

**BACHELOR'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT**  
*PPE – Bachelor's in Politics, Philosophy and Economics*  
*Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University*

<b>Thesis title:</b>	<b>Plato and Aristotle on the Functions of the State</b>
<b>Student's name:</b>	<b>Samuel Blecharž</b>
<b>Referee's name:</b>	<b>Janusz Salamon</b>

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	<b>26</b>	
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	<b>8</b>	
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	<b>8</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources, literature	<b>5</b>	
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	<b>3</b>	
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	<b>3</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>53</b>	

**Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score: 3%**

The thesis does not appear to include instances of plagiarism.

**Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria:** As Samuel's supervisor, I am aware that he spent a long time working on his BA Thesis, and that the final version of his thesis is better than an earlier version I had a chance to read, so I believe that the thesis merits a pass grade. However, the thesis has still so many weaknesses that I cannot but recommend the minimal pass grade. It is a matter of importance for my assessment of the thesis that the historical-philosophical (as opposed to empirical) nature of the subject matter, and the availability of the abundance of sources he might considered made the topic in principle less challenging that it could be otherwise (especially given the amount of time Samuel, in the end, had in his disposal to write the thesis). The curious mixture of serious scholarly works (including those recommended by the supervisor) and various "sparknotes" type of "free online learning materials", as well as introductory educational publications by the Government of Tamil Nadu and National Open University of Nigeria listed in the Bibliography testify to less than fully balanced methodological approach to the task at hand. Too much of the thesis consists of introductory information about Plato's and Aristotle's political thought, or even their philosophies in general which in a thesis of this length was surely an unnecessary waste of space that ought to be used for a more focused and in-depth exploration of the problem indicated in the title. As a result, the reader must make a considerable effort to identify the core fragments of this thesis which one would think should be the answer the question implied in the title: what Plato and Aristotle thought about the proper functions of the state? Presuming that the author

understands that a scholarly thesis is meant to have some research question which is sufficiently narrow to be addressed within the constraints of a given publication, and also is formulated in such a way as to allow for a degree of original contribution, the reader is bound to presuppose that the phrase “the functions of the state” will mean something highly specific and will not be synonymous with “What Plato and Aristotle Has to Say about Politics”. Even Plato’s and Aristotle’s ideas about the proper organisation of the state, and who governs and how, might be considered not directly relevant to the research question about “the functions of the state” (since it is Plato’s and Aristotle’s ideas about the functions of the state that dictate the type of political regime they recommend, not the other way around). Not that there is nothing relevant in Samuel’s thesis that might serve as an answer the research question implied in the title of the thesis. Some answers are (unavoidably) there, such as that one of the key functions of the state, according to both Plato and Aristotle, is creating appropriate conditions for citizens to grow in virtue and lead a virtuous life. It is just that answers of this kind to the research question are buried in less than perfectly systematic narrative about Plato’s and Aristotle’s political philosophy in general (and so one needs to know these answers in advance in order to notice that they are there, in Samuel’s thesis). Another lost opportunity of this thesis is that the comparative element (that is also implied in the title as central to the thesis) is far less prominent than one might expect. Comparing Aristotle’s political thought with that of Plato is not easy due to the unsystematic nature of his late work “Politics” but all serious commentators interpret Aristotle’s political “sympathies” as significantly different from Plato’s, hence the potential for “comparing and contrasting” in an original and imaginative way was considerable.

**Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): E**

**Suggested questions for the defence are:**

**I do recommend the thesis for final defence.**

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***Referee Signature***

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Quality standard
91 – 100	<b>A</b>	= outstanding (high honor)
81 – 90	<b>B</b>	= superior (honor)
71 – 80	<b>C</b>	= good
61 – 70	<b>D</b>	= satisfactory
51 – 60	<b>E</b>	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	<b>F</b>	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.