

Dissertation Title	: Aristotle's Concept of Polity and its Relevancy to The 2007 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand
Researcher	: Mr. Pornthep Chantraniph
Department	: Graduate School of Philosophy and Religion
Majoring in	: Philosophy
Advisor	: Dr. Veerachart Nimanong
Academic Year	: 2014

Abstract

This dissertation aims to study Aristotle's political thought regarding his concept of 'Polity,' as written in his universally famous work, *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*. The research's objectives are 1) to study the concept of 'Polity' in Aristotle's *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2) to discuss arguments for and against Aristotle's concept of polity, and 3) to examine and discuss the relevance of Aristotle's concept of polity in accordance with the intentions of the 2007 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand.

The researcher finds that polity, the best possible regime, distinguishes rulers based on their perfect virtues. The word 'mean' is used to describe the basic tool to form up polity, as well for an individual's moral standard in finding a meeting ground between two extremes. Therefore, the goal of Aristotle's concept of 'polity' is not only to accomplish the best possible form of government, but also to achieve the form of the best life.

Hence, this research discusses the arguments for and against Aristotle's concept of polity, as well as its opposite, in the context of the development of the Greek 'city-state' that resulted from the implemented morals, ethics and developmental standards,

all of which are still nowadays universally relevant. Opposition to and support for Aristotle's polity, rulers and their characteristics, was argued for and against in the behaviour of absolute sovereigns and totalitarianism which are forms of regimes which do not act within the best interests of the state's citizens, but in fact act only for the rulers themselves. This research finds that the concept of polity means the rule by the many for common interest; therefore, '*polity*,' is against totalitarianism by setting laws to limit the abuse of power and to ensure that any bad government can be deposed and replaced peacefully.

Finally, after discussion and criticism of the relevance of Aristotle's concept of Polity, the intentions of the 2007 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand are examined. The researcher finds that almost all Aristotle's key characteristics of polity are relevant to the intentions underpinning the 2007 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, particularly concerning the participation of citizens in the government process. Therefore, the researcher has arrived at the conclusion that Aristotle's concept of Polity is currently highly relevant in order to enhance accountability, and transparency in the government, as well as to prevent totalitarianism by means of upholds a participation process. Moreover, the constitution of each country must be tailored to suit the country's context and its citizens. Upon conclusion of the discussion, recommendations for further study shall be offered.