

# Plato and Aristotle

## Politics and Rhetoric Lecture 3

### 1 Plato's Political Philosophy

#### 1.1 *democracy leads to relativism*

- undermining the search for truth
- undermining search for reason
- truth NOT relative

#### 1.2 *Republic (dialogue)*

A just society accords with the universal principle of the truth

- outlines his ideal form of state
- mentor
  - Socratees
    - but to death by athenaens

#### 1.3 *view of society / state*

- three orders
  - workers
  - guardians
  - philosopher kings
- three parts of soul
  - appetite
  - honour
  - wisdom
- born with innate capabilities
  - cultivated in education
  - radical in rejection of inheritance of power
  - an elitist rejection of democracy
- democracy leads to misrule
  - trusting the wisest with running the state

### 2 Plato's critique of Sophists

#### 2.1 *rhetoric undermining reason and truth*

do not dissolve the difference between good and bad, even for populist approval  
truth - love of wisdom

**2.1.1 only good rhetoric is one that reasons from or for the truth**

**2.1.2 can only lie well from knowing the truth**

**2.1.3 sophistry**

- spin doctors

**2.2 *dialectic***

- arriving at the truth through reasoned arguments
- elimination unreasoned arguments
- reasoning towards the truth

**2.3 *Socrates in Plato's Dialogues - Phaidros & Gorgias***

**2.4 *scientific approach to speech writing***

**2.4.1 must know the truth truth is imprinted in our souls**

**2.5**

## ***2.6 importance today?***

### **2.6.1 sophistry**

- dissolving difference between truth and untruth

### **2.6.2 spin doctors**

### **2.6.3 political leaders / parties**

### **2.6.4 wary of persuasion**

## ***2.7 absolute truth in our soul***

### **2.7.1 supports Republic and rejection of democracy**

### **2.7.2 someone ought to be in charge if they can speak the truth**

## **3 Aristotle**

### ***3.1 defending philosophy from the sophists***

### ***3.2 democracy***

- rule of the people leads to bad government
- preferred balance constitution
  - aristocracy
  - monarchy
  - democracy

### ***3.3 The Politics***

Book. Man is by nature a political animal

### ***3.4 Art of Rhetoric***

Rhetoric is the counterpart of Dialectic supliament / complement each other

- a collection / synthesis of ancient rhetoric
  - informed the Roman empire
  - informs modern rhetoric study and practice
- rhetoric and dialectic complement to each other
  - rhetoric as toolset / techniques for study of persuasion
  - primacy of philosophy
  - philosophical rhetoric
    - as apposed to a sophistical rhetoric

### **3.5 Types of Rhetoric**

#### **3.5.1 Judicial rhetoric**

- forensic
- describing the past

#### **3.5.2 deliberative rhetoric**

- use for persuading an assembly
- political rhetoric
- describing the future
  - how things ought / should be done

#### **3.5.3 epideictic (demonstrative / ceremonial) rhetoric**

- describing the present

### **3.6 Types of Proof**

- external
  - laws and witnesses
- internal
  - logos
    - appeal to reason finding what is not said, looking for the hidden premise. look for the enthymeme!
    - inductive
      - conclusions drawn from specific examples
    - deductive
      - syllogism - a formal logically ordered argument from abstract premises to reasoned conclusions the proper component of philosophical argument enthymeme - a truncated syllogism, less accurate, condensed logical argument. suppression/hiding of premises, hear only part of an argument. relies on intuition in audience.
      - conclusions drawn from abstract premises
  - ethos
    - appeal to authority of speaker
  - pathos
    - appeal to feelings of audience

### **3.7 Parts of Rhetoric**

- Invention
  - ability to construct and argument
- Style
  - structure
- Delivery
  - performance
- later: arrangement, memory
  - arrangement: order of speech
  - memory: ability to recall

## **4 Summary**

### **4.1 *Aristotle and Rhetoric***

- set aside Plato's claim on danger of sophistry
- balance of rhetoric and dialectic

### **4.2 *Plato's political philosophy***

- informed his view on sophistry

## **5 Sophists**

### **5.1 *probability in argument***

- persuading on what was probably the case

### **5.2 *use of rhetorical devices***

- making case persuading
- truth being relative