the ancient Greek Kingdom of Macedon and a member of the *Argead* dynasty. He was born in Pella and succeeded his father Philip II to the throne at the age of twenty. He spent most of his ruling years on an unprecedented military campaign through Asia and northeast Africa, and he created one of the largest empires of the ancient world by the age of thirty, stretching from Greece to Northwest India. He was undefeated in battle and widely considered one of the most successful military commanders of history.



Figure 2.2 Alexander the Great (356 B.C. - 323 B.C.)

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great

Aristotle reversed the order of ideal and material worlds of Plato. It was difficult for Plato to explain the objective world just by referring to ideas and considering the objects as the shadows of ideas. Aristotle tried to find out a way of explaining facts about the objective world. This is what we call today as *logic*. In fact, the word *logica* was used by Roman philosophers. Aristotle called this part of his philosophy as *Analytics*. Instead of separating the idea and the object -or the *form* and the substance, by his conception-, he insisted on the view that included the form in the substance of an object. That is to say that the form –or *idea*- was not a conception of another world or external to the object, but was covered by the object; even the form was the substance of the object (Coleman, 2000, p. 128, ff).

Aristotle classified the sciences under three categories: Productive, practical, and theoretical sciences. Productive sciences are similar to agricultural science and engineering that are not, nevertheless, sufficiently explained by Aristotle. Theoretical sciences are ones aiming to achieve only knowledge. Physics, natural sciences, mathematics, metaphysics, or theoretical philosophy are examples of this form of science. Practical sciences are normative disciplines by which people know how to behave. Politics or ethics are practical sciences. *Logic* is not classified under one of the categories mentioned by Aristotle since, according to him, logic is not a form of science but it provides rules for argumentation. Thus, *logic* is a tool for scientific inquiry. Parallel to this view of him, Aristotle's works were collected under the title of *Organon* (tool, instrument) by his students.

The true knowledge is achieved through deducing the knowledge of the particular from the universal. This deduction is conducted by observation and follows as: All humans are mortal. Socrates is human. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

According to Aristotle, the structure of the being cannot be understood just by considering the external appearance. Rather, internal relations and connections should be revealed and the substance or cause of the being must be comprehended metaphysically. True being is the substance that developed in the phenomenon. In other words, each phenomenon is the formation in which the substance reveals itself. Formation is the relationship between the material (*hyle*) and form (*eidos*). These are the two elements of being: material and form. *Here* form refers to more than a shape. Indeed, it is a non-material or spiritual element for Aristotle. It is like the idea of Plato. But contrary to *idea*, *form* has to appear with a material (with two exceptions of God and the human reason –these two appear only as forms, they are beings without materials).

Since the formation can be understood as a material form gaining process, we can comprehend a formation through influencing factors: material causes, formal causes, effective causes, and target-oriented causes. Aristotle said that target-oriented (teleological) causes were the ones that provide a competent form to the formation. Thus, if we reveal the targets of formations, then we can achieve a true comprehension. That is to say, in order to understand the things, one should consider the form, rather than the material. For instance, target of an acorn is to be an oak tree.

It is observable that Aristotle's investigation was twofold: The true knowledge is produced through deduction but at the same time a scientific research must be inductive.

Politics and ethics were classified under practical sciences, above. According to Aristotle, politics was on the top of the other sciences and it was very inclusive; because in a city-state, the "final decision" was given through politics. The aim of the politics was to achieve the best for humans. The best for citizens is the best for the city-state. The aim of the ethics was to determine what is good for humans and society. Thus, politics and ethics were interrelated.

Important

According to Aristotle, politics was a practical science and its aim was to achieve the best for humans.

What can be the supreme target for human being? The answer was obvious for Aristotle: Happiness. But what was happiness then? The cause of happiness was neither pleasure nor pride. Again, Aristotle returns to the conception of good. Happiness was described as "being good", by Aristotle. Here the conception of good includes two pre-requirements:

a. the good should be an end in itself, it is not a mean to do and be something else,

b. the good should be self-contained, if pursued, it must be the thing which makes life worth living.

Ethics is a practical science, for Aristotle. This emphasises one of the deviations of Aristotle from the Socratic philosophy. According to Socrates -and to Plato, also- knowledge was the wisdom. But for Aristotle, knowledge was not adequate for wisdom. One does not only need to know what is good, right, or true; but also must imply it or behave accordingly. So, being virtuous means, to know what is good and to do what is revealed as good. One can prefer to behave in a bad manner; even he knows what is good. Now with Aristotle we know that virtue is a practical, ethical issue.

The initial precondition of ethical life, that is to say being happy, is acting virtuously. A virtuous act can be comprehended by reason. The reason looks for the moderate action. Thus, acting moderately or temperately, where moderate and temperate are revealed by the reason, leads to ethical life.

Human behaviours, a good life, and happiness of the citizens form the subjects of politics or political science. As mentioned before, political science is the most comprehensive one, because politics is related to all other activities within a *polis*. The end of political society –or the state- is the supreme common good or the biggest happiness of biggest number of people. Than state was an ethical apparatus for Aristotle.

State is independent from the individuals, families, or groups that form it. State is a natural and living entity. Let's think about the relationship between the acorn and oak tree. The target of the acorn was to give birth to the oak tree. Thus the form –the concept, or idea, or substance- of the oak tree was to predate the acorn. The relationship between the individuals and society or state was the same. Human is a political animal. And human is the only animal that constructs *polis* because within the animals only human beings can share their ideas about common good and values. Thus ethics and politics were interlaced. State was an ethical organism.

According to Aristotle, there were three domination-submission relationships within a family: Between the father and the son, between the husband and the wife, and between the master and the slave. These kinds coincide to different governmental types. Thus all of them were accepted as natural.

Contrary to Plato, Aristotle does not foresee an ideal state type, unique for every time and population. Since the common good could change for different societies, the governmental type could also be changed. The distribution of the powers within a society determines these types. Aristotle argues that there are three powers or factors for the political society: 1) Is the society handling the problems collectively? 2) What are the entitlements, limitations, and numbers of several duties or authorities? 3) How can they achieve a judicial decision? The answers of these questions, in fact, point out the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the modern states.



Important

Aristotle was not a universalist. According to him, as the common good changes the governmental type changes too.

Aristotle classified the governmental types on two dimensions: The first dimension was the rightness and aim of the states. According to this measure, states were classified as being right or wrong. The second dimension was the number of people who possesses the power. There can be only one single person, there can be a minority, or there can be a majority. Thus there occur six different types: The *right* single person, or minority, or majority regimes and the *wrong* single person, or minority, or majority regimes. These types can be listed as follows (Coleman, 2000, p. 214):

- The government of a single person who aims the common good: *Monarchy*
- The government of a minority group who aims the common good: *Aristocracy*
- The government of the majority of the people which aims the common good: *Politeia*
- The government of a single person who targets the interests of single person: *Tyranny*
- The government of a minority group who aims the interests of the rich: *Oligarchy*
- The government of the majority of the people aiming the interests of the poor: *Democracy*

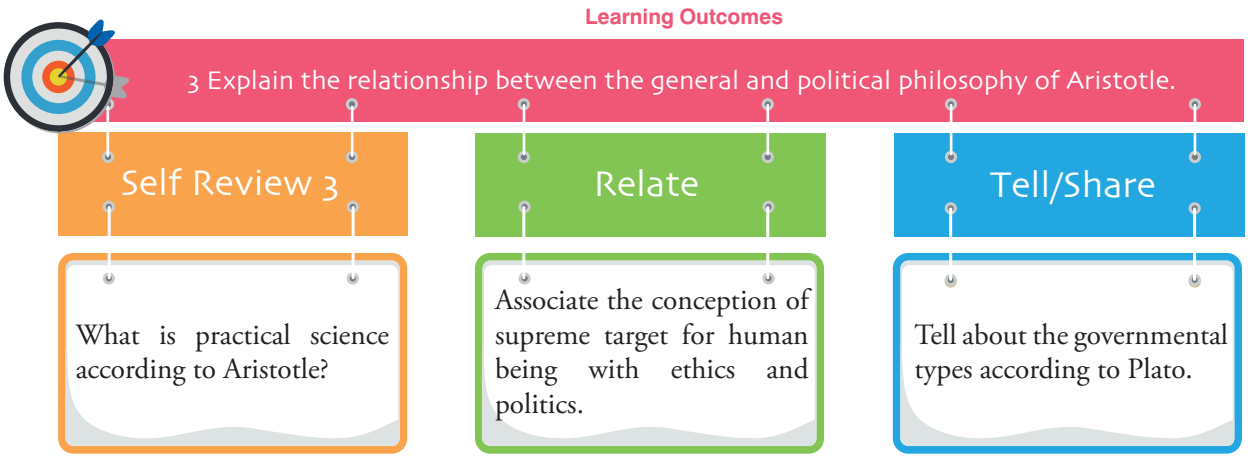
Aristotle explicitly sided with monarchy and aristocracy. In his book, *Nicomachean Ethics*, he accepted monarchy as the best regime. But then in *Politics* he said aristocracy was more preferable than the monarchy. According to Aristotle, the worst regime was tyranny. Free people would not accept tyranny, thus a tyrant must only bear on physical vulgar power.

For Aristotle, stability of the regimes should be ensured. He was against to the revolutionary movements. He considered revolutions as a disease. Then, the disease should be cured. There were several reasons for revolutions:

- Inequalities
- Drives for profit and dignity
- Cruelty, excessive force application of the ruler
- Improvidence of rulers
- Conflicts of different races or nations, who did not learn how to live together
- Minor issues, such as personal disagreements and etc.
- Empowerment of the ruler
- Lack of middle-classes; that is to say, economically a highly polarized society
- External interventions

The cure for the revolutions becomes obvious within this framework for Aristotle: Ensuring equality, educating people in order to act within the constitutional limits, sharing the power if possible, alarming the good citizens about the threads against to the constitution, establishing a moderate socio-political structure, relying on the middle-classes, and making rule of law sovereign.

It is said that the ideal state projection of Aristotle denies not only the freedom of ruled but also the rulers. Thus it has a totalitarian characteristics. The supreme goal of this regime is to minimize the individual and aggrandise the state.



INTERMEDIATE RINGS BETWEEN GREEK AND ROMAN POLITICS

The destruction of *polis* started during the age of Plato. Yet, *polis* had a chance for surviving. While Plato was portraying a strong ideal of city-state, he was considering this opportunity. When Aristotle took the turn, it was too late for a city-state to survive. Even though Aristotle sided with monarchy and aristocracy, as he noticed that *polis* was arriving to the end, he opted for *politeia*, which was a moderate regime. His try was not adequate enough. Philip II conquered the Greek peninsula at 339 B.C. and a new period, called *Hellenistic* Age, started. Son of Philip II, Alexander the Great, captured all Mediterranean geography and established a Hellenic Empire (Coleman, 2000, p. 229). It was consisting of western and eastern cultures. The legacy of this empire continued during the Roman Empire and ended up with Christianity.

General understanding for political philosophy changed as the empire met with new populations. There was a certain differentiation between civilized and barbarian groups, during the ancient Greece period. When they became the citizens of the same Hellenic Empire, the scheme had to change. It was noticed that the individual human was same everywhere. Beliefs, scares, hopes and expectations, senses of individuals were similar to each other. Thus a new kind of understanding about *humanity* arose. Political organization of this new period was

in fact enormous. Thus the connection between the political organization and individual became loose. The individual was not identified according to his citizenship but rather to his abilities, personal features and so forth. Now he needed a new normativity for the explanation of the social orientation. Society was not a natural entity anymore. It was consisting of individuals, who prefer to live together, living in a new normative order. We will deal with two important Hellenic schools: Epicurean school and Stoicism.

Important

The change of political understanding was a result of change in social combination.

Origin of Social Contractarian Political Thought: Epicurus

Epicurus developed his philosophy based on four different sources: Platonic lecturers of Athens, atomist doctrine of Democritus, septic views of Pyrrhus, and hedonist philosophy of Aristippus. Even though he was affected by all these philosophers, he was a strong critic of them. Unfortunately, he taught his ideas like dogmas and his school gained almost a semi-religious character. Thus, while the further contributions were restrained by this feature, the Epicurean philosophy became easy to be studied. Investigating only Epicurus' personal philosophy is adequate for understanding the general conception of Epicurean school indeed.

Epicurus was a materialist philosopher, who followed Democritus. He developed an ethical philosophy, consistent with the materialist philosophy of nature. Contrary to idealist philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, a materialist contribution to social philosophy was important.

According to Epicurus, the cosmos was consisting of material and space. The smallest parts of the material, *atoms*, while falling down within this space, crashed to each other and thus came together or separated. Happenings or changes occur as a result of the movements of materials. Thus, the fate of the cosmos was not a priori described. The movement of material is not end-oriented. All materials have an entity. Even the spirit was a material. Atoms of the spirit were so small that we cannot notice them (Şenel, 1982, p. 228).

Epicurus held an evolutionary historical view. Within his historical philosophy, he developed a contract based theory of the state. According to his theory, people made a contract when they noticed their common interests. Thus, they prevented the threads all together, worked together, and established a happy life. This was a very primitive type of the social contract conception. It emphasises the unnatural characteristic of the society. It must be constructed and the main instrument for its construction was a contract. The contract presupposes the freedom of will of the people. It also accepts the individual as a reasonable subject, who can pursue her/his own interests.

Justice does not occur independently. Also natural law was rejected by Epicurus. Legal system was established by a social contract, which is accurate for a definite place and period. Unless a contract was established, it was not possible to decide what right or wrong was, what just and unjust was. Behaving in accordance with the provisions of the contract ensures a secure life for everyone. Thus obeying to the law –or to the contact- was for everyone's profit.

Epicurus argued that justice was the equality for everyone. Although this reflects a democratic view, since he was an individualist for his ethical philosophy, it is hard to classify him within the vein of democratic scholar. He was against to the non-egalitarian regimes but since he was defending a happy individual life external to the politics, when he -and his followers- forced to prefer a political regime, they opted for the monarchy. He was a philosopher of the chaotic period. The need for an order seems to be prevailed to all other expectations of him and his followers. The need for security and peace led Epicureans to live in a friendly environment and be respectful to the nature. They tried to apply the principle of austerity. Instead of pursuing money and richness, they recommended to content with oneself.

As it can be understood, main aim of Epicurus was ethical, not political. He did not have social targets or social solutions. Thus, Epicureanism could not be successful against to the Stoicism and Christianity, which also emphasised a transcendental power.

Important

The aim of Epicurus was not political. He was trying to establish an internal ethical philosophy for individuals.

Cosmopolitanism of Early Periods: Stoicism

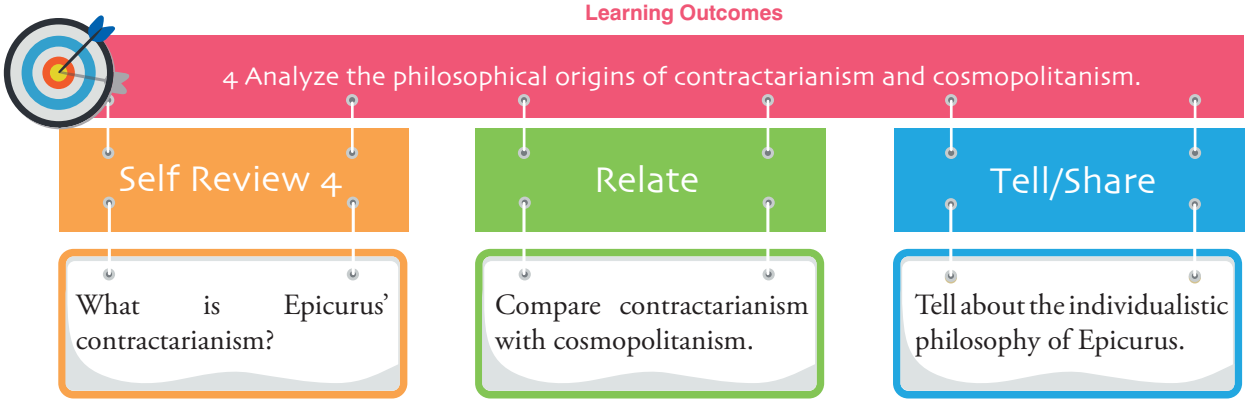
The representative philosophical understanding of Hellenic period was said to be Stoicism. Unlike Epicureanism, Stoicism was not established by several philosophers. Thus, it is hard to investigate Stoicism. Stoicism always found a way to adapt itself for each socio-political condition. It became one of the prominent philosophies of the Roman Empire. Due to this fact, Stoicism can be investigated under three different periods: Early Stoicism (3rd Century B.C.), middle Stoicism (2nd and 1st Centuries B.C.), and New Stoicism or Roman Stoicism. Roman Stoicism will be investigated below under the title of "Stoicism of Imperial Rome: Seneca". Here we will only deal with early Stoicism.

The founders of early Stoicism are Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus. Zeno was born in *Citium* at Cyprus. He moved to Athens when he was twenty. He was an admirer of Socrates and followed the Cynical school for a while. But then he reached to different conclusions from that of the Cynics. In 300 B.C. he founded his own school. The name Stoicism was given due to the porches or *stoa* of this school. Zeno was very reputable among the Athenians. He always behaved in accordance with his thoughts (Douzinas, 2017, p. 161).

Like Epicureanism, Stoicism was an ethical philosophy. According to Zeno, philosophy had three parts: Logic, physics, and ethics. But the first two parts were related to ethics somehow. In Stoicism, the sources of the knowledge were senses. But for an accurate knowledge the intellectual design of the impressions achieved by senses must be trustable. The imagination, which accurately accords with the objective fact, was called *catalepsis*. According to Stoicist, the only principle of cosmos was the God. Stoicists were monotheists. For them, different Gods of Greeks were representing the several features of the one God. God might be the reason, cosmos, nature, fate, creative fire or something else. As the spirit spreads in the body, the only principle of the cosmos, the God, spreads among everything. This God particle, which exists in everything, was the reason. Thus to behave by reason means to be in accordance with divinity. This was the basics of ethics of Stoicism.

Stoicism was also a fatalistic philosophy. It was always hard to develop an ethical perspective through a fatalistic philosophy because of that ethics requires making independent choices through free will. But the concept of free will contradicts with fatalism. The solution of Stoicism was simple: According to Stoicism, the ethical behaviour was complying with the fate. Thus, humans need to reveal their destiny. Although the solution was inadequate to convince the opponents, it revealed a new understanding about humanity. The reason was the common feature of all humans. Being reasonable was the natural fact of humans. Thus, reason was the only and common law of humanity. This opens the road for *cosmopolitanism*. A wise man could not be citizen of a particular state. He was the citizen of the entire world. If we were members of the humanity, even the slaves or enemies would be a part of this huge family. There must be only one state in the world. All the humans would be equal citizens of this state. Cosmopolitanism of the Stoicism reflects the political conjuncture of its period. Empires were a rising political organization of the age and they collect different identities as their citizens under their rule.

In summary, Stoics provided a unified account of the world, consisting of formal logic, monistic physics and naturalistic ethics. Although their logical theories were of more interest for later philosophers, among these, according to them, the main focus of human knowledge was ethics.



POLITICAL THOUGHT OF ROMAN RES PUBLICA: POLYBIUS AND CICERO

Roman political thought was a simple follower of the Greek political ideas. Theoretically saying, their contribution was limited. But still practical implication and political organizations were detailed and very well developed than that of Greek equivalents.

Roman history was divided into different phases: pre-Regal Period, Regal Period, Republican Rome, and Roman Empire. Some writers call these periods as rise of Rome, the Roman Republic, and Roman Empire. These are also called as Latin, Republican and Imperial phases.

Latin aristocrats, *patricia*, captured the government after defeating the Etruscan king. Instead of the rule of a single person, they established a council. The word "republic", which is today used as a specific type of political organization, comes from the term res publica that gained its meaning of governing through a council. *Res publica* means "for the public". *Patricia* was the ruling class of the Roman population. The 90 per cent of population, *Plebs*, was governed by *patricia*. There were three categories within the Roman population: Slaves, metics, and citizens. Citizens were consisting of patricia and *plebs*. Again, *plebs* had two categories among themselves. Rich *plebs*es were *bourgeois* and poor *plebs*es were *proletariat*. During the empire period, some *plebs* attended to army by their horses and constituted the *chevalier*.

At the beginning the marriage between *patricia* and *plebs* was forbidden. But when rich parts of plebs started to gain more influence, this rule was annihilated. The marriage introduced a new class, called *optimates*, means "goods". All other poor classes were named as *populares*. The republican period witnessed the class struggles between *patricia* and *plebs*. While the class struggles were ongoing, externally Roman state was conquering new lands and enlarging both its power and borders. The peace between the classes brings the opportunity of being an empire. Economic accumulation was adequate enough to continue as an empire.

Greek political thought linked to Roman politics through Polybius. He was a Greek, educated in Greece and thus tried to explain the Roman institutions and political developments by the conceptions of Greek political thinking. It seems that Polybius was not a follower of a particular philosophical school. He used conceptions of several Greek schools. His main argument was that there were undulant periods in the history of political societies. According to Polybius, Roman Empire owed its success to its constitution. The organizational types of governments are classified according to the thoughts of Greek philosophers by Polybius. Polybius described the political history as highs and lows. According to the *anacyclosis* theory each governmental structure transforms to another one through degeneration. According to that; expansion, maturity, and corrosion were inevitable processes. Kingdom turns to tyranny, annihilation of tyranny brings aristocracy, then comes oligarchy and as a reaction against the injustices of oligarchy democracy occurs. This was a natural rule. Polybius tried to apply the same to the Roman constitutions and thus predicted the next stage and took the necessary actions. Although he accepted internal and external factors of degeneration, he only dealt with internal factors.

The originality of Polybius' theory depended on his conception about the power relations of politics behind the scene. His claim for a mixed constitution, foresaw a check and balance system for the conflicting powers. According to him, the success of Roman constitution was to ensure this check and balance system. Polybius built his constitutional understanding on not the social classes but political forces and institutional balance. It can be said that he pointed out the way for the modern constitutional separation of powers system.

Important

Polybius was a pioneer for the idea of separation of powers.

For Polybius, the success of the Roman constitution could be interpreted according to its consequences. And according to the obvious results, Roman constitution was successful. Roman constitution had three sovereign powers: Consuls, senate, and the public. Polybius emphasized on the separation of powers but at the same time the unity of the system. According to him, senate was the key power among others. When he compared Carthage and Rome, he argued that the superiority of Rome

was coming from the power of the senate within the political system. Another reason was that the army of Rome was composed of soldiers who were not paid for combating. Contrary, Carthage army was composed of legionnaire.

In order to prevent the degeneration of success of the Rome, the aristocrats required to be temperance, the passion of the public should have been restrained, and religious should have been used as an ideological instrument. Uprisings of the slaves, particularly the one led by Spartacus at 73 B.C., shook the political foundation of Rome. A land reform was performed by the first reformists of Rome, namely Tiberius and Gaius Sempronius Gracchuss. According to the reform programme the public properties were distributed to citizens. This caused wide range of developments and political turbulence. Political institutions of the republic lost their social roots and till to a new balance was ensured political philosophers of Rome tried to instigate the republic.

Marcus Tullius Cicero

Most influential philosopher of the time, Marcus Tullius Cicero, put the ideological foundations of a monarchy, while he was trying to save the republic. Cicero was a lawyer and due to his excellent ability of speech, he was very favoured. He was the first senator for his family –this was not usual for Roman politics. He became a quaestor, a senator, an aedilis, and a praetor. In 63 B.C. he nominated for consular in the name of the optimates against to Catilina and won the election. Cicero defended the right for private property and traditional customs of Rome, thus gained the support of riches and nobles.



Figure 2.3 Marcus Tullius Cicero (B.C. 106-B.C. 43)

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cicero.PNG

The main problem of Cicero was conserving Rome despite all its social contradictions. In order to achieve this, collaboration of all institutions and unity of faithful supporters of the republic were needed. Aristocrats started to turn away from politics. The democratic developments scared them of huge masses of people. Cicero tried to provoke them for politics again. He wrote that politics was a virtuous activity. Against the Epicurean views, which recommend giving up with social issues and searching for individual happiness, Cicero argued that egoism was against nature. The nobility of the spirit had to be shown by entering to the politics. Cicero's main aim was to turn back to old aristocratic days. According to Cicero, public and republic –state- were the same. When people united within a stable order, a need for administration occurred. Society was a result of sense of community and state was a result of political differentiation. State was a unity, in which people were united with a common objective and connected to each other with legal bonds.

Cicero was strongly opposing the rule of majority. According to him, in democracy the security of the individuals was in the people's hands. If all powers are collected in the hands of people, we cannot talk about a state. Cicero searched for a mixed political structure. Singular political structures had both advantages and disadvantages. Thus, if all advantages of the different types of political regimes could be collected, then an ideal state would be achieved. This would be a mixed constitutional structure. Cicero argued that governing by the Roman administration would be better for the citizens of Roman provincial states. And if it would be better for them, then it must also be just. Roman administration would ensure the security of all these provinces. What he offered through this conception can be accepted as the beginning of *pax-Romana*.

Learning Outcomes

5 Analyze the practical contributions of Polybius and Cicero.

Self Review 5	Relate	Tell/Share
What was the originality of Polybius' theory?	Compare Cicero with Epicurian views.	Tell about pax-Romana.

IMPERIAL ROME

Republican Rome fel down between 55-31 B.C. There was an ongoing civil war in Rome, almost from 90 B.C. *Octavius*, successor of Caesar, won the war and neutralized the army against the political affairs. Thus *pax-Romana*, which would take two hundred years, officially started. Octavius was called as the *imperator*, a title given to the victorious commanders. He based on the power of *imperium* during his ruling and then gained the title of *Augustus*, which meant the supreme or the magnificent. It can be noticed that even the senate still existed; the regime was transformed to a monarchy.

Political question of this new era changed: Who would be the next emperor? The emperors were successors of important families. Although the senate kept its entity and the political regime was called as a *diarchy*, the emperors were holding the full power. Emperorship was combined with religious features and the emperor started to symbolize the unity of Rome. The politics of empire was not problematized around *res publica* anymore. The fate of the empire was a universal issue. Emperor Caracalla accepted all free people of the Empire as citizens. Thus the citizenship expanded. Infinity, divinity, universality were the main conceptions of empire.

Stoicism in Imperial Rome: Seneca

As mentioned earlier, Stoicism had several representations in different ages. Stoicism of the Imperial Rome was represented by Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.- 65 A.D.). The main problem of the age was balancing the order of a great empire and freedom. The main instrument was ethics. But this would be an ethics founded on the reason.

Self-sufficiency and happiness were the main aims within the Stoic thought. Stoicists were fatalists. The role of an individual on the world had already been described. Humans were required to prefer obeying the rule of nature and their fate by their reason. God itself was a rule of nature. The problem of contradiction between the freedom and obligatory rule of nature was solved by Roman Stoicist through dividing freedom into two parts. They said there were two types of freedom; internal freedom and external freedom. Human was internally free and nothing from external world can change this. But in order to externally be free, he must obey the rules of the order. The order must be reasonable. Thus, human can only obey to a reasonable order.

Seneca tried to establish a set of ethical rules. According to him, humans were social animals born for the common good. He referred to state of nature, in which people lived freely, equally, peacefully, and happily. But now, they had been left this state of nature and the only thing to be done was, rather than removing slavery, to adapt these institutions to a right life.

Seneca advocated for monarchy, as the best political regime. He was an advisor for the emperor Nero. In his books written as an advice for the emperor, he asked from the monarch to be merciful. Being merciful was different from commiserating or forgiving. It holds reason in itself. A monarch should be merciful to his subjects. Otherwise his kingdom might be short. This was the difference between tyranny and monarchy. Seneca classifies the governments according to the personal features

of the emperor. Thus he did not deal with the process of holding power or the legitimacy of his emperorship. The elements of good governance were not the form of constitution or legal regulations. According to him, if we are looking for good governance, we have to educate the emperor adequately; and this education must also include ethical affairs.

Important

In Seneca's works classification of the governments was based on the personal features of the emperor.

Roman Stoicists contributed to idea of the Roman law since they argued the importance of reason for the norms of human behaviours. Roman history had always seen as an early prolog to modern political philosophy and Stoicism was one of the components of this history. Seneca personally affected Christian scholars. Thus, he had been seen as a symbol of transforming to Christian political thought.

Negation of the Will in the Christian Rome: Augustine

Saint Augustine (354-430 A.D.) was the last stop before the *so-called* darkness of mediaeval ages. He was the prominent philosopher who tried to systemize Christian thought on religion, world order, and society. He tried to set up the Christianity on philosophical underpinings. Since he wrote before the Teuton invasions, he found opportunity to transfer the antique Greek philosophy to the Christianity. He adapted antique thought to the Christianity. He used the thoughts of Plato and Stoicist in order to achieve this.

Augustine believed that the universe was created by the God from nothing. According to him, the God created everything from nothing only in six days. His motto was "God and spirit. That is all I would like to know. Nothing else is needed". This was a strong negation of reason and philosophy. He thought knowledge was impossible for human being. Human beings were deficient and transgressor. The only way of reaching knowledge would be faith and the scare of God. This was the starting point for wisdom. The first step of knowing himself was believing in God. Thus the only thing to know was the God. The God of Augustine was different from the antique portraits. The God, according to his belief, did not only create the universe but also regulated it. This God is known today as the "Old Testament".

God created human and gave him freedom and free will. But human used his free will for sin. Thus, his free will is taken from him. The salvation of human through free will is impossible. He will be freed only by the blessing of the God. Thus everything loses its independence against to the God. So did the state. State was also dependent on the God. The state was established by the God in order to let people to rule each other. Thus the state was a punishment for the people. The laws of a state were possible only under the protection of a timeless and supreme will. The product of the divine reason, eternal law or God's will, commands to obey the natural order. Human beings can only notice the degenerated form of this eternal law, natural law. Then the laws of the state, positive law came. Thus the laws were classified and they were all related with the God. The lowest law should be obeyed since it is the first step of obeying the supreme law.

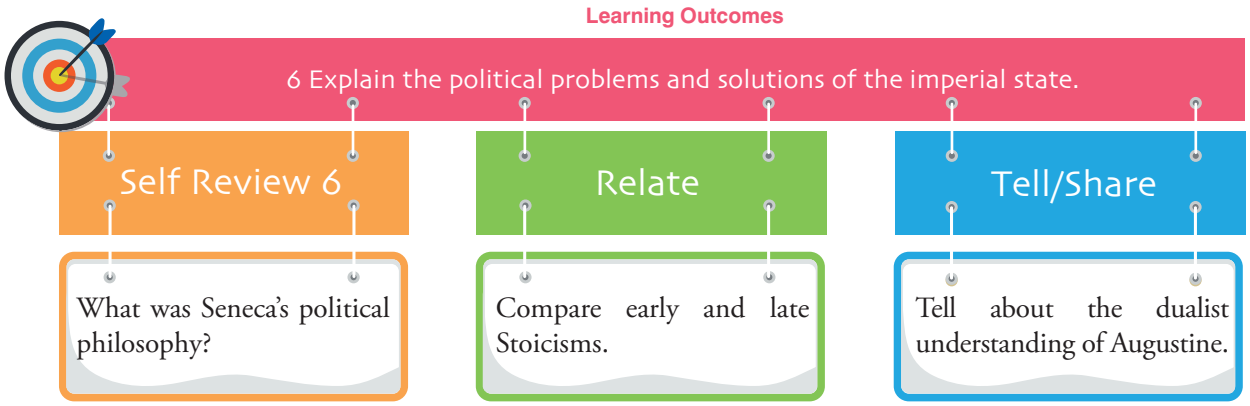
This scheme reminds us a dualist legislative will, dualist "state": State of the earth (*civitas terrana*) and the state of God (*civitas dei*). *Civitas dei* was above the *civitas terrana*. The Church was above the state. The Church was the representative of civitas dei within the civitas terrana. The true state was of course *civitas dei*. State was based on justice and true justice could only occur in the divine order.

Important

According to Augustine, justice was a relationship between the God and people.

It has to be kept in mind that, being a Christian or accepting the Church cannot automatically guarante the love of God. It is obvious that Augustine made a distinction between the Christians and non-Christians. Non-Christians were sinners and thus would never been accepted by the God. But for the Christians, we can only say that they have a chance to be accepted by God.

Augustine was the scholar who located the universality of Christianity instead of universality of the Roman Empire. Although he seemed to be pointing to the sovereignty of the Church, indeed it was only an abstraction made by him. Church was representing the love of God. Superiority of Church meant superiority of love of God.



Conclusion

Political thought started with the invention of society. Living in a society is a requirement for the human kind. But society has its own difficulties. There are fractions, individuals, different expectations in a society. The way of responding to the requirements of society gave birth to the politics and political thought.

What is to be derived from this part of the book? Thoughts can change. All those brilliant philosophers had distinct views about the society. We cannot talk about absolute true in social sciences and especially in political thoughts.

It is still too early for concluding about the importance of ancient Greek and Roman political thought. Reform and renaissance movement of the 15th Century is based on the scholars of ancient era. During these movements, approximately after 1500 years, humanity reinvented the importance of those philosophers. We noticed the inadequacies or personal deficiencies of ancient scholars. But still they are enlightening the way of humanity for the future.

Summary

LO 1 Explain the differences between political developments of Sparta and those of Athens.

There were two stereotypes that illustrated the institutionalisation, namely Sparta and Athens. Sparta was a city on the south of Peloponnesus peninsula and consisted of a few villages. Since the Laconia region, where Sparta settled in, had very productive lands but no seaport access, main economical facility was based on farming. The ownership of the land was collective. The warrior Doric tribes appropriated not only the lands but also the people living on these lands as they occupied a village or settlement. Thus, slavery was one of the main features of Spartan economy. Social stratification was based on three strata; Spartans or spartiats, perioikos, and helots. Contrary to the closed, disciplined society and agricultural economy of Sparta, the polis of Athens, on the other hand, represented a trade-based economy and a developed cultural-political social life. The Attika peninsula was an infertile region, but had a seaport access. Thus, the civilisation of the region was bound on the sea and commerce. Free population of Athens had four strata: Eupatrides, geomores, demiurgus, and thetes –the nobles, small farmers, craftsmen, and poor peasants, respectively. Class struggles between and within these groups led to different types of administrations such as Aristocracy, oligarchy, plutocracy, and democracy. Contrary to Sparta, political debates and competition were very vivid in Athens and participants were also large in numbers. The reason behind the prosperous philosophical and political tradition of the ancient Greece was demonstrated in association with this background.

LO 2 Explain Plato's political philosophy.

For Plato, republic (state) was not something that the Sophists defended; it was not contractual or artificial. Republic was natural, as the public itself. Since human beings were incapable of living by themselves, society and the state were natural beings. But, forms of societies and states were up to wills and conditions of humans. The scheme presented by Plato portrays a static societal structure though. Indeed, he was aware of the fact that ordinary states cannot achieve all these virtues and thus turn into a just organisation. It has to be kept in mind that this is a scheme for the ideal state. Thus, a state would be classified according to its distance to this ideal type. Administrators were culled among the youth of protectors. They were educated in philosophy as well as other social arts and examined several times. At the end, only the very best of this group would become the philosopher-administrators and the top would be the philosopher-king/queen. They were considered as semi-Gods by Plato. They were usually supposed to have a noble or aristocratic family. As mentioned before, there was a state idea at the world of ideas. The actual state was only degenerated images. Historically, all states were non-ideal states. Each has advantages and disadvantages. But as a general rule, it can be said that types of governments reflect a kind of circuit, from good to bad and from happiness to unhappiness.

Summary

LO 3 Explain the relationship between the general and political philosophy of Aristotle.

According to Aristotle, the structure of the being cannot be understood just by considering the external appearance. Rather, internal relations and connections should be revealed and the substance or cause of the being must be comprehended metaphysically. True being is the substance that developed in the phenomenon. In other words, each phenomenon is the formation in which the substance reveals itself. Since the formation can be understood as a material's form gaining process, we can comprehend a formation through influencing factors: material causes, formal causes, effective causes, and target-oriented causes. Aristotle said that target-oriented (teleological) causes were the ones that provide a competent form. According to Aristotle, politics was on the top of the other sciences and it was very inclusive; because in a city-state, the "final decision" was given through politics. The aim of the politics was to achieve the best for humans. The best for citizens is the best for the city-state. The aim of the ethics was to determine what is good for humans and society. Human behaviours, a good life, and happiness of the citizens form the subjects of politics or political science. As mentioned before, political science is the most comprehensive one, because politics is related with all other activities within a polis. The end of a political society –or the state- is the supreme common good or the biggest happiness for the biggest number of people. Therefore, the state was an ethical apparatus for Aristotle.

LO 4 Analyse the philosophical origins of contractarianism and cosmopolitanism.

Epicurus had an evolutionary historical view. Within his historical philosophy, he developed a contract-based theory of state. According to his theory, people made a contract when they noticed their common interests. Thus, they prevented the threats all together, worked together, and established a happy life. This was a very primitive type of social contract conception. It emphasises the unnatural characteristic of the society. It must be constructed and the main instrument for its construction was a contract. The contract presupposes the freedom of will of the people. It also accepts the individual as a reasonable subject, who can pursue his/her own interests. According to Stoicism, the ethical behaviour was complying with fate. Thus, humans need to reveal their destiny. Although the solution was inadequate to convince the opponents, it revealed a new understanding about humanity. The reason was the common feature of all humans. Being reasonable was the natural fact of humans. Thus, reason was the only and common law of humanity. This opens the road for cosmopolitanism. A wise man could not be citizen of a particular state. He was the citizen of the universal world. If we were members of the universal humanity, even the slaves or enemies would be part of this huge family. There must be only one state on the world. All humans would be equal citizens of this state. Cosmopolitanism of the Stoicism reflects political conjuncture of its period. Empires were the rising political organizations of the age and they collect different identities as their citizens under their rule.

LO 5 Analyse the practical contributions of Polybius and Cicero.

Greek political thought linked to Roman politics through Polybius. He was a Greek, educated in Greece and thus tried to explain the Roman institutions and political developments by the conceptions of the Greek political thinking. It seems that Polybius was not a follower of a particular philosophical school. He used conceptions of several Greek schools. His main argument was that there were undulant periods in the history of political societies. According to Polybius, the Roman Empire owed its success to its constitution. The organizational types of governments are classified according to the thoughts of Greek philosophers by Polybius. According to him, the success of Roman constitution was ensuring this check and balance system. Polybius built his constitutional understanding not on the social classes but on political forces and institutional balance. It can be said that he pointed out the way for the modern constitutional separation of powers as a system of governing. The main problem of Cicero was to preserve the Rome despite all its social contradictions. In order to achieve this, collaboration of all institutions and unity of faithful supporters of the republic were needed. Aristocrats started to turn away from politics. The democratic developments scared them of huge masses of people. Cicero tried to provoke them for politics again. He wrote that politics was a virtuous activity. Contrary to the Epicurean views, which recommend giving up with social issues and searching for individual happiness, Cicero argued that egoism was against the nature. The nobility of the spirit had to be shown by entering to the politics. Cicero's main aim was to turn back to old aristocratic days. According to Cicero, public and republic –state- were the same. When people were united within a stable order, a need for administration occurred. Society was a result of sense of community and state was a result of political differentiation. State was a unity, in which people were united with a common objective and connected to each other with legal bonds.

LO 6 Explain the political problems and solutions of an imperial state.

Political question of the imperial era was "who would be the next emperor?" The emperors were successors of important families. Although the senate kept its entity and the political regime was called as a *diarchy*, the emperors were holding the full power. Emperorship was combined with religious features and the emperor started to symbolize unity of the Rome. The politics of empire was not problematized around *res publica* anymore. The fate of the empire was a universal issue. Emperor Caracalla accepted all free people of the Empire as citizens. Thus the citizenship expanded. Infinity, divinity, universality were the main conceptions of empire.

Test Yourself

1 Which one of the followings includes all ideological institutions of polis?

a. agora-gymnasium-amphitheatre
b. oikos-mythology
c. gymnasium-mythology
d. amphitheatre
e. agora- oikos

2 Which one of the followings is not one of the social strata of Athens?

a. eupatrides
b. helots
c. thetes
d. demiurgus
e. geomores

3 Which one of the followings can be considered as the first social philosophical school of the ancient Greece?

a. Elea school
b. Epicurists
c. Sophists
d. Cynics
e. Stoics

4 "He was a true admirer of knowledge and wisdom. According to him, daily life of society should not be governed by ordinary citizens, who do not have adequate wisdom and knowledge. Related to this view, he was an opponent to the idea of democracy and the government of people." Which one of the followings is described by the paragraph?

a. Aristotle
b. Plato
c. Homer
d. Socrates
e. Epicurus

5 "Although they were followers of Socrates, they adopted an egalitarian understanding. The members of the movement were the lowest part of the society that was supported by the foreigners and exiles who were not given a right to citizenship. However, their egalitarian reaction to stratified society was not considerably successful in spreading among the poor." Which one of the followings is described by the paragraph?

a. Elea school
b. Epicurists
c. Sophists
d. Stoics
e. Cynics

6 Which one of the followings truly includes the separation of legitimate and degenerated political regimes according to Plato?

a. patriarchy- monarchy- aristocracy/ timocracy- oligarchy- democracy
b. patriarchy- aristocracy- oligarchy/ monarchy- timocracy- democracy
c. aristocracy- timocracy- oligarchy/ democracy- patriarchy- monarchy
d. oligarchy- democracy- patriarchy/ monarchy- aristocracy- timocracy
e. monarchy- timocracy- democracy/ patriarchy- aristocracy- oligarchy

7 Which one of the followings is defined as "the government of a minority group who aims the interests of the rich" by Aristotle?

a. Monarchy
b. Oligarchy
c. Aristocracy
d. Tyranny
e. Democracy

8 Which one of the followings cannot be counted as one of the intellectual sources of Epicurus?

a. Platonic lecturers of Athens
b. Atomist doctrine of Democritus
c. Non-egalitarian views of Socrates
d. Septic views of Pyrrhus
e. Hedonist philosophy of Aristippus

9 Which one of the followings was the ruling class during Republican Rome?

a. Plebs
b. Bourgeois
c. Proletariat
d. Patricia
e. Chevalier

10 "He believed that the universe was created by the God from nothing. God created everything from nothing only in six days. His motto was 'God and spirit. That is all I would like to know. Nothing else is needed'. This was a strong negation of reason and philosophy. He thought knowledge was impossible for human being. Human beings were deficient and transgressor. The only way of reaching knowledge would be faith and the scare of God. This was the starting point for wisdom." Which one of the followings is described by the paragraph?

a. Socrates
b. Epicurus
c. Aristotle
d. Seneca
e. Augustine

1. a	If your answer is incorrect, review "Birth of Political Thought in Polis: Sophists, Socrates, and Cynics".	6. a	If your answer is incorrect, review "State as a Result of Social Life: Political Thought in Plato".
2. b	If your answer is incorrect, review "Political and Social Developments in Ancient Polis of Sparta and Athens".	7. b	If your answer is incorrect, review "State as the Only Ethical Form of Life: Political Thought in Aristotle".
3. c	If your answer is incorrect, review "From Thinking about the Order of the Cosmos to the Order of Social: Sophists".	8. c	If your answer is incorrect, review "Origin of Social Contractarian Political Thought: Epicurus".
4. d	If your answer is incorrect, review "The Founder of the Non-Egalitarian Philosophy, Socrates and His Egalitarian Successors, Cynics".	9. d	If your answer is incorrect, review "Political Thought of Roman Res Publica: Polybius and Cicero".
5. e	If your answer is incorrect, review "The Founder of the Non-Egalitarian Philosophy, Socrates and His Egalitarian Successors, Cynics".	10. e	If your answer is incorrect, review "Negation of the Will in Christian Rome: Augustine".

Self Review 1

What are the strata of free population of Athens?

Free population of Athens had four strata: Eupatrides, geomores, demiurgus, and thetes –the nobles, small farmers, craftsmen, and poor peasants, respectively. Class struggles between and within these groups led to different types of administrations such as Aristocracy, oligarchy, plutocracy, and democracy. Contrary to Sparta, political debates and competition were very vivid in Athens and participants were also large in numbers. The reason behind the prosperous philosophical and political tradition of the ancient Greece is demonstrated in association with this background.

Self Review 2

What is the difference of Sophists' and Plato's conception of state?

For Plato, republic (state) was not something that the Sophists defended; it was not contractual or artificial. Republic was natural, as the public itself. Since human beings were incapable of living by themselves, society and the state were natural beings. But, forms of societies and states were up to wills and conditions of humans. On the other hand, social life requires a division of labour. This division of labour does not mean a completely segregated society. Indeed, the society is portrayed as an organism. Thus, each elements of this organism, according to Plato, has their own functions. Upon this organisational understanding, an ideal state is based on a stratified society, which has three occupational sections.

Suggested Answers for "Self Review"

What is the practical science according to Aristotle?

Self Review 3

Aristotle classified the sciences under three categories: Productive, practical, and theoretical sciences. Practical sciences are normative disciplines by which people know how to behave. Politics or ethics are practical sciences. According to Aristotle, politics was on the top of the other sciences and it was very inclusive; because in a city-state, the "final decision" was given through politics. The aim of the politics was to achieve the best for humans. The best for citizens is the best for the city-state. The aim of the ethics was to determine what good is for humans and society. Thus, politics and ethics were interrelated.

What is Epicurus' contractarianism?

Self Review 4

Epicurus had an evolutionary historical view. Within his historical philosophy, he developed a contract-based theory of state. According to his theory, people made a contract when they noticed their common interests. Thus, they prevented the threats all together, worked together, and established a happy life. This was a very primitive type of social contract conception. It emphasises the natural characteristic of society. The contract presupposes the freedom of will of the people. It also accepts the individual as a reasonable subject, who can pursue his/her own interests.

What was the originality of Polybius' theory?

Self Review 5

The originality of Polybius' theory was based on his conception about the power relations of politics behind the scene. His claim for a mixed constitution, foresaw a check and balance system for the conflicting powers. According to him, the success of Roman constitution was ensuring this check and balance system. Polybius built his constitutional understanding not on the social classes but on political forces and institutional balance. It can be said that he pointed out the way for the modern constitutional separation of powers system.

What was Seneca's political philosophy?

Self Review 6

Seneca tried to establish a set of ethical rules. According to him, humans were social animals born for the common good. He referred to the state of nature, in which people lived freely, equally, peacefully, and happily. But now, they had been left this state of nature and the only thing to be done was, rather than removing slavery or private property, to adapt these institutions to a right life. He advocated for monarchy, as the best political regime. He was an advisor for the emperor Nero. In his books written as an advice for the emperor, he asked from the monarch to be merciful. Being merciful was different from commiserating or forgiving. It holds reason in itself. A monarch should be merciful to his subjects. Otherwise his kingdom might be short. This was the difference between the tyranny and the monarchy. Seneca classifies the governments according to the personal features of the emperor. Thus, he did not deal with the process of holding power or the legitimacy of his emperorship. The elements of good governance were not the form of constitution or legal regulations. According to him, if we are looking for good governance, we have to educate the emperor adequately; and this education must also include ethical affairs.

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