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EMPEDOCLES' PHILOSOPHY OF POLITICS AND LAW: BETWEEN PRACTICE AND THEORY

The proposed article reveals in detail the socio-political activity and philosophical work of Empedocles in the context of the problems of the state and law.

It is proved that the political and philosophical beliefs of Empedocles were connected with the social and political situation in his native city of Akragantes. After all, during the period of his life Akragant of the 5th century. B.C. was slowly recovering from the era of tyranny, and therefore, with reflections, the thinker tried to prevent someone else from seizing power. Luxury and tyranny were spread over mainland Greece and Sicily. This fact explains why Empedocles had to direct his criticism: he wanted to preserve the freedom that he and his fellow citizens had finally won.

It is well established that Empedocles was a supporter of Propythagorean sentiments, although he did not particularly welcome aristocracy or democracy. In his fragments about the world structure, one can trace the thought about the beneficial consequences of harmony and friendliness for society, as well as the negative consequences of hatred and destructiveness. The Akragans thinker clearly adhered to anti-tyrannical views, but the idea of theocratic rule was implicitly seen in him. We consider him a follower of the Pythagorean understanding of the nature and meaning of laws, as he is also convinced of the predominance of natural law over written law. The Sicilian philosopher tried to give the general public a received Pythagorean understanding of political and legal issues, but it was not approved by the majority of the regional authorities.

Keywords: Empedocles, early Greek philosophy, the political philosophy of archaic Greece, democracy, Pythagoreans, pre-Socratics.

The figure of Empedocles – one of the most striking representatives of early Western Greek culture – is quite mysterious. He is known as a philosopher, naturalist, politician, orator, and poet. It is not clear whether the claims that he was also a doctor, magician, and shaman are true. Most of the stories about his life and death are legendary.

The philosopher came from a noble and wealthy family in the city of Akragas. His grandfather, also called Empedocles, was an equestrian and winner of the Olympics in 496 BC. Grandfather Empedocles influenced state affairs as well: this high position is evidenced by the powers and privileges of ambassadors, that is, he acted as a public figure. His father Meton was a prominent politician. After his death around 472 BC. tyrant Theron, turbulent times began in Akragas. The tyrant's successor, his son Phrasidas, was to go into exile only after a year of reign. In this political reorientation of the city, Meton played a leading role on the side of the anti-tyrants.

It is worth noting that Empedocles was offered royal honors, which he refused. The question arises, why exactly was this offered to him, and what was the reason for the refusal? In the history of Greek philosophy before Empedocles, there was already a case when the people asked a philosopher to reign over them. In particular, we can also mention that at the beginning of the V century. B.C. residents of the Asia Minor city of Ephesus, frightened by anarchy and disorder in their state, remembered the times of peace under the rule of the kings and offered the royal crown to the philosopher Heraclitus. Accordingly, there is nothing surprising in the assumption that the family of Empedocles also belonged to some ancient royal family. It is difficult to find another reason why the entire people showed their will to see the philosopher as king and to restore the patriarchal-heroic power.

Of course, the idea of a democratic state won. Empedocles was committed to the side of the supporters of

democracy and strongly opposed efforts that, in his opinion, were aimed at tyrannical rule. He succeeded in breaking up the organization known as the "Assembly of a Thousand", which probably had an oligarchic purpose.

He had envious and ill-wishers among the family and official nobility. As a people's favorite, benefactor, and guardian of the law, he stood in the way of many political upstarts who had enough motives to get rid of him. The most convenient way for this is expulsion. Timaeus unequivocally states that Empedocles was forced by the machinations of his enemies to go to the Peloponnese, where he died in exile. When he wanted to return to his hometown, powerful opponents prevented him. Referring to Aristotle and Heraclides of Pontus, Diogenes writes that Empedocles was sixty years old, that is, his death dates back to approximately the mid-30s of the V-th century. B.C. The circumstances of death are unknown. Of course, a significant list of political speeches is attributed to him.

The following evidence about Empedocles has survived to our time in the context of the issues we are investigating:

1. "Neanthes of Cyzicus [...] says that after the death of Meton a tyranny was gradually beginning to develop, but that then Empedocles persuaded the Agrigentines to put an end to their dissensions and to practice political equality" (Νεάνθης δ' ὁ Κυζικηνὸς [FGrH 84 F 28] ὁ καὶ περὶ τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν εἰπῶν φησι Μέτωνος τελευτήσαντος τυραννίδος ἀρχὴν ὑποφύεσθαι εἶτα τὸν Ἐμπεδοκλέα πείσαι τοὺς Ἀκραγαντίνους παύσασθαι μὲν τῶν στάσεων, ἰσότητα δὲ πολιτικὴν ἀσκεῖν) [22 P18 LM (31 A1 DK) – Diog. Laert. VIII 72];

2. "[...]Timaeus says in his first and second books (in fact he often mentions him) that he seems to have acquired the opposite opinion...political constitution ..., at least wherever in his poetry [scil. he appears?] as a braggart and narcissist; for at least he says [...= D4.4-5a] and the following lines" ("ὁ γέ τοι Τίμαιος ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ καὶ δευτέρῃ [FGrH 566 F 2], πολλάκις γὰρ αὐτοῦ μνημονεύει, φησὶν

ἐναντίαν ἐσχηκέναι γνώμην αὐτὸν «ἐν» τε τῇ πολιτείᾳ «καὶ ἐν τῇ ποιήσει»: ὅπου μὲν γὰρ μέτριον καὶ ἐπιεικῆ» φαίνεσθαι, ὅπου δ' ἀλλάζονα καὶ φίλαυτον [ἐν τῇ ποιήσει]: φησὶ γοῦν [31 B 112, 4 DK], χαίρει· ἐγὼ δ' ὑμῖν θεὸς ἄμβροτος, οὐκέτι θνητὸς πωλεύμαι, καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς"] [22 P20 LM (31 A1 DK) – Diog. Laert. VIII 66].

3. "[57] He [scil. Aristotle] also says in his *On the Poets* [...] that, after he had written other poems-The Expedition of Xerxes and the Prelude to Apollo—a sister of his (or daughter, as Hieronymus says) later burned them, the prelude involuntarily, but the Persian poem voluntarily, since it was unfinished. [58] And he says in general that he also wrote tragedies and political discourses. But Heraclides [i.e. Lembos], the son of Sarapion, says that the tragedies are by someone else. Hieronymus says that he had come across forty-three of them, Neanthes that he wrote the tragedies when he was young and that he himself had come across seven of them." ("[57] ἐν δὲ τῷ Περὶ ποιητῶν [fr. 70 Rose] φησὶν ὅτι καὶ Ὀμηρικὸς ὁ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ δεινὸς περὶ τὴν φράσιν γέγονεν, μεταφορητικὸς τε ὢν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῖς περὶ ποιητικὴν ἐπιτεύγμασι χρώμενος· καὶ διότι γράψαντος αὐτοῦ καὶ ἄλλα ποιήματα τὴν τε τοῦ Ξέρξου διάβασιν καὶ προοίμιον εἰς Ἀπόλλωνα, ταῦθ' ὕστερον κατέκαυσεν ἀδελφὴ τις αὐτοῦ (ἢ θυγάτηρ, ὡς φησὶν Ἰερώνυμος, τὸ μὲν προοίμιον ἄκουσα, τὰ δὲ Περσικὰ βουληθεῖσα διὰ τὸ ἀτελείωτα [58] εἶναι. καθόλου δὲ φησὶ καὶ τραγωδίας αὐτὸν γράψαι καὶ πολιτικούς· Ἡρακλείδης δ' ὁ τοῦ Σαραπίωνος [FHG III. 169] ἑτέρου φησὶν εἶναι τὰς τραγωδίας. Ἰερώνυμος δὲ τρισὶ καὶ τετραράκοντά φησὶν ἐντετυχηκέναι, Νεάνθης [FGrH 84 F 27] δὲ νέον ὄντα γεγραμέναι τὰς τραγωδίας καὶ αὐτῶν ἑπτὰ ἐντετυχηκέναι" [22 P25 LM (31 A1 DK) – Diog. Laert. VIII 57–58];

The foreign historian of philosophy P. Horky notes that "the text of Diogenes Laertius preserved in its brief description the democratic character and the act of Empedocles as something completely special and completely unique among the preserved evidence. He did not simply convey an anecdotal account, which appears to be completely unreliable, as some have thought, but invented the political activities of Empedocles for the sole purpose of entertaining the public. Diogenes Laertius probably preserved an important inner cover text, representing the early Hellenistic historian Timaeus's account of Tauromenius' dialectical appropriation and Aristotle's character criticism of Empedocles in his *On the Poets*. Diogenes seems to have preserved not only the Aristotelian characterization of Empedocles as an anarchist whose poems exhibit qualities of egocentric boasting, but also other evidence. They are absent due to the almost complete loss of the text "On the Poets", where Aristotle compared the character of the poets with the poems they composed. So we have new concrete proof of Aristotelian virtue ethics when artistic expression forms the author's character. In addition, Diogenes preserved clues to his own method of historical explanation of Timaeus, which is really valuable, because the treatises of the Hellenistic historiographers are lost, including most of Timaeus' own writings. The above evidence suggests that Timaeus was actually well aware of peripatetic historiographical and even philosophical trends. He probably chose to adapt them to his own purposes in the structure of his stories, even if it was parodying.

Timaeus reacts unusually to Aristotle's description of the character of Empedocles, but we must take into account the fact that we have little evidence of historiographers of the Hellenistic era with criticism and evaluation of Aristotle's methodology outside the

Peripatetics until the history of Polybius in the middle of the 2nd century. to n. e. Timaeus seems to nod towards the idea of Empedocles as a supporter of democracy and democratic values, δόμετικὸς ἀνὴρ, which would resonate with anyone who has read or heard the orators of Aeschines or Demosthenes in Athens. According to Timaeus, Empedocles acts as a Demosthenic philosopher, a man who ethically rejected the excesses of kingship and protected the rights of the Acragas's people from the threats of tyranny and oligarchy. However, we cannot say with absolute certainty whether the account of Empedocles' political activities in Diogenes Laertius' *Lives and Thoughts of Eminent Philosophers* is a historically accurate account of Empedocles' participation in the founding of a new democracy in Acragas in the 470s-460s BC" [3, p. 66–67].

The opinion of another researcher I. Andolfi seems close to us, who emphasizes: "Despite the strong individuality and charisma that can be felt in his poems, many ancient sources testify that Empedocles opposed tyranny and oligarchy and was on the side of the people. This idea fits very well with the situation in V-th century Acragas, where the city was slowly recovering from the previous era of tyranny and trying to prevent someone else from seizing power. Luxury and tyranny were spread over mainland Greece and Sicily. This circumstance explains why Empedocles had to direct his criticism at the luxurious habits of his fellow-citizens, in order to prevent them from seizing power: he wished to preserve the liberty which he and his fellow-citizens had finally won" [1, p. 226].

In the field of law, attention is drawn to the list of Empedocles' maxims regarding the prohibition of killing the living. This is obviously the influence of training in the Pythagorean school. Note that he was expelled from it, because he tried to implement the principles and ideals of this school not "for the chosen ones", but for the general public.

For argumentation of this, it can cite a number of testimonies about him:

1. "[...] and as Empedocles says with regard to not killing what possesses life: for it is not the case that this is rightful in some cases but not rightful in others, But what is lawful for all, through the wideruling Aether it extends continuously and through the boundless light" [22 D27a LM (31 B135 DK) – Rhet. I.13 1373b14-16];

2. "[127] Pythagoras, Empedocles, and most of the other Italians say that there exists for us a community not only with regard to one another and with regard to the gods, but also with regard to the irrational animals. For there exists a single breath that penetrates through the whole world like a soul, which also unifies us with them. [128] That is why if we kill them and feed on their flesh we will be committing an injustice and an impiety, as if we were killing our relatives. This is why these philosophers urged that we abstain from living beings and said that those men were committing an impiety who redden the altar of the blessed with hot blood. [129] And Empedocles says somewhere, [... = 028] and [... = D29]. [130] This is what the disciples of Pythagoras urged-in error: for it is not because there is a breath penetrating us and them that we have a relation of justice with regard to the irrational animals." [22 R39 LM (ad 31 B136 et B137 DK) – Sext. Emp. Adv. Math. 9.127–30];

3. What kind of meal would not be expensive for which a living being is killed? Do we consider life to be a small expense? I am not yet speaking about that of a mother or father or of some friend or a child, as Empedocles said [cf. D29], but of what at least possesses sensation [...]. But consider which of the two groups of philosophers is better

at making us gentle, those [i.e. the Cynics] who bid us eat our children, our friends, our fathers, our wives, since they are dead, or else Pythagoras and Empedocles, who accustom us to exercise justice with regard to other species too? [22 R62 LM – Plut. Esu cam. 2.3 997D-E].

His idea of Themis as justice also seems interesting to us, because it has a Pythagorean undertone. In opposition to the state legality, which sanctions the social and property inequality of people, the Pythagoreans put forward the principle of natural law, based on the initial, God-given equality of all living beings. Usually, this idea is attributed to the Greek sophists, because it received conceptual and rhetorical development from them. However, its origins lie in the sacral-theocratic ideology of the Orphics and Pythagoreans (note that Empedocles was simultaneously a Pythagorean, a sophist, and a teacher of sophists). The main content of the theory of natural law is to contrast state-political legality as artificial and therefore unjust with natural-divine legality as natural and therefore fair. For Pythagoras and Empedocles, according to Cicero, "all living beings are in the same legal position" [De civ. III, 11, 19]. This cosmopolitan right is not founded by men, not created by a legislator; it is a natural being from the beginning and has a substantial affiliation. Therefore, there is no right for the eminent, nor the noble, nor the disenfranchised, nor the insignificant, because, as Empedocles says: "The general law penetrates through the etheric abysses and through the immeasurable distances of the heavenly light" [Arist.Rhet. I, 13. 1373b4]. This idea of a natural cosmic democracy is the basis of the Pythagorean social utopia.

Synesius writes: "[I] The nature of the world has two [scil. sources], one of them luminous, the other indistinct [...] [4]. A law of Themis has been laid down proclaiming to souls that anyone of them that, having spent time in the very bottom of what exists, preserves its nature and maintains itself unpolluted, flows back once again along the same path and spills back into its own source, just as those that have escaped somehow from the other portion inhabit by a necessity of nature underground places that are akin to them: [...] = D24.2-3]" [22 R52 LM (ad 31 B121 DK) – Synes. Provid. 1 1.3-4]

Empedocles' theory of the alternating dominance of Love and Strife in the world with the corresponding interconnected processes is considered to be important from a political point of view.

This is how Hippolytus writes about it: [4] He says that all the elements from which the world has been constituted and composed are six: two that act as matter, earth and water; two as instruments thanks to which the material ones are organized and transformed, fire and air; and two work on the matter thanks to these instruments and fashion it, Strife and Love. He speaks as follows: [citation and exegesis of D57; cf. R92]. [8] And Love is a kind of peace and unanimity and fondness that chooses that the world be one, perfect, well adjusted; Strife by contrast always tears apart [scil. the world], which is one, chops it into pieces, or makes many out of one. [9] Thus Strife is the cause of all creation; he says that it is 'baleful' [073.250], that is, destructive, for it matters to him that this creation continue throughout all eternity. And destructive Strife is the demiurge and craftsman of the birth of all the things that

are born, while Love is the cause of the departure out of the world of the things that are born and of their transformation and restoration in the One [10] [...]. Fire, <water,> earth, and air die and are reborn. [II] For when the things generated by Strife die, Love takes them over and leads, adds, and assimilates them to the whole, so that the whole remain one, and eternally organized by Love in the mode of unicity and of unity [12]. But when Love makes one out of the many and assimilates to the One the things that have been torn apart, then in turn Strife tears them away from the One and makes them many, that is fire, water, earth, air, and what is born out of these: animals, plants, and all the parts of the world that we perceive. [13] And regarding what the configuration of the world is as it is organized by Love, he speaks as follows: [...] = 092; cf. 093.2-3]. Love is the cause of the departure out of the world of the things that are born and of their transformation and restoration in the One [10] [...]. Fire, <water,> earth, and air die and are reborn. [II] For when the things generated by Strife die, Love takes them over and leads, adds, and assimilates them to the whole, so that the whole remain one, and eternally organized by Love in the mode of unicity and of unity. [12] But when Love makes one out of the many and assimilates to the One the things that have been torn apart, then in turn Strife tears them away from the One and makes them many, that is fire, water, earth, air, and what is born out of these: animals, plants, and all the parts of the world that we perceive. [13] And regarding what the configuration of the world is as it is organized by Love, he speaks as follows: [...] = 092; cf. 093.2-3]; [22 R89 LM – Hipp. Haer. 7.29.3-31.4]

So, the consequences become obvious when friendship, harmony and good relations prevail in society or, on the contrary, hatred, treachery, insults and destructive actions.

Thus, taking into account the evidence, fragments and modern scientific developments, we come to the conclusion that Empedocles was a supporter of ProPythagorean sentiments, although he did not particularly welcome aristocracy or democracy. In Empedocles' fragments about the world structure, one can trace the thought about the beneficial consequences of harmony and friendliness for society, as well as the negative consequences of hatred and destructiveness. The Acragas thinker clearly adhered to anti-tyrannical views, but the idea of the theocratic rule was implicitly seen in him. We consider him a follower of the Pythagorean understanding of the nature and meaning of laws, as he is also convinced of the predominance of natural law over written law. The Sicilian philosopher tried to give the general public a received Pythagorean understanding of political and legal issues, but it was not approved by the majority of the powerful in that region.

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ЕМПЕДОКЛІВСЬКА ФІЛОСОФІЯ ПОЛІТИКИ І ПРАВА: МІЖ ПРАКТИКОЮ І ТЕОРІЄЮ

Детально розкрито суспільно-політичну діяльність та філософський доробок Емпедокла в контексті проблематики держави і права.

Доведено, що політико-філософські переконання Емпедокла були пов'язані з суспільно-політичною ситуацією у його рідному місті Акрагант. Адже на період його життя Акрагант V ст. до н. е. повільно відновлювався після епохи тиранії, а тому рефлексіями мислитель намагався перешкодити комусь іншому захопити владу. Розкіш і тиранія були поширені на материковій Греції та Сицилії. Ця обставина пояснює, чому Емпедокл мав спрямовувати свою критику: він хотів зберегти свободу, яку він та його співгромадяни наразі здобули.

Обґрунтовано, що Емпедокл був прихильником піфагорійських настроїв, хоча і не надто вітав аристократію чи демократію. У його фрагментах про світобудову простежується думка про наслідки користі злагоди і приязні для суспільства, а також про негативні наслідки від ненависті та деструктиву. Акрагантський мислитель однозначно дотримувався антитиранічних поглядів, проте в нього все ж імпліцитно проглядалася ідея теократичного панування. Вважаємо його послідовником піфагорійського розуміння природи і значення законів, оскільки він також переконаний у превалюванні природного закону над писаним. Сицилійський філософ намагався дати широкому загалу рецепційоване піфагорійське розуміння політико-правничної проблематики, однак воно не отримало схвалення у більшості можновладців регіону.

Ключові слова: Емпедокл, рання грецька філософія, політична філософія архаїчної Греції, демократія, піфагорійці, досократики.