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Politics Versus *Politeia*: Anatomy of the Critique*

Abstract

The present study focuses on two seminal works on politics written in Antiquity. One of these works is Plato's *Politeia* and the other is Aristotle's *Politics*. A vocabulary analysis of these works would likely reveal a high degree of similarity in the number of words used. Despite the similarities in terminology, there are differences in the approaches they offer. Specifically, the *Politics* is a critique of the political landscape depicted in the *Politeia*. The basis of this critique lies in what Plato and Aristotle understood by the act of philosophy. To summarise, it is straightforward to enumerate the criticisms of *Politeia* in the *Politics*. However, this does not provide an adequate explanation for Aristotle's critique of Plato. In this sense, the objective is not to demonstrate the criticisms levelled at *Politeia* in the *Politics*. The objective of this study is to ascertain the rationale behind the composition of *Politics*. In essence, the aim is to explore the reasons that led Aristotle to abstain from engaging with Platonic philosophy. The criti que of one philosopher by another constitutes an integral element within the history of philosophy. However, when considering Aristotle and Plato specifically, this becomes an issue that necessitates evaluation on an alternative plane. To summarise, it would be erroneous to interpret Aristotle's opposition to Platonic philosophy as a rudimentary occurrence in the annals of philosophy. First and foremost, the event in question represented a pivotal shift in the trajectory of philosophy as a discipline and a field of enquiry. The narrative under scrutiny herein encompasses the correlation, or otherwise, between philosophy and politics. *Politeia* chronicles the liaison between philosophy and politics, while *Politics* delineates the absence of such liaison. The following discussion will involve a comparative analysis of these narratives. The following discussion will firstly attempt to demonstrate the objectives of Plato's *Politeia*, and subsequently those of Aristotle's *Politics*. The conclusion of this study will be marked by a discussion of the assumptions that can be made regarding the outcomes of Aristotle's approach.

Keywords: Plato, Aristotle, Politeia, Politics.

Politika Politeia'ya Karşı: Eleştirinin Anatomisi

Öz

Çalışmamız, Antikçağ'da siyasetle ilgili yazılmış iki önemli eseri konu ediyor. Bu eserlerden biri Platon'un *Politeia* diyalogu, diğeri ise Aristoteles'in *Politika*'sıdır. Eğer bu eserlerle ilgili kelime analizi yapılmış olsa muhtemelen iki eserde yer alan ortak kelime sayısının yüksek oranda aynı olduğu görülür. Kelimelerdeki ortaklık olmasına rağmen ortaya koydukları yaklaşım arasında tamamen ters bir orantı mevcuttur. Şöyle ki, *Politika* metni *Politeia*'da sunulan siyaset sahnesinin bir eleştirisidir. Bu eleştirinin temeli ise iki filozofun da felsefe faaliyetinden ne anladıklarıyla ilgilidir. *Politika*'da yer alan *Politeia* eleştirilerinin neler olduğu kolay bir şekilde sıralanabilir. Ama bu bize Aristoteles'in niçin Platon'u eleştirdiği yanıtını vermez. Çalışmamızda bu anlamda *Politika*'da yer alan *Politeia* eleştirilerinin neler olduğunu göstermeyi amaçlamıyoruz. Yapmaya çalıştığımız, *Politika*'nın bir anlamda yazılış nedenini bulmak, Aristoteles'in Platoncu felsefeyi niçin üstlenmediğinin izini sürmektir. Bir filozofun diğer filozofu eleştirmesi felsefe tarihinin ayrılmaz bir unsurudur ama bu Aristoteles ve Platon söz konusu olduğu zaman başka bir düzlemde değerlendirmeyi gerektiren meseleye dönüşür. Yani Aristoteles'in Platoncu felsefeye karşı çıkması basit bir felsefe tarihi olayı gibi okunmamalıdır. Bu olay evvel emirde felsefe tarihinin seyrini değiştirmiş bir olaydır. Felsefe ve siyaset arasındaki irtibatın veya irtibatsızlığın da hikâyesidir. *Politeia* felsefe ve siyaset arasında irtibatın, *Politika* ise irtibatsızlığın hikâyesidir. Bu hikâyeleri karşılaştırmalı olarak ele alacağız. Önce Platon'un *Politeia*'sıyla ne yapılmak istendiğini akabinde ise Aristoteles'in *Politika*'sıyla ne hedeflendiğini göstermeye çalışacağız. Aristoteles'in yaklaşımının neye yol açtığına dair bazı varsayımlarla çalışmamızı yekûnlaştıracağız.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Platon, Aristoteles, Politeia, Politika.

* The sections of the article concerning Plato's *Politeia* are based on the author's doctoral thesis.

Introduction

In the aftermath of Plato, the political, particularly that which pertains to the nature of the state, is regarded as a subject open to discussion. Conversely, Plato endeavours to safeguard the knowledge attained by the philosopher within the confines of that which cannot be articulated. This predicament gives rise to a considerable degree of tension in the dialogues. The fact that the issues discussed in the dialogues remain unresolved, in a sense, keeps the dialogues open, allowing readers to continue participating in the dialogues even centuries later. This demonstrates that Plato does not reduce philosophical activity to mere reasoning. It is his contention that philosophy is experiential in nature and can be considered a dualistic activity. In this framework, the philosopher occupies one side of the divide, while the sage (*sophos*) is positioned on the other. Consequently, the philosopher's soul (*psykhe*) undergoes a shift (*periagoge*) from supposition (*doxa*) to truth (*aletheia*).

> *Sophos* is the master of philosophia as a techne (craft), but *ergon* (product) of his activity is *philosophos* himself. It is evident that the pathos concomitant with the praxis of *philosophia*, predicated on *aletheia*, is *eros*. This is due to the fact that the inherent nature of the aforementioned praxis is not judgement, but rather liberation or the act of extricating oneself from the fetters of *doxa*. In this sense, *eros* can be conceptualised as a *force majeure*, the sole driving force that will precipitate this emergence or liberation. It is this eros, directed towards *kalos* (beauty) that *sophos* 'opens up' to *philosophos*, that pulls the *philosophos' psuchē* out of *doxa* (Haşlakoğlu, 2008, s. 207).

The fact that this turning (*periagoge*), which cannot be opened to discussion, does not play a role in the organisation of the political becomes decisive with Aristotle. In this particular context, Aristotle's *Politics* is of particular significance in demonstrating the concrete origins of this process. The approach delineated in the text of *Politics* facilitates the establishment of politics as a scientific discipline. Nevertheless, it also paves the way for the distancing of politics from philosophy and philosophical activity. In this study, the initial objective will be to examine how Plato positions politics in the dialogue *Politeia* (*Republic*). In the following section, the manner in which Aristotle diverges from the approach proposed by Plato in the *Politeia* will be demonstrated. The text will emphasise which topics the *Politics* course discusses in relation to politics and which topics are disconnected from politics. The study will be concluded with the formulation of hypotheses that seek to explain the motivation behind Aristotle's undertaking. In this direction, the first step is to address Plato's *Politeia* dialogue.

Plato's Effort to Position Politics in the *Politeia*

In my opinion, Plato in *Politeia* focuses shifts from the design of a beautiful city (*kallipolis*) to the development of a procedure for political discussion. "*Politeia* is defined as a programme for individuals who subscribe to the concept of a just state. It can be argued that historical figures such as Socrates exemplified such a way of life, and thus, by living out this programme, they effectively practised it" (Celilzade, 2023, s. 246). It is evident that the scene depicted in the *Politeia* encompasses elements pertaining to political issues that transcend the purview of the dianoia activity and that are beyond the scope of discourse guided by reason. This issue may be related to the fact that the scene created by the *Politeia* is not entirely political in nature. It is evident that the dialogue under scrutiny encompasses a range of subjects that extend beyond the realm of politics, encompassing themes such as Being and the categorisation of knowledge. Moreover, the *Politeia* dialogue elucidates a discernible distinction between the position of Socrates and that of the other participants. Despite the fact that all participants, including Socrates, are equal in terms of their participation in the dialogue, Socrates is presented as the individual who possesses the ultimate knowledge on the issues discussed. To summarise, the discourse in *Politeia* is initiated not to ascertain the perspectives of Kephalos, Polemarkhos, Thrasymakhos, Glaukon and

Adeimantos on the concept of justice, but rather to address the anticipated remarks of Socrates on the subject. In summary, the perception that Socrates is cognisant of the issues and concepts underpinning the debate is one that is cultivated.

In the *Politeia*, Socrates occupies a position of considerable privilege, the very fact of which is generally taken for granted. The nature of this privilege is not discussed in the *Politeia*, but rather in the dialogue of the *Symposium*. The dialogue of the *Symposium* provides an answer to the question of why Socrates is presented in a privileged position not only in the dialogue of *Politeia* but also in other dialogues in which he takes part. The dialogue of the *Symposium* elucidates the essence of philosophical activity. In this context, it elucidates the nature of the relationship between the *sophos* and the *philosopher*, and how this relationship will engender a transformation in the philosopher's soul. Once the nature of the change in the philosopher's soul and thus the nature of the sophos-philosopher liaison is understood, it becomes clear what is intended to be done with the dialogue *Politeia*. As elucidated in the dialogue of the *Symposium*, the relationship between the sophos-philosopher is understood to be intertwined with the experience of truth, on the one hand, and politics, on the other. Plato's philosophy suggests a intrinsic connection between the experience of truth and politics. In the philosophy of Plato, philosophising is fundamentally the work of sophos.

> Sophos is defined as a person who is wise, who has complete knowledge, in other words, whose act of knowing is complete. This kind of knowing is wisdom. In this context, the term "wisdom" refers to the state of being a self-sufficient, conscious being in harmony with the world and society in which one lives. Conversely, a wise individual is one who possesses a comprehensive understanding of the world, of oneself, of life, and of the ultimate and highest purposes of life (Topdemir, 2010, s. 2).

From this standpoint, authentic philosophy is concerned with the sophos and the activity of the sophos. The acts of Sophos, which are not amenable to management within the framework of *dianoia*, constitute the primary subject of philosophy. The soul (*psykhe*) of the philosopher, in the company of the sophos to which it is subject, changes the stage in a way that we cannot grasp its nature within the activity of judgement; it returns from the stage of supposition (*doxa*) to the stage of truth (*aletheia*). In the terminology of Plato, this phenomenon is referred to as a *periagoge*. The philosopher who makes this transition (*periagoge*) thus becomes a lawgiver. In paragraph 209 a-b of the dialogue of the *Symposium*, Socrates provides the following description of the situation:

> It is posited that individuals who are pregnant in the soul, a concept that is explored in the following discourse, are those who conceive in their souls rather than in their bodies those things which it is proper for the soul to conceive and give birth to. It is imperative to ascertain what is favourable in this context. The present study explores the correlation between prudence and virtue in general. It is evident that all creative poets and all craftsmen who are considered to be inventors belong to this category. The most significant and aesthetically pleasing aspect of prudence, he continued, is that it concerns the organisation of cities and dwellings. This is referred to as moderation and justice (Platon, 2014, p. 138-139).

As previously stated, the scene created by Plato in *Politeia* is connected to the other dialogues and also to the dialogue of the *Symposium*. The singularity[1] in the dialogue of the *Symposium* is equivalent to the singularity in the dialogue of *Politeia*. Consequently, Plato's singularity in these two dialogues, that is, the nature of *sophos*, should be examined. If true philosophy is concerned with the *sophos*, and if the actions of the *sophos* are of consequence, and if one of these actions is to make laws that establish the order of small and large human

[1] The positioning of *sophos* in the dialogue as privileged in terms of knowledge compared to other persons.

communities, as in *Symposium* 209a-b, then one meaning of doing philosophy is to do politics. Alternatively, engaging with political matters can be construed as a form of philosophical contemplation. Aristotle's *Politics*, which is published immediately after Plato's *Politeia*, can be interpreted as a radicalisation of the dissatisfaction expressed by the dialogue participants. Aristotle's observations on the paradoxical stance of Plato, who sought to establish an educational system that he believed would produce competent law enforcement, underscores the complexity of his philosophical perspective (Aristoteles, 1993, s. 39). In expressing his desire to witness the establishment of a Platonic city, Aristotle alludes to the transcendent nature of Plato's pedagogical approach, which surpasses the confines of observational and experiential learning (Aristoteles, 1993, s. 39). In Aristotle's *Politics*, the concept of a constant and singular scene where politics is discussed, as in Plato's *Politeia*, is absent. As Aristotle asserts, all subjects pertaining to politics can be explored through the medium of dianoia, and his conception of a political scene is intended to facilitate our intellectual progression in the realm of political discourse, guided by our rational faculties. In this sense, it can be argued that Aristotle is the first to diverge from Plato's approach, which prioritises the sophos in the domain of political discourse. At the same time, "according to Aristotle, the Socratic/Platonic ideal is at odds with human nature, with human feelings and attitudes, and as such is not only an utopic ideal but also not a good one" (Karamanolis, 2023, p. 201).

Aristotle's *Politics*: Method and Content

Aristotle's *Politics* commences with an examination of the city. In the course of the discussion concerning the genesis and constituent elements of the phenomenon under scrutiny, an observation is made (Aristotle, 1877, p. 107). This observation is that the city emerged with the aim of achieving the common good (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 155). In summary, Aristotle's approach is characterised by reliance on the given and the utilisation of observational methods. The author undertakes observations on one hundred and fifty-eight site states, demonstrating a preference for inductive reasoning over deductive reasoning (Urhan, 2016, s. 213). "His attitude seems to be closely connected with his interpretation of Athenian history" (Lintott, 1992, p. 125). From the outset of his book, the author's opposition to Plato is evident. He directly challenges the assertion that the individual responsible for political administration, kingly administration, household administration and lordship is the same person by stating, "those who believe otherwise are not speaking the truth." Plato's theory posits that these three are one and the same (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 53-54), a notion derived from an analogy between the soul (*psykhe*) and the city (*polis*) (Platon, 2014, s. 37). In summary, the establishment of justice in the soul can be considered to result in the establishment of order in the soul. "Aristotle criticizes Plato's organic conception of the city" (Nussbaum, 1987, p. 18). It is posited that when the three aspects of the soul – reason, assertiveness and appetite – achieve harmony within the context of the ruler and the ruled, the beautiful city (*kallipolis*) is established in the soul. The individual in question is a consummate professional, demonstrating the same level of expertise in both his personal and professional domains. Indeed, the dialogues of Plato appear to imply that such an outcome awaits the person engaged in philosophical activity.

Aristotle asserts that the most efficacious approach to analysing a city is through its division into constituent parts. It is evident that the author employs his own logical reasoning throughout the entirety of the book. The author presents definitions, lists counter-criticisms, mentions complete and incomplete definitions, and explains arguments and counter-arguments. In summary, the text of *Politics* can be regarded as a work in which the rules of Aristotelian logic are applied. "*Politics*, has an analytical character, in the form of a treatise, dissecting the operational modes of existing administrative forms and seeking to classify and qualify political agents and pieces of public life and their valuation" (Stefani & Junior, 2024, p. 16). In a sentence

in paragraph 1252a7-a23, Aristotle asserts the following. Those who analyse the present text in accordance with the author's usual method of research will understand the present text (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 156). The translator's footnote from Simpson on the research method mentioned in this sentence is quite appropriate. "The analytic method is defined as the process of dividing a whole into its constituent parts, with the subsequent observation of how said whole is comprised of these individual elements. This method is discussed in *Physics* I.1 and is found throughout Aristotle's writings" (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 156).

In paragraph 1252a24 of the *Politics*, Aristotle reiterates the notion that, based on observational evidence, human beings are inherently predisposed to exist as both male and female, that is to say, as a dual entity in a relationship. Furthermore, the assertion is made that, in order to survive, it is by nature both ruler and ruled. The ability to foresee through thought is indicative of a ruler and master, while the ability to fulfil them with one's body is indicative of a ruled and slave. Consequently, the aforementioned principle is equally applicable to both the master and the slave. The assertion that the hierarchical relationship between ruler and ruled is inherently beneficial to both parties is not a sufficiently substantiated explanation. Aristotle's fundamental concept of politics and the constituents of the political sphere, namely the relationship between the ruler and the ruled and the manner in which they come into being, are expeditiously resolved. Nevertheless, this issue is intrinsically linked to the political sphere and the fundamental purpose of that sphere. As previously stated, Aristotle's approach is predicated on the analysis of the given. It can thus be posited that he developed empirical approach. Consequently, in the initial pages of his work, he reiterates his utilisation of observational reasoning for the second time. Consequently, he proceeded to analyse the predominant states of his own era. In this context, Evangeliou's characterisation of Aristotle as a traditionalist (Evangeliou, 1995, p. 3) makes sense. For instance, he articulates his personal perspectives by conducting an analysis of the political entities of his era, including Sparta, Crete, and Carthage.

It is noteworthy that Aristotle, who asserts that the household emerges from the union of male and female, citing Hesiodos, employs mythological references when addressing a fundamental issue related to politics. It is intriguing to note that Aristotle (2020), who previously expounded on the genesis of villages as a natural extension of the household unit, once again underscores the role of mythical discourse within the framework of political philosophy by invoking the works of Homer. Once more, following the assertion that man is a political creature by nature and the subsequent reinforcement of this notion with the statement that 'the non-city by nature is either inferior or superior to man', reference is made to Homer once more. This is particularly salient given the author's emphasis on observation, coupled with his tacit disclosure that he will address issues pertaining to politics through the lens of observation. A notable aspect of the text pertains to his invocation of mythical discourse as the authority that substantiates his thesis, a choice that potentially introduces a significant problematic dimension to the text of *Politics*. In the Turkish translation of the *Politics* under consideration, Homer is referred to in seven places (1338a22; 1292a4; 1284b40; 1278a34; 1259b10; 1253a1; 1252b15). In six of these references, Homer is either explicitly endorsed or the notion is further substantiated by a reference to Homer. It is notable that in a single instance only (1292a4), there is a mention of the ambiguity of Homer's words in the relevant context, yet they are not disregarded. Hesiodos is referenced in two places (1252b9; 1312a39), and in both instances it is asserted that his statements are accurate. When Aristotle established politics as a science, what drew him closer to Homer and Hesiod and distanced him from Plato? Aristotle, in his references to Homer and Hesiodos, asserts their accuracy and correctness in their determinations. However, he evaluates the relevant statements of Socrates in the *Politeia* as erroneous (1261a10), untrue (1263b29), unreliable (1264b6), ambiguous (1264b26), incomplete (1315b40), etc. In 1263b30, Aristotle characterises Socrates' approach as nonsense (*parakrousis*) (Müller, 2016, p. 108).

It is important to consider how Aristotle, who had previously criticised Socrates' theses, came to be convinced of the conformity of Homer's and Hesiodos' views to observation and logic. In the *Politics*, Aristotle stated that he would be based on observation and apply the analytical and synthetic method.

The tendency towards urbanisation is an innate human impulse, yet the individual responsible for the development of a city assumes a significant responsibility for the greatest of blessings. This is because justice, the quality that elevates humanity, is best embodied by the city (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 158-159). The question therefore arises: what precisely does Aristotle mean by "a person who builds a city"? The question thus arises as to whether this individual corresponds to the *sophos* that Plato emphasises. It is challenging to provide a definitive response to this query, particularly in light of the specific paragraph (1253a29) containing Aristotle's pertinent statement. This is due to the fact that the paragraph under discussion does not address the issue of "a person who founded the city".

Aristotle then seeks to resolve this question by referring directly to the relevant discussion in Plato's *Politeia* dialogue. Socrates is quoted as stating that children, women and property should be common. Therefore, the question arises as to whether the current practice is preferable or if the law proposed in the *Politeia* would be a more suitable alternative (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 194). It is the contention of the present study that Aristotle, who has been known to criticise Plato, is incorrect in his assessment. In the relevant work, Plato puts forward the argument that communal life would be right only for the guard class of the beautiful city (*kallipolis*). It is therefore not recommended and defended for the entire *Kallipolis* to live in a communal way. It would be erroneous to assume that Aristotle was unaware of this fact; however, it is our contention that he contributed to the distortion of the truth through an incomplete expression. It is possible that his interpretation may have resulted in the defence of *Kallipolis* as a design for communism. For instance, Karl Popper propounds a similar argument in his seminal work *Open Society and Its Enemies*. In order to ensure and control economic abstinence, Plato resorts to communism, i.e. the abolition of private property, especially private property in precious metals (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 73-74). It is evident that Karl Popper may have been influenced by an erroneous interpretation of Plato's philosophy, as posited by Aristotle's *Politics*.

The Regime Issue in *Politics*

Aristotle's regime analysis is initiated from the perspective of the citizen, as opposed to the city (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 53-54). Plato's approach originates from the city itself, drawing parallels between the soul (psykhe) and the city (*polis*) as outlined in his work *Politeia* (578a). In contrast, Aristotle's analysis of the regime is initiated from the perspective of the citizen, that is to say, from the standpoint of the soul (*psykhe*). This further corroborates the hypothesis that he is in opposition to Plato. Aristotle's critique of Plato's *Politeia* in some sections of his *Politics* has led to significant discourse on political ideations (Acar, 2018, s. 2219). Aristotle's complete opposition to Plato's approach in the *Politeia* is more clearly revealed in the paragraphs of the *Politics* dealing with the regime (Knoll, 2022, p. 404).

Aristotle poses the question, "Who is a citizen?" It is his contention that citizenship cannot be defined in terms of sharing a common space. If this were the case, foreigners and enslaved persons would also be considered citizens. The concept of citizenship is predicated upon the notion of shared participation in the decision-making process and the governance of the nation (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 254-255). This preliminary definition is intended to serve as a foundation for further exploration and elaboration. The precise definition of a citizen is as follows: The term 'citizen' is generally understood to denote an individual who is generally authorised to consult and decide (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 255). “Aristotle's conceptualisation of the citizen is significantly divergent from the contemporary understanding of the term. In his

philosophical framework, the government is not perceived as a representative entity, but rather as a direct authority. The citizen is not content with having a say in choosing his rulers, but actually governs when the time comes" (Ross, 1993, s. 300). Aristotle, in his definition of the city as 'a self-sufficient community of citizens' (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 255), attempts to establish a definition of the regime subsequent to those of citizen and city.

Aristotle's philosophical standpoint emphasises the inherent fallibility of regimes, whilst acknowledging the distinct characteristics of the individual within each regime. According to the aforementioned theorist, democracy is the regime that is suitable for the precise definition of the citizen. Aristotle is also against the practice of passing citizenship through parents. It is his contention that the parents of the first citizens were not themselves citizens. Such a practice is ethically and morally reprehensible.

Aristotle, in likening the citizen to a sailor, asserts that the primary responsibility of the sailor is to safeguard the ship, and that of the citizen is to protect the regime. In other words, the concept of 'the virtue of the citizen' is relative to the prevailing regime (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 260). Aristotle's philosophical perspective posits that the concept of virtue is relative to the prevailing regime, thereby giving rise to the discourse surrounding the question of whether the virtue of a good person and that of a perfect citizen are indeed synonymous. The virtue of the good person and the virtue of the perfect citizen are not synonymous. It is evident that, despite the unity of human virtue, there exist exemplary citizens who exhibit distinct virtues in accordance with the prevailing regime. This is attributable to the existence of numerous disparate regimes. Furthermore, while the establishment of a regime consisting entirely of morally good individuals may be unattainable, the possibility of a regime consisting of perfect citizens remains a distinct prospect. Aristotle will reach the following conclusion: "It is possible for a person to be a perfect citizen without possessing the virtues of a perfect man" (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 262). In cases where the ruler exhibits the virtues of the good man, the virtue of the perfect citizen and the virtue of the good man are combined in the same person. Aristotle, in his definition of a regime as "the organisation of the governing authorities of a city and especially the sovereign authority" (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 269), poses two fundamental questions. Firstly, he queries the number of regimes, and secondly, he explores the distinguishing characteristics that set multiple regimes apart from one another. It is his contention that the nature of the regime is determined by the ruling class. To illustrate this point, if the ruling class is constituted by the populace, the regime is deemed to be democracy; if the ruling class is constituted by a select group, then the regime is referred to as an oligarchy.

Given that the focus of his regime analysis is on the evaluation of de facto regimes, and that he has analysed over one hundred cities in this manner, it may be posited that he presents a draft of public law which is ready to be applied in a de facto regime. Consequently, it has been asserted that his regime analysis possesses a utilitarian dimension (Wanlass, 1970, p. 64). This point is of crucial significance. It is an established fact that Aristotle served the Macedonian state (Shields, 2012, p. 5). It is possible to interpret Aristotle's critique of *Politeia*, particularly with regard to the regime analysis sections of *Politics*, as conveying a particular message to state administrators of that era. The regulations proposed by *Politeia* are not to be considered. Consequently, the critique of *Politeia* in the *Politics* occasionally transcends the domain of philosophy, metamorphosing into a form of counter-propaganda. In this particular context, an explanation can be provided for the fact that the views of Homer and Hesiodos are upheld, despite the assertion that all of Socrates' statements are erroneous, incomplete, or insane, etc.

Aristotle's philosophy posits that humans are political animals (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 269), motivated by a desire to coexist for the sake of aesthetics. The fundamental purpose of the city is to facilitate harmonious coexistence. Nevertheless, while the aspiration to cohabit harmoniously

is commendable, its actualisation is not always attainable. In fact, Aristotle himself emphasised that there are two fundamental understandings of government: despotic and political. A government that prioritises the interests of the ruler is considered despotic, while a government that prioritises the interests of the ruled is regarded as political.

It is imperative that Aristotle's conception of man as a fundamentally political animal is delineated. The inherent human tendency does not necessitate socialisation through external pressures. To summarise, the natural state and the process of leaving the natural state, as illustrated by the philosophies of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, are not in accordance with the political philosophy of Aristotle. Aristotle's discourse on socialisation suggests that individuals are inherently compelled to assimilate themselves into the prevailing societal structures (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 270). This phenomenon can be explained by the desire of people to live in communities, even in the absence of a perceived need for mutual assistance. In essence, the human species can be considered a political entity by its very nature. The objective of politics is to facilitate harmonious coexistence. It is evident that the realisation of this objective is either non-existent or only partial in the context of despotic governments.

Aristotle's philosophical perspective on political governance asserts that a political government is defined as "the government that favours the common good according to what is absolutely just" (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 271), while a despotic government is the antithesis of this. Furthermore, the political government is divided into three according to him. The governance of a minority is termed an aristocracy, that of a majority a republic, and that of the entire populace a kingdom. Aristotle propounded the notion that the most ideal form of government is the republic (Aktan, 2016, s. 4). It is evident that, despite the fact that the majority may not be flawless on an individual basis, they have the capacity to surpass even the most exceptional minority when they unite. However, this potential is not realised when each individual is considered in isolation. However, the republic (politeia), according to the aforementioned scholar, manifests itself only on rare occasions (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 344).

The advent of despotic rule is concomitant with the dissolution of these three regimes. The term "tyranny" is employed to denote a regime that is ruled for the benefit of the ruling elite, "oligarchy" to denote a regime ruled for the benefit of a minority, and "democracy" to denote a regime ruled for the benefit of the poor. The fundamental distinction between a democratic system and an oligarchic one lies in the distribution of wealth and the presence or absence of poverty. Aristotle's philosophical standpoint posits that the foundation of aristocracy lies in virtue, while oligarchy is rooted in wealth and democracy is founded on freedom (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 347). Aristotle then proceeded to analyse the concept of justice in the context of these regimes. It is the contention of the aforementioned author that the concept of justice is not being interpreted correctly (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 275) within the context of despotic rule, that is to say, within the context of corrupt regimes. For instance, the author asserts that both democracy and oligarchy embody a conception of justice, albeit one that is limited in scope and fails to engage with the fundamental question of what constitutes justice in its most comprehensive sense (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 275). Aristotle's philosophical perspective on justice asserts that its presence does not inherently lead to the destruction of the city (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 280). The purpose or good of politics is justice (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 287). It is the contention of the aforementioned author that the legal systems which govern the political regimes of government, namely kingdom, aristocracy and republic, are just, whilst those which govern the despotic regimes of government, namely tyranny, oligarchy and democracy, are not. It is evident that legislation that is favourable to righteous regimes must be deemed just, while that which is favourable to perverse regimes must be considered unjust (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 287).

The concept of justice is addressed in a cursory manner in the *Politics*. In contrast, the central subject of the *Politeia* is justice. It is a matter of some interest that the author does not make justice the central subject of the *Politics*. In the *Politeia*, justice is defined within the activity of judgement (473d-e) and is expressed as everyone doing their own thing (Platon, 2010, s. 182). However, an aspect of justice that cannot be discussed within the activity of judgement is also present, and this is related to the (*periagoge*) of the soul (*psykhe*).

Socrates, who states that unveiling this facet of justice necessitates traversing an arduous and circuitous route (435d) (Platon, 2010, s. 135), imparts from Diotima (*Symposium*) that this trajectory is experiential in nature. It is noteworthy that Diotima informs Socrates of her uncertainty regarding the feasibility of experiencing this phenomenon, yet she proceeds to offer her perspective (210a) (Platon, 2014, s. 142). Socrates' citation of Diotima's statement is recorded in sections 209b, 211a and 212a of the extant sources.

> Those who conceive in their souls rather than in their bodies are the ones who conceive what is fitting for the soul to conceive and give birth to. It is imperative to ascertain what is favourable in this context. The present study explores the correlation between prudence and virtue in general. The most significant and aesthetically pleasing aspect of prudence,' he continued, 'pertains to the organisation of urban settlements and residential structures. This phenomenon is referred to as moderation and justice (...). Upon attaining the final echelon of erotic enlightenment, the individual beholds a singular aesthetic that transcends conventional beauty, owing to its inherent uniqueness. This, Socrates, is the fundamental purpose of all previous endeavours (...). It is in this context that the potential for a person to give birth to truths, rather than empty dreams of virtue, becomes apparent. This is achieved by looking with an eye that can perceive the beautiful, leading to the realisation of truth rather than illusion. The text asserts that by giving birth to a genuine virtue and nurturing and growing it, man can win the friendship of the gods (Platon, 2014, s. 139-146).

Aristotle dedicates a greater proportion of his *Nicomachean Ethics* to the issue of justice. In this particular context, justice is defined as the mean between two things in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle dedicates a greater proportion of his *Nicomachean Ethics* to the issue of justice. In this particular context, justice is defined as the mean between two things in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristoteles, 2012, s. 42). It has been sufficiently stated that the concept (justice) under discussion is located at the midpoint between two vices, one of which is excessive and the other deficient, and that this midpoint is achieved by aiming at the middle in both affections and actions (Aristoteles, 2012, s. 42). In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, it is evident that the concept of justice is not associated with the birth of the soul (*psykhe*) as delineated in the *Symposium*, and that the dimension of power is subjected to more rigorous scrutiny. Aristotle's conception of justice is predicated on the prevailing order of society and the existing state. Despite the existence of a fundamental conception of justice in Aristotle's thought, its practical implementation remains subject to contextual variation. He asserts that individuals who adhere to the law and uphold equality are deserving of justice, and that legislation that is deemed appropriate is also just. He conceptualises justice in terms of distributive justice, corrective justice and exchange justice (Çiçek, 2020, s. 4). In contrast to Plato's notion that the establishment of justice in the soul (*psykhe*) would result in societal transformation towards justice, Aristotle's philosophy diverges from this perspective. The concept of justice is inherently linked to the notion of compliance with the established laws of a given society. An individual who embodies justice is one who has internalised the legal framework of the community, thereby demonstrating a commitment to its principles and regulations.

The Debate on the Right Regime in *Politics*

In addressing the question, "is kingship the right regime?", the focus is on the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of kingship and its historical evolution. Aristotle's response to this query is affirmative. Firstly, the author posits the existence of multiple forms of kingdom. Aristotle posits that the paradigm of a kingdom governed by law is exemplified by Sparta, while the model of a kingdom transferred from one generation to the next, as observed in certain barbarian communities, serves as a contrast. According to the aforementioned theorist, these communities exercise authority over a consenting subject. Consequently, the term tyranny is not applicable in this context. The fundamental nature of tyranny is the governance of subjects who have not expressed consent. Another form of government is the dictatorship. Aristotle's philosophical standpoint asserts that while dictatorship is founded upon legal principles, it does not invariably transcend familial lines, implying that it is not transmitted from one generation to the next (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 299). The concept of dictatorship is often associated with tyrannical rule, yet it is also characterised by its elective nature, with the consent of the subjects, thus aligning it with the concept of royalty (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 300). Aristotle's philosophical standpoint posits the emergence of a distinct form of kingdom during the epoch of heroes. 'There are four kinds of kingdoms: In the age of heroes, the king's authority was limited to specific functions, and he was subject to the consent of the subjects. The king was both commander and judge, and held authority in matters concerning the gods. The second is that of the barbarian family origin and ruled by a despot in accordance with tradition. The third is an elective tyranny, known as a dictator. The fourth is the kingdom of Sparta, which is characterised as a family-based permanent command (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 301). However, he also makes reference to a fifth type of kingdom. In this final kingdom typology, sovereignty is held by a sole individual, the king, who wields authority over all domains.

Aristotle's philosophical contributions to the study of political science include the assertion that the final category of kingdom, in conjunction with the Spartan model of governance, delineates the boundaries of kingship. In contrast, other forms of government are situated in a position intermediate between these two extremes. Aristotle then proceeds to draw parallels between the concepts of kingship and aristocracy. Following a thorough examination of the available evidence, it is the author's conclusion that aristocracy is to be preferred to kingship. The reasoning underpinning this assertion is predicated on the premise that the propensity to commit errors is contingent on the number of individuals involved. Furthermore, Aristotle hypothesises that the initial human settlement in the kingdom was driven by the rarity of virtuous individuals (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 305). He subsequently posits that, as cities expanded and the population of virtuous individuals increased, a transition occurred towards an aristocratic society. He asserts that the emergence of oligarchy was precipitated by the misappropriation of communal resources, and that tyranny and democracy were concomitantly established during this process of deterioration. Aristotle's philosophical standpoint is that the initial societal structure to which human beings gave rise was the kingdom, and that this constituted a political administration. The advent of despotic rule, that is to say, corrupt regimes, coincided with the deterioration of political rule and the emergence of correct regimes. The hypothesis that humankind is, by its very nature, a political animal (*zoon politikon*) necessitates the defence of such a supposition. In summary, if human beings are considered to possess the attribute of 'being a political creature' as a fundamental aspect of their nature – a proposition that is supported by Aristotle's philosophical standpoint – then the initial societal structure established by human beings must be deemed correct and the form of government must be political in nature, rather than despotic.

In summary, Aristotle's fiction is compatible with the zoon politikon approach within the historical context. Aristotle's position is that kingship is a form of government that is inferior to

that of an aristocracy. In this passage, he sets out the various arguments that are put forward against the idea of an absolute kingship. He then goes on to describe the circumstances in which the idea of kingship is just. It is asserted that an individual who is distinguished by virtue and whose virtue surpasses that of others may be considered worthy of royal status or kingship, thereby bestowing upon them the authority to govern (Aristoteles, 2020, p. 315).

Aristotle's political philosophy is characterised by the notion that politics should examine the best regime. Furthermore, when he asserts that a politician should be cognizant of the most suitable regime for all cities, he divests politics and the fundamental activities associated with it from the realm of privilege (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 320). In this regard, it is imperative to examine the conceptualisation of regimes and the suitability of legal frameworks to align with specific regimes. Aristotle's response to the question of the number of regimes is that each city is comprised of many parts. He differentiates between the absolute best regime and the best regime that is permitted by the conditions (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 320). Within the spectrum of oppressive regimes, tyranny is regarded as the most egregious, with oligarchy and democracy following in succession in terms of severity. In a manner analogous to the heterogeneity that characterises democratic systems, the conceptualisation of oligarchy is similarly diversified, encompassing a range of distinct forms. This assertion is further substantiated by the observation that analogous conclusions can be drawn concerning other regimes. The rule of the middle way becomes the rule he follows in politics. The optimal existence for both individuals and urban centres is predicated upon the pursuit of virtue. The middle class, situated between the socio-economic extremes of wealth and poverty, inhabits this socio-economic space and should be regarded as the most privileged (in comparison to other socio-economic classes) (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 352). The argument is that a regime based on the middle class is optimal for two main reasons. Firstly, the middle class, as has just been demonstrated, is the most stable social class and thus the best placed to prevent the regime from deviating to extremes (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 352). It is widely accepted that Aristotle's philosophical standpoint is predicated on the notion of the real, from which he subsequently derives the politics of the existing. The judgement should not be made based on virtues that are beyond the reach of ordinary people, nor on an education that requires talents endowed by nature and resources dependent on fortune. Nor should it be based on a regime to pray for, but rather on a way of life that most people can share and a regime in which most cities can participate (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 352). In this particular instance, Aristotle does not preclude the possibility of a regime grounded in a virtue that is beyond the reach of the general populace. In essence, Plato's conception of an ideal regime is predicated on the notion of the birth of the soul (psykhe) within the paradigm of the sophos-philosopher relationship. Aristotle's approach is to 'decide according to a regime in which most cities can participate', although this is a theoretical possibility.

Aristotle, in his subsequent discourse on the dissolution of regimes, asserts that this process unfolds in a specific manner. The supporters of the regime may resort to factional conflict in order to alter the regime in the event that they perceive themselves to be under-represented (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 379). In the process of change, there may be a transition from one regime to another, or control may change hands within the same regime. Aristotle posited that factors such as the perception of inequity, the pursuit of honour and profit, arrogance, fear, superiority complexes, and contempt can lead to regime change and even collapse.

The collapse of democracies is attributed to the empowerment of demagogues (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 394), while the disintegration of oligarchies is often ascribed to the proliferation of mercenaries, factions and fortuitous occurrences (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 397). The breakdown of aristocracies is frequently linked to income inequality, concessions and the self-importance of the majority (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 402). The causes of collapse in monarchies are identified as injustice, fear and contempt (Aristoteles, 2020, s. 419), while the causes of collapse in

tyrannies are classified as internal (conflicts within the tyrant's family) and external (invasion or defeat by other regimes) (Aristoteles, 2020, **s**. 423-424). Aristotle's philosophical perspective on the sustainability of regimes posits that their resilience is contingent on the absence of factors that could potentially lead to their transformation or collapse (Aristoteles, 2020, **s**. 406).

Aristotle asserts that Plato also addressed the issue of regime change, but that it was left unfinished (Aristoteles, 2020, **s**. 436). We concur with this observation. However, it should be noted that the *Politeia* dialogue treats politics as a sub-stage of philosophy.

The subjects addressed in the dialogue assume greater significance in this context. To summarise, the extent to which the topic of regime fall is addressed in *Politeia* and *Politics* is contingent on the attitudes of the two philosophers towards the relationship between politics and philosophy. Aristotle's philosophical standpoint is that politics is a science, akin to other sciences. The analysis of political issues should be grounded in empirical observation. "He had a stronger observational and descriptive basis for his researches and conclusions than Plato" (Ferguson, 2023, p. 2). In contrast, Plato's philosophical perspective on politics is not regarded as a scientific discipline but rather as a sub-stage of philosophy. Consequently, the dialogue *Politeia* commences with the theme of sacrifice, progresses to the subject of death, engages with the concept of degrees of knowledge (divided line), and concludes with the theme of life after death. The organisation of work on politics is not undertaken by post-Platonic philosophers, with only a few exceptions.[2]

Conclusion

The work known as Plato's *Politeia* commences with an examination of sacrifice and death, and concludes with a myth concerning the afterlife. The subject of death may be connected to the act of observing the inception and termination of life from a particular perspective. In summary, the concept of life can be defined as a continuous entity with defined beginning and end points. However, it is only through the process of dying that this wholeness can be fully comprehended. The veracity of this locale remains unattainable to those who find themselves within it. The fundamental question pertains to the possibility of observing the inception and cessation of life as a unified entity, while concurrently inhabiting that unified state, and yet maintaining consciousness and vital signs, in the absence of biological death. It is understood that Plato subscribes to the following perspective on the matter: that this is indeed a possibility. In the dialogue *Phaidon* (64-67a), Socrates defines philosophy as the work of dying before dying. Consequently, the philosopher becomes a person who perishes before actually dying. The philosopher is the individual who observes the beginning and end of life in unison. This awareness is embodied in the life (in both words and deeds) of the philosopher. The words and deeds of the philosopher provide a moral and legal framework for living. The imitation (*mimesis*) of the philosopher's words and deeds is naturally conducive to the creation of a beautiful city (*kallipolis*). In this sense, the philosopher's objective is to live in accordance with the integrity they observe, rather than what is defined as 'law' by the society in which they reside.

For this reason, in the *Apalogia*, Socrates does not adopt a serious attitude towards his situation, i.e. the trial. As a final request, he mentions the rooster debt to Asclepius. This phenomenon can be interpreted as a manifestation of Socratic irony, yet it also constitutes a challenge. However, contemplation of the totality in question engenders an awareness of right and wrong. It is evident that those who judge Socrates lack this awareness. Despite Socrates' attempts to refute the prophecy that he is the wisest in the *Apalogia*, he remains convinced that those who self-identify as wise are, in fact, unwise. Following this realisation, the events in question and the subsequent judgement are rendered devoid of any significance.

[2] One of these exceptions is Fârâbi's *Medinetü'l-Fazila.*

Without acknowledging the aforementioned concept of unity, it is challenging to comprehend the rationale behind the inclusion of themes such as sacrifice, death, the value of knowledge, and existence within the *Politeia*. In Plato's political philosophy, politics should only be established in connection with philosophy and as a sub-stage of it. In other words, the law-making of the soul (*psykhe*) as a result of philosophical activity establishes the stage of politics. It is therefore evident that political issues have their origins and foundations in philosophy. The foundations of this philosophy include existence, knowledge and death. Following the period of Platonic political thought, the manner in which political issues are addressed underwent a significant transformation. It is probable that Aristotle was the first to instigate this. He conceptualises politics as a scientific discipline. Consequently, he propounds the theory of politics without associating it with issues such as existence and the value of knowledge. Indeed, the connection between politics and philosophy is becoming obscured. Instead, the scientific study of politics is being constructed, and today, in political science departments, an Aristotelian approach is actually maintained. The objective of this study is to demonstrate how Aristotle employed this approach in his work *Politics*. In the domain of politics, Aristotle challenges the traditional notion of the sage as an individual of superior wisdom and knowledge, thereby challenging the prevailing hierarchy. In summary, the concept of observing the inception and termination of life as a unified entity is relinquished. It is imperative to acknowledge that no individual or group is inherently superior or inferior in the context of political discourse. Nevertheless, it is imperative to recognise that any form of political reasoning must be founded upon empirical observation and necessitates a structured methodological framework as a foundational principle. In this direction, it has been demonstrated that the author took the actual situation as a basis and analysed over a hundred cities. In evaluating *Polited*'s actions, it was asserted that his motivations were driven more by political considerations than philosophical ones. The grounds for Aristotle's censure of Plato's methodology may be identified in his relationship with the Macedonian state. The continuation of the Platonic approach could have posed certain challenges to the states. In the Platonic approach, as we have previously outlined, the formation of the law is evident. The formation of the law is predicated on philosophical activity that engenders the return (*periagoge*) of the soul (*psykhe*). This approach is not considered appropriate for states and has been shown to have destructive consequences in certain respects. Furthermore, the young people's dedication to this comprehension of philosophy has the potential to result in an uncontrollable dimension for the states. Nevertheless, Aristotle opts for a different approach. He promotes the pursuit of science among young people and establishes the foundation for philosophy to be governed by political entities. The text *Politics* demonstrates the initiation of this process.

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