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**THE RECEPTION OF PEISISTRATUS' *HORIZONTAL*  
EGALITARIANISM IN SIXTH CENTURY ATTICA: IMPLICATIONS  
FOR SCHOLARSHIP**

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**Abstract:**

Egalitarianism is an inclination of thought within political philosophy that discusses the practice of social equality for all people. In public administration, egalitarianism is a practice where leaders create conditions for equality of all. Scholars such as John Locke and John Rawls have immensely contributed to the nuances of egalitarianism from a universalist perspective, as examined in the introduction of the paper. However, the universalist view of egalitarianism does not help the comprehensive understanding of the practice of egalitarian systems across past and contemporary societies. Before Locke and Rawls' egalitarianism, in Attica's 8th-6th century politico-economic history, there was already the practice of two different egalitarian systems shaped by power relations. By examining the practice of egalitarianism in this period in Attica through historical methods, conceptual analysis, and Marcella Frangipane's egalitarianism, one can appreciate how the formation of state and power structures influenced the practice of egalitarian systems and normatively suggest which kind of equality resonates with ours or needs to be adopted. The 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Attica's power dynamics led to the practice of (1) a *vertical egalitarian system* during the aristocratic rule and (2) a *horizontal egalitarian system*, which emerged during Peisistratus' leadership. Unlike the aristocratic governance, Peisistratus' leadership enabled the practice of economic equality. We deduce that the mode of leadership determines the kind of equality and inequality to be identified in any political community. Hence, we conclude that equality is power-based and evolving in practice, although it may have universal normative dispositions.

**Keywords:** Reception of Peisistratus, Horizontal Egalitarian System, Sixth Century Attica

### **1.1 Introduction**

Egalitarianism is an inclination of thought within political philosophy that discusses the practice of social equality for all people. In political and moral philosophy, egalitarianism favours equality of rights and liberties, opportunities, income and wealth, and social bases of self-respect. It considers that since humans are born equal, equal treatment of people, equal relationships, and equal enjoyment of social status should exist (Arneson, 2013:1). In public administration, egalitarianism is a practice where leaders create conditions for equality of all. Scholars such as John Locke and John Rawls have immensely contributed to the nuances of egalitarianism from a universalist perspective (Arneson, 2013: 1–8).

In the *Second Treatise on Government* (9.123-131), Locke indicates, for example, that essential rights like liberty, equality, and property/wealth are considered 'natural' rights that are self-evident in the pre-political condition of nature. By inference, since Locke considers equality as a natural right, its practices must be the same across all human societies. Locke's advocacy for equality deals with not just equality before the law, natural and civil, but also ethical and civic ('commonwealth') equality among individuals regarded unequally based on their social standing (Locke, 2017, chap. 9.123-131 & chap. 10.132-133). He saw the working poor as moral equals in terms of their commitment to labour and the responsibility they can and should take in their actions, albeit he also recognised that they frequently fail to do so (Kashiwazaki, 2022:56–57). Normatively, Locke's proposition can be considered across societies but should not necessarily be universalised since societies undergo different modes of political and economic development. Such developments determine the kind of equality and inequality to be witnessed.

Similarly, in *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls proposed that, regarding equality, the significant distributive units are "primary social goods" such as equal rights and liberties, equal opportunities, equal income and wealth, and social bases of self-respect. These are the things that each logical person is expected to seek, regardless of her/his specific life goals (Rawls 1999: 78–81). According to Rawls, principles of justice are guidelines for sharing primary social goods. The guidelines must be fair because everyone deserves equal attention and respect (Rawls, 1999: 78–81; Smith 2017:11). Although Rawls' position is reasonable enough to be applied universally, it must be discussed against historical developments and power politics in individual political communities.

### **1.2 Statement of Problem and Methodology**

Locke and Rawls significantly contribute to political philosophy and how human flourishing can be achieved. However, their universalist position needs to open more room for historical and contemporary debates on equality. Thus, it

is equally important to look at how power relations, state formation and structures shape our understanding of equality and inequality in a historical context. This can help to discuss better and determine what is equal and unequal. We resolve this problem by focusing on ancient Attica between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. Before Locke and Rawls' egalitarianism, in Attica's 8th-6th century politico-economic history, there was already the practice of two different egalitarian systems shaped by power relations. Through a historical approach, the paper employs conceptual, descriptive, and evaluative analyses to address the issue (Frankena, 1973, p. 13; Gorovitz et al., 1979, pp. 135–144; Olsthoorn, 2017, pp. 153–154). The paper begins with an explanation of egalitarianism from Lockean and Rawlsian viewpoints. After clarifying these views, the paper examines Marcella Frangipane's egalitarianism as the operational framework of the topic and proceeds from there.

Frangipane's egalitarianism is selected as the framework for this study since it does not universalise equality from Locke's and Rawls' perspectives but considers state formation and socio-political establishments of societies, which determines the kind of equality and inequality practised in historical context, as examined below.

### **1.3 The Idea of Egalitarian[ism]: Perspectives of Marcella Frangipane**

Egalitarianism is an idea and practice that since humans are born equal, equal treatment of people, equal relationships, and equal enjoyment of social status should exist (Arneson, 2013, p. 1). As pointed out above, Locke and Rawls are ardent proponents of this inclination and practice. However, as Marcella Frangipane proposes, equality needs to be assessed within the socio-political context that gave rise to equality and inequality principles and how they developed over time.

In Marcella Frangipane's view, the definition of equality, as opposed to its inverse, inequality, is a critical topic when attempting to comprehend the nature and structure of social relations systems (Frangipane, 2007, p. 151). To fully understand equality and inequality in a society's political and social economy, one must strike a difference across "societies of equals and unequals" (Frangipane, 2007, p. 151). Thus, for Frangipane, it is through this that one can understand the differences between equality and inequality forms. The critical importance of the "equality/inequality" elements, according to Frangipane, is evident when they are used to evaluate and define more simple and closed cultures, such as ancient Athens, Sparta, Corinth, and early Mesopotamia, as opposed to ours. Hence, equality and inequality may differ from one country to another depending on public and private relationships (Frangipane, 2007, p. 152).

It is deduced from the above that equality can only remain a deliberate normative practice. Hence, in contrast to inequality criteria, equality becomes useful when it identifies and provides for all of the underlying interactions in a specific society, as in the relationships that give the society its shape and

structure. Hence, the potential practices of evolving egalitarianism must be examined against the historical characteristics of the relationship and formation of state and power structures. It is important to attempt “to gain a better understanding of the essential characteristics of different types of society by comparing their distinct features and observing the changes that occurred during the transitional process”, as Frangipane suggests (Frangipane, 2007, p. 152). To understand egalitarianism in contemporary disciplines from the historical past of societies, Frangipane proposes a *horizontal egalitarian system* and a *vertical egalitarian system*.

### **1.3.1 The Idea of Horizontal and Vertical Egalitarian Systems**

Using sixth- and fifth-millennium Mesopotamia as a case study, Frangipane indicates that in ancient societies, equality and inequality were not straightforward concepts as there were various diverse kinds of equality, as well as inequality, which, regardless of looks, disclose various structures of interaction and economic and political development in the societies. She articulates that such concept variants resulted from “horizontal egalitarian systems” and “vertical egalitarian systems” (Frangipane, 2007, p. 153). Whereas *horizontal egalitarian systems* represent “total egalitarian societies”, *vertical egalitarian systems* are “basically egalitarian societies which are ideologically and politically represented by their chief members” (Frangipane, 2007, p. 153). In a *horizontal egalitarian system*, Frangipane states that all political community members are necessarily of the same status, socially, politically, and economically. In such regard, members horizontally distribute the status and decision-making mandates within (1) each group (based on sex and age or by function such as religious leaders, elected chiefs, or warriors) and (2) “between ‘related’ communities in a given territory ([through] flexible enlarged institutions and periodic communal events, such as sodalities, assemblies, religious ceremonies, feasts, etc.) ...”. In such a society, there is also the absence of differences between resource distribution and access (Frangipane, 2007: 153). Thus, governance, production, control, and access to resources are practically diffused among community members. Concerning the *vertical egalitarian system*, Frangipane states that considerable equality and economic independence are accompanied by a structure of social and kinship relationships which gives and legitimises advantaged prestige to some members of the community subject to their hereditary or genealogical position, actual or presumed, authorising them to represent the political community and take up its authority (Frangipane, 2007, p. 15).

Based on the above clarification and distinction of the two egalitarian categories, it suffices to conclude that, in vertical egalitarian societies, unlike horizontal egalitarian societies, the role of more or less extended home groupings was highly prominent, and family membership was more essential than group membership (Frangipane, 2007, p. 15). We take these egalitarian practices from early Mesopotamian societies of the sixth- and fifth millennium further back to

eighth to sixth-century Attica. The object is to support Frangipane's position and contribute to the debate concerning egalitarianism, which states that equality and inequality concepts cannot be strictly applicable universally but are highly relative based on social, cultural, and political histories. With this said, we examine how the two types of egalitarianism manifested in 8<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century Attica. The first egalitarian system emerged during the aristocratic governance of Attica. The second egalitarian system occurred under the leadership of Peisistratus through his economic and diplomatic policies, which tended to promote equality in Attica's political and economic development.

Henceforth, through the reception of Peisistratus' development policies, we re-examine the egalitarianisms of eighth to sixth-century Attica. By using the historical developments of socio-political and socio-economic structures of 800-600 B.C. Attica and how Peisistratus promoted socio-economic equality in Attica, we propose and support Frangipane's position and contribute to the debate concerning egalitarianism, which states that equality and inequality concepts cannot be strictly applicable universally but are highly relative based on social, cultural, and political histories.

#### **1.4 Vertical Egalitarian System in Attica: The Era of Aristocratic Governance, 800-561 B.C.**

From about 800 to 561 B.C., social, political, and economic equality hardly existed in Attica due to the then existing structures. Notably, there was the absence of equality and economic self-reliance because the social structure of Attica consisted of social and kinship relationships which gave and legitimised an advantaged status to the aristocratic members of Attica, who were believed to have been of noble birth or who subjected themselves to hereditary or genealogical position, true or presumed, authorising them to represent the political community and take up its authority. The structure favoured aristocratic urban dwellers and wealthy landowners, charged with designing public policies for the citizens of Attica. In this regard, Starr suggests that the social structure did not allow the majority poor to benefit enormously from the then-expanding economy (Starr, 1982, p. 418).

Thus, among their class, they ensured equal benefits of the state's resources. The economic development that was taking shape favoured those Starr considers "The most important group" who "continued to be the landholding descendants of the Zeus-sprung leaders of the Homeric world" (Starr, 1982, p. 418). The "Zeus-sprung" leaders were the wealthy aristocrats who governed Attica and believed that they had divine authorisation to administer Attica. Hence, they either saw nothing wrong with the state's structures or were just insensitive to attend to the needs of the ordinary community members. Evidence given by Aristotle in *The Athenian Constitution* and Starr in *Economic and Social Conditions in the Greek World* indicates that the socio-economic status of the wealthy aristocratic ruling class received significant transformation, and the

majority of the poor of the low class's economic status worsened (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 5.1-2; Starr, 1982, p. 418).

It is deduced from the above that the leadership set no favourable conditions to give everyone an equal opportunity to flourish. Because the aristocrats designed public policies for Attica, they ensured that the outcome of the policies favoured their class members as opposed to the masses. By implication, whatever policies existed at the time were designed to favour the leaders themselves with little or no benefits to the ordinary citizen. Consequently, the economic conditions of the masses became harsher.

The first of such harsh conditions the aristocratic vertical egalitarian subjected to the peasants is what Aristotle calls *Pelatae* ("bond-slaves for hire") (Andrewes, 1982a, p. 378; Aristotle, *Constitution*, II.2). Because the poor did not own land to cultivate and went to the rich to hire a piece of land to farm, the land owners considered the lower class as bond enslaved people working on their (the aristocrats') land. In the opinion of Aristotle, the poor peasants, including their wives and children, were indeed in a state of bondage (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 2.2). Thus, although people experiencing poverty in Attica from 800 to 561 B.C. may have had the will to work in capacities and improve their economic situations, they nevertheless had economic freedom.

In connection with the above is the second condition, *Hektemoroi*, under which the poor worked the lands of the rich. For Aristotle, *hektemoroi* meant "paying a sixth of the produce as rent." (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 2.2; Sealey, 1976, pp. 107–108). It meant that, for every crop planted and harvested on a piece of land, the farmer had to divide it into sixths and give a fifth to the landowner. One can only imagine how this condition made life unbearable for the poor farmer, especially if one had to depend on just one-sixth of the produce to feed his family. Therefore, it makes sense if Aristotle suggests that the *Hektemoroi* was one of the unfavourable economic conditions that subjected ordinary citizens to poor living conditions.

Concerning the above developments, it becomes difficult to blame the system because the aristocrats were operating at the level of vertical egalitarian systems. This type of aristocratic vertical egalitarian system is what Frangipane described as considerable equality and economic independence accompanied by a structure of social and kinship relationships. This relationship gave and legitimised a kind of privilege to some community members to their hereditary or genealogical position, true or presumed, authorising them to represent the political community and taking advantage of the primary social goods or rights (Frangipane, 2007, p. 15). Nevertheless, in Attica's political and economic history, there came a point where the pursuit for equality became unavoidable since there was discontent among the masses, especially in 621 B.C., in Draco's constitution. Such a seeming equality was witnessed under Solon's leadership in 594 B.C.

### 1.5 Solon's Interventions and Policies, 594 B.C.

By 594 B.C., the masses had become politically and economically conscious. Their agitations made the aristocrats seek mediation measures. Both parties agreed to appoint Solon to mediate (Aristotle, 1984, *Constitution*, 2, 5-12). Among Solon's laws, which directly benefited people experiencing poverty, were "forbidding loans on the security of the person, and a cancelling of all debts both private and public", as Aristotle states (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 6.1). These policies and their implementations were known as *Seisachtheia* (the disburdening ordinance or the Shaking-off of Burdens), as it relieved them of their burden.<sup>1</sup> According to Aristotle, the ordinance meant shaking off the socio-economic "weight lying on them [the poor masses]" (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 6.1).

It was also evident that although Solon made the above provisions to bring the masses legal and economic justice, they noticed that their main economic constraints, mainly access to farmland and finance, were unresolved. In addition, although the poor Athenians held these assumptions, as noted above, they, in practice, did not have actual political and legal freedom since the interpretations of the laws were outside their control. Whatever the degree of relief Solon's laws may have brought, one thing was sure – he wanted to help the poor majority. However, in his attempt to give laws that would bring social and economic justice to the downtrodden, Solon failed to meet the fundamental expectations of the aristocrats and the ordinary citizens.

#### 1.5.1 Solon's Restructuring Attica

Solon categorised citizens into four classes based on wealth. The first to last ranks are (1) the five-hundred-bushel class (those whose estates measured five hundred bushels of dry and liquid goods together), (2) the cavalry (those whose estate measured three hundred bushels, dry and liquid goods, or those who could keep and maintain horses), the rankers (those whose estates measured two hundred bushels), and the labourers (whose estates measure less than two hundred bushels).<sup>2</sup> Based on their assessment level, Solon assigned principal offices to members of the five-hundred-bushel class, cavalry, and rankers, including nine archons, treasurers, sellers, and finance officers. Solon assigned no office to the labourers' class except for granting assembly and jury-court membership (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 7.3-4).

Thus, the lower class participated in assembly meetings and court cases but did not hold official duties there. Solon selected officials based on a small list of men each clan chose. Solon established a council composed of four hundred.

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<sup>1</sup> Solon established a constitution and made other laws, and they ceased to use the laws of Draco, except in matters of homicide. See, (Aristotle, 1891, p. VI–IX; Ehrenberg, 1973, p. 52)

<sup>2</sup> A bushel is a unit of weight used to measure agricultural produce like olive, wheat, maize or beans.

Each of the four tribes selected a hundred members for the committee composition (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 8.1-4).

#### 1.5.2 Solon's Policies Disappointments

Throughout the examinations, one notes that the significant economic concern of people experiencing poverty was inaccessibility to farmlands and debt bondage. Regarding the latter, Solon's disburdening ordinance addressed it. However, the former was unresolved. Expectedly, the poor citizens found Solon's economic policies disappointing since their problems were half solved (Starr, 1982, p. 433).

Aristotle notes that the nobles and the majority poor disagreed with Solon's laws. Whereas the nobles blamed him for stripping off their political and economic power and cancelling debts, the poor masses criticised Solon for not re-distributing property, especially land, since it was what could place them many steps up the social ladder (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 11.1-2). Hence, upper- and lower-class members saw Solon's policies and interventions as unsatisfactory. Moreover, concerning Solon's policies on reorganising the state and power qualification based on wealth, he did not intend to openly promote political participation in the labourers' class. This is because until a person acquires a certain amount of wealth, he cannot hold public office in his lifetime, even if he has brilliant ideas to contribute to the state's growth. In its practical sense, this law was never in favour of the poor to gain political participation. Since the aristocrats had accumulated some reasonable wealth, they occupied all public offices under the Solonian Constitution.

Since Solon could not anticipate the shortfalls in his constitution, he became an enemy to both parties. Having found himself unfavourable to the people, Solon left to settle in Egypt's city, Canopus (Ehrenberg, 1973, p. 62; Herodotus, 1954a, p. Book I, 29, 59-64; Plutarch, 1960, 2012). He returned to meet the disorder he left behind. His absence came immediately with party divisions.<sup>3</sup> The citizens looked up to another leader who could redeem them from their economic impoverishment. Thus, as we approach Attica's political and economic history in 561-527 B.C., another kind of horizontal equality emerged. This horizontal egalitarian system is associated with Peisistratus' economic and diplomatic policies.

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<sup>3</sup> The political troubles had to do with clan struggle for political power. The three clans (parties) that took shape at the time were (1) the *Pedieis* (people of the plain)<sup>3</sup> under the leader Lycurgus, (2) the *Paralioi* (people of the Coast)<sup>3</sup> under Megacles, and (3) the *Hyperakrioi/Diakrioi* (people beyond the hills or of the hills) under the leader understudy, Peisistratus (Grote, 2001; Orrieux & Pantel, 1999, p. 86).



### **1.6 Horizontal Egalitarian: Peisistratus' Tyranny and Economic Policies, 561-527 B.C.**

About thirty-three years, 594-561 B.C., before Peisistratus became the Tyrant of Athens, the political economy of Attica was in shambles. Those who could not survive the economic chaos left the region to find greener pastures elsewhere. Those who did not travel outside the region but needed to satisfy their material needs resorted and continued cultivating their piece of land or hired land from the aristocrats for a living (Ehrenberg, 1973, p. 43).

By the sixth century and up to Peisistratus' emergence, political and economic power still rested in the hands of the upper classes. The system of land dependency brought by the vertical egalitarian systems, which Solon could not address, made it easier for the ruling class to exploit the people. Thus, from 594 to 561 B.C., debt engulfed the peasants. Farmers of Attica at this time found themselves in a state of structural injustice because various public and private mechanisms were utilised to force the weaker or poorer citizens to give their meagre surpluses to the rich (Starr, 1982, p. 424; Ehrenberg, 1973, p. 41). In the end, capital accumulation and control remained under the direct control of the aristocrats. Upon gaining authority in Athens, Peisistratus focused on many development projects to redeem the people from the economic inequality occasioned by the vertical egalitarian systems at the time. Henceforth, we will focus on his economic and diplomatic policies because they gave Attica a horizontal egalitarian outlook between 561 and 527 B.C.

#### **1.6.1 Peisistratus' Agricultural Policies**

Peisistratus' agricultural policies came in two forms: financial start-ups and providing agricultural lands to those who did not have. Peisistratus also provided financial start-ups to people in the farming business (Aristotle, *Constitution*, XVI.2-9; Starr, 1982, p. 433). According to Victor Ehrenberg, Peisistratus also gave some new lands from a few confiscated estates of exiled nobles (Ehrenberg, 1973, p. 67). Aristotle and Ehrenberg provide information that Peisistratus won the people over with material help, especially since the state loans he made available to the deprived allowed them to live sustainable lives as farmers (Aristotle, *Constitution*, XVI.2-9; Starr, 1982, p. 433). Effectively, these were also attempts to bring about economic equality among the aristocrats and the ordinary citizens.

This policy of Peisistratus allowed the agronomists to continue cultivating their fields without financial constraints. As Aristotle suggests, Peisistratus did so with two goals in mind: that the majority of the population who were farmers would not live in the city, but that because they were distributed over the country, enjoying moderate means, and absorbed in their affairs, they would not have the desire or leisure to be concerned with public issues. From an economic perspective, Peisistratus' spending on the poor farmers can be linked to what is considered "the multiplier effect", which means that "an injection in new spending, for example, exports, government spending, or investment, can lead to

an enormous increase in gross national income. This is because a percentage of the new spending will generate profits for other individuals. These businesses and individuals will also spend a portion of their earnings, which creates revenue for others. This practice is repeated until there is no more excess revenue to spend (Economics Online, 2020). For instance, Attic farmers will use some money to buy farm tools from blacksmiths and cattle raisers to till the land. Olive oil extractors will, in turn, purchase the grapes from farmers. They will, in turn, buy pots from pottery makers to store/contain olive oil, wine, ointments, perfumes, and many other purposes (Starr, 1982, p. 427). This practice encourages domestic enterprise.

### **1.6.2 Introduction of Taxation**

Peisistratus was interested in more than just spending on the farmers. He thought that people would become more willing to contribute and participate in the development of the polis through tax if the government supported the people. Hence, as Peisistratus provided regular money for farmers, Aristotle writes that, at the same time, he (Peisistratus) benefited from higher revenue from intensive land cultivation because he took about ten or twenty per cent tax or tithes of the harvest and other produce (Aristotle, *Constitution*, XVI. 4; Sealey, 1976, p. 111).

The direct tax imposed on all members in Attica served as internal revenue generated for developmental projects. To prevent people from evading tax, conflict of interest, corruption, and unaccountability, Peisistratus established jurors across the districts and frequently left the capital to make tours in the country, viewing matters for himself and reconciling those who had conflicts so that they would have no necessity to come to the city and ignore their fields where internal revenue was generated from. With such intervention, people could spend more time in their field rather than travelling to the capital city to settle disputes, which would equally affect production and tax revenue.

### **1.6.3 Introduction of Tax-Free Policies**

The above was how Peisistratus got everyone to contribute to the state. Aristotle further reveals that after the introduction of the taxation policy, circumstances demanded that Peisistratus introduce a "Tax-Free" policy (Aristotle, *Constitution*, XVI.6-10/16.6-7), which he implemented to reduce further the burdens of those who could not produce much, not because they were too lazy to be productive or were free-riders but because of unfavourable situations beyond their control. For instance, due to unpredictable weather and infertile or rocky land, Peisistratus was moved to grant some people facing such situations what Aristotle called "No-Tax-Land" (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 16.6-10; Ehrenberg, 1973, p. 43).

It was reasonable for Peisistratus to make regular capital available to the farmers, as he wanted to promote economic equality to transform their living conditions for the good of the entire region of Attica. However, it was also

reasonable to give a loan to someone to start a business, but without other conducive factors of production, the loan will not yield any profit. Since some poor peasants needed fertile soil to cultivate their crops, it became evident that no adequate harvest and wealth would be produced. If those categories of farmers were also beneficiaries of Peisistratus' finance policy, then we should expect no returns from the loan but debt. Also, since Peisistratus wanted to ensure the appropriate use of the funds and encourage the people to work to their full capabilities to flourish in their own lives, he needed to develop such policies. Such plans paid off. Since there were no insurance policies for farmers, the best Peisistratus could do was to spare people who fell under harsh economic conditions from paying all taxes on their hard-earned but little farm produce. Aristotle's account reveals how Peisistratus was determined to promote Attica's economic transformation and common good so that people could flourish equally from state resources. One can only agree with the scholars who have praised the leadership of Peisistratus as a period of Attica's transformation since, in addition to all things, he did not interfere with people's lives unnecessarily in any other fashion throughout the time he ruled but always promoted harmony. In all matters, Aristotle believes that Peisistratus was accustomed to administering the state exclusively "according to the laws, so he never allowed himself any unfair advantage" (Aristotle, *Constitution*, XVI.8). Aristotle concludes on Peisistratus by saying that his leadership competency led to the proverb that Peisistratus' tyranny was "the age of Cronus" – a period that represented the "Golden Age" (Aristotle, *Constitution*, XVI).

#### 1.6.4 Peisistratus Diplomatic Policy

In Aristotle's *The Constitution of Athens*, Aristotle recounts that Peisistratus had to relate with the rich and poor on equal, harmonious grounds to handle domestic affairs on the principle of justice if he wanted to ensure economic equality of Attica (Aristotle, *Constitution*, 14.3; 16.2-3). A. Andrewes also re-emphasises this point (Andrewes, 1982b, p. 406). At the international level, Peisistratus saw the essence of keeping friendly relations with cities outside Attica. With the zeal to expand Attica's economy, Peisistratus had thought about seeking a bigger market space for farmers and artisans. Hence, he created a good relationship with Attica's neighbouring cities. Such named cities include but are not limited to Argos, Naxos, Thebes, Eretria, and Thessaly (Herodotus, 1954a, p. I. 64, 1954a, p. V. 63. 3; Aristotle, *Constitution*, 14.3; 16.2-3). Peisistratus's relationship with neighbouring cities fascinates scholars like Andrewes, who reaffirms that "Aristotle may be right in supposing that Peisistratus himself worked more by diplomacy than by arms" (Andrewes, 1982b, p. 403). Earlier, Herodotus (Herodotus, 1954b, p. V. 94-95; Sealey, 1976, p. 142) affirmed that Peisistratus managed to secure a political position with the cities of Chersonese and Sigeum near the mouth of the Hellespont. The economic advantage of this relation was that the position secured with these cities allowed Attica to safeguard the grain route across the Aegean Sea.

Maintaining good foreign relations was also the peaceful environment where he had to keep mining sites. He kept his mining property at Mt Pangaeum and with the Attic mines at Laurium. Thus, his rule rested on a substantial financial basis (Ehrenberg, 1973, p. 66). This means that by establishing good relations at home and abroad and mobilising funds in other places and Attica, Peisistratus' development plans were easy to carry out. The fact is that promoting economic equality could not have been achieved if Peisistratus' regime had not been financially stable.

### **1.7 Evaluation and Conclusion**

In this paper, we have drawn attention to two types of egalitarianism, with the first type being a *vertical egalitarian system* that existed during the aristocratic control of Attica. Peisistratus' tyranny ushered Attica into the practice of the second, which consisted of a *horizontal egalitarian system* where all political community members were economically of the same status. In a juxtaposition of Peisistratus' policies to Frangipane's horizontal egalitarianism, citizens of Attica horizontally distributed the economic status and decision-making mandates within each group and between 'related' communities in Attica and beyond – by using adequate domestic and foreign diplomatic relationships. In such a society, resource distribution and access disparities were also absent. Thus, governance, production, control, and access to resources were practically diffused among community members. Based on this, we deduce that the socio-political establishments, mode of governance, and leadership determine the kind of equality and inequality to be identified in any political community. Because equality is power-related, discussing it from a universalist perspective does not help in understanding the dynamics and complexities of egalitarian systems. Hence, critical attention needs to be given to such periods and societies, as we have discussed, to better normatively evaluate the kind of equality type, such as Peisistratus' horizontal egalitarianism, which can serve as a roadmap to economic flourishing in contemporary times.

Through such a historical study of egalitarianism in context, the findings concerning economic equality between 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century Attica have proven that equality is better discussed against historical and political contestations of particular societies. From the examined case, we deduce that the leadership mode determines the equality and inequality that can be identified in any political community. Also, equality is power-based and evolving in practice, although it may have universal normative dispositions. Thus, regarding equality/egalitarianism and welfare, one should understand its historical development and practices to appreciate the contemporary nuances of egalitarianism. Therefore, by re-examining the political economy of Attica under the aristocratic rule and Peisistratus' practice of a vertical egalitarian system, this paper has provided a historical approach to which egalitarianism systems can be discussed and benchmarked for contemporary power politics, applied leadership ideas, and equality nuances.

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