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Verification the dichotomy of democracy-despotism relating ancient Iran and Greece

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Abstract. Iran and Greece have played major roles in ancient world and are seen as two rival power and sometimes enemies. In political thought and structure, in political and historical texts, they are seen also different, one is democratic model and another is an empire and autocracy, but there is some resemblance between their political views that are neglected. Also some mistakes there are. What same socio-political contexts has been in both? This article is addressed this main point.

Keywords. Verification, dichotomy, democracy-despotism, iran, Greece

A. Problematique

Iran and Greece have played major roles in ancient world and are seen as two rival power and sometimes enemies. In political thought and structure, in political and historical texts, they are seen also different, one is democratic model and another is an empire and autocracy, but there is some resemblance between their political views that are neglected. Also some mistakes there are. What same socio-political contexts has been in both? This article is addressed this main point.

B. A short history and preamble

Before to begin the main subject, we should verify some primary points which are important in this issue.

1. There was a difference between ancient Iranian and Greek civilizations: in Greece a written civilization has produced some important text and books which sustained more than two thousand of years against time lapse; but in Iran, we can say some books in political sphere were produced, but then disappeared and lost, and in a general view, the Iranian ancient civilization was a moral and social civilization. Iranians pay most attention to practical governance rather than philosophy of politics.

2. It is clear that culture and customs affect on political reflections of a community and are affected by them. There was some differences that are basic in shaping political thought in these two ancient civilization. Herodotus writes: "The customs which I know the Persians to observe are the following: they have no images of the gods, no temples nor altars, and consider the use of them a sign of folly. This comes, I think, from their not believing the gods to have

the same nature with men, as the Greeks imagine...Of all the days in the year, the one which they celebrate most is their birthday...There is no nation which so readily adopts foreign customs as the Persians. Thus, they have taken the dress of the Medes, considering it superior to their own; and in war they wear the Egyptian breastplate. As soon as they hear of any luxury, they instantly make it their own: and hence, among other novelties, they have learnt unnatural lust from the Greeks. Each of them has several wives, and a still larger number of concubines...my mind it is a wise rule, as also is the following- that the king shall not put any one to death for a single fault, and that none of the Persians shall visit a single fault in a slave with any extreme penalty; but in every case the services of the offender shall be set against his misdoings; and, if the latter be found to outweigh the former, the aggrieved party shall then proceed to punishment.

The Persians maintain that never yet did any one kill his own father or mother; but in all such cases they are quite sure that, if matters were sifted to the bottom, it would be found that the child was either a changeling or else the fruit of adultery; for it is not likely, they say, that the real father should perish by the hands of his child.

They hold it unlawful to talk of anything which it is unlawful to do. The most disgraceful thing in the world, they think, is to tell a lie; the next worst, to owe a debt: because, among other reasons, the debtor is obliged to tell lies. If a Persian has the leprosy he is not allowed to enter into a city, or to have any dealings with the other Persians; he must, they say, have sinned against the sun."(Herodotus, 2013, pp. 61-63.).Iranian ancient civilization was a combinational and productive civilization and we can guess that socio-political relations were at a stable and moderate level, truth-telling is anti-opportunism and this kind of a structure can not be existed in a despot regime.

3. Another point relating this subject, is the difference between the kind of political reflection between ancient Iran and Greece. "Chinese cities of the Warring states period (481-221Bc) were not like Athens...China did not experience Christendom's struggle between Church and state. Feudalism, which in Europe provided the basis for constitutionalism, disappeared from China with the war chariot...the emphasis on finding new means of maintaining social harmony led them to think less in terms of abstract principles and more in terms of the process of socialization. As a result, China produced a political culture rather than a political philosophy."(Iain Mclean, p.62-63).It seems that it is true basically about ancient Iran that for some causes, it has not produced abstract political philosophy and produced political culture. According to some little texts that has remained from ancient period, we can say that this political thought and teaching was based upon religion and experience.

4. We must pay attention to this point that our contemporary judgement about ancient times is based upon which texts or resources or documents? "The history of the Parthian kingdom presents a special problem, since the sources on which it must be based are both fragmentary extraneous. In the present state of knowledge, information originating from authentic Parthian sources is scanty in the extreme. Almost all the particulars available are derived from histories written in either Greek or Latin. Both the Seleucid kings of Syria, the Roman republic empire, the patrons of the majority of writers concerned with this subject, were frequently at war with Parthia, so that the tone of the writings is naturally often tinged with hostility. Yet more serious for our understanding than direct hostility (which could easily be discounted) is their lack of inner understanding of Parthian, its society. Such matters as the dominant Parthian ideals aspirations, or the ethnic linguistic make-up of the kingdom, would not have been apparent to uninformed observers under the stress of military operations."(Yarshater, 1986 ,p. 2.)

5. About wars between Iran and Greece, in the west many books has been written and in some of them Marathon and Salamis embattles were exaggerated. What can be true is that each of these two countries has some triumph, and of all narratives of these wars, it is almost the Greek narrative, which was the enemy's reading, is sustained the time lapse. For example : "Immediately after the conquest of Lydia by the Persians, the Ionian and Aeolian Greeks sent ambassadors to Cyrus at Sardis, and prayed to become his lieges on the footing which they had occupied under Croesus. Cyrus listened attentively to their proposals, and answered them by a fable. "There was a certain piper," he said, "who was walking one day by the seaside, when he espied some fish; so he began to pipe to them, imagining they would come out to him upon the land. But as he found at last that his hope was vain, he took a net, and enclosing a great draught of fishes, drew them ashore. The fish then began to leap and dance; but the piper said, 'Cease your dancing now, as you did not choose to come and dance when I piped to you.'" Cyrus gave this answer to the Ionians and Aeolians, because, when he urged them by his messengers to revolt from Croesus, they refused; but now, when his work was done, they came to offer their allegiance."(Herodotus, 2013, pp.64-65.) .

6. In this ancient period, the main roles of Iranian and Greek people and civilizations in improving political thought and governance, which each of them in a different sphere played, should be considered. "Iran has functioned for at least 5000 years as a civilization and as fertile ground for the emergence of the world's first state in the modern sense of the word. The administration of Iran has historically been plagued with difficulties of exerting authority outside the main areas of population and, therefore, in fixing its national frontiers .The word Iran means "the land of the Aryans." ...

7."There are unmistakable indications in the historical record that Iran was the first civilization to fashion the concept of "state," here used to mean a set of governing institutions with sovereignty over a defined territory. Although there is little doubt that the modern concepts of state and territory were developed in modern Europe, it is hard to overlook the fact that they are rooted in periods older than their 15-century emergence in Europe, in the Iranian Tradition of Statehood. There are indications that ancient civilizations were familiar with the notion of the state in connection with territorial and boundary characteristics, similar to modern states. References in ancient Persian literature discuss states, territories, and boundaries in a strikingly modern way, which probably influenced ancient Greek and Roman governance. A combination of traits from the ancient Greek, Roman, and Persian civilizations is said to have been a major source of contributions to what culturally constitutes the West in our time."(Mojtabeh-Zadeh,pp.20-21).

8. Kind of governance and political structure is depended on kind of population and number of it's and also size and features of territory. This main point which Aristotle and others consider it in their writings, why is not considered in ancient world. Iran was an empire and Greece was a collection of islands. Empire with multi ethnic population and sizable territory has necessities which are different from a territory with some islands. We should not expect the same political structure in these two different territories, as when westerns reached to power in these areas, they adopted this kind of structure ."Verification can be found in historical events as when, upon conquering Persia in 333 CE, the Greek leader, Alexander the Great, claimed in Persepolis that he was a true successor to the Iranian leader, Achaeminid Darius III. The significance of this declaration is provided by Ferdowsi , the famous 11-century Persian poet, in Shahnameh, Book of the King, Having conquered Iran, Alexander wrote to the nobles of the country apologizing for having done away with their king, Darius III. In Ferdowsi's poetic retelling, Alexander assured them "if Dara is no more, I am here and Iran will remain the same as it has always been since its beginning" He kept the existing political organization of space,

modified later by his successors. Alexander also proclaimed justice to be the goal of his mission in Iran. Eminent researcher Nayer Nouri quotes fellow expert Glover on the nature of ancient Persian civilization: Other writers, ancient and modern, confirm that the “state” was central to Iran's governance from early times. Greek historians/geographers Herodotus and Xenophon (5th century BCE) confirm that Iran's Achaemenid Dynasty (559-330 BCE) founded a federal state, a vast commonwealth of autonomous nations. This federation's founder, Cyrus (Kurosh) the Great (559-529 BCE), together with his successors, substantially expanded their new commonwealth, dividing it into many satrapies (up to forty). Each was governed by a local Satrap, a Khashthrapavan or vassal king. This was a commonwealth of global proportions, including the lands of Trans-Oxania, Sind, and Trans-Caucasus, which stretch from today's Romania east across the Middle East and North Africa. It was also a political system of universal aspirations ruled by a Shahanshah (king of kings), hence referred to as the Shahanshahi system. The king of kings in this system was not a lawgiver but the defender of laws and religions for all in the federation. Glover notes the Achaemenids' “good government” and Cyrus's proclamation in Babylonia stated that all were “equal in his realm.” Ethnic and cultural groups enjoyed a measure of independence in the practice of their language, religion, and economies. To uphold their independence and to respect their religions, the king of kings did not lay claim to any specific religion. Consequently, the peoples of ancient Iran's conquered territories were free to keep their religions, laws, and traditions. Upon conquering Babylonia in 539 BCE, Cyrus the Great found thousands of Jews in captivity there. He freed them and sent them back to their place of worship. His respect for the captive Jews' religious freedom guaranteed their good will towards the Iranians. He became their prophet, and they became voluntary citizens of the Persian federation. Cyrus commissioned the building of their temple, and their reaction was to assess his work as fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, where it says: Many have tried hard to detect a “dark side” to this early example of a federative state and good government.” (Mojtahed-Zadeh, p.22.)

9. Some writers when they write about ancient times do not pay attention that Iranians also did pay attention to some categories like justice and participation, and the notion of them in some aspect was similar to Greek thinkers and had a collective nature in some of those reflections: “Justice occupies an important position in the ancient Greek Political Thought. The Greek thinkers considered justice as an important virtue which enabled a citizen to discharge of proper duties and contributed towards the development of human faculties. Justice was also implied to mean willing obedience to laws of the state. According to Plato “Justice was the virtue of soul and injustice its vice”... To the Greek thinkers “citizenship did not merely imply payment of taxes and a vote. It meant direct participation in the management of the state as a soldier, as a judge, as a legislator in person, not through a Deputy. Thus the Greeks clearly ruled out the concept of representative government. Again, the Greeks did not extend citizenship rights to the slaves because they felt that the slaves could not discharge their obligations towards the state. Even the working classes were denied the right to rule on the ground that they did not possess a speculative mind. As citizenship required active participation in the affairs of the state only the classes which enjoyed leisure and owned lands, and were hence free from economic worries, were given the citizenship rights.

” (Prem Arora and Brij Grover, p.9)

10. In any study about ancient times, one of the main problems, is the sources of study. A main part of study, is that the sources are not pure political or historical texts, and we should extract political themes from religious, mythical, literary and other texts. “The difference between a historian and a poet is not that one writes in prose and the other in verse – indeed the writings of Herodotus could be put into verse and yet would still be a kind of history,

whether written in metre or not. The real difference is that one tells what happened and the other what might happen. For this reason poetry is something more scientific and serious than history, because poetry tends to give general truths while history gives particular facts. By a 'general truth' I mean the sort of thing that a certain type of man will do or say either probably or necessarily. That is what poetry aims at in giving names to the characters...This opening up of the ancient historians for more literary readings is particularly relevant for the study of Greek political thought. Greek politics in terms of its pragmatics and institutions has always been central to the study of Greek history. "(Mitchell , 2019,pp.52,54)

11. Another important thing, is that if we talk about the role of the Greek in political philosophy, we should not forget the readiness and raw materials that was prepared by other peoples like Iranians and Egyptians. "The ancient Greeks are said to have invented political theorizing, but the sense in which they invented it is frequently misunderstood. Systematic reflection about politics certainly did not begin with Plato, and Plato himself certainly did not wake up one day, find that he had nothing much on his hands, and begin to write the Republic. Equally, it appears to be the case that politics were not the first thing that the ancients reflected systematically about; nor was it the case that when they did begin to think about politics they had nothing else in their heads. Speculation about the gods, about how a properly conducted household should be run, about what moral instruction the Homeric poems contained ,about the nature of the natural world, about the duties and limits of hospitality, and about many other things was already far advanced before anything like political theorizing began. That list of things could no doubt be extended almost indefinitely, and perhaps we should extend it, even if we would have to extend it by guesswork, because what we do in fact know about what the ancients did think about is largely the result of the accidents of the historical survival of manuscripts, and it is perfectly possible that what has comedown to us is a distorting fragment which gives us a very misleading picture of what was Greek."(McClelland,2005,p.3).

C. Verification of dichotomy

1. Firstly, we must clear some aspect which is obscure in this subject. Ancient Greece was not with a monolith or integral characteristic, as almost is shown, we can see major differences among cities of ancient Greece, at least between Athena and Sparta. So making a dichotomy between Iran and Greece is not true .we can see some features in socio-political structure of Sparta, there were major differences between this two main cities of ancient Greece and there is some resemblances between those and ancient Iran. Democracy and democratic era, with all of it's limitations, was a limited period in practice in Athena, and in thought and theory Plato and Aristotle, the two remarkable Athenian thinkers were not kin to this kind of governance. So how we can generalize this controversial and limited period in one city to all city-states of ancient Greece, and more incorrect than that, is making a dichotomy between democracy and absolutism about Iran and Greece? In Sparta, state was not at the service of citizen, but citizen was at the service of state. The end of law and social structure was to produce a combatant generation, and the military exercise was at the top of training program. From this point of view it is not a strange thing but is admirable that in ancient Iran healthcare and body exercises was a main part of family training, as ancient historians like Herodotus mentioned it as a praiseworthy point.

2. Furthermore, Sparta has a political organization that was monarchical with two monarchs, and power was in the hands of these two hereditary. This monarchs through the war period were commonly the commanders in chief, but governance practically was done by a council of 30 elders above 60 age whom were elected for life. The council of aristocrats was electing these 30 members. This city-state was an oligarchy and legal bills were decided without

debate and negotiation in city council. Social stratification of Sparta was based upon three main class: the Spartan, Premedic and Ilotes, and the later was seen as an enemy class in the city-state and the second class also was oppressed strictly by the first. (Mahmoodabadi, 2009, pp. 75-80). Herodotus praises the body readiness and exercises in Achaemenid era, "Next to prowess in arms, it is regarded as the greatest proof of manly excellence to be the father of many sons. Every year the king sends rich gifts to the man who can show the largest number: for they hold that number is strength. Their sons are carefully instructed from their fifth to their twentieth year, in three things alone, - to ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth. Until their fifth year they are not allowed to come into the sight of their father, but pass their lives with the women. This is done that, if the child die young, the father may not be afflicted by its loss." (Herodotus, 2013, p.63.). This kind of body exercises in Sparta has become a military training for many years of young people. So we can see that in Iran it was a moderate and rational kind of training which is important in socio-political sphere of a society.

3. It is mentionable that in political terminology of west, 'Spartan' is the symbol of harsh and hardhearted political system. and This charecterization of socio-political organization of Sparta, the second main city-state of ancient Greece, is enough to show that ancient Greece was not a monolithic political structure, and some elements of political structure that is mentioned as despicable points of ancient Iran, the same were existed in ancient Greece. The leading Iranian writer, Mohammad Ali Islami Nodoushan, writes: It is strange that I have seen so many resemblances between 'Shahnameh (The letter of kings by Iranian poet Ferdowsi)" and "Iliad". I have found nearly 70 resemblances, although there are differences. What is the source of this same elements? I think that the main cause is common nature of human in any time and place. (Islami Nodoushan,2011 ,pp.162-163.).

4. Another issue that must be considered, is that in socio-economic sphere of both ancient Greece and Iran, unlikely to medieval and modern history, there was some resemblances, and agriculture and trade were the main sources of capital. Furthermore, in Sparta there was a semi-socialist system of economy, and in Iran " Mazdak movement" was characterized with some elements of socialism.

5. Also It is important consider that relating to humanity and human rights, ancient Greeks were not recognized any ethnicity or civilization except themselves. (Islami, nodoushan,p.43.).At the same time, Iranian Achaemenid Empire was very tolerant about other races and ethnicity and religious, as released Jewish people at the conquest of Babel.

6. It seems that in ancient Iran like Greece, there was a similar notion of public good, and socio-political organization was based upon this notion. Meanwhile the forms of organizations differ. Aristotle in "politics" says: "every state is a community of some kind, and every community is stablished with a view to some good: for mankind is always act in order to obtain that which they think good.But if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good at a greater degree than any other, and at highest good."(Aristotle,1999,p.3).

7. It seems that like in ancient Iran view, in ancient Greece, state has priority over individual: "The state is by nature, prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole of necessity prior to the part. For example if the whole body be destroyed, there will be no foot or hand, except in an equivocal sense, as we might speak of stone hand."(Aristotle,pp.5-6).

8. Some political views in Iran about social classes indicates that they was looking at socio-political order as a natural matter that should be kept. According to Aristotle:"...It is evident that state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a state.is either a bad man or above humanity."(Aristotle,1999,p.5).

9. I think that a main resemblance between political thought in ancient Iran and Greece, is that both somewhat are built on myth, in other words, both are interconnected to myth. As this are studied about ancient Gerrece.

"The papers I had collected in that volume [Myth and Thought] seemed to me to lend themselves, in a similar way, to a double reading. On the one hand, hvas trying to reveal the intelJectual code peculiar to myth and to distinguish the mental aspects of myths concerned with , for instance, memory, time, and Hermes and Hestia."
(Jean Pierre Vernant, 1990-pp.7-8).

And this mythical notion some what is seen in political philosophy of other periods. "Plato says in the Republic that there are people living in his own day who still believe that all aspects of life should be regulated according to precepts derivable from the Homeric poems. This tells us that there are also people living in Plato's day who thought nothing of the kind. The world view of Homer still commands the loyalty of some men but not of others. Men cannot live without a value system which orders their lives, so it follows that Plato's own world is one in which a number of different value systems compete for the attention of thinking men. That plurality of possible value systems easily led to the Sophist position that value systems are matters of convention only in a world where it was strength which really counted. fierce loyalty and irritated enmity."(McCLELLAND,2005,PP.17-18).

10. Believe in a world of hierarchies, it seems that has been a common notion in most parts of ancient world, Iran and Greece: Therefore it is not correct to condemn ancient Iran for a social classification of people.

"Those predecessors had left knowledge in a mess. The certainties of the Homeric world of natural hierarchies were undermined from any number of different directions, but because those three interlocking hierarchies stand or fall together, a sustained and successful attack from any direction would have been fatal to all three. The hierarchy of the gods, the hierarchy of men and the hierarchy of nature paid a high price for their card-castle elegance; all three would tumble down at the removal of a single card. Among the first to remove a card was Democritus with his brilliant guess at atomic theory. In essence, what Democritus had to say about atoms was simple, but it had very far-reaching consequences. Democritus said that the whole of nature could be explained as the behaviour of very small particles acting in ways which were in principle predictable but which men were in fact incapable of predicting. Everything was made of the same stuff, and every happening was simply the result of that stuff moving around. The implication for the Homeric view of nature was obvious. How could nature be hierarchical if everything was made up of everything else? Some events are bigger than others, a storm at sea bigger than a storm in a tea cup, but that was just the way things turned out; a sliding-scale of events of infinitely graded magnitude made much more sense than different classes of events clearly differentiated from each other. And it was hardly reassuring for a king to be told that he was made of the same clay as the meanest of his subjects, or his slaves, or even his domestic animals. If the events which concerned kings and nobles were not qualitatively different from the events which concerned ordinary men, then there was no need to introduce into the world a special class of gods important enough to account for the greatness of great men's deeds. Now only their scale is greater, not their nature"').(McELLAND,2005,p. 53).

11. Slaveholding relationship was not special to ancient Iran, it was in Greece and also in modern United States, and in Iran in theory and practice was more moderate than Greece. So it is not fair to condemn only Iran for that. "A justification of slavery as part of a well-managed household, and therefore natural (was in ancient Greek philosophy). A discussion of

the relationship between the acquisition of wealth and the management of a household (the original meaning of 'economics'). Wealth has as its end provision for a household, and must be limited by its end, so 'making money for its own sake' is unnatural. Aristotle also discusses the forms of relationship which naturally occur in a household on the basis of the possession of 'reason' (the capacity to direct one's own life and so the lives of others), so free men in whom the directive faculty naturally rules, rule over others, including wives (because the directive faculty, while existing in women, is 'inoperative'); slaves, having no reason, are ruled as tools or beasts of burden."(McCELLAND,2005,p.53).

12. In ancient Iran skill and pragmatic thoughts was valued in a good level, although in ancient Athena theoretical or philosophical was valued more. It is a little different relating Socrates: "Socrates made his living as a stonemason, and he is reputed to have said that the only men who knew anything at Athens were the craftsmen. For Socrates, there was always more than an analogy between knowing something and a technical skill (techne). What a craftsman knows is the reverse of dogmatic; a craft is not a set of principles to be put into operation; that is not what a craftsman does when he practises his craft, and the learning of a craft certainly does not consist of learning a set of principles and then putting them into practice. It is not even clear that a set of principles could usefully be extrapolated from a craft, and most craftsmen, when asked what they are doing, would be hard put to it to explain beyond saying: 'Any fool can see I'm doing carpentry.' The questions which can sensibly be asked of someone practicing a skill are not about what the skill is like but about how the skill was acquired. Someone practicing a skill would be able to propose a training programme for skill-learning much more easily than he would be able to describe the end-product of that training. The relationship between master and pupil would be central to the enterprise. A craft does not exist apart from its exercise, so a pupil has to see the master practise the craft before he can begin to learn, and the whole purpose of the training is to produce a master. That is not to say that all of the training would be on-the-job training. A certain amount of 'theoretical' work might be useful, in mathematics, say, and there might be room for physical exercise to cultivate desirable physical attributes, like strength and dexterity, but these too would be learned from a master". (McCELLAND,2005,PP.19-20).

13. It is almost clear that governance in ancient Iran was not entirely subject to will of kings, they must obey some customs and process in their ruling, in another words legitimacy of ruling was depend on (written or unwritten) laws, and this is was seen in Greece : "Legitimate power is not the same as force. Force has only natural limits, while legitimate power is subject to the formal limitations of law. From very ancient times, the Greeks had an idea of law (nomos) which they contrasted with the arrogance of power (hubris). Hubris was the cause of chronic uncertainty and instability (stasis)in cities because, being the ally of the instability of character which the possession of power is likely to bring out or even to cause, hubristic behaviour was unpredictable. In the Homeric world, men were as accustomed to the unsettling effects of the anger of kings as they were to the effects of the anger of the gods. The law which can be inferred from the Homeric poems is unwritten law, where unwritten law means both a moral law (perhaps manating from the gods), a set of ancestral customs, and a set of expectations about how particular kinds of men should behave".(McCELLAND,2005,P.8).

14. Some kinds of political writings that has been influential and attractive in ancient and early Islamic era of Iran, is a kind that in western middle age was known as "Mirror of princess", that is advice, recommendations and quotes in political issues, on the basis of experienced guide liens in past history.one of the most famouse of this kind, is("karnameh ye Ardashir e Babakan") and "Policy book of Khaje Nezam ol molk of Touse"(Siasat nameh"). We can not say that political philosophy, in any case, is the best kind of political thought.

Political advice is also a kind of political thought and as it has a pragmatic approach, may be very useful in governance. "The naturalistic approach to politics is far from simple-minded. Aristotle does not think that everything which just happens to happen in the world is natural. The processes of nature are subject to endless vicissitudes. Aristotle preserves Plato's distinction between the world as it is and the world as it is meant to be. Political science is meant to be useful, and political science's function as Aristotle sees it is to identify those aspects of political life which operate as nature intended ('Nature does nothing without a purpose'), with a view to removing or amending those aspects of political life which frustrate nature's own purposes. This is an extremely ambitious undertaking. It means that nothing political is in principle outside its concern, and it involves developing a sense of judgement about what is in fact possible. Aristotle sees nature eternally striving to reach its fulfilment in a hostile world, and those who strive with it must often settle for its partial fulfilment. This has often been misunderstood to mean that Aristotle is the political theorist of the second-best, or of the mediocre, on the grounds that Plato went straight for the ideal while Aristotle was content for the best possible in the circumstances, but that view of Aristotle misses the point about the usefulness of political science. The informed gardener who makes the best of his own tools, his own seed and his own soil really has got the best out of nature. The fact that tools, seed and soil could all be improved does not detract from his achievement, and thinking about how they could be improved, possibly even to perfection, might or might not improve his performance. In thinking this, Aristotle is not in fact very far from the Plato of the Republic who says that in any case practice always falls short of theory".(McCELLAND,2005,p.52).

15. Aristotle in his influential book-"Politics"- has characterized the ancient Greece democracy, which upon this we can have a political view of that system, also Aristotle's political thought in this book can be seen as a main part of ancient political thinking in ancient Greece. Plato and Aristotle, both, has elaborated a concept of "common goods". Here we can see a major same element of political thought in two ancient countries. Stability, security and unity and coherence of nation (based on ethics and religious traditions), are some of these common goods in two countries .

16. Political participation, its scope, theory and justifications is a key element in any political thought. The concept of political participation depends on "who are to count as citizens? Aristotle distinguishes three basic elements in government, the deliberative, the executive, and the judicial functions. Such active participation requires directive reasoning powers and a certain amount of leisure and education; he further holds that these requirements will mean that only freeborn, non-artisan males can be citizens. Some humans, Aristotle believes, have only sufficient reasoning powers to obey the directions of others; they cannot deliberate for themselves. Such humans are not capable of taking part in political decision-making... Women will also be happier if they are directed by someone else, for though they possess the ability to reason for themselves, this faculty is not authoritative in them, being at the mercy of their emotions. Artisans and manual laborers are to be excluded on the grounds that their occupation deprives them of the leisure required both for active political participation and for the intellectual development such participation demands. As resident aliens are also to be denied citizenship, the result will be that only a comparatively small number of those living in a state are to count as its citizens.(Mclean, Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics, The Entry of Aristotle,pp.21-22). It is clear that in ancient Greece a main part of community was excluded from political participation and process, and in Iran also the upper classes were participating in governance, but the model and structure of political were different in the two communities.

17. The notion of public good was existed in ancient Iran and most of king especially Cyrus and Dariush referred to order, justice, truth telling and etc. According to Aristotle in books III and IV of Politics, "One way of roughly distinguishing constitutions is by asking two fundamental questions: who rules and on whose behalf? Rule may be exercised by one, few, or many, and it may be exercised by well, on behalf of the population as a whole, or badly, on behalf of the rulers themselves. The three correct constitution are monarchy, aristocracy, and polity, and the three corresponding deviations tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy. In practice, however, the few will be rich and the majority poor; thus economic status will be at least as important a defining feature as number. In helping to shape the goals and values of those in power, economic conditions are also partly responsible for giving each constitution it's own distinguishing mark: the goal of oligarchy, for instance, is more wealth: that of democracy, freedom...He is clear that all constitutions which aim at the common good are preferable to those which look solely to sectional interests; and common good must be firmly based on a notion of distributive justice, according to which the greater share of goods and honors is distributed to the citizens who contribute most to the state. The question of what form of constitution is best, however, depends on circumstances."(Mclean, p.22.).

18. Democracy was not the all times regime in Athena, and Athena was not all of ancient Greece: "Pericles' Athens was not a democracy, although it was called that. The regime of the Five Thousand was not democracy either (although the Four Hundred wanted to maintain uncertainty about whether it existed or not because it was tantamount to democracy in their view). Thucydides is deliberately ambiguous about, 53 and not interested in, who held sovereignty in the Five Thousand: that question is not addressed. What is important is the fact that while the labels of democracy and oligarchy matter because they are emotionally loaded and can polarize political situations, in the end the gap between them becomes artificial. The same political vocabulary can be put together in a different way to create new meanings: rule in the interests not of just the majority, and not rule by all (or by the few), but a more satisfactory – and innovative – measured blend in the interests of the few and the many."(Mitchell, p.68).

19. It seems necessary to rethinking about the causes of stability in ancient Iran community, it was not due to despotism, as some say, we can see a good middle class in that community. "Middle class, Aristotle believes, will be the most likely to act in accordance with reason, and the least likely to suffer from faction and the extremes that both wealth and poverty encourage; he explicitly, if problematically, links it to the 'mean' which in the 'Nichomachean Ethics' is said to constitute virtue. Their decisions are also most likely to win general acceptance. All these factors will make for stability."(Mclean, p. 22.). Iranians had some mechanism for maintaining stability, like keeping social classifications, as in Greece also it was in agenda. "Political stability is for Aristotle one of the greatest goods, and in Books V and VI of the Politics he devotes considerable space to examining the features which promote and undermine it... The chief reason for constitutional instability and revolution is said to be discontent arising from perceived inequality. Everyone agrees that there should be justice, and that this is proportional equality, but there is no agreement on what the criterion should be: democrats will claim it is freedom and oligarchs that it is wealth. The way to ensure stability, therefore, is to prevent such discontent by giving as many people as possible at least some share of honors, offices, and profit."(Mclean, p.23).

20. It's not right to say ancient Iran was a holistic or collectivist community and ancient Greece was an individualistic. Aristotle in Book 3 of Politics deals with "1. The answer to the question 'What is the polis?' The polis must be its constitution (the arrangements for the holding of public office, the way it is governed) because the constitution provides the polis with its identity over a period of time. The polis cannot be defined as its citizens, because they die and

are replaced; nor can it be its territory because territory expands and contracts. 2 The answer to the question 'What is it to be a member of a 'polis?'' States are composed of citizens, and citizens are those who have a share in public affairs, which means holding office, taking part in the administration of justice and membership of a Aristotle and the science of politics 53

Governing assembly. The exact meaning of 'citizen' will of course vary from polis to polis because citizen is a genus, not a species. Those directly engaged in the business of getting a living with their own hands are excluded from citizenship because they haven't the leisure for virtue."(Mcelland , 2005,pp.53-54).

21• In social sphere ,items like justice in education was not entirely known in the ancient times, but in most part of times , people if had financial ability was allowed to educate." Most importantly, the education system must be well adapted to the forms of government. Aristotle adds the twist that oligarchs should be educated democratically and democrats must be educated oligarchically, because bringing up young democrats in complete freedom and young oligarchs in luxury and ease is asking for trouble in the future. • Tyrants may preserve their power by appearing to act like kings."(McCELLAND, 2005, PP.54-55).

22. Is the defense of Aristotle of slavery and his justifications democratic and humanistic? We didn't see this kind of hard defense in Iran.: " Rulership is exercised in different ways. Aristotle gives two illuminating examples: mind over body and intelligence over the desires. The rule of mind over body is absolute or despotic in the interests of both, while the rule of intelligence over the desires is constitutional and royal. By this Aristotle means that the mind does not negotiate with the body... For the satisfaction of the reasonable desires, say three meals a day, none in excess, and regular hours of sleep..... All forms of rulership are limited by the end for which rulership is exercised. Rule is not domination for its own sake; abuse of power for Aristotle means something very close to what we mean by 'drug abuse', the use of something which has no end and which can only lead on to disaster because it has no end. Husbands must remember that's exuality is for procreation and not for mere enjoyment (though they are allowed to smile), fathers must remember that children will one day be like themselves, and masters of slaves must remember that slaves are for use and not for exploitation. Slaves exist to free masters from the menial (banausic) occupations. Free men need the leisure for virtue and so have not got the time to get their own living. Aristotle is careful to say that slaves are a part of wealth and not a means towards the increase of wealth, by which he means that it is no part of a master's business to squeeze the last ounce of labour out of his slaves".(McELLAND,2005,pp.57-63).

Conclusion

This is a strong theme in writing about ancient times regarding Iran and Greece, that the first was an absolutism and the latter was a democracy. I discussed and verified some foundations and premises of this dichotomy, and showed that it is not true to polarize some aspects of policy, governance and politics in ancient times. It's better to adopt a relativism concerning this complicated issue. Each of the two mentioned civilizations had positive and negative elements. Now is the time of criticism, but not just about ancient Iran.

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