# Aristotle

# *Politics*

## *A New Translation*

With Introduction and Notes
By

C. D. C. Reeve

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Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.
Indianapolis/Cambridge

Printed in the United States of America

20 19 18 17 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

For further information, please address
Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 44937
Indianapolis, Indiana 46244-0937

www.hackettpublishing.com

Cover design by Deborah Wilkes
Interior design by Elizabeth L. Wilson
Composition by Aptara, Inc.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Names: Aristotle. | Reeve, C. D. C., 1948–
Title: Politics : a new translation / Aristotle ; with introduction and notes by C. D. C. Reeve.
Other titles: Politics. English
Description: Indianapolis, Indiana : Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., [2017] | Series: The new Hackett Aristotle | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2016047055| ISBN 9781624665578 (pbk.) | ISBN 9781624665585 (cloth)
Subjects: LCSH: Political science—Early works to 1800.
Classification: LCC JC71.A41 R4413 2017 | DDC 320.01/1—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016047055

Adobe PDF ebook ISBN: 978-1-62466-559-2

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# Preface

This book is a descendant of a translation of the *Politics* published by Hackett in 1988. But it is not the result of making spot revisions to its ancestor. Instead it is an entirely new translation, built from the ground up, and very different in scale and level of annotation from its predecesor. My reason for producing it is in the first instance to have a translation that is in harmony with my *Nicomachean Ethics* (2014), so that readers can more easily read the *Ethics* and then the *Politics* as a relatively seamless whole. The final chapter of the *Ethics* suggests that this is what Aristotle himself intended. A second reason is that readers of the *Politics* find themselves in territory whose apparent familiarity is often deceptive and inimical to proper understanding: *politikê* isn't quite politics, *epistêmê* isn't quite science, *praxis* isn't quite action, *theôria* isn't quite theory, *eudaimonia* isn't quite happiness, *ergon* isn't quite function, *aretê* isn't quite virtue, a *politiea* isn't quite a constitution, and a *polis* isn't quite a city. A translation must try to compensate for this deceptive familiarity, therefore, without producing too much potentially alienating distance and strangeness in its place. Accuracy and consistency are essential to achieving this goal, obviously, and I think that I can now do quite a bit better in these regards than I did before. Indeed, the 1988 version, while sufficiently useful for many purposes to be kept in print, falls short, in my view, of what is required for serious study of this extraordinary work. It is my hope and expectation that this one will eventually replace it entirely.

In addition to accuracy and consistency, extensive annotation and commentary are of the first importance. Some of this can consist, as it does here, of texts selected from other works by Aristotle, so that, while traveling through the region of the Aristotelian world that the *Politics* describes, readers can also travel through other regions of it, acquiring an ever widening and deepening grasp on the whole picture—something that is crucial, in my view, to understanding any part of it adequately or perhaps at all. But much commentary must simply be explanatory, clarificatory, and interpretative.

To make the journey a convenient one, footnotes and glossary entries are replaced by sequentially numbered endnotes, so that the information most needed at each juncture is available in a single location. The non-sequential reader interested in a particular topic will find in the Indexes a guide to places where focused discussion of it occurs. The Introduction describes the book that lies ahead, explaining what it is about, what it is trying to do,

what sort of evidence is relevant to its evaluation, and what sort of person has access to such evidence. It is not a comprehensive discussion of all the important topics the *Politics* contains, nor an attempt to situate Aristotle's thought in the history of political thought more generally. Many books are available that attempt these tasks. Nor is it, I should add, an expression of scholarly consensus on the topics it does discuss—insofar as such a thing exists—but rather my own take on them.

I have benefited from the work of previous translators and commentators, especially Carnes Lord and Peter Simpson (into English) and Pierre Pellegrin (into French). The translations in the Clarendon Aristotle Series have also been very helpful, especially those of David Keyt (Books V and VII), Richard Kraut (Books VIII and IX), and Trevor Saunders (Books I and II), as have the translations of parts of the *Politics* by Terence Irwin.

I thank Pavlos Kontos and David Riesbeck for their careful line reading, as well as for their many useful comments, suggestions, and corrections. David's own work on the *Politics* in particular has been a frequent stimulus to new thought on my part.

I renew my thanks to ΔΚΕ, the first fraternity in the United States to endow a professorial chair, and to the University of North Carolina for awarding it to me. The generous research funds, among other things, that the endowment makes available each year have allowed me to travel to conferences and to acquire books, computers, and other research materials and assistance, without which my work would have been much more difficult.

Finally and wholeheartedly, I thank Jay Hullett and Deborah Wilkes for their friendship, encouragement, and faith in me. It is a pleasure to dedicate this new translation to them, and to include all at Hackett in the dedication.

# Abbreviations

## *Aristotle*

Citations of Aristotle's works are made to Immanuel Bekker, *Aristotelis Opera* (Berlin: 1831 [1970]), in the canonical form of abbreviated title, book number (when the work is divided into books), chapter number, page number, column letter, and line number. References to the *Politics* typically omit the title. A * indicates a work whose authenticity has been seriously questioned; ** indicates a work attributed to Aristotle but generally agreed not to be by him. The abbreviations used are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| *APo.* | *Posterior Analytics* |
| *APr.* | *Prior Analytics* |
| *Ath.* | *Constitution of Athens* |
| *Cael.* | *De Caelo (On the Heavens)* |
| *Cat.* | *Categories* |
| *DA* | *De Anima (On the Soul)* |
| *Div. Somn.* | *On Divination in Sleep* |
| *EE* | *Eudemian Ethics* |
| *Fr.* | *Fragments* |
| *GA* | *Generation of Animals* |
| *GC* | *On Generation and Corruption* (Joachim) |
| *HA* | *History of Animals* (Balme) |
| *Int.* | *De Interpretatione* |
| *Juv.* | *On Youth and Old Age, Life and Death, and Respiration* (Ross) |
| *Long.* | *On Length and Shortness of Life* (Ross) |
| *MA* | *Movement of Animals* (Nussbaum) |
| *MM* | *Magna Moralia** (Susemihl) |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Mem.* | *On Memory* (Ross) |
| *Mete.* | *Meteorology* |
| *NE* | *Nicomachean Ethics* |
| *Oec.* | *Economics** (van Groningen and Wartelle) |
| *PA* | *Parts of Animals* |
| *Ph.* | *Physics* |
| *Po.* | *Poetics* |
| *Po. II* | *Poetics II* (Janko) |
| *Pol.* | *Politics* |
| *Pr.* | *Problems** |
| *Protr.* | *Protrepticus* (Düring) |
| *Rh.* | *Rhetoric* |
| *SE* | *Sophistical Refutations* |
| *Sens.* | *Sense and Sensibilia* |
| *Somn.* | *On Sleep* |
| *Top.* | *Topics* |
| *VV* | *On Virtues and Vices*** |

I cite and translate the *Oxford Classical Texts* (OCT) editions of these works, where available, otherwise Bekker or the editions noted:

Balme, D. M. *Aristotle: Historia Animalium* (Cambridge, 2002).

Düring, I. *Aristotle's Protrepticus: An Attempt at Reconstruction* (Göteborg, 1961).

Janko, R. *Aristotle on Comedy: Toward a Reconstruction of Poetics II* (Berkeley, 1984).

Joachim, H. H. *Aristotle on Coming-to-Be and Passing-Away* (Oxford, 1926).

Mayhew, R. *Aristotle: Problems* (Cambridge, Mass., 2011).

Nussbaum, M. *Aristotle's De Motu Animalium: Text with Translation, Commentary, and Interpretative Essays* (Princeton, 1978).

Rose, V. *Aristotelis Fragmenta* 3rd ed. (Leipzig, 1886).

Ross, W. D. *Aristotle Parva Naturalia* (Oxford, 1955).

Susemihl, F. *Aristotelis Magna Moralia* (Leipzig, 1883).

van Groningen, B. A. and A. Wartelle, *Aristote: Économique* (Paris, 1968).

## *Plato*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Ap.* | *Apology* |
| *Chrm.* | *Charmides* |
| *Ep.* | *Letters* |
| *Euthphr.* | *Euthyphro* |
| *Grg.* | *Gorgias* |
| *Lg.* | *Laws* |
| *Men.* | *Meno* |
| *Menex.* | *Menexenus* |
| *Min.* | *Minos** |
| *Phd.* | *Phaedo* |
| *Pol.* | *Statesman* |
| *Rep.* | *Republic* |
| *Tht.* | *Theaetetus* |
| *Ti.* | *Timaeus* |

Translations of Plato in the notes are based on those in J. M. Cooper, (ed.), *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, 1997) and on my *The Trials of Socrates* (Indianapolis, 2002) and *Plato: Republic* (Indianapolis, 2004).

## *Xenophon*

| | |
|---|---|
| *An.* | *Anabasis* |
| *Lac.* | *De Republica Lacedaemoniorum* |
| *Cyr.* | *Cyropaedia* |
| *Hell.* | *Hellenica* |
| *Mem.* | *Memorabilia* |
| *Oec.* | *Oeconomicus* |

## *Other Abbreviations*

Athenaeus = Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*.

Barker = A. Barker, *Greek Musical Writings I: The Musician and His Art* (Cambridge, 1984).

Barnes = J. Barnes, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation* (Princeton, 1984).

*CAG* = M. Hayduck, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* (Berlin, 1882–1909).

Diehl = E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca* (2 vols., Leipzig, 1925).

Diodorus = Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History.*

DK = H. Diels and W. Kranz (eds.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (6ed., Berlin, 1951).

DL = Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, T. Dorandi (ed.) (Cambridge, 2013).

Dreizehnter = A. Dreizehnter, *Aristoteles' Politica* (Munich, 1970).

Gagarin & Woodruff = M. Gagarin and P. Woodruff (eds.), *Early Greek Political Thought from Homer to the Sophists* (Cambridge, 1995).

Herodotus = Herodotus, *Histories.*

Huffman = C. Huffman, *Archytas of Tarentum: Pythagorean, Philosopher and Mathematician King* (Cambridge, 2005).

Justin = *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus.*

Keyt = D. Keyt, *Aristotle: Politics Books V and VI* (Oxford, 1999).

Kock = T. Kock, *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta* (3 vols., Leipzig, 1880).

Kraut = R. Kraut, *Aristotle: Politics Books VII and VIII* (Oxford, 1997).

Lonie = I. Lonie, *The Seed*. In G. Lloyd (ed.), *Hippocratic Writings* (Harmondsworth, 1978).

Nauck = A. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1889).

Newman = W. Newman, *The Politics of Aristotle* 4 vols. (Oxford, 1887–1902).

$R^3$ = Rose, V., *Aristotelis Fragmenta* 3rd ed. (Leipzig, 1886).

Saunders = T. Saunders, *Aristotle: Politics Books I and II* (Oxford, 1995).

Schütrumpf = E. Schütrumpf, and in the case of vol. iii, H-J Gehrke, *Aristotles Politik* 4 vols. (Berlin, 1991–2005).

Strabo = Strabo, *Geographica.*

Susemihl = F. Susemihl and R. Hicks, *The Politics of Aristotle: A Revised Text with Introduction, Analysis, and Commentary* (London, 1894).

TEGP = D. Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy: The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of the Major Presocratics* (Cambridge, 2010).

Thucydides = Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War.*

# Introduction

## *Life and Works*

Aristotle was born in 384 BC to a well-off family living in the small town of Stagira in northern Greece. His father, Nicomachus, who died while Aristotle was still quite young, was allegedly doctor to King Amyntas of Macedon. His mother, Phaestis, was wealthy in her own right. When Aristotle was seventeen his guardian, Proxenus, sent him to study at Plato's Academy in Athens. He remained there for twenty years, initially as a student, eventually as a researcher and teacher.

When Plato died in 347, leaving the Academy in the hands of his nephew, Speusippus, Aristotle left Athens for Assos in Asia Minor, where the ruler, Hermias, was a patron of philosophy. He married Hermias' niece, Pythias, and had a daughter by her, also named Pythias. Three years later, in 345, after Hermias had been killed by the Persians, Aristotle moved to Mytilene on the island of Lesbos, where he met Theophrastus, who was to become his best student and closest colleague.

In 343 Aristotle seems to have been invited by Philip of Macedon to be tutor to the latter's thirteen-year-old son, Alexander, later called "the Great." In 335 Aristotle returned to Athens and founded his own institute, the Lyceum. While he was there his wife died and he established a relationship with Herpyllis, also a native of Stagira. Their son Nicomachus was named for Aristotle's father, and the *Nicomachean Ethics* may, in turn, have been named for him or transcribed by him. In 323 Alexander the Great died, with the result that anti-Macedonian feeling in Athens grew stronger. Perhaps threatened with a formal charge of impiety (*NE* X 7 $1177^{b}33$), Aristotle left for Chalcis in Euboea, where he died twelve months later, in 322, at the age of sixty-two.

Legend has it that Aristotle had slender calves, small eyes, spoke with a lisp, and was "conspicuous by his attire, his rings, and the cut of his hair." His will reveals that he had a sizable estate, a domestic partner, two children, a considerable library, and a large circle of friends. In it Aristotle asks his executors to take special care of Herpyllis. He directs that his slaves be freed "when they come of age" and that the bones of his wife, Pythias, be mixed with his "as she instructed."

Although the surviving writings of Aristotle occupy almost 2,500 tightly printed pages in English, most of them are not works polished for publication but sometimes incomplete lecture notes and working papers. This accounts for some, though not all, of their legendary difficulty. It is unfair to complain, as a Platonist opponent did, that Aristotle "escapes refutation by clothing a perplexing subject in obscure language, using darkness like a squid to make himself hard to catch," but there is darkness and obscurity enough for anyone, even if none of it is intentional. There is also a staggering breadth and depth of intellect. Aristotle made fundamental contributions to a vast range of disciplines, including logic, metaphysics, epistemology, psychology, ethics, politics, rhetoric, aesthetics, zoology, biology, physics, and philosophical and political history. When Dante called him "the master of those who know," he was scarcely exaggerating.

## *What the* Politics *Is*

One thing we might mean by the *Politics* is what we now find inscribed on the pages that make up David Ross's Oxford Classical Text (OCT) edition of the Greek text, first published in 1957, which is the basis of the present translation. This is the descendant of texts derived—via manuscripts copied in the Byzantine period (from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries AD)—from manuscripts that derive from the edition of Aristotle's works produced by Andronicus of Rhodes in the first century BC. Ross's edition, like most other modern editions, records in the textual apparatus at the bottom of the page various manuscript readings alternative to the one he prints in the body of his text. In some cases, I have preferred one of these readings and have indicated so in the notes. Divisions of the text into books and chapters are the work of editors, not of Aristotle himself. Also present in Ross's text are the page numbers of Bekker, *Aristotelis Opera*. These appear here in the margins of the printed version and enclosed in | | in the electronic one. Occasional material in square brackets in the text is my addition.

The second thing we might mean, and are perhaps more likely to mean, by the *Politics* is the work itself—that more abstract thing that is embodied in a good Greek text and (ideally) in any translation of it. Aristotle identifies this as a contribution to "our philosophy of human affairs" (*NE* X 9 $1181^{b}15$). In the discussion that begins in the opening chapter of the *Ethics* and ends in its successor, he says that the methodical inquiry (*methodos*) pursued in it is "a sort of *politikê*" (*NE* I 2 $1094^{b}11$)—a sort of politics, a sort of political science. We need to determine, therefore, what this science is, what evidence it is answerable to, and how its success or failure is to be determined.

## *Aristotelian Sciences*

Aristotle usually divides the bodies of knowledge that he refers to as "sciences" (*epistêmai*) into three types: theoretical, practical, and productive (crafts). But when he is being especially careful, he also distinguishes within the theoretical sciences between the *strictly theoretical* ones (astronomy, theology), as we may call them, and the *natural* ones, which are like the strictly theoretical ones in being neither practical nor productive but are unlike them in consisting of propositions that—though necessary and universal in some sense—hold for the most part rather than without exception:

> If all thought is either practical or productive or theoretical, natural science would have to be some sort of theoretical science—but a theoretical science that is concerned with such being as is capable of being moved and with the substance that in accord with its account holds for the most part only, because it is not separable. But we must not neglect to consider the *way* the essence or its account is, because, without this, inquiry produces no result. Of things defined, however, that is, of the "whats" that things are, some are the way the snub is, others the way the concave is. And these differ because the snub is grasped in combination with the matter (for the snub is a concave *nose*), whereas the concavity is without perceptible matter. If, then, all natural things are said the way the snub is (for example, nose, eye, face, flesh, bone, and, in general, animal, and leaf, root, bark, and, in general, plant—for the account of none of these is without [reference to] movement, but always includes matter), the way we must inquire into and define the what-it-is in the case of natural things is clear, as is why it belongs to the natural scientist to get a theoretical grasp even on some of the soul, that is, on as much of it as is not without matter. That natural science is a theoretical science, then, is evident from these considerations. Mathematics too is a theoretical one, but whether its objects are immovable and separable is not now clear; however, it is clear that *some* parts of mathematics get a theoretical grasp on their objects insofar as they are immovable and insofar as they are separable. But if there is something that is eternal and immovable and separable, it is evident that knowledge of it belongs to a theoretical science—not, however, to *natural* science (for natural science is concerned with certain moveable things) nor to mathematics, but to something prior to both. . . .

> If, then, there is no other substance beyond those composed by nature, natural science will be the primary science. But if there is some immovable substance, this will be prior and will be primary philosophy. (*Met*. VI 1 1025$^{b}$25–1026$^{a}$30)

When we hear, as we quickly do in the *Ethics* (I 3 1094$^{b}$14–22), that because the subject matter of politics, which consists of noble, just, and good things and the like, admits of so much difference and variability, its claims hold for the most part, we should bear in mind that all the natural sciences—which for us are the paradigm cases of science—are in a similar boat.

When science receives its focused discussion in the *Ethics*, however, Aristotle is explicit that if we are "to speak in an exact way and not be guided by mere similarities" (VI 3 1139$^{b}$19), we should not call anything a science unless it deals with eternal, entirely exceptionless facts about universals that are wholly necessary and do not at all admit of being otherwise (1139$^{b}$22–24). Since he is here explicitly epitomizing his more detailed discussion of science in the *Posterior Analytics* (1139$^{b}$27), we should take the latter too as primarily a discussion of science in the exact sense, which it calls *epistêmê haplôs*—unconditional scientific knowledge. It follows—and we should acknowledge this—that only the strictly theoretical sciences are sciences in the exact sense. Hence politics is not such a science and neither is physics or biology or any other natural science.

Having made the acknowledgement, though, we must also register the fact—since it is a fact—that Aristotle himself mostly does not speak in the exact way but instead persistently refers to bodies of knowledge other than the strictly theoretical sciences as *epistêmai*. His division of the *epistêmai* into theoretical, practical, and productive is a dramatic case in point. But so too is his use of the term *epistêmê* within the *Politics*, which we first encounter being applied to politics itself, which is a practical and not a theoretical science (I 1 1152$^{a}$15). Even boxing and wrestling are classed as *epistêmai* (*Cat*. 8 10$^{b}$3–4).

So the interesting question is not whether politics is a science, since the answer to that is obvious: it is not a science if we are being absolutely exact about the matter, but it is a science if we allow ourselves to be guided by the similarities between it and the strictly theoretical sciences—or by Aristotle's own general use of the term *epistêmê*, on the assumption that he himself was guided by these. The interesting question is, what are these similarities? Just how like a canonical or theoretical science is politics?

An Aristotelian science of any sort, including a theoretical one, is a state of the soul, not a body of propositions in a textbook—although the state does involve having an assertoric grasp on a set of true propositions (*NE* VI 3 1139$^{b}$14–16). Some of these propositions are indemonstrable

starting-points, which are or are expressed in definitions, and others are theorems demonstrable from these starting-points. We can have scientific knowledge only of the theorems, since—exactly speaking—only what is demonstrable can be scientifically known (VI 6). Yet—in what is clearly another lapse from exact speaking—Aristotle characterizes "the most exact of the sciences," which is theoretical wisdom (*sophia*) or primary philosophy, as also involving a grasp by understanding (*nous*) of the truth where the starting-points themselves are concerned (VI 7 $1141^{a}16$–18). He does the same thing in the *Metaphysics,* where theoretical wisdom is the *epistêmê* that provides "a theoretical grasp on the primary starting-points and causes"—among which are included "the good or the for-sake-of-which" (I 2 $982^{b}7$–10). Indeed, the grasp we have of such starting-points must result in their being "better known" than the theorems we demonstrate from them if we are to have any scientific knowledge of the exact sort at all (*NE* VI 3 $1139^{b}34$).

How like that is politics? Are there starting-points here too and theorems demonstrable from them? We might think this is an easy question to answer. After all, the methodical inquiry the *Ethics* employs is a sort of politics, yet it doesn't seem to include any demonstrations whatsoever, and neither does the *Politics*. For a demonstration is, among other things, a deductively valid argument that is syllogistic in form, and deductions of any sort are scarcely to be found in the *Ethics* or *Politics*. This is also a problem with the vast majority of Aristotle's works, even those that are usually classed as "scientific treatises"—for example, *Meteorology* and *Parts of Animals*. For none of them seems to fit the description of a science as developed in the *Posterior Analytics*. Attempts have certainly been made to find elements of demonstration and axiomatic structure in these treatises, but the results are somewhat underwhelming. In large part, this is because the search is somewhat misconceived from the outset.

If we think of a science in the exact sense as consisting exclusively of what is demonstrable, as we have seen that Aristotle himself sometimes does, we will be right to conclude that a treatise without demonstrations in it cannot be scientific. But if, as he also does, we include knowledge of starting-points as parts of science, we will not be right, since a treatise could contribute to a science not by demonstrating anything but by arguing to the starting-points themselves—an enterprise which could not possibly consist of demonstrations from those starting-points, since these would be circular. We might reasonably infer, therefore, that the politics is a sort of science precisely because it contributes to the correct definition and secure grasp on starting-points without which no science can exist. The same idea might be employed in the case of many of Aristotle's other treatises. They too, we might suppose, are scientific in just this sense.

But even if politics has starting-points, it still would not be a science unless it were possible to demonstrate theorems from these. Yet here too we seem to face an obstacle. For Aristotle tells us that we cannot demonstrate things whose starting-points admit of being otherwise (*NE* VI 5 $1140^{a}33$–35), that politics is the same state of the soul as practical wisdom (VI 8 $1141^{b}23$–24), and that the starting-points of practical wisdom do admit of being otherwise (VI 5 $1140^{a}30$–$^{b}4$). Elsewhere, though, he allows that there *can* be demonstrations of what admits of being otherwise provided it holds for the most part—as the starting-points and theorems of politics are said to do (I 3 $1094^{b}19$–22):

> What admits of being otherwise is spoken of in two ways: in one, it means what holds for the most part, that is, when the necessity has gaps (*dialeipein*)—for example, a man's turning grey or growing or decaying, or, in general, what belongs to something by nature (for this does not belong by continuous necessity, since a human being does not exist forever, although if a human being does exist, it belongs either necessarily or for the most part); in the other, it means what is indeterminate, which is what is capable of being thus or not thus—for example, an animal's walking or an earthquake's taking place while it is walking, or, in general, what is the result of luck (for it is not more natural for it to be that way rather than the opposite). . . . Science and demonstrative deductions are not concerned with things that are indeterminate, because the middle term is irregular, but there is scientific knowledge of what happens by nature, and argument and investigations are pretty much concerned with things that are possible in this way. (*APr.* I 13 $32^{b}4$–21)

Apparently, then, the notion of a demonstration is a bit like that of a science. Speaking exactly, there are demonstrations only in the theoretical sciences, since—speaking exactly again—these alone are sciences. Speaking less exactly, though, there are also demonstrations in other bodies of knowledge. Thus we find Aristotle referring to practical demonstrations (*NE* VI 11 $1143^{b}2$), contrasting the undemonstrated sayings and beliefs of practically-wise people with things they can demonstrate ($1143^{b}11$–13), telling us about practical deductions (VI 12 $1144^{a}31$–32), and contrasting what are clearly theoretical deductions with productive ones (VII 3 $1147^{a}25$–$^{b}1$). We hear too about starting-points in politics and about reaching conclusions from them (I 3 $1094^{b}21$–22), and about supposedly having reached some (see I 8 $1098^{b}9$–10). Finally, if we do not allow there

to be demonstrations of what admits of being otherwise in the sense of holding for the most part, it isn't just politics that will lose its putative scientific status; natural science will too.

A penultimate problem: Scientific knowledge seems to be exclusively about universals—about what is common to many particulars (*NE* VI 6 $1140^{b}31$, X 9 $1180^{b}15$–16). Yet politics, since it has a deliberative component, must also deal with particulars:

> Of the practical wisdom concerned with the city, the architectonic part is legislative science, while the part concerned with particulars has the name common to both—"politics." This part is practical and deliberative, since a decree is doable in action, as the last thing. (*NE* VI 8 $1141^{b}23$–28)

It seems an easy inference that politics cannot be a science. The first point to make in response is that even theoretical sciences, though they deal with eternal and unchangeable necessary truths about universals and have no grasp "on any of the things from which a human being will come to be happy" (*NE* VI 12 $1143^{b}19$–20), can be "coincidentally useful to us where many of the necessities of life are concerned" (*EE* I 6 $1216^{b}15$–16). Knowledge of astronomy, for instance, helped Thales to make a killing in the olive business (*Pol.* I 11 $1259^{a}5$–33). The second point to make is that Aristotle allows that sciences dealing with universals can also deal—albeit coincidentally—with (perishable) particulars:

> There is neither demonstration nor unconditional scientific knowledge of what is subject to passing away, but only the coincidental sort, because it does not hold of this universally, but at some time (*pote*) and in some way (*pôs*). (*APo*. I 8 $75^{b}24$–26)

The scientific theorem that all light meats are healthy (*NE* VI 7 $1141^{b}18$–19) may enable me to infer that this meat is healthy now, but it does not tell me whether it will still be healthy tomorrow (it may have rotted in the meantime) or whether, though it is healthy for most people, it is healthy for me (I may have a fever that makes meat of any sort a bad choice).

While each of these points does something to take the edge off our problem, even collectively they do not seem to go quite far enough. And the reason is this. It is quite possible to have scientific knowledge of universals without knowing how to apply it in particular cases, but it is not possible, as we have just seen, to have a grasp on politics—which is the same state of the soul as practical wisdom (*NE* VI 8 $1141^{b}23$–24)—without knowing this. In fact, it is almost the other way around:

> Nor is practical wisdom knowledge of universals only. On the contrary, it must also know particulars. For it is practical, and action is concerned with particulars. That is why, in other areas too, some people who lack knowledge—most of all, those with experience—are more effective *doers* of action than are others who have knowledge. For if someone knows that light meats are digestible and healthy but is ignorant about which sorts of meat are light, he will not produce health; but someone who knows that bird meats are healthy will produce health more. But practical wisdom is practical, so one must possess both sorts of knowledge—or this one more. (*NE* VI 7 $1141^{b}14$–21)

At the same time, knowledge of universals is a crucial part of politics. This emerges most clearly in the final discussion in the *Ethics,* where we learn not only about the importance of experience of particulars to politics but also about the need to "take steps toward the universal" (X 9 $1180^{b}21$), on the grounds that "the best supervision in each particular case" will be provided by the person who has "knowledge of the universal and knows what applies in all cases or in these sorts (since the sciences are said to be—and actually are—of what is common)" ($1180^{b}13$–16).

Once we register the fact that politics must include both a scientific knowledge of universals and an experience of particulars that enables us to apply those universals correctly to them, we can see that it is something like an applied science as opposed to a pure one. And this seems to be what Aristotle has in mind by classifying it as *practical*—that is to say, as bearing on *praxis*, or action, and so on the particulars with which action is irremediably concerned. When we look for the similarities that may justify him in classifying it as a practical *science*, then, we must look not at its particularist component but at its universalist one, since a science, as we saw, is always of what is universal. A practical science, in other words, might to some extent be usefully thought of as a combination of something like a theoretical science (in any case, in the sense in which natural science is theoretical) and the experience-based knowledge of how to apply it.

What the universalist component of politics consists in is uncontroversial, since Aristotle tells us plainly that it is *nomothetikê,* or legislative science:

> Maybe, then, someone who wishes to make people—whether many or few—better because of his supervision should also try to acquire legislative science, if it is through laws that we can become good. For producing a noble disposition in anyone whatever—in anyone put before him—is not a matter for some

> random person, but if indeed anyone can do it, it is a person who knows, just as in medicine and in all other matters that involve a sort of supervision and practical wisdom. (*NE* X 9 1180$^{b}$23–28)

What legislative science does, as its name suggests, is to produce a set of universal laws—for "all law is universal" (V 10 1137$^{b}$13)—that will "make citizens good by habituating them" (II 1 1103$^{b}$3–4). Thus one very important subset of these laws bears on education, since "what produces virtue as a whole are the actions that are ordained by the laws concerned with education that looks to the common good" (V 2 1130$^{b}$25–26). Another subset, however, governs the actions of already-educated adults:

> It is not enough, presumably, that when people are young they get the correct nurture and supervision. On the contrary, even when they have grown into manhood they must continue to practice the same things and be habituated to them. And so there will need to be laws concerning these matters as well and, in general, then, concerning all of life. (*NE* X 9 1180$^{a}$1–4)

The phrase "concerning all of life" nicely captures the ideal extent of the laws: "It is above all appropriate that correctly laid down laws themselves define all the things they possibly can and leave the fewest possible to the judges" (*Rh*. I 1 1354$^{a}$31–33), since "the wish of human beings . . . is not a safe standard" (*Pol*. II 10 1272$^{b}$6–7).

We are now able to solve a final problem. Theorems in canonical theoretical sciences are not just universal, they are also necessary: they are about relations between universals that do not "*at all* admit of being otherwise" (*NE* VI 3 1139$^{b}$20–21). The theorems of natural science too, although not as strictly necessary as this, also describe relations between universals that are far from simply being matters of luck or contingency. Were it otherwise, there would, as we noticed, simply be no such thing as natural *science*. Obviously the theorems of politics, which are universal laws, are not like either of these, since they govern voluntary action, which, as something whose starting-point is in us, is up to us to do or not to do (*NE* III 5 1113$^{b}$7–8). This difference, however, is due to a difference in direction of fit. Theorems of a theoretical science *describe* how things must be; practical laws *prescribe* how they must be. Thus, when Aristotle gives an example of an ethical proposition, it is this: "whether we *should* obey our parents or the laws, if they disagree" (*Top*. I 14 105$^{b}$22–23). What practical laws prescribe will be correct, if it is what the virtues require of us (*NE* V 2 1130$^{b}$22–24), and it will be what the virtues require of us if it is what the practical wisdom they presuppose would prescribe, and it will

be what practical wisdom would prescribe if it is what best furthers happiness or the human good (VI 9 1142$^{b}$31–33, 10 1143$^{a}$8). For the law owes its compulsive force to the fact that it is "reason that derives from a sort of practical wisdom and understanding" (X 9 1180$^{a}$21–22).

Although it is through laws that we can "become good" (*NE* X 9 1180$^{b}$25), it is not just through any old laws. Rather, we need *correct* laws—laws that really do further genuine happiness by inculcating genuine virtues. The question arises, therefore, of how such laws are to be found. A good place to start, Aristotle thinks, is by collecting the laws and constitutions that are in use in different places, as well as those ideal ones suggested by wise people, such as Plato, who have thought a lot about the topic. But this by itself will not be enough, since selecting the best ones from these requires "correct discernment" (X 9 1181$^{a}$17), based on knowledge of what virtue and vice really are. In Aristotle's view, there is only one such constitution:

> [The constitution] consisting of those who are unconditionally best in accord with virtue, and not those who are good men relative to a hypothesis, is the only constitution that it is just to call an aristocracy. For only in it is the same person unconditionally a good man and a good citizen, whereas those who are good in the others are so relative to their constitutions. (*Pol.* IV 7 1293$^{b}$3–6; compare *NE* V 7 1135$^{a}$5)

Thus when the topic of the best constitution is taken up in the *Politics*, Aristotle begins by noting that "anyone who is going to make an inquiry into the best constitution in the appropriate way must first determine what the most choiceworthy life is" (VII 1 1323$^{a}$14–17), referring us for a fuller discussion to "external accounts," whose topics significantly overlap those of the *Ethics*. Other constitutions, however—and this is a point that we shall return to in a moment—can come close enough to the best one that something approximating full virtue can be acquired in them; these are the non-deviant constitutions (kingship, aristocracy, and polity) described in the relevant parts of the *Politics*.

It is scarcely a step at this point to see what the *Ethics* contributes to legislative science. After all, the *Ethics* is devoted to defining the virtues of character, which are starting-points of politics (*Met.* XIII 4 1078$^{b}$17–30, quoted below), as well as to correctly and clearly defining the yet more fundamental starting-point, happiness, which is the end or target that politics aims at (*NE* I 2 1094$^{a}$26–$^{b}$7, *Pol.* VII 1 1323$^{a}$15–21). It is a contribution to the philosophy of human affairs, as we saw, and "the political philosopher is the architectonic craftsman of the end to which we look in calling each thing unconditionally bad or good" (*NE* VII 11 1152$^{b}$1–3)—namely, happiness.

This helps us to understand something that is much more mysterious than is usually recognized, namely, how it is that Aristotle can do the following three things: First, characterize the *Ethics* as "not undertaken for the sake of theoretical knowledge . . . but in order to become good people, since otherwise there would be nothing of benefit in it" (II 2 1103$^{b}$26–29; also I 3 1095$^{a}$5–6). Second, insist that we become good in large part through habituation, not through reading books (II 2 1103$^{b}$23–25). And, third, that we must already have been "nobly brought up if, where noble things, just things, and the topics of politics as a whole are concerned, we are to be an adequate audience" (I 4 1095$^{b}$4–6). For "argument and teaching . . . do not have strength in everyone," but only in those whose souls have been "prepared beforehand through habits to enjoy and hate in a noble way, like earth that is to nourish seed" and may not even be comprehensible to anyone else (X 9 1179$^{b}$23–31). The heavy lifting of the *Ethics*' practicality is done, then, not so much by the book itself, which presupposes an already existing noble condition in a comprehending reader, but by the contribution it makes to legislative science, ensuring that the laws it selects will habituate people in genuine virtues and that it will have as its end happiness correctly conceived and clearly defined. The *Politics* comes into play at this point to actually find those laws and the constitution to which they belong (II 5 1263$^{a}$39n).

Because the heavy lifting is done by legislation and habituation, it matters enormously that the legislation and habituation in question is not required to be of the ideal or very best sort available only in a true aristocracy of virtue. For such a constitution does not exist, and never has existed. But even if it had, Aristotle was not brought up in it—Stagira and Athens were certainly not such true aristocracies—and his audience and fellow Lyceum members were not brought up in it either. What *is* required, though, is that we not be "disabled in relation to virtue" (*NE* I 9 1099$^{b}$19), that we have the natural resources needed to develop it—which may include possession of the so-called natural virtues (VI 13 1144$^{b}$5–6), that we have been sufficiently well brought up that we do not, like children, pursue each thing in accord with our feelings, but rather form our desires and perform our actions to some extent at least "in accord with reason" (I 3 1095$^{a}$4–11), and that we have "sufficient experience of the actions of life," since "the arguments are in accord with these and concerned with these" (1095$^{a}$3–4). Aristotle does not go into detail in the *Ethics* about just how much experience of just what sorts of actions we need, but there is clear evidence in the *Politics* that we may not have it until we have reached the age of around fifty (VII 9 1328$^{b}$34–1329$^{a}$17). Because our nature, upbringing, and experience are unlikely to have been ideal, moreover, we must not expect too much, but rather "be content if, when we have all the things through which it

seems we become decent people, we achieve some share of virtue" (*NE* X 9 1179$^{b}$18–20).

We turn now to the particularist part of politics, which is concerned with deliberation:

> The part concerned with particulars has the name common to both—"politics." This part is practical and deliberative, since a decree is doable in action, as the last thing. (*NE* VI 8 1141$^{b}$25–28)

Precisely because this part is particularist, it cannot itself be a science, since—to repeat—sciences are always (anyway non-coincidentally) about universals. Nonetheless, it is some sort of knowledge or ability that makes its possessor a competent deliberator—someone who is reliably able to deliberate correctly by working out the best means to the best end (*NE* VI 9 1142$^{b}$28–33), this being happiness or the human good. Since only a practically-wise person is in this position and since practical wisdom is as much if not more concerned with particulars than with universals, the function of such a person is "most of all . . . to deliberate well" (VI 7 1141$^{b}$9–10).

Now the sphere of deliberation is the part of what admits of being otherwise that deliberators can change through their own actions (*NE* III 3 1112$^{a}$30–34). Hence it is also the sphere of the practical and productive sciences which help deliberators to make good choices within that sphere. But once these sciences are factored into the equation, the scope of deliberation within the sphere is affected, so that as their scope expands, that of deliberation contracts:

> There is no deliberation, however, where sciences that are both exact and self-sufficient are concerned—where writing the letters of the alphabet is concerned, for example, since we have no hesitation about what way to write them. We do deliberate, however, about those things that come about through ourselves, but not always in the same way (for example, about the things that medicine or moneymaking deals with). And we deliberate more about navigation than about athletic training, insofar as navigation is less exactly developed. Further, deliberation is involved in a similar way where the rest are concerned, but more where crafts are concerned than sciences, since we are more hesitant about them. (*NE* III 3 1112$^{a}$34–$^{b}$9)

As Aristotle succinctly puts it at one point: "Craft does not deliberate" (*Ph.* II 8 199$^{b}$28). He means, as we see, that a craft, insofar as it is exact, fully developed, and self-contained, does not do so.

Even when the productive sciences are less exact or developed, however, as is true, for example, of medicine and wealth acquisition, their universal laws should generally be followed:

> Those who think it advantageous to be ruled by a king hold that laws speak only of the universal, and do not prescribe with a view to particular circumstances, so that it is foolish to rule in any craft accord with what is written down. And so it is a good thing that in Egypt the doctors are allowed to change the treatment [prescribed by the manuals] until after the fourth day—although, if they do so earlier, it is at their own risk. It is evident, therefore, that the best constitution is not one that is in accord with what is written down and laws, due to the same cause. But then, the rulers should possess the universal account as well. And something to which the passionate element is wholly unattached is better than something in which it is innate. This element does not belong to the law, whereas every human soul necessarily possesses it. But presumably it should be said, to balance this, that a human being will deliberate better about particular cases. That he must, therefore, be a legislator is clear, and that laws must be laid down, but they must not be in control insofar as they deviate from what is best, although they should certainly be in control everywhere else. (*Pol.* III 15 $1286^{a}9$–25; also 16 $1287^{a}33$–$1287^{b}5$)

It is when the universal laws fail us—as the Egyptian doctors imagine them doing by the fourth day of a patient's unresponsiveness to the prescribed treatment—that deliberation comes into play. It is then that the practical wisdom possessed by the better practitioners of the science becomes important. We "speak of people as practically-wise *in some area*, when they rationally calculate well about what furthers some excellent end, concerning which no craft [prescription] exists" (*NE* VI 5 $1140^{a}28$–30).

The element in practical wisdom that is particularly involved in the kinds of cases where the end is "living well as a whole" (*NE* VI 5 $1140^{a}27$–28) is decency (*epieikeia*):

> All law is universal, but about some sorts of things it is not possible to pronounce correctly in universal terms. . . . So whenever the law makes a universal pronouncement and a particular case arises that is contrary to the universal pronouncement, at that time it is correct (insofar as the legislator has omitted something, and he has made an error in pronouncing unconditionally) to rectify the deficiency—to pronounce what the legislator

> himself would have pronounced had he been present and would have put into his law had he known about the case. . . . And this is the very nature of what is decent—a rectification of law insofar as it is deficient because of its universality. For this is also the cause of not everything's being regulated by law—namely, that there are some cases where it is impossible to set up a law, so that decrees (*psêphismata*) are needed. For the standard of what is indeterminate is itself indeterminate, just like the lead standard used in Lesbian building. For the standard is not fixed but adapts itself to the shape of the stone and a decree adapts itself to the things themselves. (*NE* V 10 $1137^{b}13$–32)

Though this comment applies primarily to the context of political deliberation by members of a city's ruling deliberative body, it is the model for Aristotle's account of an individual agent's deliberation as well. This is particularly clear when an individual's action-controlling beliefs—the guiding premises of his deliberative reasoning—are analogized to decrees (*NE* VII 9 $1151^{b}15$, 10 $1152^{a}20$–21). But it is similarly in operation when the last thing reached in deliberation is identified as a decree (VI 8 $1141^{b}26$–28). Practical wisdom is prescriptive (VI 10 $1143^{a}8$) indeed because it issues in decrees which, like laws, have prescriptive force.

The picture that finally emerges of politics, therefore, is of a science that has three elements. The first is legislative science, which, since it issues universal laws that have the right sort of modal status (allowing for differences of direction of fit), makes politics similar enough to a canonical theoretical science to justify its classification as a science. The second is deliberative ability (*bouleutikê*), which is particularistic enough to justify its classification as practical. The third is the judicial science (*dikastikê*), which is primarily exercised in the administration of legal justice (*dikê*) (VI 8 $1141^{b}33$, *Pol.* I 2 $1253^{a}36$–38). But this is a picture of politics that has, as it were, a concealed element, which is the one providing an argument for the starting-points—happiness, the virtues—that are crucial to it. These, we learned, it was the job of the methodical inquiry of the *Ethics* to provide. We must now see what it consists in.

## *The Foundations of* Politics

We know that scientific starting-points cannot be demonstrated. They are what we construct demonstrations from, not to. Of scientific starting-points, therefore, we have understanding, not scientific knowledge (*Pol.* I 5 $1254^{b}5$n, *NE* VI 6 $1141^{a}7$–8)—even if, when we do have understanding of

them combined with demonstrations from them, what we have is a more exact form of such knowledge (*NE* VI 7 1141$^{a}$16–18). It is in this less exact way, remember, that we saw we should speak when considering the scientific status of politics. How, then, do we get this understanding? Where do we start the process? "We must," Aristotle says, "start from things that are knowable. But things are knowable in two ways, since some are knowable to us, some unconditionally. So presumably we should start from things knowable to us" (I 4 1095$^{b}$2–4). For the sake of clarity, let us call these *raw starting-points*. These are what we start from when we are arguing to *explanatory scientific starting-points*. It is important not to confuse the two.

In the case of the methodical inquiry of the *Ethics*, we are told that a raw starting-point is "the fact that something is so" (I 4 1095$^{b}$6; also I 7 1098$^{b}$2–3) and that this fact concerns "noble things, just things, and the topics of politics as a whole" (I 4 1095$^{b}$5–6). But since no explicit examples are given of these starting-points, we need to do some detective work to get a better understanding of what exactly they are.

An important clue to their nature derives from the way that we gain access to them: "it is virtue, whether natural or habituated, that teaches correct belief about the starting-point" (*NE* VII 8 1151$^{a}$18–19). Hence Aristotle's insistence on the importance of being well or nobly brought up: "it makes no small difference whether people are habituated in one way or in another way straight from childhood; on the contrary, it makes a huge one—or rather, *all* the difference" (II 1 1103$^{b}$23–25). Equally important is the account of the way that failure to be brought up well affects or blocks our access to raw starting-points:

> Ordinary people naturally obey not shame but fear, and abstain from base things not because of their shamefulness but because of the sanctions involved. For living by feeling as they do, they pursue the pleasures that are properly their own as well as the things through which these come about, and avoid the opposing pains. Of what is noble and what is truly pleasant, however, they have no understanding at all, not having tasted it. What sort of argument, then, could reform such people? For it is not possible—or not easy—to alter by argument what has long since been locked up in traits of character. (X 9 1179$^{b}$11–16)

By being habituated badly where pleasures and pains are concerned, people are prevented from experiencing what is noble and truly pleasant. When such people read in the *Ethics* that we should sacrifice wealth, power, honor, the satisfaction of their appetites, and other such so-called external goods (*Pol.* VII 1 1323$^{a}$25n) in order to gain what is noble for ourselves, they

should suppose it mere words (*NE* X 8 1179ª22). After all, their own life experience, which is what casts "the controlling vote" (1179ª20) in practical matters, tells them in no uncertain terms that words is all it is. For ordinary people "judge by external goods, since these are the only ones they can perceive" (1179ª16), and so when they see someone who lacks these, they cannot see how he could be happy, and when they see him sacrifice these for the sake of what is noble, they cannot do otherwise than take him to be sacrificing his self-interest for an empty dream (IX 8, *Pol.* VII 1).

One kind of raw political starting-point, then, is a belief about the sort of value that noble things (as well as just things) have. People who have been correctly habituated to enjoy and hate in a noble way see correctly that these things are intrinsically valuable or choiceworthy for their own sake and that they are more valuable than external goods. People who have been inadequately habituated cannot see this, and so reject one of the raw starting-points of politics right off the bat. When they read the *Ethics* and *Politics*, therefore, they simply cannot see the truth in them, and so these works are of no practical value to them. They do what virtue requires of them to the extent that they do from fear of penalties rather than for the sake of what is noble (*NE* X 9 1180ª4–5).

Happiness is also a raw starting-point of politics (*Pol.* VII 1 1323ª15–21, *NE* I 12 1102ª2–4), about which people quite reasonably get "their suppositions . . . from their lives" (*NE* I 5 1095ᵇ15–16). Hence happiness too can seem as variable as good things generally (I 3 1094ª16–17). As a result, ordinary people—anyway "the most vulgar ones"—suppose that happiness is pleasure, since their bad habituation, especially where bodily pleasures and pains are concerned, leads them exclusively to pursue "money, honors, and bodily pleasures . . . on the supposition that they are the best goods" (IX 8 1168ᵇ 16–18). Yet, as Aristotle points out, they "have an argument for their choice," since people in positions of power, like Sardanapalus, who are able to do what they want, pursue these goods too. It is this argument that makes their views worth examining (I 4 1095ª28–30). The same goes for people whose upbringings have led them to pursue honor as if it were the best good.

Raw political starting-points, we now see, are socially mediated and language-mediated facts (or putative facts) that are accessible only to properly socialized subjects and so only to subjects who are members of societies—that is, of groups that socialize or habituate their members into some common form of life. Here is Aristotle himself on the topic:

> The voice is a signifier of what is pleasant or painful, which is why it is also possessed by the other animals (for their nature does extend this far, namely, to having the perception of pleasure and pain and signifying them to each other). But speech is for making

> clear what is advantageous or harmful, and so too what is just or unjust. For this is special to humans, in comparison to the other animals, that they alone have perception of the good and the bad, the just and the unjust, and the rest. And it is community in these that makes a household and a city. (*Pol.* I 2 1253$^{a}$10–18)

It follows, then, that the beliefs of properly socialized subjects—or the way things noble, just, and so on appear to them as a result of such socialization—are the rawest data available. It is to these that politics is ultimately answerable.

It is useful to juxtapose this picture of politics to a picture Aristotle gives of the canonical sciences and of the importance in them of experience and ultimately of perception:

> What causes our inability to take a comprehensive view of the agreed-upon facts is lack of experience. That is why those who dwell in more intimate association with the facts of nature are better able to lay down [explanatory] starting-points which can bring together a good many of these, whereas those whom many arguments have made unobservant of the facts come too readily to their conclusions after looking at only a few facts. (*GC* I 2 316$^{a}$5–10)

We might advisedly see "those who dwell in more intimate association with the facts of nature," in other words, as the equivalent in a canonical science of the well brought up or properly socialized and habituated subjects of the *Ethics* and *Politics*, who, "because they have an eye formed from experience, . . . see correctly" (*NE* VI 11 1143$^{b}$13–14). And one reason we might do so is that canonical scientists too are socialized subjects, albeit of a somewhat specialized sort. For it is only within scientific communities or communities of knowledge that, through complex processes of habituation and teaching, canonical scientists are produced: we learn science from other scientists (X 9 1180$^{b}$28–34). But communities of knowledge, both in Aristotle's view and in reality, are parts of the political community and are regulated and sustained by it. When we first meet politics, in fact, it is as an architectonic science that oversees the others, ensuring that all sciences work together to further human happiness (*NE* I 2 1094$^{a}$26–$^{b}$7, *Pol.* I 13 1260$^{a}$18–19n).

Because the things that appear to be so to appropriately socialized subjects are the raw starting-points in canonical sciences just as much as in politics, the only difference between them lying in the sort of socialization involved, we must be careful not to think of an appeal to "the things we say (*ta legomena*)" (*NE* I 8 1098$^{b}$10, VII 1 1145$^{b}$20) as an appeal to evidence of a sort quite different from the sort appealed to in a canonical science.

We are not in the one case appealing to conceptual considerations or intuitions and in the other to empirical facts or findings. We are not looking at analytic matters as opposed to synthetic ones. Instead, what we have in both cases are socially mediated facts, some closer to the conceptual or the analytic, some closer to the empirical or synthetic. Political subjects who disagree about the intrinsic choiceworthiness of what is noble, for example, are not disagreeing about a concept or about the meaning of a word but about a substantive issue concerning how to live. Aristotle's account of happiness and his definition of virtue of character as a sort of medial state are to be evaluated not by appeal to our intuitions but by appeal to the facts of our lives (X 8 $1179^{a}17$–22).

The significance of these conclusions about raw political starting-points and the kinds of subjects who can detect them is most easily seen when we run across—as readers of the secondary literature on the *Ethics* and *Politics* inevitably will—topics related to the "foundations" of Aristotle's politics. Often a central exhibit in these discussions is the famous function (*ergon*) argument (*NE* I 7 $1097^{b}22$–$1098^{a}20$), where it is thought that the notion of a function is introduced into politics as something already so grounded in the facts (or putative facts) of Aristotle's biological or metaphysical investigations that politics then inherits these grounds and becomes hostage to these facts—facts that are not themselves political facts or putative facts. Another frequent exhibit is the use Aristotle makes, at various junctures, of his own account of the soul—an account supported not by political facts or putative facts, apparently, but by biological or psychological ones (*NE* I 13 $1102^{a}14$–26, *Pol.* I 5 $1254^{a}34$–$^{b}4$, 13 $1260^{a}4$–14).

What these discussions fail to give proper weight to is the difference between *empirical* foundations, or the facts to which politics or any other body of knowledge is ultimately answerable, and *explanatory* foundations, or the explanatory notions that politics makes use of in explaining those facts. To be sure, these notions may also often play explanatory roles in various other Aristotelian bodies of knowledge, including various theoretical sciences, and may for that reason recommend themselves to Aristotle for use elsewhere. It would be strange if it were otherwise. These notions may well, then, be epistemically sanctioned within these other bodies of knowledge too, providing correct explanations of the relevant sorts of facts. But this does not mean that politics must be committed to them as fixed points of its own explanatory enterprise. Rather, it takes them on board wholly and entirely as answerable to raw political starting-points and must reject them if they prove inadequate for those purposes. In the only really important sense, then, politics has political facts as its sole foundations. Biology, metaphysics, and other bodies of knowledge have no foundational role in politics whatsoever.

## *Explanatory Starting-points and Dialectic*

In the case of canonical sciences, the most important explanatory starting-points consist of definitions that specify the genus and differentia of the real (as opposed to nominal) universal essences of the beings with which the science deals (*APo*. II 10 93$^{b}$29–94$^{a}$19). Since scientific definitions must be apt starting-points of demonstrations, this implies, Aristotle thinks, that the "extremes and the middle terms must come from the same genus" (I 7 75$^{b}$10–11). As a result, a single canonical science must deal with a single genus (I 28 87$^{a}$38–39). The conclusion we reached earlier—that politics deals with and is empirically based only on political facts—thus marks another potential similarity between politics and a canonical science, since it suggests that politics does deal with a single genus and so meets a crucial condition definitive of a canonical science.

It should come as no surprise, then, that in defining the virtues of character, which are the explanatory starting-points of politics and are those states of the soul with which noble and just actions must be in accord, Aristotle first specifies their genus (*NE* II 5 1106$^{a}$12–13). They are, he says, states (*hexeis*)—where a state is a condition "by dint of which we are well or badly off in relation to feelings" (1105$^{b}$25–26). Then, making use of the so-called doctrine of the mean, he goes on to tell us what the differentiae are of the states that are virtues:

> Virtue . . . is a deliberately choosing state, which is in a medial condition in relation to us, one defined by a reason and the one by which a practically-wise person would define it. (*NE* II 6 1106$^{b}$36–1107$^{a}$1)

At that point he implies he has discovered virtue's "substance and the account that states its essence" (*NE* II 6 1107$^{a}$6–7). It is just what a definition or account in a canonical science is supposed to do (*APo*. II 3 90$^{b}$16, 10 93$^{b}$29).

There is an important difference, though, which Aristotle takes pains to register but whose significance is nonetheless easy to miss. If politics is a science at all, it is a practical one, which aims to make us good. This means that the definitions it produces must be of a sort that can guide the actions of politicians, legislators, and individual agents. They must, in a word, be definitions that can be put into practice. Thus Aristotle's major criticism of Plato's form of the good is that it is impractical:

> Even if there is some single good predicated in common of all intrinsic goods, a separable one that is itself an intrinsic good, it

> is clear that it will not be something doable in action or acquirable by a human being. But that is the sort we are now looking for. (*NE* I 6 1096$^{b}$32–35)

Moreover, it is even impractical in a more attenuated sense, namely, as a sort of regulative ideal, unachievable in action yet guiding it from beyond. For to treat it as such results in a clash with the productive sciences as these are actually practiced, since the practitioners of the productive sciences, though seeking some good, ignore the form of the good altogether, "yet for all craftsmen not to know—and not even to look for—so important an aid would hardly be reasonable" (1097$^{a}$6–8).

It is true that Aristotle's own definition of happiness as activity of the soul in accord with the best and most complete virtue seems to end up entailing that a certain leisured theoretical activity—the contemplation of the god—is the best kind of happiness (*NE* X 7–8). But it is not a theoretical definition for all that, if by "theoretical" we mean, as we should, that truth alone is the measure of its correctness. What matters most is that what it defines, unlike Plato's good itself, is something we can put into practice—something we can *do*. That is why the measure of its success is an entirely practical one:

> When we examine what has been previously said, . . . it must be by bringing it to bear on the facts of our life, and if it is in harmony with the facts, we should accept it, but if it clashes, we should suppose it mere words. (*NE* X 8 1179$^{a}$20–22)

With similar concerns in mind, Aristotle prefaces his definition of virtue of character with an account of how we think such virtue is acquired (II 1) and with a reminder that the goal of the *Ethics* and *Politics* is practical, not theoretical (II 2). When the definition is finally developed (II 5–6), we see that it is in keeping with these prefatory comments, since it is one that can guide us in both inculcating and maintaining the virtues of character in others and in ourselves (II 9).

Nowadays philosophy is for the most part a theoretical subject with few pretensions to having much bearing on practical affairs. So it is easy to forget that Aristotle thinks of some branches of philosophy, anyway, in quite a different way. His discussion of voluntariness and involuntariness, for example, is intended to be "also useful to legislators regarding honors and punishments" (*NE* III 1 1109$^{b}$34–35). When we evaluate that discussion, therefore, we shouldn't just do so in standard philosophical fashion—by looking for clever counterexamples, however far-fetched they might be. We should think rather of how well it would work in practical life, where

the far-fetched seldom occurs and requires special provision when it does. Here the discussion of decency (V 10) should serve as our guide.

Understanding, then, that definitions of starting-points in politics must be practical, let us return to the question of how we arrive at these definitions by beginning from raw starting-points. Well, first we have to have the raw starting-points ready to hand. Aristotle is clear about this, as he is indeed about what is supposed to happen next:

> The way [of inquiry] (*hodos*) is the same in all cases, in philosophy as well as in the crafts or any sort of learning whatsoever. For one must observe for both terms what belongs to them and what they belong to, and be supplied with as many of these terms as possible. . . . When it is in accord with truth, it must be from the terms that are catalogued (*diagegrammennôn*) as truly belonging, but in dialectical deductions it must be from premises that are in accord with [reputable] belief. . . . Most of the starting-points, however, are special to each science. That is why experience must provide us with the starting-points where each is concerned—I mean, for example, that experience in astronomy must do so in the case of astronomical science. For when the appearances had been adequately grasped, the demonstrations in astronomy were found in the way we described. And it is the same way where any other craft or science whatsoever is concerned. Hence if what belongs to each thing has been grasped, at that point we can readily exhibit the demonstrations. For if nothing that truly belongs to the relevant things has been omitted from the collection, then concerning everything, if a demonstration of it exists, we will be able to find it and give the demonstration, and if it is by nature indemonstrable, we will be able to make that evident. (*APr.* I 30 $46^{a}3$–27)

So once we have a catalogue of the raw starting-points, the demonstrative explanation of them from explanatory scientific starting-points is supposedly fairly routine. We should not, however, demand "the cause [or explanation] in all cases alike. Rather, in some it will be adequate if the fact that they are so has been correctly shown (*deiknunai*)—as it is indeed where starting-points are concerned" (*NE* I 8 $1098^{a}33$–$^{b}2$). But what exactly is it to show a starting-point correctly or adequately? It can't be to demonstrate it, we know that.

Aristotle describes what he is undertaking in the *Ethics* specifically as a "methodical inquiry (*methodos*)," as we saw, that like the *Politics* is a contribution to the "philosophy of human affairs" (*NE* X 9 $1181^{b}12$–15). And

to the explanatory scientific starting-points of these, he claims, there is a unique route:

> Dialectic is useful in the philosophical sciences because the capacity to go though the puzzles on both sides of a question will make it easier to discern what is true and what is false in each. Furthermore, dialectic is useful as regards the primary [starting-points] (*ta prôta*) in each science. For it is impossible to say anything about these based on the starting points properly belonging to the science in question, since these starting-points are, of all of them, the primary ones, and it is through reputable beliefs (*endoxa*) about each that it is necessary to discuss them. This, though, is a task special to, or most characteristic of, dialectic. For because of its ability to examine (*exetastikê*) it has a route toward the starting-points of all methodical inquiries. (*Top.* I 2 101$^{a}$34–$^{b}$4)

Prima facie, then, the *Ethics*—and also the *Politics* to the extent that it involves new starting-points beyond those found there, such as the definitions of a citizen and a city—should correctly show the explanatory starting-points of politics by going through puzzles and solving them by appeal to reputable beliefs. But before we rush to the *Ethics* or *Politics* to see whether that is what we do find, we need to be clearer about what exactly we should be looking for. Writers on Aristotle's politics often go astray by failing to do this.

Dialectic is recognizably a descendant of the Socratic elenchus, which famously begins with a question like this: *Ti esti to kalon?* What is the noble? The respondent, sometimes after a bit of nudging, comes up with a universal definition, what is noble is what all the gods love, or whatever it might be (I adapt a well-known answer from Plato's *Euthyphro*). Socrates then puts this definition to the test by drawing attention to some things that seem true to the respondent himself but that conflict with his definition. The puzzle, or *aporia,* that results from this conflict then remains for the respondent to try to solve, usually by reformulating or rejecting his definition. Aristotle understood this process in terms that reveal its relationship to his own:

> Socrates . . . busied himself about the virtues of character, and in connection with these was the first to inquire into universal definition. . . . It was reasonable, though, that Socrates was inquiring into the what-it-is. For he was inquiring in order to deduce, and the what-it-is is a starting-point of deductions. . . . For there are two things that may be fairly ascribed to Socrates—inductive

> arguments and universal definition, both of which are concerned with a starting-point of scientific knowledge. (*Met*. XIII 4 1078$^{b}$17–30; also I 6 987$^{b}$1–4)

In Plato too dialectic is primarily concerned with scientific starting-points, such as those of mathematics, and seems to consist in some sort of elenchus-like process of reformulating definitions in the face of conflicting evidence so as to render them puzzle free (*Rep*. VII 532a1–533d1). Aristotle can reasonably be seen, then, as continuing a line of thought about dialectic which, in the *Topics* and the *Sophistical Refutations,* he explores, systematizes, and elaborates.

Think now about the respondent's first answer, his first definition: what is noble is what the gods love. Although it is soon shown to be incorrect, there is something quite remarkable about its very existence. Through experience shaped by acculturation and habituation involving the learning of a natural language, the respondent is confident that he can say what nobility is. He has learned to apply the word "noble" to particular people, actions, and so on correctly enough to pass muster as knowing its meaning, knowing how to use it. From these particular cases he has reached a putative universal, something the particular cases have in common, but when he tries to define that universal in words, he gets it wrong, as Socrates shows. Here is Aristotle registering the significance of this:

> What is knowable to each person at first is often knowable to a very small extent and possesses little or nothing of what is real [or true]. All the same, we must start from what is but badly knowable to us and try . . . to proceed through this to a knowledge of what is entirely knowable. (*Met*. VII 3 1029$^{b}$8–12)

The route by which the respondent reaches the universal that he is unable to define correctly is what Aristotle calls "induction" (*epagôgê*), or that variant of induction, which also involves the shaping of feelings and the development of character, namely, habituation (*ethismos*).

Induction begins with (1) perception of particulars, which leads to (2) retention of perceptual contents in memory, and, when many such contents have been retained, to (3) an experience, so that for the first time "there is a universal in the soul" (*APo.* II 19 100$^{a}$3–16). The universal reached at stage (3), which is the one the respondent reaches, is described as "indeterminate" and "better known by perception" (*Ph.* I 1 184$^{a}$22–25). It is the sort of universal, often quite complex, that constitutes a nominal essence corresponding to the nominal definition or meaning of a general term. Finally, (4) from experience come craft knowledge and

scientific knowledge, when "from many intelligible objects arising from experience one universal supposition about similar objects is produced" (*Met.* I 1 $981^{a}5$–7).

The *nominal* (or analytic, meaning-based) definition of the general term "thunder," for example, might pick out the universal *loud noise in the clouds*. When science investigates the things that have this nominal essence, it may find that they also have a real essence or nature in terms of which their other features can be scientifically explained:

> Since a definition is said to be an account of what something is, it is evident that one sort will be an account of what its name, or of what some other name-like account, signifies—for example, what "triangle" signifies. . . . Another sort of definition is an account that makes clear the explanation of why it exists. So the former sort signifies something but does not show it, whereas the latter will evidently be like a demonstration of what it is, differing in arrangement from a demonstration. For there is a difference between giving the explanation of why it thunders and saying what thunder is. In the first case you will say: because fire is being extinguished in the clouds. And what is thunder? The loud noise of fire being extinguished in the clouds. Hence the same account is given in different ways. In one way it is a continuous demonstration, in the other a definition. Further, a definition of thunder is "a noise in the clouds," and this is a conclusion of the demonstration of what it is. The definition of an immediate item, though, is an indemonstrable positing (*thesis*) of what it is. (*APo.* II 10 $93^{b}29$–$94^{a}10$)

A real (or synthetic, fact-based) definition analyzes this real essence into its "constituents (*stoicheia*) and starting-points" (*Ph.* I 1 $184^{a}23$), which will be definable but indemonstrable. It makes intrinsically clear what the nominal definition made clear only to us by enabling us to recognize instances of thunder in a fairly—but imperfectly—reliable way. As a result, thunder itself, now clearly a natural and not just a conventional kind, becomes better known not just to us but entirely or unconditionally (*NE* I 4 $1095^{b}2$–8). These analyzed universals, which are the sort reached at stage (4), are the ones suited to serve as starting-points of the sciences and crafts: "People with experience know the fact that but not the explanation why, whereas those with craft knowledge know the explanation why, that is, the cause" (*Met.* I 1 $981^{a}28$–30).

Socrates too, we see, wanted definitions that were not just empirically adequate but also explanatory. Thus in telling Euthyphro what he wants in

the case of piety, he says that he is seeking "the form itself *by dint of* which all the pieties are pieties" (*Euthphr*. 6d10–11). That is why he rejects the definition of piety as being what all the gods love. This definition is in one way correct, presumably, in that if something is pious, it is necessarily loved by all the gods, and vice versa, but it is not explanatory, since it does not tell us what it is about pious things that makes all the gods love them, and so it does not identify the form by dint of which they are pious (9e–11b).

Let's go back. We wanted to know what was involved in showing a scientific starting-point. We were told how we could *not* do this, namely, by demonstrating it from scientific starting-points. Next we learned that dialectic had a route to it from reputable beliefs. At the same time, we were told that induction had a route to it as well—something the *Ethics* also tells us: "we get a theoretical grasp on some starting-points through induction, some through perception, some through some sort of habituation, and others through other means" (I 7 $1098^{b}3$–4). This suggests that induction and dialectic are in some way or other the same process. It is a suggestion to keep in mind.

What shows a Socratic respondent to be wrong is an example that the respondent's definition does not fit. The presentation of the example might be quite indirect, however. It might take quite a bit of stage setting, elicited by the asking of many questions, to bring out a puzzle. But if the example is one the definition does not fit, it shows that the universal grasped by the respondent and the definition he produces are not entirely or unconditionally knowable and that his state is not one of clear-eyed understanding:

> A puzzle in thought reveals a knot in its subject matter. For thought caught in a puzzle is like people who are tied up, since in either case it is impossible to make progress. That is why one must get a theoretical grasp on all the difficulties ahead of time, both for these reasons and because those who inquire without first going through the puzzles are like people who don't know where they have to go, and, in addition, don't even know whether they have found what they were inquiring about, since the end is not clear to them. But to someone who has first gone through the puzzles it is clear. (*Met*. II 1 $995^{a}30$–$^{b}2$)

But lack of such clear-eyed understanding of a scientific starting-point has serious downstream consequences:

> If we are to have scientific knowledge through demonstration, . . . we must know the starting-points better and be better persuaded of them than of what is being shown, but we must also not find anything more persuasive or better known among

> things opposed to the starting-points from which a contrary mistaken conclusion may be deduced, since someone who has unconditional scientific knowledge must be incapable of being persuaded out of it. (*APo*. I 2 72$^{a}$37–$^{b}$4; also see *NE* VI 3 1139$^{b}$33–35)

If dialectical examination reveals a puzzle in a respondent's thought about a scientific starting-point, then he cannot have any unconditional scientific knowledge even of what he may well be able to demonstrate correctly from it. Contrariwise, if dialectical examination reveals no such puzzle, then he apparently does have clear-eyed understanding, and his route to what he can demonstrate is free of obstacles.

At the heart of dialectic, as Aristotle understands it, is the dialectical deduction (*dialektikos sullogismos*). This is the argument lying behind the questioner's questions, partly dictating their order and content and partly determining the strategy of his examination. In the following passage it is defined and contrasted with two relevant others:

> Dialectical arguments are those that deduce from reputable beliefs in a way that reaches a contradiction; peirastic arguments are those that deduce from those beliefs of the respondent that anyone must know (*eidenai*) who pretends to possess scientific knowledge. . . . Contentious (*eristikos*) arguments are those that deduce or appear to deduce from what appear to be reputable beliefs but are not really such. (*SE* 2 165$^{b}$3–8)

If we think of dialectical deductions in this way, a dialectician, in contrast to a contender, is an honest questioner, appealing to genuinely reputable beliefs and employing valid deductions. "Contenders and sophists use the same arguments," Aristotle says, "but not to achieve the same goal. . . . If the goal is apparent victory, the argument is contentious; if it is apparent wisdom, sophistic" (*SE* 11 171$^{b}$27–33). Nonetheless, Aristotle does also use the term *dialektikê* as the name for the craft that honest dialecticians and sophists both use:

> In dialectic a sophist is so called in accord with his deliberate choice, and a dialectician is so called not in accord with his deliberate choice but in accord with the capacity he has. (*Rh*. I 1 1355$^{b}$20–21)

If dialectic is understood in this way, a dialectician who deliberately chooses to employ contentious arguments is a sophist (*Rh*. I 1 1355$^{a}$24–$^{b}$7).

We need to be careful, therefore, to distinguish *honest dialectic* from what we may call *plain dialectic*, which—like all crafts—can be used for good and ill (*NE* V 1 1129ª13–17).

The canonical occasion for the practice of the Socratic elenchus, obviously, is the examination of someone else. But there is nothing to prevent a person from practicing it on himself: "How could you think," Socrates asks Critias, "that I would refute you for any reason other than the one for which I would refute myself, fearing lest I might inadvertently think I know something when I don't know it?" (*Chrm*. 166c7–d2). Dialectic is no different in this regard:

> The premises of the philosopher's deductions, or those of a person who is investigating by himself, though true and knowable, may be refused by the respondent because they lie too near to the original proposition, and so he sees what will happen if he grants them. But the philosopher is unconcerned about this. Indeed, he will presumably be eager that his axioms should be as familiar and as near to the question at hand as possible, since it is from premises of this sort that scientific deductions proceed. (*Top.* VIII 1 155b10–16)

What we are to imagine, then, is that the political philosopher, to focus on him, surveys the raw political starting-points (the empirical foundations of politics), constructing detailed catalogues of these. He then tries to formulate definitions of the various universals involved in them that seem to be candidate scientific starting-points (virtue, happiness, and so on), testing these against the raw political starting-points by trying to construct demonstrations from them. But these definitions will often be no more than partial; our political philosopher is on his way to complete definitional starting-points, just as the demonstrations will often be no more than proto or nascent demonstrations. The often rudimentary demonstrations that we find in Aristotle's scientific treatises are parts of this process of arguing *to*, not *from* starting-points: we argue to them in part by seeing whether or to what extent we could demonstrate from them.

So, first, we have the important distinction between dialectic proper, which includes the use of what appear to be deductions from what appear to be reputable beliefs, and honest dialectic, which uses only genuine deductions from genuine reputable beliefs. Second, we have the equally important distinction between the use of dialectic in examining a potentially hostile respondent and its use by the philosopher in a perhaps private pursuit of the truth. Third, we have an important contrast between honest dialectical premises and philosophical ones or scientific ones. Honest dialectical

premises are reputable beliefs; philosophical and scientific premises must be true and knowable. Fourth, we have two apparently equivalent routes to scientific starting-points, one inductive, which starts from raw political starting-points, and the other dialectic, which starts from reputable beliefs.

According to the official definition, genuine reputable beliefs are "things that are believed by everyone, by the majority, or by the wise—either by all of them, or by most, or by the most well known and most reputable" (*Top.* I 1 $100^{b}21$–23). Just as the scientist should have a catalogue of scientific truths ready to hand from which to select the premises of his demonstrations, so a dialectician ought also to select premises "from arguments that have been written down and produce catalogues (*diagraphas*) of them concerning each kind of subject, putting them under separate headings—for example, 'Concerned with good,' 'Concerned with life'" (*Top.* I 14 $105^{b}12$–15). We should be reminded of the collections of laws and constitutions that enjoy "a good reputation (*eudokimountas*)," from which the legislative scientist selects the best ones (*NE* X 9 $1181^{a}12$–$^{b}12$, *Pol.* II 5 $1263^{a}39$n).

Clearly, then, there will be considerable overlap between the scientist's catalogue of raw starting-points and the honest dialectician's catalogue of genuine reputable beliefs. For, first, things that are believed by reputably wise people are themselves reputable beliefs, and, second, any respondent would accept "the beliefs of those who have investigated the subjects in question—for example, on a question of medicine he will agree with a doctor, and on a question of geometry with a geometer" (*Top.* I 10 $104^{a}8$–37). The catalogues also differ, however, in that not all reputable beliefs need to be true. If a proposition is a reputable belief, if it would be accepted by all or most people, it is everything an honest dialectician could ask for in a premise, since his goal is simply this: to reveal by honest deductions that a definition offered by any respondent whatsoever conflicts—if it does—with other beliefs that the respondent has. That is why having a complete or fairly complete catalogue of reputable beliefs is such an important resource for a dialectician. It is because dialectic deals with things only "in relation to belief," then, and not as philosophy and science do, "in relation to truth" (I 14 $105^{b}30$–31) that it needs nothing more than reputable *beliefs*.

Nonetheless, the fact that all or most people believe something leads us "to trust it as something in accord with experience" (*Div. Somn.* 1 $426^{b}14$–16), and—since human beings "are naturally adequate as regards the truth and for the most part happen upon it" (*Rh.* I 1 $1355^{a}15$–17)—as containing some truth. That is why, having catalogued some of the things that people believe happiness to be, Aristotle writes:

> Some of these views are held by many and are of long standing, while others are held by a few reputable men. And it is not

> reasonable to suppose that either group is entirely wrong, but rather that they are correct on one point at least or even on most of them. (*NE* I 8 1098$^{b}$27–29).

Later he generalizes the claim: "things that seem to be so to everyone, these, we say, are" (X 2 1172$^{b}$36–1173$^{a}$1). Raw starting-points are just that—raw. But when refined, some shred of truth is likely to be found in them. So likely, indeed, that if none is found, this will itself be a surprising fact needing to be explained: "when a reasonable explanation is given of why an untrue view appears true, this makes us more convinced of the true view" (VII 14 1154$^{a}$24–25). It is in the perhaps mere grain of truth enclosed in a reputable belief that a philosopher or scientist is interested, then, not in the general acceptability of the surrounding husk, much of which he may discard.

The process of refinement in the case of a candidate explanatory starting-point is that of testing a definition of it against reputable beliefs. This may result in the definition being accepted as it stands or in its being altered or modified. The same process applies to the reputable beliefs themselves, since they may conflict not only with the definition but also with each other. Again, this may also result in their being modified, often by uncovering ambiguities within them or in the argument supporting them or by drawing distinctions that uncover complexities in these. Thus Aristotle's view that it is "from oneself that all the features fitted to friendship also extend to others" is in accord with the reputable beliefs embodied in "all the proverbs" (*NE* IX 8 1168$^{b}$5–10). But both conflict with the view that there is something shameful about being a self-lover, since a base person "does all his actions for the sake of himself," whereas a decent one "seems to act because of what is noble . . . and for the sake of a friend, disregarding his own interests" (1168$^{a}$31–35). As a result, "it is reasonable to be puzzled . . . as to which side we should follow, since both carry conviction." Hence, to ease our puzzlement not just in this case but in all others like it, "we need to draw distinctions in connection with the arguments and determine to what extent and in what ways they grasp the truth. If, then, we were to find out what those on each side mean by 'self-love,' perhaps this would be clear" (1168$^{b}$10–15). By the end of the chapter, this is precisely what has been accomplished. If, as ordinary people do, we think of self-lovers as those who gratify the non-rational part of their soul (as if it were their true self) with money, honors, and bodily pleasures (as if these were the greatest goods), we can see why they are right to think that "self-love" is a term of reproach. But if we recognize that noble things are better than these other goods, and that the true self is the understanding, we will also see what is wrong in their view and what is right in the opposing one, and agree that we should be "self-lovers" in that sense of the term. Just what it means to

say that our true self is the understanding, however, is something we will return to at the appropriate juncture.

A more extreme possibility, as we saw, is that a reputable belief is not modified at all but is rejected entirely and has its appearance of truth explained away. This is what happens in the case of bodily pleasures. These are not more choiceworthy, Aristotle argues, yet they appear to be. So we must explain away their false appearance of choiceworthiness, one source of which is that they "knock out pain," and "get their intensity (which is why they are pursued) from the fact that they appear alongside their contrary" (*NE* VII 14 1154$^{a}$26–31). Sometimes all the reputable beliefs on a certain topic stemming from a certain group can be excluded *en masse*:

> To investigate all the beliefs about happiness held by different people is superfluous, since little children, sick people, and lunatics apparently have many views, but no one with any understanding would go through these. For these people need not arguments but, in some cases, time in which to mature, in others, medical or political correction [or punishment]—for a drug is no less correctional than a flogging. Similarly there is no need to investigate the beliefs of the majority, since they speak baselessly on pretty much every topic but most of all this one. On it, only the beliefs of wise people need be investigated. (*EE* I 3 1214$^{b}$28–1215$^{a}$2)

We might see Aristotle's account of the distorting effects on beliefs about happiness of inadequate habituation where pleasures and pains are concerned as the justification of this bold claim. Readers who think that Aristotle gives the life of indulgence shrift that is much too short (*NE* I 5 1095$^{b}$19–22, X 6 1176$^{b}$9–1177$^{a}$1) should not overlook its bearing on their concern. False consciousness, at least in one of its forms, was as familiar to Aristotle as it subsequently became to Hegel and Marx.

The canonical occasion for the use of honest dialectic, as of the Socratic elenchus and plain dialectic, is the examination of a respondent. The relevant premises for the questioner to use, therefore, are the reputable beliefs in his catalogue that his respondent will accept. Just how wide this set of beliefs is in a given case depends naturally on how accessible to the untrained subject the subject matter is on which he is being examined. In this regard our target candidate science, politics, is in a somewhat special position, since all adequately socialized subjects have access to the relevant subject matter and are even likely to have received some—however vestigial—training in politics itself. That is no doubt why Socrates' respondents are so confident, prior to examination, that they do know how to define

the virtues. We might usefully compare the case of religious beliefs about the nature of human beings and the origins of life and cosmos in a society where all the citizens practice the same religion and all the schools teach it. In other more esoteric areas the class of reputable beliefs may be substantially narrower. We may all have some beliefs about thunder and other phenomena readily perceptible to everyone, that are—for that very reason—reputable. But about Mandelbrot sets, Bell's theorem, or messenger RNA we may have none at all.

When a scientist is investigating by himself, the class of premises he will select from is the catalogue of *all* the raw starting-points of his science, despite a natural human inclination to do otherwise:

> Yet . . . people seem to inquire up to a certain point but not as far as it is possible to take the puzzle. It is what we are all inclined to do, to make our inquiry not with an eye to the thing itself but with an eye to the person who says things that contradict him. For even a person inquiring on his own continues up to the point at which he is no longer able to contradict himself. That is why a person who is going to inquire correctly should be able to raise objections to a position by using objections that are proper to the relevant genus, and this will be when he has acquired a theoretical grasp on all the differentiae. (*Cael.* II 13 $294^{b}6$–13)

Hence our scientist will want to err on the side of excess, adding any reputable belief that appears to have any relevance whatsoever to his catalogue. When he formulates definitions of candidate scientific starting-points from which he thinks he can demonstrate the raw ones, he must then examine himself to see whether he really does in this case have the scientific knowledge he thinks he has. If he is investigating together with fellow scientists, others may examine him: we all do better with the aid of co-workers (*NE* X 7 $1177^{a}34$), among whom time figures as one (I 7 $1095^{a}23$–24). What he is doing is using honest dialectic on himself or having it used on him. But this, we see, is little different from the final stage—stage (4)—of the induction we looked at earlier. Induction, as we might put it, is, in its final stage, (possibly self-directed) honest dialectic.

In a famous and much debated passage of the *Ethics*, Aristotle writes:

> We must, as in the other cases, set out the things that appear to be so and first go through the puzzles, and, in that way show preferably all the reputable beliefs about these ways of being affected, or, if not all of them then most of them, and the ones with the most control. For if the objections are resolved and the

> reputable beliefs are left standing, that would be an adequate showing. (VII 1 1145[b]1–7)

The specific topic of the comment is "these ways of being affected," which are self-control and its lack as well as resilience and softness. Some people think that the comment applies only to this topic and should not be generalized, even though "as in the other cases" surely suggests a wider scope. And as we can now see, that scope *is* in fact entirely general, since it describes the honest dialectical or inductive route to the starting-points of *all* the sciences and methodical inquiries, with *tithenai ta phainomena* ("setting out the things that appear to be so") describing the initial phase in which the raw starting-points are collected and catalogued.

Earlier we asked whether the *Ethics* took a route like this to the starting-points of politics. Now that we know what exactly it is we are asking, we must follow in Aristotle's footsteps both there and in the *Politics* to see what the answer is. But that is a task that a reader can be safely left to undertake for her- or himself. The fact that the *Ethics* explicitly refers to puzzles over thirty times, while the *Politics* does so around fifty,* might be taken as one measure, however, of the importance of honest dialectic in these works. But if we take this as the only measure, we are likely not to recognize the honest dialectic that is present in the many discussions in which no puzzles arise because none are encountered. This would be a mistake, as we saw, that our understanding of the *Ethics* and *Politics* would inherit from a mistake we had already made about the nature of honest dialectic and its role in all canonical sciences. When appearances, or what appears so, or what is evident to properly socialized subjects is appealed to—as happens repeatedly in the *Ethics* and *Politics*—honest dialectic is silently there, even if no puzzles are present.

Is politics, then, sufficiently similar to count as a science—provided that we are guided by similarities and are not speaking in an exact way? If we look, as we should, to politics' universalist component, the answer is that politics is as much like a canonical theoretical science as a natural science is. If we look to politics' particularist component, the answer is that it is not a science. All of which is to say that politics is a *practical* science, one with both a universalist and a particularist component. The contribution the *Ethics* makes to this science, so conceived, is to give it its capstone or "head"—a clear-eyed understanding of its primary starting-points (VI 7 1141[a]19) that is at once true and (unlike Plato's form of the good) practical.

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*As a glance at the Index of Terms s.v. "puzzle" will attest.

## *Happiness and the Human Function*

Aristotle attributes functions to parts of bodies and souls, to instruments or tools of various sorts, and to human beings, insofar as they play certain sorts of roles (*Pol.* I 2 1252$^{b}$4n). Thus "a flute player, a carpenter, and every craftsman" have a function, since each has a characteristic activity or type of action that he does, namely, playing the flute or doing woodwork (*NE* I 7 1097$^{b}$25–26). But instead of arguing directly that human beings have a function, he treats the uncontroversial fact that craftsmen have "certain functions and actions," and that bodily parts, such as eyes, hands, and feet do (1097$^{b}$28–33), as making it absurd to think that they do not have one. The first thought seems to be that if in his roles as craftsmen of various sorts a human being has a function, he must also have a function of a more general type that suits him to play those roles, and to adapt himself to the rational principles and norms of the associated crafts and sciences. The second thought seems to reach the same conclusion by something like the reverse route: if each part of the human body has a function, the whole of which they are the parts must also have one, to which each of theirs contributes, so that its function explains theirs.

Whatever the human function turns out to be, then, it must be something we can intelligibly think of as explaining the functions of the parts of the human body, and how it is that human beings can be craftsmen, subject to the rational principles or norms of their craft. These are the requirements that shape Aristotle's search (F-prefaced numerals will help us keep track of its various steps and stages):

> [F1] What, then, could this [human function] be? For living (*zên*) is evidently shared with plants as well, but we are looking for what is special. Hence we must set aside the living that consists in nutrition and growth. Next in order is some sort of perceptual living. But this too is evidently shared with horse and ox and every animal. [F2] There remains, then, some sort of practical (*praktikê*) living of the part that has reason. And of what has reason, [F3] one part has it by dint of obeying reason, the other by dint of actually having it and exercising thought. [F4] But "living" is said of things in two ways, and we must take the one in accord with activity, since it seems to be called "living" in a fuller sense. (*NE* I 7 1097$^{b}$33–1098$^{a}$7)

*Zôê* refers to the sorts of life processes studied by biologists, zoologists, and other scientists (including psychologists and theologians): growth and reproduction are such processes, as are perceiving and understanding. As

a result it is, as [F4] tells us, ambiguous, referring either to the potential to grow, reproduce, or perceive, or to the process or activity of growing, reproducing, perceiving, or understanding (*Protr.* B79–83). A second word, *bios*, refers to the sort of life a natural historian or (auto)biographer might investigate—the life of the otter, the life of Pericles—and so to a span of time throughout which someone possesses *zôê* as a potentiality: "The good and the bad person are least distinct while asleep, which is why happy people are said to be no worse off than wretched ones for half their life (*bios*)" (*NE* I 13 $1102^{b}5$–7). Hence, in the conclusion of the function argument, we are reminded that a *zôê* will not be happiness for a human being unless it occurs "in a complete *bios*" (I 7 $1098^{a}18$–20).

What is characterized as *praktikê* in [F2] is the *zôê* of what possesses reason, which might lead us to think that what is being referred to is a peculiarly practical as opposed to theoretical or contemplative rational activity. What is *praktikê*, however, often includes what is theoretical or contemplative, rather than excluding it:

> Yet it is not necessary, as some suppose, for an action-involving life to be lived in relation to other people, nor are those thoughts alone action-involving that arise for the sake of the consequences of doing an action, rather, much more so are the acts of contemplation and thought that are their own ends and are engaged in for their own sake. For doing well in action is the end, and so action of a sort is the end too. (*Pol.* VII 3 $1325^{b}16$–21)

[F3] seems intended to remind us of just this fact. Rational activity, it tells us, is twofold—that of the part that obeys reason, which is the desiring part, and that of the part that possesses reason autonomously, which comprises the scientific part, the deliberative part, and the understanding (I 5 $1254^{b}5$–9n, VII 14 $1333^{a}16$–18n, 15 $1334^{b}20$). But when we consider the desiring part in the way that [F4] requires, as actively obeying reason, it also involves the activity of the deliberative calculative subpart of the part that possesses reason autonomously. The twofold activity of what possesses reason is not (a) non-rational active desiring and (b) practical thinking, therefore, but rather (c) active desiring in accord with practical thinking or deliberation and (d) theoretical thinking or contemplation. It is the distinction between (c) and (d) indeed that paves the way for the disjunctive conclusion of the argument as a whole: "the human good turns out to be activity of soul in accord with virtue, and, if there are more virtues than one, in accord with the best and most complete" (*NE* I 7 $1098^{a}16$–18). For the most complete virtue is theoretical wisdom, which is the virtue of the scientific part, and is responsible for theoretical thinking or contemplation,

while the less complete one is the amalgam of practical wisdom and the virtues of character, which is the virtue of the calculative and desiring parts, and is responsible for practical thinking or deliberation (*NE* X 7–8).

The implicit argument by elimination that Aristotle uses in [F1–2] to identify the human function with rational activity of a sort presupposes his own account of the soul (*NE* I 13). But whichever account we appeal to, rational activity of some sort is likely to emerge as best fitted for the double explanatory duty the human function must perform. For the crafts and choice-relevant sciences are rational enterprises, and the parts of the body, since they can be moved in accord with their norms, are arguably adapted by nature to subserve and further their ends and goals:

> Just as every instrument is for the sake of something, the parts of the body are also for the sake of something, that is, for the sake of some action, so that the whole body must evidently be for the sake of some complex action. Just as the saw is there for the sake of sawing, not sawing for the sake of the saw, since sawing is a certain use [of a saw], so the body, too, is somehow for the sake of the soul, and the parts of the body for the sake of those functions for which each is naturally adapted. (*PA* I 5 $645^{b}14$–20)

That is why [F2] the human function, as a rational activity of the soul, is something beyond all the functions of the bodily parts (*NE* I 7 $1097^{b}32$–33).

Once the human function is identified with a type of rational activity, the conceptual or analytic connection between a thing's functions and its virtues is used to legitimate the introduction of these virtues:

> [F5] If, then, the function of a human being is activity of the soul in accord with reason or not without reason, and the function of a sort of thing, we say, is the same in kind as the function of an excellent thing of that sort (as in the case of a lyre player and an excellent lyre player), and this is unconditionally so in all cases when we add to the function the superiority that is in accord with the virtue (for it is characteristic of a lyre player to play the lyre and of an excellent one to do it well)—if all this is so, and a human being's function is supposed to be a sort of living, and this living is supposed to be activity of the soul and actions that involve reason, and it is characteristic of an excellent man to do these well and nobly, and each is completed well when it is in accord with the virtue that properly belongs to it—if all this is so, [F6] the human good turns out to be activity of the soul in accord with virtue and, if there are more virtues than

> one, then in accord with the best and most complete (*teleiotatên*). [F7] Furthermore, in a complete life, for one swallow does not make a spring, nor does one day. Nor, similarly, does one day or a short time make someone blessed and happy. (*NE* I 7 $1098^{a}7$–20)

The investigation of happiness then focuses on the various candidate virtues governing rational activity, with the aim, finally, of discovering which of them is most complete. Once we know that, we will have the clearer account of what happiness is—or what its essence is—that readies it to be a scientific starting-point.

Before we can take that step, however, we need to understand [F6] more fully. The adjective *teleion*, which there occurs in the superlative, derives from *telos* ("end," "goal"), is discussed in the following entry in Aristotle's philosophical lexicon:

> What is said to be complete is, [$C_1$] in one way, that outside which not even one part is to be found—for example, the complete time of each thing is the one outside which there is no time to be found that is part of that time. [$C_2$] That which, as regards virtue or the good, cannot be surpassed relative to its kind (*genos*)—for example, a doctor is complete and a flute player is complete when they lack nothing as regards the form of their own proper virtue. (It is in this way, transferring the term to bad things, we speak of a complete scandalmonger and a complete thief—indeed we even say that they are good, for example, a good thief and a good scandalmonger.) Also, virtue is a sort of completion. For each thing is complete and every substance is complete when, as regards the form of its proper virtue, it lacks no part of its natural magnitude. [$C_3$] Further, things that have attained their end, this being something excellent, are said to be complete. For things are complete in virtue of having attained their end. So, since the end is a last thing, we transfer the term to base things and say that a thing has been completely ruined and completely destroyed, when there is no deficiency in its destruction and badness but it has reached its last. This is why death, too, is by metaphorical transference said to be an end, because both are last things. And the end—that is, the for-the-sake-of-which—is a last thing. (*Met.* V 16 $1021^{b}12$–30)

When Aristotle speaks of virtue as being complete, then, he often means that it is [$C_1$] *part-whole* complete. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, for example, he

identifies complete virtue with virtue as a whole, incomplete virtue with its parts: "life (*zôê*) is either complete or incomplete, and similarly virtue, since in the one case it is whole (*holê*), in the other a part (*morion*)" (II 1 $1219^{a}36$–37). There and in the *Magna Moralia* he also identifies complete virtue with the amalgam of practical wisdom and the virtues of character that he calls *kalokagathia* or noble-goodness (II 8 $1207^{b}20$–27, *EE* VIII 3 $1249^{a}16$–17)—a notion he also employs in the *Politics* (I 13 $1259^{b}34$–35). In both these ethical treatises, he identifies happiness with activity in accord with complete virtue in a complete life (*MM* I 4 $1184^{a}35$–$^{b}9$, *EE* II 1 $1219^{a}38$–39). At the same time, he acknowledges the existence of practical wisdom as a virtue of thought, not of character, characterizes it as inferior to theoretical wisdom, and recognizes the contemplative activity that theoretical wisdom perfects or completes as of the greatest possible import to happiness (*MM* I 34 $1197^{b}3$–11, *EE* VII 15 $1249^{a}24$–$^{b}25$). What he does not do is explain how all these claims can be consistent with each other.

The *Nicomachean Ethics* might seem to inherit this problem. For there, too, general justice is "the complete use of complete virtue" (V 1 $1129^{b}31$), not "a part (*meros*) of virtue, but virtue as a whole (*holê*)" (V 1 $1130^{a}9$). Yet theoretical wisdom, which is also "a part (*meros*) of virtue as a whole (*holês*)" (VI 12 $1144^{a}5$–6), is not a part of general justice or its use. For "the virtue of understanding is separate" from the virtues of character and practical wisdom, which are virtues of the matter-form compound of soul and body (X 8 $1178^{a}9$–23), just as understanding is separate from the compound itself. Thus the problem implicit in the *Magna Moralia* and the *Eudemian Ethics* now seems to be right out in the open.

In all three ethical treatises, virtues are divided into those of character and those of thought, but once the (full) virtues of character are shown to be inseparable from practical wisdom, this distinction fades in prominence, and the distinction between the complete virtue of the merely human matter-form compound of body and soul and the virtue of the fully human or divine constituent in us in accord with which we contemplate on the other gains prominence—implicitly in the *Magna Moralia* (II 3 $1199^{b}38$–$1200^{a}5$) and *Eudemian Ethics* (VIII 1 $1246^{b}32$–33), explicitly in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (X 8 $1178^{a}16$–22). Thus in the latter happiness is no longer activity in accord with complete virtue but is activity in accord with the *best* and most complete virtue. Moreover, theoretical wisdom is the virtue of the best thing and the one with most control, so that its activity is complete happiness (*NE* I 7 $1098^{a}16$–18, X 7 $1177^{a}12$–17). Thus it is now recognized as a more complete virtue than full virtue of character. Yet the sense in which it is more or most complete cannot be a matter of [$C_1$] part-whole completeness, since, again, full virtue of character is not part of theoretical wisdom. Instead, it seems that the completeness it possesses to the greatest

extent is something more akin to [$C_2$] *value* completeness, so that theoretical wisdom is more value complete than full virtue of character, because relative to the kind *virtue*, it cannot be surpassed in value.

While theoretical wisdom may be more value complete than full or complete virtue of character, it is apparently less part-whole complete than human virtue as a whole, which includes both of them (*NE* VI 12 $1144^a5$–6). In the case of virtues, in other words, it might seem that the two sorts of completeness can come apart. It is signal, therefore, that while the *Eudemian Ethics* seems not to distinguish complete virtues from whole virtues, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, while it recognizes human virtue to be a whole, of which theoretical wisdom and full or complete virtue of character are both parts, never characterizes it as complete. Full virtue of character is *a* virtue, as are its constituents, practical wisdom and the individual virtues of character. It is something with which activity can be in accord. The same is true of theoretical wisdom. Human virtue as a whole, by contrast, is not *a* virtue, *a* state, or something with which activity can be in accord: for activity in accord with theoretical wisdom is leisured, while activity in accord with full virtue is unleisured (X 7 $1177^b4$–26). Hence it is not something that is even a candidate for being a complete virtue, let alone the most complete one. The *Nicomachean Ethics* avoids a problem in the conception of a complete virtue present in the *Magna Moralia* and *Eudemian Ethics*, then, in a way that might reasonably be taken to suggest an awareness of its existence.

A problem similar to the one we have been exploring in the case of the virtues arises, too, in the case of ends or goods. The *Magna Moralia* is explicit that that thing "is better for the sake of which the rest are." Nonetheless, it uses this fact not to define the completeness of ends, as the *Nicomachean Ethics* does (I 7 $1097^a30$–34), but to establish the superior value of goods that are ends over that of goods that are not ends but means to them (*MM* I 2 $1184^a3$–7). The relative value of ends, on the other hand, is established by a kind of completeness that is part-whole:

> Among ends themselves, the complete is always better than the incomplete. A complete end is one whose attainment leaves us not still needing anything in addition, whereas an incomplete one is one whose attainment does leave us needing something in addition. For instance, if we attain justice alone, there are many things we need in addition, but when we attain happiness, there is nothing additional we still need. This, therefore, is the best end we are searching for, the complete end. The complete end, then, is the good and the end of the [other] goods. . . . But the complete end, unconditionally speaking, is nothing other

> than happiness, it seems, and happiness is composed of many goods. . . . For happiness is not something separate from these, but is these. (*MM* I 2 1184$^{a}$7–29)

The conclusion reached is that happiness "cannot exist apart from external goods, and they come about as a result of good luck" (II 8 1207$^{b}$16–18). Nonetheless, happiness does not consist in these goods but "in actively living in accord with the virtues" of character (I 4 1184$^{b}$35–36), in a complete life (I 4 1185$^{a}$1–9). Implicitly, then, the distinction is recognized between goods that are parts of happiness and those that are necessary or enabling conditions of it, as in the *Eudemian Ethics* (I 2 1214$^{b}$26–27). Since the many goods of which happiness is composed are the activities of the various virtues of character, this again leaves the relationship of *theoretical wisdom* to happiness in an unstable situation—now because of how happiness is being conceived. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* (X 7–8) this instability is removed by recognizing two different types or grades of happiness, one incomplete, constituted by activity in accord with full virtue of character, another complete, constituted by activity in accord with theoretical wisdom.

The *Nicomachean Ethics* recognizes in [F7] that if activity in accord with theoretical wisdom is to constitute complete happiness, it must receive "a complete span of life (*bios*)" (X 7 1177$^{b}$25) or must occur in or throughout "a complete life (*bios*)" (I 7 1098$^{a}$18). What it does not do is explain what a complete life is or what makes it complete. The *Eudemian Ethics* refers to the "life (*bios*) with most control" (I 3 1215$^{a}$4–5), emphasizes the importance of ordering "one's life (*bios*) in relation to some end" (I 2 1214$^{b}$10), and replaces *bios* with *zôê* in requiring happiness to be "activity of a complete life (*zôê*)" (II 1 1219$^{a}$38–39) but is equally silent about what makes a *bios* or *zôê* complete. In spelling out what a complete life is, the *Magna Moralia* stands alone:

> Since, then, happiness is a complete good and end, we should not overlook the fact that it will also exist in what is complete. For it will not exist in a child (since a child is not happy) but in a man, since he is complete. Nor will it exist in an incomplete time, but in a complete one, such as that of a human life (*bios*). For it is correctly said among the masses that a life's happiness should be discerned in its longest time, since what is complete should exist in a complete time and a complete human being. (I 4 1185$^{a}$1–9)

As in the case of virtues and ends, then, the completeness attributed to lives is [$C_1$] part-whole completeness.

The completeness assigned to a life in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, by contrast, cannot be of this part-whole variety, since what is said there to virtue seems plainly inconsistent with it:

> It is true of an excellent person too that he does many actions for the sake of his friends and his fatherland, even dying for them if need be. For he will give up wealth, honors, and fought-about goods generally, in keeping for himself what is noble. For he will choose intense pleasure for a short time over weak pleasure for a long one; living life nobly for a year over many years lived in random fashion; and a single noble and great action over many small ones. This is presumably what happens with those who die for others. (IX 8 1169$^{a}$18–25)

It may be true, of course, that a happy life is presumptively of normal length, and so is part-whole complete—just as long as it is recognized that a shorter life can also be happy, provided its shortness is compensated for in some way.

In characterizing one sort of compensation, Aristotle again appeals to the notion of completeness. A virtuous person, he says, who has suffered many great strokes of bad luck will not return "to being happy again in a short time but—if indeed he does do so—in a long and complete one in which he achieves great and noble things" (I 10 1101$^{a}$12–13). Again, this sort of completeness, while clearly some sort of measure of life extent, cannot be that of normal life expectancy or part-whole completeness. The sort of life (*bios*) to which a natural life expectancy belongs, indeed, is primarily a biological life: elephants and plants also have life expectancies in this sense. But an individual human being's life, as we saw, is also an *(auto)-biographical* life, which can be a success—can be worthwhile and in need of nothing—even if it is not of normal length. One way it might be so is by containing, like the life of a great hero, "a single action that is noble and grand"—that is to say, an action of the sort the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* is built around, "an action that is unified, and a whole as well, whose parts, consisting of the events that happen, so constructed that the displacement or removal of any one of them will disturb and disjoint the whole" (*Po.* 8 1451$^{a}$32–35). Such a life may in a way be part-whole complete, but what is really important is that by achieving a good end it is [$C_3$] *end* complete.

Whether we consider virtues, ends, or lives, then, Aristotle seems to move away from thinking of their completeness in part-whole terms and toward thinking of it in terms of the completeness appropriate to ends. The reason he does so, in the case of virtues, seems to be the tension that otherwise results in how to include theoretical wisdom among the virtues.

Where life itself is concerned, the reason seems to have more to do with the virtues themselves and the demands they make—demands that cannot be made subservient to a formula, of the sort provided in the *Magna Moralia,* for how long a virtuous or happy life must be.

In one way it is easy to say what the human function is: it is [F5] activity of the soul in accord with reason. It is when we try to be more specific that we run into difficulties. For there seem to be three possibilities for what such activity could be: contemplative activity in accord with reason of the sort that theoretical wisdom completes or perfects; practical activity involving reason of the sort that practical wisdom and the virtues of character perfect; or some sort of activity involving reason that all of these virtues together somehow complete or perfect.

In the *Protrepticus*, we find Aristotle apparently confronting this problem in an interesting way, unparalleled in his other works:

> [F8] When each thing completes in the best way that which—not coincidentally but intrinsically—is its function, the thing in question must be said to be good too, and the virtue by which each thing can by nature accomplish this should be deemed to have the most control. [F9] What is composite and divisible into parts has several different activities, but what is by nature simple and does not have its substance in relation to something else must have one controlling virtue intrinsically. [F10] If then a human being is a simple animal and his substance is ordered in accord both with reason and with understanding, he has no other function than this alone, namely, the attainment of the most rigorous truth about the beings. [F11] But if he is naturally co-composed of several potentialities, and it is clear that he has by nature several functions to be completed, the best of them is always *his* function, as health is the function of the doctor, and safety of a ship's captain. We can, however, name no function of thought or of the understanding part of our soul that is better than truth. Truth, therefore, is the function of this part of the soul that has most control. [F12] But this it attains in accord with unconditional scientific knowledge, or rather in accord with what is scientific knowledge to a higher degree [than anything else], and of this the end that has most control is contemplation. For when of two things one is choiceworthy for the sake of the other, the latter is better and more choiceworthy, precisely because the other is choiceworthy for it, as, for example, pleasure is more choiceworthy than pleasant things, and health than healthy ones, since the latter, we say, produce the former.

> Than wisdom, however, which we say is the potentiality in us that has most control, nothing is more choiceworthy, when one state is discerned in relation to another, for the part that has knowledge, whether taken separately or jointly, is better than all the rest of the soul, and its virtue is [a sort of unconditional] scientific knowledge [namely, theoretical wisdom]. (B63–67)

[F8] reprises doctrine familiar from the function argument, making plain what is implicit there, that a thing's function is what the virtue with most control completes or perfects. [F9] contrasts two kinds of beings: a simple being—the primary god (*Pol.* III 6 1287$^{a}$29n)—who has only one function (implied in [F10]), and so only one virtue with most control; and a complex being, which has many parts. If a human being were a simple animal, his function would be "the attainment of the most rigorous truth," and so [F12] his one virtue would be the wisdom ensuring such attainment, namely, theoretical wisdom. But [F11] he is not a simple animal. Instead, he has many potentialities and functions to be completed, and so (by implication), many virtues too. Nonetheless, it is the best of these functions that is *his* function, so that the virtue of his that has most control, like the virtue of the simple being, is theoretical wisdom.

To take the next step we need first to acknowledge complexity in Aristotle's use of the term *anthrôpos*—or, if you like, in his conception of what a human being is. An *anthrôpos* in the most general sense is a human being of either sex, whereas an *anêr*, by contrast, is specifically a male human being—a man. The associated adjective *anthrôpinos*, while it can certainly mean "human," often seems to mean something more like "*merely* human":

> We should not, however, in accord with the makers of proverbs, "think human things (*anthrôpina*), since you are human" or "think mortal things, since you are mortal" but, rather, we should as far as possible immortalize, and do everything to live in accord with the element in us that is most excellent. (*NE* X 7 1177$^{b}$31–33)

*Anthrôpikos* (also "human") sometimes has similar connotations:

> Happiest, but in a secondary way, is the life in accord with the other virtue, since the activities in accord with it are human (*anthrôpikai*). . . . Indeed, some of them even seem to arise from the body. . . . But the virtues of the compound [of soul and body] are human (*anthrôpikai*). So too, then, are both the life and the happiness that is in accord with them. The virtue

> of understanding [= theoretical wisdom], though, is separated. (*NE* X 8 1178$^{a}$9–22)

Indeed, even *anthrôpos* itself is sometimes used to refer to the whole human animal, sometimes to the human element in human beings by contrast with the divine one:

> But such a [contemplative] life would be more excellent than one in accord with the human element (*anthrôpon*), since it is not insofar as he is a human being (*anthrôpos*) that someone will live a life like that but insofar as he has some divine element (*theion ti*) in him, and to the degree that this element is superior to the compound, to that degree will its activity also be superior to that in accord with the other sort of virtue. (*NE* X 7 1177$^{b}$26–29)

But *anthrôpos* is equally well used to refer to that divine element itself, since it is what makes human beings distinctively human:

> Of those pleasures that seem to be decent, however, which sort or which particular one should we say is characteristic of a human being? Or isn't this clear from the corresponding activities, since the pleasures are entailed by these? So whether the activities of a complete and blessed man are one or more than one, the pleasures that complete these will be said to be characteristically human (*anthrôpou*) pleasures in the full sense, and the rest will be so in a secondary or many-times-removed way, as are the activities. (*NE* X 5 1176$^{a}$24–29)

Here the pleasures that are characteristically human are those not of the body, since many of these we share with wild beasts, but of the soul, especially the understanding:

> We think that pleasure must be mixed in with happiness, and the most pleasant of the activities in accord with virtue is agreed to be the one in accord with theoretical wisdom. (*NE* X 7 1177$^{a}$22–25)

Thus when we ask what the special human function is, we need to be clear about what we think a human being in the relevant sense is.

It is at this point that we come face to face with an initially quite puzzling doctrine:

> [F13a] But just as a city too or any other complex system, seems to be most of all (*malist'*) its most controlling part, so also does a human being. (*NE* IX 8 1168$^{b}$31–33)

> [F13b] It would seem too that each person actually *is* this, if indeed it is the controlling and better element. So it would be strange if he were to choose not his own life but that of something else. Moreover, what we said before will fit now as well. For what properly belongs to each thing by nature is best and most pleasant for each of them. For each human being, then, the life in accord with understanding is so too, if indeed this most of all is a human being. Hence, this life will also be happiest. (*NE* X 7 1178$^{a}$2–8; also *Protr*. B58–70)

[F13a] tells us that a human being is *malista* ("most of all") its most controlling element, which [F13b] identifies with the divine element in him—understanding. [F13b] goes further in one dimension, since it drops the adverb *malista*, and speaks of a human being simply as being—as being one and the same as—his understanding. At the same time, it is more tentative about this identity—"if indeed it is the controlling and better element"—and in the end even restores the adverb: "if indeed this most of all is a human being."

Now it is certainly true that we cannot make much sense of one thing being most of all one and the same as another if this means that it has a very high degree, or the highest degree, of numerical identity to it. For numerical identity, like existence, does not come in degrees: things either exist or they don't and are either one and the same as each other or they aren't. However, the fact that [F13a] mentions a city as an example of the sort of complex system that is most of all its most controlling element gives us a way to understand it in more familiar, and less apparently paradoxical terms.

In *Politics* III 6, Aristotle squarely states that "the governing body controls the city everywhere, and the constitution is governing body" (1278$^{b}$10–11). What is revealing about this statement is that, like [F13a–b], it mentions the notion of control, which is itself characterized in terms of degree: "most controlling" in [F13a] and "controls the city everywhere (*pantachou*)." And the reason it is revealing is this:

> [F14a] A person is called "self-controlled" or "lacking in self-control" depending on whether or not his understanding is in control, on the supposition that this is what each person *is*, and it is actions involving reason that people seem most of all to do themselves and to do voluntarily. So it is clear enough that this

> part is what each person is or is most of all and that a decent person likes this part most. (*NE* X 8 1168$^{b}$34–1169$^{a}$2)
>
> [F14b] Just as in the whole it is the [primary] god, so it is too in us. For the divine constituent in us [= understanding or reason] in a way does all the moving. Of reason, however, the starting-point is not reason, but something superior. But what besides the [primary] god is superior to both scientific knowledge and understanding, since virtue [of character] is an instrument of understanding? (*EE* VIII 2 1248$^{a}$25–29)

Without going into all the details involved in interpreting [F14b], we can see that together with [F14a] it licenses us to understand [F13a–b] as a doctrine that is as much about control as it is about identity.

When contemporary philosophers try to understand human agency, they often find themselves wanting to distinguish actions that originate in—or have their causal source in—the agent from actions that stem from the agent's "real self" or "will" or what the agent "identifies" with. A reforming smoker, for example, may succumb to temptation and exhibit lack of self-control by smoking a cigarette, without thereby returning to being a smoker. Why? Because that action stems from a desire that is no longer a part of his true self, no longer part of his will or what he identifies with. However precisely we are best to understand the psychology of agency that makes these distinctions fully intelligible, it is attractive to see Aristotle as making an early contribution to it, since this allows us to make good sense of [F13a–b]. For on this way of looking at them degrees of identity have no place in them. We are most of all our understanding because our understanding is our "true self"—the source of those actions that are most our own, that we most identify with. And our function—even though unlike the primary god we are complex beings—is our function for the same reason. It is, so to speak, the function that is most of all ours—the function of what we most of all identify with.

## *The Happiest Human Life 1: Education*

Since practical wisdom includes politics, it shares its status as the most architectonic sort of knowledge. Yet there are limits even to its control. Practical wisdom "does not control either theoretical wisdom or the better part [of the soul], any more than medicine controls health, since it does not use it, but sees to its coming into being. So it prescribes for its sake, but not to it" (*NE* VI 13 1145$^{a}$6–9). To think otherwise would be like thinking that politics "rules the gods, because it prescribes with regard to everything

in the city" (1145$^{a}$10–11). For while politics does indeed enact laws concerning the distribution of priesthoods, the location of temples, and other things pertaining to the public worship of the gods, these are for the sake of the gods, ensuring their proper honor and worship, not laws to which the gods themselves are subject (*Pol.* VII 9 1329$^{a}$27–34, 10 1330$^{a}$11–13). Similarly, the divine constituent of the soul and its virtue (theoretical wisdom) do not operate in accord with politics' prescriptions, but rather these prescriptions are for their sake. True, politics "uses the other practical sciences" (*NE* I 2 1094$^{b}$4–5), but that means that it uses them to further happiness, which, as we saw, just is the activity of theoretical wisdom. It does not use theoretical wisdom itself, since it does not use *it* to further anything. In this regard, politics is like medicine, which does not issue prescriptions to the already healthy, or use health to further some additional end, but rather prescribes to the sick to see to it that health comes to be in them.

Theoretical wisdom is a state of the soul's scientific part. Hence, to see to its coming into being, politics must arrange for its acquisition by some group in the city it supervises, and then arrange for those in the group to have the leisure necessary to actualize their acquired state in active contemplation, throughout a life that is sufficiently long to count as complete. In the case of the best kind of city and constitution described in *Politics* VII–VIII, the implication seems to be that *all unconditional citizens* should have access to happiness, so that all should acquire and, to the extent possible, exercise theoretical wisdom. There seems to be no question of restricting theoretical wisdom to some intellectual elite, or to those who are actual or future political leaders, or heads of households. Aristotle does, of course, restrict membership of the class of unconditional citizens of the best city, but the way he does it shows him to be entirely unconcerned about issues of this sort.

Because a city must be a self-sufficient community, it needs "a multitude of farmers to provide the food; and craftsmen; and a fighting element; and a rich element; and priests; and judges of necessary matters and advantageous ones" (*Pol.* VII 8 1328$^{b}$20–23). It is from these groups that the unconditional citizens must be selected. One way constitutions differ, indeed, is by making the selection in different ways: "in democracies everyone shares in everything, whereas in oligarchies it is the contrary" (VII 9 1328$^{b}$32–33). So the task is to determine how in the best circumstances the selection should be made:

> Since we are investigating the best constitution, however, the one in accord with which a city would be most happy, and happiness cannot exist separate from virtue, as was said earlier, it evidently follows that in a city governed in the best way, possessing men who are unconditionally—not relative to a hypothesis—just, the citizens should not live a vulgar or a trading life. For lives of these

> sorts are ignoble and entirely contrary to virtue. Nor should those who are going to be citizens be farmers, since leisure is needed both for the development of virtue and for political actions. But since the best city contains both a military part and one that deliberates about what is advantageous and renders judgment about what is just, and since it is evident that these are most of all parts of the city, should these functions also be assigned to distinct people, or are both to be assigned to the same people? [The answer to] this is evident too, because in one way the functions should be assigned to the same people and in another they should be assigned to distinct ones. For insofar as the prime time for each of the two functions is different, in that one requires practical wisdom and the other strength, they should be assigned to different people. On the other hand, insofar as it is impossible for those capable of using and resisting force to tolerate being always ruled, to that extent they should be assigned to the same people. For those who control the weapons also control whether a constitution will endure or not. The only course remaining, therefore, is for the constitution to assign both functions to the same people, but not at the same time. Instead, just as it is natural for strength to be found among younger men and practical wisdom among older ones, so it is advantageous and just to assign the functions to each group in this way, since this division is in accord with worth. Moreover, the property too should be assigned to them. For it is necessary for the citizens to be well supplied with resources, and these people are the citizens. For the vulgar element does not share in the city, and nor does any other kind (*genos*) of person who is not a craftsman of virtue. This is clear from our hypothesis. For happiness necessarily involves virtue, and a city must not be called happy by looking at just a part of it, but by looking at all the citizens. It is also evident that the property should be theirs, if indeed the farmers must either be slaves, either barbarians or subject peoples. (*Pol*. VII 9 $1328^{b}33$–$1329^{a}26$)

The phrase "a craftsman of virtue" is borrowed from Plato, who uses it to characterize the work of the philosopher rulers in drafting the constitution of his own best city or *kallipolis*:

> The philosopher, by associating with what is orderly and divine [that is, the Platonic Forms] becomes as divine and orderly as a human being can. . . . And if he should come to be compelled to make a practice—in private and in public—of stamping what he

> sees there into the people's characters, instead of shaping only his own . . . he will [not] be a poor craftsman of temperance, justice, and the whole of popular virtue (*dêmiourgon . . . tês dêmotikês aretês*). (*Rep.* 500d)

It is hard to believe that Aristotle would use this phrase were he not also planning to educate *his* ideal citizens in philosophy. But that is a small point on which we have no need to lean.

The prime time for a man's military service is that of his body, which is somewhere between the ages of thirty and thirty-five, while the prime time for that of his soul or his potentiality for thought is forty-nine or fifty (*Pol.* VII 16 $1335^{b}32$–35, *Rh.* II 14 $1390^{b}9$–11). Until the age of forty or so, then, male citizens lack the experience necessary for practical wisdom and deliberative ruling office, and thereafter possess it. Yet, though full virtue of character is something they can develop only in middle age, all are presumed capable of developing it. No elaborate tests are countenanced, as they are in Plato's best city, to segregate the future philosopher rulers from other citizens equally mature but less gifted in, for example, mathematics. A politician aims at "happiness for himself and for his fellow citizens" (*NE* X 7 $1177^{b}14$), not for the happiness of some narrower few. As an end additional to the unleisured activities of the virtues of character themselves, such happiness must be contemplative in nature.

The mature citizens of the best city are all unconditionally just, which involves their possessing full virtue of character. Moreover, all of them are as happy as possible, which involves their also possessing theoretical wisdom. But theoretical wisdom cannot be acquired except through lengthy education and experience (*NE* II 1 $1103^{a}14$–17). Hence the natural place to begin an investigation of how politics arranges more specifically for theoretical wisdom's acquisition is with the discussion in *Politics* VII–VIII of the education that the best city and constitution provides.

A community could not really be a city, Aristotle thinks, if it did not educate its citizens in virtue, since it is by means of education that people are unified and made into a city (*Pol.* II 5 $1263^{b}36$–37, III 9 $1280^{b}1$–8). Consequently, education should be suited to the constitution and provided to the citizens by it, so that it is communal or public rather than private (I 13 $1260^{b}15$, VIII 1 $1337^{a}14$–26). Although most of the discussion of education in the best city concerns that of (future) male citizens, communal education is also provided to girls and women (I 3 $1260^{b}13$–20, VII 16 $1335^{b}11$–12). Since women's virtues of character are different from men's, part of their education must also be different. Just how different it will be when these virtues are no longer the issue is hard to say. Women cannot have unconditional practical wisdom and virtue of character, since the deliberative part of their soul lacks authority

(I 13 1260$^{a}$12–13n). The scientific part, on the other hand, seems unaffected by this difference. So perhaps women are capable of acquiring theoretical wisdom, or some close approximation to it. Aristotle does not explicitly rule it out, but he does not explicitly discuss it either. (Among the students in Plato's Academy, where Aristotle spent twenty years, Diogenes Laertius (III [46], IV [2]) lists two women, Lasthenia of Mantinea and Axiothea of Plus, citing Dicaerarchus, one of Aristotle's pupils, as a source of his information. So Aristotle cannot have been ignorant of the existence of women philosophers.)

Education from infancy to early adulthood seems to have four stages:

1. The first concerns the treatment of infants, and their informal training up to the age of five (*Pol.* VII 17 1336$^{a}$3–$^{b}$35). The emphasis here is on diet, on the shaping and conditioning of the body, and especially on the use of leisure appropriate to free citizens.
2. From age five to seven, children observe the lessons they will later learn for themselves (1336$^{b}$35–37).
3. From seven to fourteen, their education includes lighter gymnastic exercises (VIII 4 1338$^{b}$40–42).
4. From fourteen to twenty-one, the first three years are devoted in part to "other sorts of learning," and the next four to arduous athletic training combined with a strict diet (VIII 4 1339$^{a}$5–7).

Much of what is included here falls under the rubric of the "education through habituation" provided by physical trainers and coaches, which precedes "education through reason" (VIII 3 1338$^{b}$4–7) and helps lead to habituated virtue. The "other sorts of learning" mentioned at stage 4 are not explicitly identified. They could be restricted to reading, writing, music, and drawing (1337$^{b}$24–25), but then the only thing that children would be taught at stage 3—a period of seven whole years—would be light gymnastics. This is sufficiently implausible in its own terms, and a sufficiently large departure from common Greek practice that we would expect Aristotle to acknowledge it as an innovation and defend it carefully. The fact that he does neither suggests that he is intending to follow tradition and include reading, writing, drawing, and music at stage 3.

A promised discussion of a sort of education that sons must be given "not as something useful or necessary but as something noble and free" (*Pol.* VIII 3 1338$^{a}$30–34) is not a part of Aristotle's works as we have them. Nonetheless, what we do have contains some clues as to the nature of such studies. We know, for example, that music and drawing are both to be taught in part because they are free subjects and contribute to leisure (VIII 3 1338$^{a}$21–22, 1338$^{b}$1–2). We also know that a free person must have theoretical knowledge of various aspects of wealth-acquisition

(I 11 1258$^{b}$9–11). Stage 4 seems a plausible location for some level of training in these subjects.

Aristotle also sometimes refers to what he calls "a well-educated person" (*pepaideumenos*)—someone who studies a subject not to acquire scientific knowledge of it but to become a discerning judge:

> Regarding every sort of theoretical knowledge and every methodical inquiry, the more humble and more estimable alike, there appear to be two ways for the state to be, one that may be well described as scientific knowledge of the subject matter, the other a certain sort of educatedness. For it is characteristic of a person well educated (*pepaideumenos*) in that way to be able accurately to discern what is well said and what is not. We think of someone who is well educated about the whole of things as a person of that sort, and we think that being well educated consists in having the capacity to do that sort of discerning. But in one case, we consider a single individual to have the capacity to discern in, so to speak, all subjects, in the other case, we consider him to have the capacity to discern in a subject of a delimited nature—for there might be a person with the same capacity as the person we have been discussing but about a part of the whole. So it is clear in the case of inquiry into nature too that there should be certain defining marks by reference to which we can appraise the way of its demonstrations, separately from the question of what the truth is, whether thus or otherwise. (*PA* I 1 639$^{a}$1–15)

> Not being well educated is just the inability to discern in each subject which arguments belong to it and which are foreign to it. (*EE* I 6 1217$^{a}$7–10)

Thus a person well educated in medicine, for example, is capable of discerning whether someone has treated a disease correctly (*Pol.* III 11 1282$^{a}$3–7), and the "unconditionally well-educated person," who is well educated in every subject or area, "seeks exactness in each area to the extent that the nature of its subject matter allows" (*NE* I 3 1094$^{b}$23–1095$^{a}$2).

Since a well-educated person is discerning, he knows who is and is not worth listening to on any topic, and so is free from intellectual enslavement to self-proclaimed experts. He is also free from the sort of intellectual enslavement that is often the lot of the narrow specialist, whose imagination is often straitjacketed by the one thing he knows too well. A well-educated person has studied all the "free sciences," but he has done so only "up to a point" and not so assiduously as "to make thought unleisured and low"

(*Pol.* VIII 3 1337$^{b}$14–17). Presumably, then, the citizens of the best city, who are all free and well-educated people, must be trained in these subjects at some stage, if not at stage 4, then later in their lives: "a young person," notoriously, is not "a suitable audience for politics" (*NE* I 3 1095$^{a}$2–3).

That there must be public education in philosophy generally, and not just in ethics or political science, is certain, since philosophy is required for leisure and education in it is needed to make a city good (*Pol.* II 5 1263$^{b}$37–40, 7 1267$^{a}$10–12). Besides, since theoretical wisdom (*sophia*) is at least part of the *sophia* of which *philosophia* is the love, it must be education in *philosophia* that leads to *sophia*'s acquisition, and so to the happiness it constitutes.

Aristotle sometimes applies the term *philosophia* to any science aiming at truth rather than action: "It is also correct that philosophy should be called scientific knowledge of the truth. For the end of theoretical science is truth, while that of practical science is the result (*ergon*) [of action]" (*Met.* II 1 993$^{b}$19–21). In this sense of the term, all the broadly theoretical sciences count as branches of philosophy, and *philosophia* is more or less equivalent in meaning to *epistêmê*. *Philosophia* also has a narrower sense, however, in which it applies exclusively to sciences providing knowledge of starting-points. Thus "natural—that is, secondary, philosophy" has the task of providing theoretical knowledge of the starting-points of perceptible substances (VII 11 1037$^{a}$14–16), whereas "the determination of the unmoving starting-point is a task for a distinct and prior philosophy" (*GC* I 3 318$^{a}$5–6). Since there are just "three theoretical philosophies, mathematical, natural, and theological" (*Met.* VI 1 1026$^{a}$18–19), theological philosophy must be primary, mathematical philosophy tertiary (although it is not, I think, ever referred to as such).

Besides these theoretical philosophies, Aristotle occasionally mentions practical ones, such as "the philosophy of human affairs" (*NE* X 9 1181$^{b}$15). It is among these that his own ethical writings belong:

> It seems to everyone that justice is some sort of equality, and up to a point, at least, they agree with what has been determined in those philosophical accounts in which ethical matters were discussed. For justice is something to someone, and they say it should be something equal to those who are equal. But we should not neglect to consider what sort of equality and what sort of inequality. For this also involves a puzzle for political philosophy. (*Pol.* III 12 1282$^{b}$18–23)

Since puzzles—especially those about starting-points—are the provenance of dialectic and philosophy, as we saw, it seems that political philosophy, like its theoretical fellows, should be primarily concerned with

the starting-points of political science, and with the puzzles to which these give rise. And in fact, as we also saw, puzzles are explicitly mentioned around fifty times in the *Politics*.

In its early stages, at least, the education that politics provides to citizens in the best city overlaps with the habituation designed to cultivate in the young the habits of being pleased and pained that will lead them to form true beliefs about the noble and just things that the subject matter of ethics comprises. Once such habits are acquired, the task remains of explaining why the beliefs these habits support are true by demonstrating them from the appropriate starting-points (*NE* I 4 $1095^{a}30–^{b}8$). This is a task for ethics and politics. By showing that the various conventionally distinguished virtues of character are mean states that help us complete or fulfill our function well, for example, politics shows that they are genuine virtues, and provides a demonstration (or the raw materials for a demonstration) of them, by revealing their relationship to its own starting-point—happiness:

> In every methodical inquiry, there is a difference between what is said philosophically and what is said un-philosophically. That is precisely why even politicians (*tôn politikôn*) should not regard as irrelevant to their work the sort of theoretical knowledge (*theôrian*) that makes evident not only the fact, but also the reason why. For in every line of inquiry this is how the philosopher proceeds. (*EE* I 6 $1216^{b}35–39$)

In the process, it explains why the virtues are worth having, and why the beliefs they help sustain are true. Likewise, it explains why a certain constitution is in fact the best one because it is the one in which those virtues are best cultivated, and genuine happiness best achieved. Once political science has accomplished this task, it falls to political *philosophy* to give us clear understanding of the starting-point by solving the relevant puzzles. Political science and the related philosophy, then, are what transform habituated virtue into full virtue and practical wisdom, by providing them with understanding of the target or end they further: "to those who form their desires and do their actions in accord with reason," knowledge of politics will be "of great benefit" (*NE* I 3 $1095^{a}10–11$), since it is through "habits, *philosophy*, and laws" that cities are made virtuous or good (*Pol.* II 5 $1263^{b}39–40$).

The focus of the various philosophies on starting-points is indicative of their reflective or higher-order status—their being not so much science as *meta*-science. Hence it is by reflecting on first-order sciences generally that primary philosophy begins, seeking insight not so much into the subject matter of each one as into the structure of the whole of the reality—the

beings as such or qua being—these sciences collectively characterize and explain:

> The starting-points and causes of beings are what we are inquiring into, and clearly qua beings. For there is some cause of health and of good physical condition, and there are starting-points and elements and causes of the objects of mathematics, and in general every science that proceeds by thinking or that has some share in thinking is concerned with causes and starting-points, whether more exactly or more simply considered. All these sciences, however, mark off a certain being, a certain genus, and busy themselves with it, but not with being unconditionally or qua being, nor do they produce any account of the what-it-is. Instead, starting from the what-it-is—some making it clear by means of the perceptual capacities, some getting hold of it as a hypothesis—they in this way proceed to demonstrate the things that belong intrinsically to the genus with which they are concerned, either in a more necessary or in a weaker way. Which is why it is evident from such an induction that there is no demonstration of substance nor of the what-it-is, but some other way of making it clear. Similarly too they say nothing as to whether the genus they busy themselves with does or does not exist, because it belongs to the same sort of thinking to make clear both what-it-is and whether it exists. (*Met.* VI 1 $1025^{b}3$–18)

What induction reveals is that the familiar special sciences, each of which deals with a single genus, are all to some degree demonstrative in structure, have essences as their starting-points, and give no arguments for these or demonstrations of them. Hence they "say nothing" about the existence of the genus of beings with which they deal. Induction also reveals that the special sciences fall into three distinct types: natural, mathematical, and theoretical, these being distinguished by the kinds of essences that serve as their starting-points, and whether or not they involve matter. These types are not genera, however, since natural and mathematical beings, for example, belong to multiple genera.

Although theorems of mathematics are usually special to some branch of it, such as arithmetic or geometry, there are also "certain mathematical theorems of a universal character" (*Met.* XIII 2 $1077^{a}9$–10):

> That proportionals alternate might be thought to apply to numbers qua numbers, lines qua lines, solids qua solids, and times qua times, as used to be demonstrated of these separately,

> although it is possible to prove it of all cases by a single demonstration. But because all these things—numbers, lengths, times, solids—do not constitute a single named [type] and differ in form from each other, they were treated separately. But now it is demonstrated universally: for what is supposed to hold of them universally doesn't hold of them qua lines or qua numbers, but qua this [unnamed] type. (*APo.* I 5 74$^{a}$17–25)

That proportionals alternate is a theorem of universal mathematics, but its universality is open to challenge, since lines, numbers, and so on belong to different genera. For the tight unity of the definitions that are scientific starting-points makes it "necessary for the extreme and middle terms in a demonstration to come from the same genus" (I 7 75$^{b}$10–11). Consequently, transgeneric demonstrations seem to be ruled out: "it is impossible that what is proved should cross from one genus to another" (I 23 84$^{b}$17–18). Yet even though the explanation of why the theorem about proportionals holds "in the case of lines and of numbers is different, qua such-and-such an increase in quantity, it is the same" (II 17 99$^{a}$8–10). What the theorem does hold of, in other words, are *quantities* (*Met.* XI 4 1061$^{b}$19–21). *Quantity*, however, is not a genus, since it is unified analogically:

> Of the items used in the demonstrative sciences some are special to each science and others common, but common by analogy, since they are only useful in so far as they bear on the genus falling under the science. Proper, for example, that a line is such-and-such, and straight so-and-so. Common, for example, that if equals are taken from equals, the remainders are equal. (*APo.* I 10 76$^{a}$37–41)

It is an analogically unified *category*, therefore, that serves as the ontological correlate or truth-maker for theorems of universal mathematics (I 32 88$^{b}$1–3).

The status of universal natural science is similar:

> Natural science too has the same way of inquiring as mathematics. For natural science gets a theoretical grasp on the [intrinsic] coincidents and starting-points of beings insofar as they are moving and not qua beings (whereas the primary science, we have said, is concerned with these, only insofar as the underlying subjects are beings, and not insofar as they are anything else). That is why both this science and mathematical science must be posited as *parts* of theoretical wisdom. (*Met.* XI 4 1061$^{b}$27–33)

There must be theorems of universal natural science, then, that, like those of universal mathematics, require distinctive analogically unified ontological correlates. These are what are needed to explain change generally:

> The causes and starting-points of distinct things are distinct in a way, but in a way—if we are to speak universally and analogically—they are the same for all. For we might raise a puzzle as to whether the starting-points and elements of substances and of relations are distinct or the same, and similarly, then, in the case of each of the categories. . . . Or as we say, there is a way in which they are and there is a way in which they are not. For example, the elements of perceptible bodies are presumably: as *form*, the hot and, in another way, the cold, which is the *lack*; and, as *matter*, what is potentially these directly and intrinsically. And both these and the things composed of them are substances, of which these are the starting-points. . . . But since not only the things present in something are causes, but also certain external things, for example, the moving cause, it is clear that starting-point and element are distinct. Both, though, are causes, while what is so in the sense of moving or causing rest is a sort of starting-point, and the starting-point is divided into these two [sorts]. So analogically there are three elements, and four causes and starting-points. But distinct things have distinct ones, as was said, and the direct cause in the sense of a moving cause is distinct for distinct things. . . . And, furthermore, beyond these there is what as the first of all [movers] moves all things. (*Met.* XII 4 $1070^{a}31$–$^{b}35$)

The upshot for universal natural science is that the ontological correlates or truth-makers for its theorems are not species or genera, but beings that, as a type, are characterized in terms of analogical unities: the three fundamental constituents (matter, form, privation) and the four analogically characterized causes (material, formal, final, and efficient) (5 $1071^{a}29$–$1071^{b}2$).

Once the fundamental constituents and starting-points of the various universal sciences have been identified, it falls to the associated philosophy to give an account and—where appropriate—a demonstration of them. Matter, form, the various causes are among philosophy's topics, therefore, but so too are the other transgeneric attributes: being and nonbeing, unity and plurality, likeness and unlikeness, sameness and difference, equality and inequality, priority and posteriority, whole and part (*Met.* IV 2 $1003^{b}22$–$1004^{a}25$). It is because all beings share in these that the various transgeneric principles or axioms hold of them. Since substantial beings

are the kind on which all the other kinds (qualitative, relational, quantitative, and so on) depend, the same branch of philosophy deals with both:

> We do, however, have to say whether it belongs to one science or to distinct ones to get a theoretical grasp both on what in mathematics are called "axioms" and on substance. It is evident, then, that the investigation of these does also belong to one science and, besides, that the one in question is the philosopher's. For these axioms hold of all beings, and not of some special genus separate from the others. Also, because they are true of being qua being and each genus is a genus of being, all people do use them. However, they use them only so far as is adequate for their purposes, that is, so far as the genus extends about which they are carrying out their demonstrations. So, since it is clear that these axioms hold of all things qua beings (for this is what is common to them), it belongs to the person who knows being qua being to get a theoretical grasp on them as well. That is why none of those who investigate a part [of being]—neither geometer nor arithmetician—attempts to say anything about them, as to whether or not they are true. But some natural scientists, as makes perfect sense, did do this, since they were the only ones who thought that they were both investigating nature as a whole and investigating being. But since there is someone further, higher than the natural scientist (for nature is one particular kind (*genos*) of being), it will belong to him whose theoretical grasp is universal and concerned with primary substance also to investigate these axioms. Natural science, however, is a sort of wisdom too, but it is not the primary sort. (*Met.* IV 3 $1005^{a}19$–$1005^{b}2$)

The implication that primary or theological philosophy investigates these matters is one we should for now simply register.

The transgeneric axioms, which serve as starting-points of the universal sciences, also have a starting-point, since the principle of noncontradiction is "by nature the starting-point of all the other axioms too" (*Met.* IV 4 $1005^{b}33$–$34$). For though the other logical axioms, such as the law of excluded middle, which are "the starting-points of a syllogism" ($1005^{b}5$–$8$), also apply to beings as such, noncontradiction is the most stable of them:

> And it is fitting for the one who knows best about each kind (*genos*) to be able to state the most stable starting-points of his subject matter, and so when this is beings qua beings, the

> most stable starting-points of all things. And this person is the philosopher. The most stable starting-point of all, however, is the one it is impossible to be deceived about. For such a starting-point must be both the best known—since it is things that people do not know that they can all be fooled about—and unhypothetical. For a starting-point that must be possessed by anyone who is going to apprehend *any* beings is no hypothesis. And what someone must know who knows anything at all, he must already possess. It is clear, then, that such a starting-point is the most stable of all. What it is, however, we must next state. It is, that the same thing cannot at the same time belong and also not belong to the same thing and in the same respect. (*Met.* IV 3 $1005^{b}10$–20)

The reason noncontradiction has this especially stable status is that we cannot think falsely about it but must "always . . . be grasping the truth" (*Met.* XI 5 $1061^{b}35$–36). This does not mean that we cannot sincerely deny it or say that we do not believe it, since "it is not necessary for what someone says to be what he takes to be so" (IV 3 $1005^{b}25$–26). What it does mean is that a demonstration of the principle of noncontradiction to someone who denies it cannot, except perhaps in cases of confusion, constitute his primary reason for believing it, since there is no reason more basic than it. For a demonstration "is not related to external argument, but to the one in the soul, since a syllogism is not either, for one can always object to external argument, but not always to internal argument" (*APo.* I 10 $76^{b}24$–25).

As a starting-point of all sciences, the principle of noncontradiction cannot be unconditionally demonstrated, since no science can demonstrate its own starting-points:

> While there is no unconditional demonstration of such things, against a given person there is one. For it is not possible to produce a deduction of this from a more convincing starting-point, and yet we at any rate must do so, if indeed we are to demonstrate it unconditionally. (*Met.* XI 5 $1062^{a}2$–5)

Nonetheless, it can be demonstrated "by refutation" (*Met.* IV 4 $1006^{a}11$–12) or "against someone" ($1062^{a}3$):

> And by "demonstrating by refutation" I mean something different from demonstrating, because in demonstrating we might seem to be assuming the starting-point at issue, but if the other person is responsible for an assumption of this sort, it would

> be refutation not demonstration. The starting-point for all such arguments is to ask the disputant not to *state* something to be or not to be (since someone might take this to be assuming the starting-point at issue), but rather to *signify* something both to himself and to another person, since that is necessary if indeed he is to say something. For if he does not grant this, no argument is possible for such a person, either with himself or with another person. But if he does grant it, demonstration will be possible, since there will already be something definite. The one responsible for it, however, is not the one who gives the demonstration but the one who submits to it, since in doing away with argument, he submits to argument. Further, anyone who agrees to this has agreed that something is true without a demonstration, so that not everything will be so-and-so and not so-and-so. (*Met*. IV 4 $1006^{a}15$–28)

The *say-or-signify-something requirement* is the starting-point common to all demonstrations by refutation of the principle of noncontradiction. If the denier satisfies this requirement, *he* takes on the responsibility that allows the philosopher to escape the charge of assuming what is at issue. Hence the denier, in complying with the say-or-signify-something requirement, must unwittingly reveal his commitment to noncontradiction:

> To show to the person who makes opposite affirmations that he speaks falsely, one must get the sort of thing from him that *is* the same as that it is not possible for the same thing to be and not to be at the same time, but that does not *seem* to be the same. (*Met*. XI 5 $1062^{a}5$–9)

Whatever the say-or-signify-something requirement amounts to, and in whatever way Aristotle's use of it to defend the principle of noncontradiction is supposed to work, one salient point is uncontroversial: the principle itself is not an outré one, uncovered through specialized scientific research, but one we all already accept, even if confusion leads us to deny that we do.

A second principle with a status comparable to that of noncontradiction is the principle that natural beings are subject to change (*Ph*. I 2 $185^{a}12$–13). Because this principle is a transgeneric starting-point of universal natural science, a defense of it "is not a contribution to natural science" ($184^{b}25$–$185^{a}5$) but belongs instead (since the principle does not apply to all beings as such) to secondary or natural philosophy. Hence natural philosophy should provide a demonstration—or demonstration by

refutation—of it. The following, whether intended as such or not, seems a plausible candidate:

> Even if it is truly the case that being is infinite and unchanging, it certainly does not appear to be so according to perception; rather, many beings appear to undergo change. Now if indeed there is such a thing as false belief or belief at all, there is also change; similarly if there is imagination, or if anything is thought to be one way at one time and another at another. For imagination and belief are thought to be changes of a sort. (*Ph.* VIII 3 $254^{a}24$–30)

As someone can deny the principle of noncontradiction in words, so he can deny that natural beings are subject to change. To do so internally, however, seems impossible, since the denial of it itself involves self-conscious change.

As a product of confusion, the demand to have it demonstrated that natural bodies are subject to change shows not intellectual probity but lack of discernment:

> To investigate this at all, to seek an argument in a case where we are too well off to require argument, implies poor discernment of what is better and what is worse, what commends itself to belief and what does not, what is a starting-point and what is not. It is likewise impossible that all things should be changing or that some things should always be changing and the remainder always at rest. For against all these, this one thing provides sufficient assurance: we *see* some things sometimes changing and sometimes at rest. (*Ph.* VIII 3 $254^{a}30$–$^{b}1$)

In the case of the principle of noncontradiction too, the demand for a demonstration is a bad sign:

> Now some people do demand that we demonstrate even this, but this is due to lack of educatedness. For it is lack of educatedness not to know what things we should look for a demonstration of and what things we should not. For it is in general impossible to demonstrate everything (for it would go on without limit, so that even then there would be no demonstration). But if there are things we should not look for a demonstration of, these people would not be able to say what starting-point they think has more of a claim to be such. (*Met.* IV 4 $1006^{a}5$–11)

To grasp such fundamental starting-points, then, we do not need specialized training in a science, just the discernment that comes with being well educated. To defend them against skeptics, of course, one needs to be dialectically or philosophically proficient, but such proficiency is what leads the well educated to a clear understanding of them in the first place, free of the intellectual knots that unsolved puzzles constitute.

## *The Happiest Human Life 2: Leisure and Contemplation*

Theology, which is the science dealing with the primary god, is this god's own science in a very strong sense:

> A science would be most divine in only two ways: if the [primary] god most of all would have it, or if it were a science of divine things. And this science alone is divine in both these ways. For the [primary] god seems to be among the causes of all things and to be a sort of starting-point, and this is the sort of science that the [primary] god alone, or that he most of all, would have. (*Met.* I 2 983$^{a}$5–10)

And what this god does in theologizing is to actively contemplate or understand himself:

> It is itself, therefore, that it [the primary god] understands, if indeed it is the most excellent thing, and the active understanding is active understanding of active understanding. (*Met.* XII 9 1074$^{b}$33–35)

As "a judge is meant to be, as it were, justice ensouled" (*NE* V 4 1132$^{a}$21–22), so the primary god is, as it were, theology ensouled—theology actively understood.

A second of Aristotle's thoughts about theology, as we saw in passing, is that it is identical to primary philosophy:

> The most estimable [philosophy] must be concerned with the most estimable genus. Thus, the theoretical are the more choiceworthy of the various sciences, and this [theology] of the theoretical. . . . But if there is some immovable substance, this [theology] will be prior and will be primary philosophy, and it will be universal in this way, namely, because it is primary. And it will belong to it to get a theoretical grasp on being qua

> being, both what it is and the things that belong to it qua being. (*Met.* VI 1 1026$^{a}$21–30)

The primary god is his own starting-point, his own cause, and always and eternally has clear understanding of himself, and so of theology—the science of himself. Hence he does not need dialectic to clarify his understanding by solving the puzzles that muddy it and knot it up. In our case, of course, things are different. Our understanding of theology is darkened by puzzles, so that we do need dialectic. In the limit, however, that need evaporates even for us. For the most exact scientific knowledge of theology comes only at the end of the dialectical process that renders our understanding clear and puzzle free. In the end, then, when we become truly well educated, primary philosophy is replaced by theology in our case too.

We might analogize this conclusion to a more familiar one. In some versions of Christianity, complete happiness consists in the eternal, untrammeled vision of the Christian god, which is achievable by anyone, once they have accepted Christ as their savior and been cleansed of their sins, since all have in their immortal souls a spark of the divine. There is no one, as a result, who is too intellectually humble to see this god. Aristotle does not go that far, but he is recognizably traveling a parallel road. Each human being has understanding, which is something divine. It is darkened by incarnation and by puzzles, which prevent it from seeing clearly. And being well educated in the Aristotelian sense can often resolve these puzzles. In the case of theology, the distinction between being well educated in it and having scientific knowledge of it, like the distinction between theology itself and theological philosophy, breaks down or is overcome. To be sure, the "free" education, in which dialectic and philosophy figures so prominently, may still seem much too demanding to expect of all free citizens. This may be true, but we can at last see why Aristotle thought it was not true, and why his well-educated free citizens do not compromise their status as such when they acquire, in becoming theoretically wise, the most exact form of scientific knowledge:

> Clearly we do not inquire into it [theology] because of its having another use, but just as a human being is free, we say, when he is for his own sake and not for someone else, in the same way we pursue this as the only free science, since it alone is for its own sake. (*Met.* I 2 982$^{b}$24–28)

No doubt, too, it is important to remember that Aristotle is talking about the kinds of human beings that a legislator would pray to have as the citizens of the best of all possible cities (*Pol.* VII 4 1325$^{a}$38–40).

Life for a human being is twofold, as we saw, consisting in *bios*, or (auto)-biographical life, and *zôê*, the life activities that take place within it. In the case of the primary god, on the other hand, *bios* just is the life activity of contemplation to which he is identical:

> And life (*zôê*) too certainly belongs to him [the primary god]. For the activity of understanding is life, and he is that activity; and his intrinsic activity is life that is best and eternal. We say, indeed, that the god is a living being who is eternal and best, so that living and a continuous and everlasting eternity belong to the god, since this is the god. (*Met.* XII 7 $1072^{b}26$–30)

The more of the life activity of contemplation our *bios* contains, therefore, the more like the god's it is in its happiness:

> So the activity of a god, superior as it is in blessedness, will be contemplative. And so the activity of humans, then, that is most akin to this will most bear the stamp of happiness. (*NE* X 8 $1178^{b}21$–32)

In its best form, such activity consists in theologizing, since that is the most exact and most excellent kind of scientific knowing. When we are urged to "immortalize," it is this that we are being urged to do (*NE* X 7 $1178^{b}33$). That is why the *Nicomachean Ethics*, whose focus is on virtues or excellences, and on the best kind of happiness, mentions no form of theoretical activity besides the very best sort in connection with the contemplative life. Elsewhere, however, the picture is somewhat different:

> Among the substances formed by nature, some [such as the heavenly bodies] never for all eternity either come to be or pass away, while others share in coming to be and passing away. Yet, as it happens, our theoretical knowledge (*theôria*) of the former, though they are estimable and divine, is slighter, since as regards both those things on the basis of which one would investigate them and those things about them that we long to know, the perceptual appearances are altogether few. Where the plants and animals that pass away are concerned, however, we are much better off as regards knowledge, because we live among them. For anyone willing to take sufficient trouble can grasp a lot about each genus of them. Each type of theoretical knowledge has its attractions. For even if our contact with eternal things is but slight, all the same, because of its esteem, this

> knowledge is a greater pleasure than our knowledge of everything around us, just as even a chance, brief glimpse of those we love is a greater pleasure than the most exact view of other things, however many or great they are. On the other hand, because we know more of them and know them more fully, our scientific knowledge of things that pass away exceeds that of the others. Further, because they are nearer to us and because their nature is more akin to ours, they provide their own compensations in comparison with the philosophy concerned with divine things. . . . For even in the theoretical knowledge of animals that are disagreeable to perception, the nature that crafted them likewise provides extraordinary pleasures to those who can know their causes and are by nature philosophers. . . . That is why we should not be childishly disgusted at the investigation of the less estimable animals, since in all natural things there is something wondrous. (*PA* I 5 $644^{b}22$–$645^{a}17$)

As in the *Ethics*, a glimpse of the divine remains the best kind of theoretical knowing. The difference is that now the extraordinary pleasures offered by the vaster scientific knowledge of the sublunary realm are also part of the picture.

It is in discussing pleasures, indeed, that Aristotle acknowledges an obvious fact about our nature:

> That it is in connection with each of the perceptual capacities that pleasure arises is clear, since we say that sights and sounds are pleasant. It is clear too that it does so most when the perceptual capacity is at its best and is active in relation to an object that is in the same condition. And when the perceptual capacity and the object being perceived are in conditions like that, there will always be pleasure, so long, at any rate, as what will produce the effect and what will be affected are both present. . . . So long, then, as the intelligible object or the perceptible one and what discerns or contemplates are as they should be, there will be pleasure in the activity. For when what is affected and the thing producing the effect are similar and keep in the same relation to each other, the same thing naturally arises. How is it, then, that no one is pleased continuously? Or is it that we get tired (*kamnei*)? For continuous activity is impossible for all things human. So no continuous pleasure arises either, since it is entailed by the activity. Some things delight us when they are novelties, but later delight us less, because of the same thing. For

> at first thought is called forth and is intensely active regarding them, as happens in the case of our sight when we look hard at something, but later the activity is no longer like that but has grown relaxed, so that the pleasure is dimmed as well. (*NE* X 4 $1174^{b}26–1175^{a}10$)

The tiredness that explains why we cannot be continuously pleased might be the sort a good night's sleep relieves, which is what the verb *kamnein* usually signifies. The immediate mention of novelties, however, suggests that boredom rather than fatigue may be the issue—especially since the reason no activity pleases us for long isn't simply that our batteries wear down:

> In no case, though, is the same thing always pleasant, because our nature is not simple but also has another element in it, in that we are mortals. As a result, if one of the two is doing something, it is contrary to the nature of our other nature, and when the two are equally balanced, what we are doing seems neither painful nor pleasant. For if the nature of some being were simple, the same action would always be most pleasant. That is why the god always enjoys a single simple pleasure. For there is not only an activity of moving but also an activity of unmoving, and pleasure is found more in rest than in movement. "Change in all things is sweet," as the poet says, because of a sort of wickedness. For just as a wicked human being is an easily changeable one, a nature that needs change is also wicked, since it is neither simple nor decent. (*NE* VII 14 $1154^{b}20–31$)

Usually, the fault line in human nature seems to coincide with the divide between action and contemplation, between the merely human practical life of politics and the truly human or divine contemplative life. Now, however, it has opened up within the contemplative life itself. Not even theologizing, it seems, will continuously charm us. At some point boredom or tedium will set in, and we will crave the delights of contemplating something else, something closer to home. *Historia Animalium* offers plenty of examples to choose from. But again we should register that if we were the truly virtuous citizens of the best city, this sort of issue might be less of a problem.

The focus on theoretical wisdom, as the very best kind of contemplation of the very best intelligible object, makes the task that politics faces seem somewhat simpler than it is, suggesting that maximizing the time we spend theologizing will make us happiest. It would be truer to say, it seems, that it will do so by giving us as much theologizing as we can tolerate, and as many contemplative alternatives to it as we may need. This doesn't quite

turn the dazzling brightness of theory into nature's green, but it makes the contemplative life look much less monochrome.

The education that politics provides to citizens of the best city must already include sufficient exposure to the special sciences to enable the induction that leads to the universal sciences and their associated philosophies, since only in that way can theoretical wisdom be reached. It might seem that with this enrichment of the contemplative life comes a need for something closer to firsthand expert scientific knowledge of the special sciences themselves, rather than reflective, meta-level, secondhand knowledge of their starting-points. Consequently, it is of some importance that even in the case of the special sciences, it is those who "can know their causes and are by nature philosophers" who get the extraordinary pleasures they have to offer. It may be less the narrow specialist who is being described, therefore, than the well-educated person, who sees the beauty even in naked mole rats or other unattractive living things because he has had a clear-headed glimpse of the divine, and so can see that:

> The order is not such that one thing has no relation to another but rather there is a relation. For all things are jointly ordered in relation to one thing. (*Met.* XII 10 $1075^{a}17–19$)

The one thing referred to is, of course, the primary god. What distinguishes "those doctors who pursue their craft more philosophically" is that their search for the "primary starting-points of health and disease" leads them to begin by considering nature in general (*Sens.* 1 $436^{a}17–^{b}1$). It can hardly be an accident, in any case, that Aristotle's longest paean to well educatedness forms a preface to *Parts of Animals* (quoted in the previous section), suggesting that this biological treatise itself is a contribution to the very thing praised within it.

One sort of simplification the *Nicomachean Ethics* engages in when portraying the contemplative life is a result of its focus on the *virtues* whether of character or thought, since this has the effect of making the star of the contemplative show—the most virtuous or excellent kind of contemplation—look like the entire cast. A second sort of simplification is caused by its focus on the question of what activity in accord with what virtue *happiness* is, which tends to make the contemplative components of the leisured life look like the leisured life as a whole. This has the further effect of overheightening the contrast between the leisured contemplative life and the unleisured political life that supports it.

As Aristotle conceives of it, political activity is already a step up from productive work, since, as activity in accord with practical wisdom and full virtue of character, it is choiceworthy at least in part because of itself.

Unleisured, productive work, by contrast, is choiceworthy only because of the additional ends that are its products. Engaging in it, therefore, or in certain sorts of it anyway, such as farming or the vulgar crafts, unfits one to be a free citizen of many constitutions, including the best one. Leisure for a productive worker may well just be time off from work. This, no doubt, is how we sometimes conceive of it ourselves. We are at leisure when our time is our own to do with as we please. Aristotle's view is different: we are at leisure not when we are, as we say, doing nothing, or doing as we please, but when what we are doing is choiceworthy because of itself. Much practical activity is, in that sense, already somewhat leisured, even if, because it also has an additional end, it is also somewhat unleisured.

The reason leisure should not consist exclusively of playing games or amusing oneself is that amusement is choiceworthy for the sake of relaxation, and relaxation is not something choiceworthy for its own sake but only because the pains and exertions of unleisure require it:

> Happiness does not lie in amusement, since it would indeed be strange if the end were amusement and we did all the work we do and suffered evils all our lives for the sake of amusing ourselves. For, in a word, we choose everything—except happiness, since end *it* is—for the sake of something else. But to engage in serious matters and to labor for the sake of amusement would evidently be silly and utterly childish. On the contrary, "amusing ourselves so as to engage in serious matters," as Anacharsis puts it, seems to be correct. For amusement is like relaxation, and it is because people cannot labor continuously that they need relaxation. End, then, relaxation is not, since it occurs for the sake of activity. (*NE* X 6 $1176^{b}27$–$1177^{a}1$)

Nonetheless, because, as political animals, we do have to engage in unleisured practical activities, the best city will "introduce amusement, but watch for the appropriate time to use it, as if dispensing it as a medicine [for the ills of unleisure]" (*Pol.* VIII 3 $1337^{b}40$–42). Amusement is a bridge, in other words, between the unleisured life of politics and the leisured one—included in the latter only because of its connection to the former.

Free people should be educated in drawing, in part because it helps them better discern the quality of a craftsman's work, so that they do not "make errors in their private purchases and avoid being cheated when buying or selling products," but also as a leisured pursuit that "makes them good at contemplating the beauty of bodies" (*Pol.* VIII 3 $1338^{a}41$–$^{b}2$). Likewise, they should be educated in reading and writing, because they are "useful for making money, managing a household, acquiring learning,

and for many political actions" (VIII 3 1338a15–19), but also, no doubt, because they too can be leisured pursuits: Aristotle's own love of books was legendary and he refers to his own philosophical works as "leisured discussions" (VII 1 $1323^{b}$39–40). Finally, he should be educated in *mousikê*, a combination of poetry, dance, and music proper, which was a staple of traditional Greek education, solely because it is "a pastime characteristic of free people" (VIII 3 $1338^{a}$22–23). We are already a long way, then, from thinking of the leisured life as consisting of contemplation alone. The peak is not the whole range.

Within that life, moreover, a variety of different virtues have roles to play:

> Since the end is evidently the same for human beings both communally and individually, and since it is necessary for there to be the same defining mark for the best man and for the best constitution, it is evident that the virtues for leisure must be present. For, as has often been said, the end of war is peace, and that of unleisure is leisure. But the virtues useful with a view to leisure and passing the time include both those whose function lies in leisure and those whose function lies in unleisure. For many necessities must be present in order for being at leisure to be possible. That is why temperance is appropriate for our city as are courage and resilience. For as the proverb says, there is no leisure for slaves, and those who are incapable of facing danger courageously are the slaves of their attackers. Now, courage and resilience are for unleisure, philosophy for leisure, and temperance and justice are useful during both, and particular when people remain at peace and are at leisure. For war compels people to be just and temperate, but the enjoyment of good luck and the leisure that accompanies peace make them wantonly aggressive instead. Much justice and temperance are needed, therefore, by those who seem to do best and who enjoy all the things regarded as blessings—people like those, if there are any, as the poets say there are, who live in the Isles of the Blessed. For these above all will need philosophy, temperance, and justice, to the extent that they are at leisure amidst an abundance of such goods. (*Pol.* VII 15 $1334^{a}$11–40)

Philosophy, which must be theoretical wisdom here, since it is exclusively useful in leisure, is also theoretical wisdom in the following passage: "if certain people wish to find enjoyment through themselves, they should not look for a remedy beyond philosophy, since all other pleasures

require [other] human beings" (II 7 1267$^{a}$10–12). For it is the theoretically wise person, who is able—"and more able the wiser he is"—to engage in contemplation "even by himself" (*NE* X 7 1177$^{a}$32–34).

The mention of good luck and arrogance in connection with the virtues needed in leisure strongly suggest that the use temperance and justice (and so practical wisdom) have there concerns external goods, since it is these that luck controls, these whose possession in abundance arrogance commonly accompanies:

> The sorts of character that wealth entails are on the surface for all to see. For the wealthy are wantonly aggressive and arrogant, since they are affected somehow by the possession of wealth (for their general disposition is that of those who possess every good thing, since wealth is a sort of standard of value for the other ones, which is why all of them appear to be purchasable by it). (*Rh.* II 16 1390$^{b}$32–1391$^{a}$2)

Add to this the fact that very abundant external goods are positive hindrances to contemplation (*NE* X 8 1178$^{b}$3–5) and something like the following picture is suggested. As human beings whose lives are not self-sufficient for contemplation, we must live together with others in a city, where—if we are lucky and our city is the best possible—abundant external goods will be available (*Pol.* VII 13 1332$^{a}$28–31). For unless we possess an abundance of such goods, we cannot exercise all the virtues of character—generosity and great-souledness being obvious examples. When we are at leisure, some of these virtues, such as courage and endurance, are inactive, while others, temperance and justice, are active. Since these are inseparable parts of full virtue of character, however, all must be possessed together with practical wisdom, if any are. We must be fully virtuous and practically-wise, it follows, not just when being unleisured activities but also when being at leisure.

The best human life, then, has an unleisured part, consisting of practical political activities, and a leisured one, consisting of contemplative activities of various sorts, as well as other activities of a non-contemplative sort, such as relaxing amusements. The ordering of all these into a single life-structure that best furthers the contemplation of the primary god is a politician's primary task:

> This is always what is most choiceworthy for each individual, to attain what is the topmost. . . . The politician must legislate, therefore, looking to all these things in a way that is in accord with the parts of the soul and their actions, but more to those that are better and those that are ends. . . . But reason and

> understanding are our nature's end, and so it is to further the coming to be and the training of our habits should be established. . . . Supervision of desire must be for the sake of the understanding, and that of the body for the sake of the soul. (*Pol.* VII 14–15 1333$^{a}$29–1334$^{b}$28; also *Protr.* B17–30)

Since every organized system, as we saw, is identified most of all with the constituent in it that has most control (*NE* IX 8 1168$^{b}$31–32), and a life with the structure described is clearly such a system, there is good reason to call it the contemplative life, since contemplation is the end or target that controls it.

If abundant external goods are not to hinder contemplation, however, we must not overindulge in them, or become involved in the sort of competition for them to which greed gives rise. We need temperance, therefore, which pertains to the private use of such goods, and justice, which pertains to their fair and equal distribution. Leisure time itself is also a sort of good, of course, which needs to be used temperately and justly for the same reason. Theoretical wisdom—philosophy—is needed in this regard, too, because it is only if we have experienced contemplation for ourselves that we can grasp as a practical truth that *it* is what complete happiness consists in. That is why, having provided a theoretical argument in support of contemplation's claim to be complete happiness, Aristotle insists that the proof of the pudding, where a practical treatise like the *Ethics* is concerned, lies ultimately in the eating:

> The truth in practical matters must be discerned from the facts of our life, since these are what have the controlling vote. When we examine what has been previously said, then, it must be discerned by bringing it to bear on the facts of our life, and if it is in harmony with the facts, we should accept it, but if it clashes, we should suppose it mere words. (*NE* X 8 1179$^{a}$17–22)

This is what gives the virtues of character a more intimate role to play even within those leisured activities that are strictly contemplative. In the case of the gods, contemplation always appears as the happiness it really is. This is not so for us: to experience contemplation *as happiness*, we must have the virtues of character, since it is they—and they alone—that make our target, and our suppositions about it, correct: "it is virtue, whether natural or habituated, that teaches correct belief about the starting-point [namely, happiness]" (*NE* VII 8 1151$^{a}$18–19). Without the virtues of character, therefore, even if we did engage in contemplation of the god, we could not possibly see it as what all by itself made a life choiceworthy and in

need of nothing. Other activities in which we found much greater pleasure and satisfaction might seem far stronger contenders. We would then be entirely justified from the practical point of view in dismissing Aristotle's arguments to the contrary as mere words. For human beings, then, if not for gods, it is impossible to have theoretical wisdom without also having practical wisdom and the virtues of character.

In the best city, practical wisdom (politics) is something that all the male citizens achieve when, at around the age of forty, they have acquired an experienced eye to complement their theoretical knowledge. But one does not need to have been brought up in the best city to be practically-wise. Even an oligarchy or a democracy, provided it is not too extreme, can provide someone with good enough habits to make him an adequate student of noble and just things, once he is old enough. At the beginning of his ethical studies, he will already have a grasp on the pertinent facts, a grasp on what the noble and just things are, since this good habits can provide unaided. What he does not have is an explanation of these things. That is what, by the end of his studies, he will have acquired. He will have seen how and why noble and just things further happiness.

In the best city, practical wisdom (politics) is ideally placed and rules everything, but it can get by with much less:

> Nonetheless, we should not think that a person who is going to be happy needs many things and grand ones, even if it is not possible for him to be blessed without external goods. For self-sufficiency does not lie in an extreme amount of these and neither does action. But it is possible to do many noble actions even without ruling land and sea, since even from moderate resources a person can do actions in accord with virtue. (This is plain enough to see, since private individuals seem to do decent actions no less, or even more, than people in positions of power.) It is enough, then, to have that amount, since the life of a person who is active in accord with virtue will be happy. (*NE* X 8 1179$^{a}$1–9)

Aristotle's own will reveals that he had a sizable estate, including houses in Chalcis and Stagira, significant capital, a domestic partner, two children, a number of slaves, a large library, and a wide circle of friends (DL V [11–16]). Adequate resources, one would suppose. When he was seventeen, there was the Academy, where he spent twenty years studying under the greatest philosopher there has ever been, himself perhaps excepted. No doubt, the best city would do much better, but adequate training in philosophy the Academy surely provided. Later in life, there was the Lyceum,

and the company of distinguished colleagues and co-workers, his friend Theophrastus prominent among them.

That Aristotle had something approaching practical wisdom—something approaching what he took to be a scientific knowledge of politics—by the time he composed the *Ethics* and *Politics* seems a safe assumption, then, given his own account of what it takes to acquire it (II 5 1263$^{a}$39n). We might infer that he nonetheless somewhat lamented his exclusion from active participation in politics, since as a resident alien in Athens, not a citizen, he was debarred from holding office, participating in the assembly, serving on a jury, owning land, or building a house, since the best life, as he describes it, involves ruling a city as one of its free and unconditional citizens. But it is also possible that he thought that luck had landed him in a better situation, one in which he was free to pursue what he thought of as the leisured life in a way untrammeled by a citizen's responsibilities.


The World of the *Politics*

LDK, 24.XII.97

# *Politics*

# Book I

## I 1

1252a1 Since we see every city to be a sort of community, and every community to be formed for the sake of some good (for everyone does every action for the sake of what seems to be good), clearly, then, while every community aims at some good, the community that has the most control of all, and encompasses all the others, aims both at the good that has the most control of all and does so to the highest degree.[1] And this community is the one called a city, the community that is political.[2]

Now those who think that the positions of politician, king, household manager, and master [of slaves] are the same, are not correct.[3] For they think that each of these differs with regard to large or small number, but not in kind (*eidos*)—for example, if someone rules few people, he is a master, if more, a household manager, if still more, he has the position of politician or king—the assumption being that there is no difference between a large household and a small city.[4] And as for the positions of politician and king, they say that someone who is himself in charge has the position of king, whereas someone who, in accord with the reasons belonging to this sort of science, takes his turn at ruling and being ruled, has the position of politician.[5] But these claims are not true.

What I am saying will be clear, if we investigate the matter in accord with the method of inquiry that has guided us elsewhere.[6] For as in other cases, a composite must be analyzed until we reach things that are incomposite, since these are the smallest parts of the whole, so too it is by investigating the parts of which a city is composed that we shall see better both how these differ from each other, and whether or not it is possible to gain some craft-like expertise concerning each of the things we have mentioned.[7]

## I 2

If we were to see how these things grow naturally from the start, we would in this way, as in other cases, get the best theoretical grasp on them.[8] First, then, those who are incapable of existing without each other necessarily form a couple, as female and male do for the sake of procreation (they do not do so from deliberate choice, but, like other animals and plants, because the urge to leave behind something of the same sort as themselves is natural), and as what rules by nature

and what is by nature ruled do for the sake of preservation.[9] For if something is capable of looking ahead by using its thought, it is by nature a ruler and by nature a master, whereas whatever can labor by using its body is ruled and is by nature a slave.[10] That is why the same thing is advantageous for both master and slave.[11]

Now by nature female is distinguished from slave. For, unlike the blacksmiths who make the Delphian knife, nature produces nothing in a stingy way, but instead makes one thing for one [function].[12] For each one of the instruments will be completed best if it serves one function rather than many.[13] Among barbarians, however, a woman and a slave occupy the same position. The cause of this is that they have no element that is by nature a ruler, but rather their community is that of male and female slave. That is why the poets say "it is reasonable for Greeks to rule barbarians," on the supposition that a barbarian and a slave are by nature the same.[14]

From these two communities, then, the household was first to arise, and Hesiod was correct when he said in his poem, "First and foremost a house, a woman, and an ox for the plow."[15] For to poor people an ox takes the place of a servant.[16] The community that is formed to satisfy everyday needs, then, is the household in accord with nature, whose members are called "meal-sharers" by Charondas and "manger-sharers" by Epimenides the Cretan.[17]

The first community, consisting of several households, for the sake of satisfying needs other than everyday ones, is the village. And above all the village in accord with nature seems to be a colony of the household, consisting as it does of what some have called "sharers of the same milk," sons and the sons of sons.[18] That is why cities were at first ruled by kings, as [barbarian] nations still are.[19] For those who came together were living under kingly rule, since every household is ruled by the eldest as a king. And so the same holds in the colonies, because of the kinship [of the villagers].[20] This is what Homer is describing when he says: "Each one lays down the law for his own wives and children."[21] For they were scattered about, which is how people used to dwell in ancient times. And it is because of this that all people say that the gods too are ruled by a king, namely, that they themselves were ruled by kings in ancient times, and some still are. And human beings model not only the forms of the gods on their own, but their way of life as well.

The community, coming from several villages, when it is complete, is the city, once it has already reached (one might almost say) the limit of total self-sufficiency.[22] It comes to be for the sake of living, but it exists for the sake of living well. That is why every city exists by nature, since

the first communities also do.[23] For this one is their end, and nature is an end. For what each thing is when its coming to be has been completed, this we say is the nature of each—for example, of a human, of a horse, or of a household. Further, its for-the-sake-of-which—namely, its end—is best, and self-sufficiency is both end and best.

1253ª1 From these considerations, then, it is evident that a city is among the things that exist by nature, that a human is by nature a political animal, and that anyone who is without a city, not by luck but by nature, is either a wretch or else better than human, and, like the one Homer 5 condemns, he is "clanless, lawless, and homeless."[24] For someone with such a nature has at the same time an appetite for war, like an isolated piece in a game of checkers.[25]

It is also clear why a human is more of a political animal than any bee or any other gregarious animal. For nature does nothing pointlessly, as we say, and a human being alone among the animals has 10 speech.[26] Now, the voice is a signifier of what is pleasant or painful, which is why it is also possessed by the other animals (for their nature does extend this far, namely, to having the perception of pleasure and pain and signifying them to each other). But speech is for making clear what is advantageous or harmful, and so too what is just or unjust. For 15 this is special to humans, in comparison to the other animals, that they alone have perception of the good and the bad, the just and the unjust, and the rest.[27] And it is community in these that makes a household and a city.[28]

Also the city is prior in nature to the household and to each of us indi- 20 vidually.[29] For it is necessary for the whole to be prior to the part. For if the whole body is put to death, there will no longer be a foot or a hand, except homonymously, as one might speak of a stone "hand" (for, once dead, the hand will be like that).[30] For everything is defined by its function and by its capacity, so that when they are no longer in that condition they should not be said to be the same things but homonymous ones.[31] It is clear, then, that the city both exists by nature and is prior in nature to 25 the individual. For if an individual is not self-sufficient when separated, he will be in a similar state to that of the other parts in relation to the whole.[32] And anyone who cannot live in a community with others, or who does not need to because of his self-sufficiency, is no part of a city, so that he is either a wild beast or a god.[33]

30 Now, although the impulse toward this sort of community exists by nature in everyone, the person who first put one together was also the cause of very great goods. For just as when completed a human is the best of the animals, so when separated from law and judicial proceeding he is worst of all.[34] For injustice is harshest when it possesses

weapons, and a human grows up possessed of weapons for practical wisdom and virtue to use, which may be used for absolutely contrary purposes.[35] That is why he is the most unrestrained and most savage of animals when he lacks virtue, as well as the worst as regards sex and food. But justice is something political.[36] For justice is a political community's order, and justice is judgment of what is just.[37]

## I 3

Since it is evident from what parts the city is composed we must first discuss household management, for every city is composed of households. And the parts of household management correspond in turn to the parts of which the household is composed, and a complete household is composed of slaves and free people.[38] But since we must first inquire into each thing in terms of its smallest parts, and the primary and smallest parts of a household are master and slave, husband and wife, and father and children, we shall have to investigate these three things to see what each of them is and what sort of thing each must be.[39] The three in question are: mastership, "marital" science (for we have no word to describe the union of woman and man), and, third, "procreative" science (this too has not been given a name that is special to it).[40] Let these three that we mentioned stand. But there is also a part, which some believe to be identical to household management, and others believe to be its largest part. We shall have to get a theoretical grasp on how things stand with it too. I am speaking of what is called the craft of wealth acquisition.[41] 1253b1

But let us first discuss master and slave in order to see the things that are related to necessary use, and also to see whether we can acquire something in the way of knowledge about these things that is better than what it is supposed at present.[42] For some people believe that mastership is a sort of science, and that household management, mastership, politics, and kingship are all the same, as we said at the start.[43] But others believe that it is contrary to nature to be a master.[44] For it is by law that one person is a slave and another free, whereas by nature there is no difference between them.[45] That is why to be a master is not just either, since it is based on force.

## I 4

Since property is part of the household, the craft of property acquisition is also a part of household management.[46] For we can neither live nor live well without the necessities. So, just as the specialized crafts

must have their proper instruments if they are going to perform their functions, the same applies to a household manager. Of instruments, however, some are inanimate and some are animate—for example, for the ship's captain a rudder is an inanimate instrument, whereas his lookout is an animate one. For in the crafts an assistant belongs in the kind (*eidos*) that consists of instruments. So too a piece of property is an instrument for living, and property [in general] a number of such instruments, a slave is a sort of animate piece of property, and all assistants are like instruments for [using] instruments.[47] For if each instrument could perform its own function on command or by anticipating instructions, and if—like the statues of Daedalus or the tripods of Hephaestus (which the poet describes as having "entered the assembly of the gods of their own accord")—shuttles wove cloth by themselves, and plectra played the lyre, an architectonic craftsman would not need assistants and masters would not need slaves.[48]

1254ª1 Now, what are commonly said to be instruments are instruments for production, whereas a piece of property is action-involving.[49] For something comes from a shuttle beyond the use of it, but from a piece of clothing or a bed we get only the use. Further, since production and action differ in kind (*eidos*), and both need instruments, their instruments must differ in the same way as they do.[50] Life (*bios*), though, is action, not production.[51] That is why a slave is an assistant in the things related to action.[52] And something is said to be a piece of property in the same way as it is said to be a part. For a part is not just a part of another thing, but is *wholly* that thing's, and the same also holds of a piece of property. That is why a master is just his slave's *master*, not simply his, while a slave is not just his master's *slave*, but wholly his.

From these considerations it is clear what the nature and capacity of a slave are. For anyone who, though human, is by nature not his own but someone else's is by nature a slave. And a human being is someone else's when, though human, he is a piece of property, and a piece of property is an instrument that is for action and separate [from its owner].[53]

## I 5

But whether anyone is like that by nature or not, and whether it is better and just for anyone to be a slave or not (all slavery being, on the contrary, against nature)—these are the things we must investigate next. And it is neither difficult to get a theoretical grasp on the answer by argument nor to learn it from what actually happens. For ruling and being ruled are not only necessary, they are also advantageous, and some things are set apart straight from birth, some to rule, others to

be ruled. And there are many kinds (*eidos*) of rulers and ruled, and the rule is always better when the ruled are better—for example, rule over humans is better than rule over wild beasts.[54] For a function that is accomplished by something better is a better function, and where one thing rules and another is ruled, there is a certain function belonging to these. For in whatever is composed of a number of things, whether continuous with each other or discontinuous, and becomes one communal thing, a ruler and a ruled are always seen, and this is present in animate beings on the basis of their entire nature. For even in things that do not share in living some rule exists—for example, in a harmony.[55] But these topics presumably lie far outside our investigation.

In the first place, a living being is composed of soul and body, and of these the first is by nature the ruler, the latter by nature the ruled. And one must investigate what is natural in things whose condition is in accord with nature, not in corrupted ones. That is why we must also get a theoretical grasp on the human being who is in the best possible condition, both of soul and of body, since in him this is clear. For in depraved people, and those in a depraved condition, the body will often seem to rule the soul, because their condition is base and in disaccord with nature.

But it is, as we were saying, in a living being, that we can first get a theoretical grasp on both the rule of a master and political rule. For the soul rules the body with the rule of a master, whereas the understanding rules desire with political rule or kingly rule.[56] In these cases, it is evident that it is in accord with nature and advantageous for the body to be ruled by the soul, and for the affective part to be ruled by the understanding and the part that has reason, whereas if the relation were equal or reversed it would be harmful to all concerned. And again in the case of a human being and the other animals the same holds. For domestic animals are by nature better than wild ones, and it is better for all of them to be ruled by human beings, since in this way they secure their preservation.[57] Further, the relation of male to female is that of what is better by nature to what is worse, and that of ruler to ruled. And it must be the same way in the case of all human beings.

Those people, then, who are as different [from others] as body is from soul or beast from human (and they are in this condition if their function is to use their bodies, and this the best thing to come from them)—those people are by nature slaves. And it is better for them to be subject to this rule, if indeed it is also better for the other things we mentioned. For he is by nature a slave who is capable of belonging to someone else, belongs to someone else because of this, and shares in reason to the extent of perceiving it but not to the extent of having it himself. For the other animals assist not because they perceive the reason but because of

feelings.[58] Also, the difference in the use made of them is small. For in relation to the necessities bodily help comes from both, both from slaves and from domestic animals.

Now, nature tends indeed to make the bodies of free people and slaves different, the latter strong enough to be used for necessities, the former upright in posture and useless for that sort of work, but useful for political life—which is itself divided into what is useful for war and what is useful for peace. But the contrary also often happens, namely, some have the bodies of freemen, whereas others have the souls.[59] For this at any rate is evident: if people were to become in body alone as distinguished as the statues of the gods, everyone would say that those who fell short deserved to be their slaves.[60] And if this is true in the case of the body, it is even more just to make this distinction in the case of the soul. But it is not as easy to see the beauty of the soul as it is to see that of the body.

1255ª1 It is evident, therefore, that by nature some people are free and others are slaves, for whom slavery is both advantageous and just.

## I 6

But that those who make the contrary claim are also correct in a way is not difficult to see.[61] For someone is said to be being ruled as a slave, or to be a slave, in two ways, since *by law* too a person can be a slave or be ruled as a slave. For the law [in question] is a sort of agreement by which what is conquered in war is said to belong to the conquerors. Against the justice of this, then, many of those versed in the law bring a writ of illegality, analogous to that brought against a [legislative] speaker, on the grounds that it is a terrible thing if what is overcome by force is going to be the slave of, and ruled by, what is able to use force and is superior in power.[62] And some hold the latter view, others the former, even among the wise.

The cause of this dispute, and what produces a going back-and-forth in the arguments, is that in a way virtue, when it is equipped with resources, is most able to use force, and what conquers is always superior in something good, so that it seems that there is no force without virtue, the dispute being only about justice.[63] For because of this view one side believes that justice is goodwill, whereas the other believes that justice is precisely this—the rule of the stronger.[64] At any rate, if these arguments are left aside, the other arguments have neither strength nor anything to persuade us that the one who is better in virtue should not rule, that is, be master.

Some people, though, cleave exclusively to what they think is a sort of justice (since the law is something just), and maintain that

enslavement in war is just. But at the same time they say that it is not just. For it is possible for wars to be started unjustly, and there is no way in which someone would say that the person who does not deserve to be in a condition of slavery is a slave—otherwise, it could turn out that those believed to be the most well bred are slaves or the children of slaves, if any of them happen to be taken captive and sold. That is why indeed the people who hold this view are not willing to say that *these* are slaves, but only that barbarians are. And yet, in saying this, what they are seeking is nothing other than what is by nature a slave—which is just what we talked about at the start. For they have to say that some people are slaves everywhere, others nowhere.

It is the same way with good-breeding.[65] For people think of themselves as well bred not just when they are in their own country, but wherever they are, whereas they think of barbarians as well bred only at home, on the supposition that it is one thing to be *unconditionally* well bred and free, and another to be so but not unconditionally—as the Helen of Theodectes does when she says: "Sprung from divine roots on both sides, who would think that I deserve to be called a hired servant?"[66] But when people say this, it is by nothing but virtue and vice that they are defining slave and free, well bred and ill bred. For they think that in just the way that human comes from human, and wild beast from wild beast, so too good people come from good ones. But, though nature tends to do this, it is nonetheless often unable to do so.[67]

It is clear, then, that there is some reason for the dispute and that the one lot are not always slaves by nature nor the other free. But it is also clear that in some cases there is such a distinction—cases where it is advantageous and just for the one to be ruled as a slave and the other to rule as a master, and where the one should be ruled and the other should exercise the rule that is natural for him (so that he is in fact ruling as a master), and where misrule is disadvantageous to both.[68] For the same thing is advantageous for both part and whole, body and soul, and a slave is a sort of part of his master—a sort of living but separate part of his body. That is why there is in fact a sort of mutual advantage and mutual friendship for such masters and slaves as deserve to be by nature so related.[69] When their relationship is not that way, however, but is in accord with law, and they have been subjected to force, the contrary holds.

## I 7

It is also evident from these considerations that the rule of a master and the rule of a politician are not the same, and that the sorts of rule are not all the same as each other either, as some people claim. For one

is rule over people who are by nature free, the other over slaves. Rule by a household manager is a monarchy, since every household has one ruler; rule of a politician is rule over people who are free and equal.[70]

Now, someone is said to be a master not in virtue of his scientific knowledge but in virtue of being such-and-such a sort of person.[71] The same is true of both slave and free. Nevertheless, there *could* be such a thing as mastership or slavecraft—for example, of the sort that was taught by the man in Syracuse, who, for a fee, used to teach slave boys their day-to-day services.[72] Lessons in such things as these might well be extended to include cooking and other services of that kind (*genos*). For distinct slaves have distinct functions, some of which are more estimable, others more concerned with providing the necessities—"slave before slave, master before master," as the proverb says.[73]

All such sciences, then, are the business of slaves, whereas mastership is the science of using slaves. For being a master does not consist in the acquiring of slaves but in the using of them. But there is nothing grand or dignified about this science. For what the slave needs to scientifically know how to do is what the master needs to scientifically know how to prescribe. That is why for those who have the resources not to bother with such things a steward takes on this office, while they themselves engage in politics or do philosophy.[74] As for the science of acquiring slaves (that is, the just variety of it), it is distinct from both of these, and is a kind of warfare or hunting.[75]

Where master and slave are concerned, then, let the distinctions be made in this way.

## I 8

Let us now get a general theoretical grasp on all property and the craft of wealth acquisition, in accord with our guiding way [of inquiry], since in fact a slave has turned out to be a part of property.[76] The first puzzle we might raise is whether the craft of wealth acquisition is the same as household management, or a part of it, or an assistant to it.[77] And if it is an assistant, whether it is in the way that shuttle-making is to weaving, or in the way that bronze-smelting is to statue-making. For these do not assist in the same way, but rather the first provides instruments, the second the matter. (By the matter I mean the underlying subject from which the product is made—for example, wool for the weaver and bronze for the statue-maker.)

Now, it is clear that household management is not the same as the craft of wealth acquisition, since the former uses resources, while the latter provides them. For [if they are identical] what science will

there be that uses what is in the household, except that of household management? But whether the craft of wealth acquisition is a part of household management or a science of a distinct kind (*eidos*) is a matter of dispute. For if it belongs to someone who possesses the craft of wealth acquisition to get a theoretical grasp on the various sources of wealth and property, and property and wealth include many parts, we shall first [have to investigate] whether farming—and, in universal terms, the supervision and acquisition of food—is a part of wealth-acquisition or some distinct kind (*genos*) of thing.[78]

But then there are indeed many kinds (*eidos*) of food, because the ways of life of both animals and humans are also many. For it is impossible to live without food, so that differences in food have produced distinct ways of life among the animals. For some beasts live in herds and others live scattered about, whichever is advantageous for getting their food, because some of them are carnivorous, some herbivorous, and some omnivorous. And so with a view to their convenience and their preference in these matters, nature has made their ways of life different. And since the same things are not naturally pleasant to each, but rather distinct things to distinct ones, among the carnivores and herbivores themselves the ways of life are different.

The same is also true of human beings. For their ways of life differ greatly. The most idle are herders. For they—without effort and while at leisure—get their food from their domestic animals. Although, when it is necessary for their herds to change pasture, they too have to move around with them, as if they were farming a living farm. Others live from hunting, and distinct sorts from distinct sorts of it: some from raiding; some—those who live near lakes, marshes, rivers, or a suitable sort of sea—live from fishing; and some off birds or wild beasts. But the kind (*genos*) of human being that is most numerous lives off the land and off cultivated crops.

The ways of life, then, at any rate those that naturally develop of themselves and do not provide food through exchange or commerce, are pretty much these: nomadic, raiding, fishing, hunting, farming. But some people live pleasantly by mixing together several of these, supplementing their way of life where it happens to be deficient with regard to self-sufficiency—for example, some live both a nomadic and a raiding life, others, both a farming and a hunting one, and similarly in the case of the others, each passing their time in the way need, together with other things, necessitates.

Property of this sort, then, is evidently given by nature itself to all living things straight from when they are first conceived, and similarly too when they have reached completion. And in fact some

animals produce at the start, together with their offspring, enough food to last the latter until such time as it is able to get it for itself—for example, those that produce grubs or eggs. Animals that give birth to live offspring, on the other hand, carry food for their offspring in their own bodies for a certain period—namely, the natural substance called milk. It is clear, then, in the case of developed things too, that we must suppose both that plants are for the sake of animals, and that the other animals are for the sake of humans, domestic ones both for using and eating, and if not all, nonetheless most, wild ones for food and other sorts of support, so that clothes and other instruments may be got from them. If then nature makes nothing incomplete and nothing pointlessly, it must be that nature made all of them for the sake of humans.[79] That is why even warfare, since hunting is a part of it, will in a way be by nature a craft of property acquisition—one that should be used not only against wild beasts but also against those humans who are naturally suited to be ruled but unwilling to be, on the supposition that this sort of warfare is by nature just.

One kind (*eidos*) of craft of property acquisition, then, is by nature a part of household management, in that either there must be available, or it itself must arrange to make available, a store of what is both necessary for living and useful to the community of city or household. At any rate, true wealth seems to consist of such things. For self-sufficiency in this sort of property, with a view to living the good life, is not unlimited, as Solon in his poetry says it is: "No boundary to wealth has been laid down for human beings."[80] For one has been laid down just as in the other crafts. For there is no instrument of any craft that is unlimited in quantity or size, and wealth is a collection of instruments for politicians and household managers.[81]

It is clear, then, that there is a natural sort of craft of property acquisition for household managers and politicians, and what the cause of this is.

## I 9

But there is another kind (*genos*) of craft of property acquisition, which they most of all call—and justly so—*the craft of wealth acquisition*. It is because of it that wealth and property seem to have no limit. For many people think that the craft of wealth acquisition is one and the same thing as what we talked about, because the two are close neighbors. But it is neither the same as what we were talking about nor all that far from it. One of them, though, exists by nature, whereas the other does

not exist by nature, but comes more from a sort of experience and craft knowledge.[82]

Concerning the latter, let us take the following as our starting-point.[83] Each piece of property has two uses, both of which are uses of it intrinsically, but not uses of it intrinsically in the same way.[84] Instead, one properly belongs to the thing, while the other does not properly belong to it—for example, as regards a shoe, its use in wearing it and its use in exchange.[85] For both are uses to which a shoe can be put. For someone who exchanges a shoe in return for money or food with someone who needs a shoe is using the shoe insofar as it is a shoe. But this is not the use that properly belongs to it. For it does not come to exist for the sake of exchange. And it is the same way with other pieces of property as well. For the craft of exchange applies to all of them, and first started from the natural circumstance of some human beings having more than enough and others less. (It is also clear from this that the craft of commerce does not by nature belong to the craft of wealth acquisition, since it was up to the point at which they had enough that it was necessary for them to engage in exchange.[86]) It is evident, then, that in the first community, that is, the household, there is no function for exchange, but only when the community already consists of more members. For the members of the household used to share all their own things, whereas those in separate households in turn shared many other things, and it was necessary to make a trade of these in accord with the need, as many barbarian peoples still do, through exchange. For they exchange useful things for other useful things, but nothing more than that—for example, they take and give wine in return for corn, and so on with everything else of this sort.

This sort of craft of exchange, then, is neither contrary to nature nor is it any kind (*eidos*) of craft of wealth acquisition. For it existed as a replenishment of a self-sufficiency that is in accord with nature.[87] Nevertheless, the craft of wealth acquisition arose from it, and did so in accord with reason. For when supplies came from increasingly foreign sources, because of importing what was needed and exporting the surplus, the use of money had of necessity to be devised. For not all the natural necessities are easily transportable. And that is why with a view to exchange people agreed with each other to give and take something that was itself one of the useful things and that was easily adaptable to the needs of living—for example, iron, silver, and anything else of that sort. At first, its value was determined simply by size and weight, but finally people also put a stamp on it, in order to save themselves the trouble of measuring it. For the stamp was put on to signify the amount.

1257ᵇ1 Once money was devised, necessary exchange gave rise to the second of the two kinds (*eidos*) of crafts of wealth acquisition, namely, the craft of commerce. At first, it was presumably a simple affair, but then through experience it became more of a craft of how and from what sources the greatest profit could be made through exchange. That is why it seems that the craft of wealth acquisition is most of all concerned with money, and that its function is to be able to get a theoretical grasp on the sources from which a quantity of wealth will come. For it is productive of wealth and money. For wealth is often assumed to be a quantity of money, because this is what the craft of wealth acquisition and the craft of commerce are concerned with.

But sometimes, contrariwise, money seems to be empty trash and to exist entirely by convention and not by nature at all, because, when changed by its users, it has no value and is useless for acquiring the necessities, and often someone who is rich in money will be unprovided with the food that is necessary. Yet it is absurd for something to be wealth if someone well provided with it will die of hunger, like Midas in the fable, when everything set before him turned to gold in answer to his own greedy prayer. That is why people seek another notion of what wealth and the craft of wealth acquisition are, and correctly so. For the craft of natural wealth acquisition and natural wealth are of another sort, and it is [a part of] household management, whereas the craft of commerce is productive of goods, not in every way, but through their exchange. And it seems to be concerned with money, since money is the element and limit of exchange.[88]

And the wealth that derives from this sort of craft of wealth acquisition *is* unlimited. For just as the craft of medicine aims at unlimited health, and each of the crafts aims to achieve its end in an unlimited way (since each tries to achieve it as fully as possible), whereas the things that further the end are not unlimited (for the end is the limit of all of them), so too of this sort of craft of wealth acquisition there is no limit where its end is concerned, since its end is wealth of this sort, namely, the possession of money. The sort of craft of wealth acquisition that is a part of household management, on the other hand, does have a limit. For this [providing unlimited wealth] is not the function of household management. That is why, in one way it appears to be necessary for all wealth to have a limit, and yet, if we look at what actually happens, the contrary seems true, since all acquirers of wealth go on increasing their money without limit.[89] The cause of this is the close relation between the two. For the use, being of the same thing, goes back and forth between the two sorts of crafts of wealth acquisition.[90] For the use is of the same property in both cases, but not with respect to the same

thing. Instead, in one case the end is increase, in the other, something else. So it seems to some people that this is the function of household management, and so they end up thinking that they should either preserve the substantial amount of money they have or increase it without limit.

The cause, though, of their being so disposed is that what they take seriously is living, not living well.[91] And since their appetite for living is unlimited, they also have an appetite for an unlimited amount of what is productive of it. But even those who do aim at living well seek what furthers bodily gratification, so that since this too appears to depend on having property, they spend all their time acquiring wealth. And the other kind (*eidos*) of craft of wealth acquisition arose because of this. For since their gratification lies in excess, they seek the craft that is productive of the excess needed for gratification. And if they cannot provide it through the craft of wealth acquisition, they try to do so by means of some other cause of it, using each of their capacities not in accord with nature. For it does not belong to courage to produce wealth but to produce confidence in the face of danger, nor does it belong to generalship or medicine to do so, but rather to produce victory and health, respectively. These people, however, make all of these into the craft of wealth acquisition, on the supposition that acquiring wealth is the end, and that everything must further the end.

About the craft of unnecessary wealth acquisition, what it is, and what the cause is of our need of it, we have said what we have to say, and also about the necessary sort, that it is a distinct sort, that it is a natural part of household management, being concerned with food, and that it is not unlimited like the other, but has a defining mark.[92]

## I 10

Clearly, we have also found the solution to the puzzle raised at the start about whether the craft of wealth acquisition belongs to a household manager and a politician, or whether this is not so, but wealth must rather be available to him.[93] For just as politics does not make humans, but takes them from nature and uses them, so too nature must provide land or sea or something else as a source of food, so a household manager must manage what comes from these sources in the appropriate way. For it does not belong to weaving to make wool but to use it, and to know which sorts are usable and suitable or bad and unsuitable.

For someone might be puzzled as to why the craft of wealth acquisition is a part of household management, whereas the craft of medicine is not, even though the members of a household need to be healthy,

just as they need to live and have every other necessity. But since there is a way in which it does belong to a household manager and a ruler to see even to health, whereas in another way it does not belong to them, but rather to a doctor, so too in the case of wealth there is a way in which it belongs to a household manager to see to it, and another in which it does not belong to him but to an assistant craft. But above all, as was said earlier, nature must ensure that this is on hand.[94] For it is a function of nature to provide food for what is born, since the leftovers of what they are born from are food for each one.[95] That is why in all cases the craft of acquiring wealth from crops and animals is in accord with nature.

But since it is of two sorts, as we said, one belonging to the craft of commerce and the other to household management, and the latter is necessary and praiseworthy, whereas the craft of exchange is justly blamed (for it is not in accord with nature but involves taking from others), usury is most reasonably hated, because it gets wealth from money itself, rather than just what money was provided for.[96] For money was introduced for the sake of exchange, but interest makes money itself grow bigger. That in fact is how it got its name. For offspring (*tokos*) resemble their parents, and interest (*tokos*) is money that comes from money. And so of all the sorts of crafts of wealth acquisition this one is the most unnatural.

## I 11[97]

Since we have adequately discussed what relates to knowledge, we must go through what relates to use.[98] For of all such things theoretical knowledge is something free, whereas experience is something necessary.[99] The practically useful parts of the craft of wealth acquisition are: being experienced with livestock—for example, with what sorts of horses, cattle, sheep, and similarly other animals yield the most profit in different places and conditions (for one needs experience of which of these, in comparison to each other, are the most profitable breeds, and which sorts in which places, since one thrives in one place, another in another). Next, being experienced in farming, which is now divided into land planted with fruit and land planted with cereals, and in beekeeping and in the rearing of the other creatures, whether fish or fowl, from which we can derive some benefit.[100] Of the craft of wealth acquisition of the most proper and primary sort, then, these are the parts.

The most important part of the craft of exchange, on the other hand, is trading, which has three parts: ship-owning, transport, and marketing. These are distinct from each other in that some are safer, others offering

greater profit. The second part is money-lending; the third is wage-earning, of which one sort involves the vulgar craftsmen, whereas the other involves those who have no craft knowledge but are useful with their bodies only.[101]

A third kind (*eidos*) of craft of wealth acquisition comes between this one and the primary one, since it contains some part of the natural one and some part of the craft of exchange. It is concerned with things that come from the earth, or are extracted from the earth, that are inedible but useful—for example, logging and every sort of mining. And this now includes many kinds (*genos*), since many kinds (*eidos*) of things are mined from the earth.

About each of these we have now spoken in universal terms. And whereas an exact accounting of each particular one might be useful for putting them into practice, it would be vulgar to spend one's time on it.[102] Now, the most craft-like of these practices are those in which there is the least luck involved; the most vulgar, those in which the body is most damaged; the most slavish, those in which the body is used the most; the most ill-bred, those least in need of virtue in addition.[103]

But since some people have written on these topics—for example, Chares of Paros and Apollodorus of Lemnos on how to farm both grain and fruit, and others on similar topics—anyone who cares to can get a theoretical grasp on them from these.[104] Still, the scattered things that are said about how people have succeeded in acquiring wealth should be collected, since all of them are beneficial for those who hold the craft of wealth acquisition in esteem. For example, the one about Thales of Miletus.[105] This involved an insight related to the craft of wealth acquisition, which, though attributed to him because of his wisdom, happens to be universally applicable. For people were reproaching him because of his poverty, claiming that it showed his philosophy was of no benefit.[106] The story goes that he apprehended from his astronomy that a good olive harvest was coming. So, while it was still winter, he raised a little money, and put a deposit on all the olive presses in Miletus and Chios, hiring them at a low rate, because no one was bidding against him.[107] When the olive season came and many people all of a sudden sought olive presses at the same time, he hired them out at whatever rate he chose. He collected a lot of money, showing that philosophers could easily become rich if they wished, but that this is not what they take seriously.

Thales, then, is said to have demonstrated his own wisdom in this way. But, as we said, this sort of insight related to the craft of wealth acquisition—namely, establishing a monopoly for oneself if one can—is universally applicable. That is why some cities also do this when they

are in need of resources, since they create a monopoly on goods for sale. For there was a man in Sicily, who used some money that had been deposited with him to buy up all the iron from the foundries, and later, when the merchants came from their warehouses to buy iron, he was the only seller.[108] He did not increase his prices very much, but all the same he added a hundred talents to his original fifty. When Dionysius heard about this, he told the man to take his money, but on the condition that he remain in Syracuse no longer, as he had discovered ways of making money that were harmful to Dionysius' own affairs.[109] Yet this man's insight was the same as Thales', since each contrived to develop a monopoly for himself.

It is also useful for politicians to know about these things, since many cities need the craft of wealth acquisition and revenues of this sort just as households do, but more so. That is why indeed some people active in politics restrict their political activities to these matters alone.

## I 12

Since there were three parts to household management, one being mastership (which we discussed earlier), another the science of fatherhood, and a third, marital science, [let us now discuss the other two].[110] For a wife and children are both ruled as free people, but not with the same mode of rule. Instead, a wife is ruled in a political way, children in a kingly one.[111] For a male, unless he is somehow formed contrary to nature, is by nature more capable of leading than a female, and someone older and complete than someone younger and incomplete.

Now in most cases of rule by politicians people take turns at ruling and being ruled, because they tend to be equal by nature and to differ in nothing. All the same, whenever one person is ruling and another being ruled, the one ruling tries to distinguish himself in dress, titles, and honors from the ruled—as for example in what Amasis said about his footbath.[112] Male, by contrast, is *always* related to female in this way.

The rule over the children, on the other hand, is kingly. For a begetter rules on the basis both of affection and age, and this is a kind (*eidos*) of kingly rule. That is why Homer spoke well when he addressed Zeus, who is king of them all, as "Father of gods and men."[113] For a king should be superior by nature, but belong to the same kind (*genos*), which is just the condition of older in relation to younger, and begetter to child.

# I 13

It is evident, accordingly, that household management is more seriously concerned with humans than with inanimate property, with their virtue more than with the virtue (which we call wealth) of acquisition, and with the virtue of free people more than with that of slaves.

Now the first puzzle to raise about slaves is whether the slave has some other virtue, beyond those he has as an instrument or servant, that is more estimable, such as temperance, courage, justice, and other such states of character, or whether he has none beyond those having to do with the bodily assistance he provides.[114] For there is a puzzle either way. For if slaves do have these other virtues, in what respect will they differ from free? If they do not, it is strange, since slaves are human and have a share in reason. Pretty much the same question arises concerning woman and child, as to whether there are virtues proper to them—whether a woman must be temperate, courageous, and just or not, and whether there are temperate and intemperate children or not.

This question, then, about what is ruled by nature and what is ruling by nature must be investigated in universal terms, as to whether their virtue is the same or distinct. For if both of them must share in noble-goodness, why should one of them rule and the other be ruled once and for all?[115] (For it cannot be that the difference between them is one of more or less. For being ruled and ruling differ in kind (*eidos*), not in degree.[116]) On the other hand, if the one must share in it, whereas the other must not, that would be a wonder. For if the ruler is not going to be temperate and just, how will he rule well? And if the ruled is not going to be, how will he be ruled well? For if he is intemperate and cowardly, he will do none of his duties. It is evident, therefore, that both must share in virtue, though there must be differences (*diaphora*) in it, just as there are in those who are by nature ruled.[117]

Consideration of the soul leads at once to this view. For in it there is by nature a part that rules and a part that is ruled, and the virtue of each, we say, is distinct, namely, that of the part that has reason and that of the non-rational part. It is clear, furthermore, that the same holds in the other cases as well, so that most instances of ruling and being ruled are by nature such. For free rule slaves, male rules female, and a grown man rules a child in different ways, because, while the parts of the soul are present in all these people, they are present in different ways. For a slave does not have the deliberative part of the soul at all; the female has it but it lacks control; a child has it but it is incomplete.[118]

We must take it, therefore, that the same necessarily also holds concerning the virtues of character, namely, that all must share in them, but not in the same way—instead, each must have a sufficient share for his own function. That is why a ruler needs to have complete virtue of character.[119] For his function is unconditionally that of an architectonic craftsman, and his reason is an architectonic craftsman.[120] And each of the others must have as much virtue as pertains to them. So it is evident that all those mentioned have virtue of character, and that the temperance of a man is not the same as that of a woman, and neither is the courage or justice, as Socrates supposed, but rather men have ruling courage and women assistant courage, and the same holds of the other virtues.[121]

This will also be clear if we instead investigate each particular one. For people who speak in universal terms are deceiving themselves when they say that virtue is good condition of the soul, or correct action, or something of that sort. For it is far better to enumerate the virtues, as Gorgias does, than to define them in this way.[122] That is why the way the poet spoke about woman is the way we must think about every case.[123] He said, "to a woman silence is a crowning glory"—whereas to a man this does not apply. Since a child is incomplete, it is clear that his virtue too is not his in relation to himself, but in relation to his end and his leader.[124] And the same holds of a slave in relation to his master. But we said that a slave is useful in relation to the necessities, so of [ethical] virtue too he clearly needs only a little—just so much as will prevent him from being deficient in his functions because of intemperance or cowardice.

If what has now been said is true, however, someone might raise the puzzle of whether craftsmen too need to have virtue. For shortcomings often occur in their works through intemperance. Or is this case very different? For a slave shares in his master's living, whereas a craftsman is at a greater remove, and virtue pertains to him just to the extent that slavery does.[125] For a vulgar craftsman has a kind of limited slavery.[126] Moreover, a slave is among the things that exist by nature, whereas no shoemaker is, nor any other sort of craftsman. It is evident, therefore, that the cause of such virtue in a slave must be the master, not the one who possesses the science of teaching him his functions.[127] That is why those people do not speak correctly who withhold reason from slaves, but tell us to make use only of prescriptive commands.[128] For slaves should be warned more than children.[129]

Well, where these matters are concerned let them be determined in this way. As for man and woman, father and children, the virtue relevant to each of them, what is good in their relationship with each

other and what is not good, and how to achieve the good and avoid the bad—it will be necessary to go through all these in connection with the constitutions.[130] For since every household is part of a city, and these are parts of a household, and the virtue of the part must look to the virtue of the whole, it is necessary to look to the constitution in educating both women and children, if indeed it makes any difference to the excellence of a city that its children be excellent, and its women too.[131] And it must make a difference. For the women are half of the free population, and from children come those who share in the constitution.[132]

So, since we have determined these matters, and must discuss the rest elsewhere, let us put aside the present accounts as complete and make a new beginning to our discussion. And let us first investigate those who have expressed views about the best constitution.

# Book II

## II 1

Since our deliberately chosen project is to get a theoretical grasp on which political community is superior to all others for people who are able to live as far as possible in the way they would pray to live, we must investigate other constitutions too, both some of those used in cities that are said to be in good legislative order, as well as any others that happen to have been spoken about by anyone and that seem to be in good condition. Our aim is to see what is correct and useful in them, and further, to show that we are undertaking our methodical inquiry, and seeking something else that is beyond the presently existing constitutions, not because we wish to devise subtleties but because they are not in fact in good condition.[133]

We must make a start, however, at what is just the natural starting-point of this sort of investigation. For all the citizens must share either everything, or nothing, or some things but not others.[134] Now it is evidently impossible for them to share nothing. For a constitution is a sort of community, and so they must, in the first place, share their location. For the location of one single city is a single one, and citizens are sharers of that one single city. But of the things that it is possible to share, is it better for all of them to be shared in a city that is to be well managed, or is it better for some of them to be shared but not others? For the citizens could share children, women, and property with each other, as in Plato's *Republic*.[135] For Socrates claims there that children, women, and property should be held communally. Is the condition we have now better, then, or one that is in accord with the law described in the *Republic*?

## II 2

For the women to be common to all both involves many other difficulties, and this one especially, namely, that what causes Socrates to say that things must be legislated in this way is not evidently what follows from his arguments. Further, the end he says his city should have is impossible, as in fact described, yet nothing has been determined about how we should define it. I am talking about its being best for a city to be as far as possible entirely *one*. For this is the hypothesis Socrates adopts.[136] And yet it is evident that the more a city becomes one the less

of a city it will be. For a city is in its nature a sort of multitude, and as it becomes more one, it will turn from a city into a household, and from a household into a human being. For we would say that a household is more one than a city, and an individual than a household. So even if someone could achieve this, it should not be done, since it will destroy the city.

A city consists not only of a larger number of human beings [than a household], however, but of human beings of different kinds (*eidos*). For a city does not come about from those who are alike, since a city is distinct from a military alliance. For a military alliance is useful because of the weight of numbers, even if they are all of the same kind (*eidos*), since an alliance naturally exists for the sake of providing assistance in the way that a heavier weight does when placed on a scale. A nation will also differ from a city in this sort of way, when the multitude is not separated into villages, but is like the Arcadians.[137] But things from which one thing must come about, differ in kind (*eidos*).

That is why reciprocal equality preserves cities, as we said earlier in the *Ethics*, since this is also what must exist among people who are free and equal.[138] For they cannot all rule at the same time, but each can rule for a year or in accord with some other time scheme. In this way, then, the result is that they all do rule, just as, if they changed places, all would be shoemakers and carpenters rather than the same people always being shoemakers and carpenters. But since it is better to have it this way also where a political community is concerned, it is clearly better, where possible, for the same people always to rule. But among those where it is not possible, because all are in nature equal, it is at the same time also just for all to share in ruling (regardless of whether it is good or bad (*phaulos*) to rule), and for those who are equal to take turns, and to be similar when they are out of office, imitates this.[139] For they rule and are ruled in turn, just as if they had become other people. It is the same way among those who are ruling, some hold one office, some another.

It is evident from these considerations, therefore, that a city is not in nature one in the way some people say it is, and that what is said to be the greatest good for cities destroys them.[140] Yet what is good for a given thing in fact preserves it. It is also evident in another way that to seek to produce too much oneness in a city is not a better thing. For a household is more self-sufficient than an individual, and a city than a household, and a city tends to come into being at the time when the community of its multitude is self-sufficient. If, then, what is more self-sufficient is indeed more choiceworthy, to be less one is more choiceworthy than to be more one.

## II 3

But then even if this is best for a community, namely, to be as far as possible one, this does not seem to have been proved by the argument that all at the same time say "mine" and "not mine" (for Socrates takes this as an indication that his city is completely one).[141] For "all" is ambiguous. If it means "each individually," perhaps what Socrates wants will more come about, since each will call the same person his son, the same woman, of course, his wife, the same things his property, and so on, then, for each of the things that fall to him. As things stand, however, this is not how those who treat women and children as common will speak. Instead, though all [will say "mine" and "not mine"], they will not do so each individually, and similarly for property too—all, but not each individually. Therefore, it is evident that a sort of fallacy is involved in "all say."[142] For "all," "both," "odd," and "even" are ambiguous, and produce contentious deductions even in arguments.[143] That is why in one way it would be noble if all said the same, although this is not possible, whereas in another way it is not at all productive of harmony.

In addition, what is said [by Socrates] is also harmful in another way. For what is held communally by the most people gets the least care. For people give most thought to what is their own, less to what is communal, or only as much as falls to each of them to give.[144] For apart from anything else, the supposition that someone else is attending to it makes them neglect it more, just as, in the case of household services, many servants sometimes give worse service than few. Each of the citizens acquires a thousand sons, although not as an individual, but rather any random one is likewise the son of any random citizen. So all will be likewise neglected by them all.

Further, each says "mine" of anyone among the citizens who is doing well or badly, and says "mine" in this sense, that he is whatever fraction he happens to be of a certain number.[145] What he really means is "mine or so-and-so's," referring in this way to each of the thousand or however many compose the city, and even then he is in doubt. For it is not clear who has had a child born to him, or whether any that were born survived. Yet is this way of calling the same thing "mine" as practiced by each of two or ten thousand people really better than the way they say "mine" in cities as things stand? For the same person is called "my son" by one person, "my brother" by another, "my cousin" by a third, or something else in virtue of some other sort of kinship, whether of blood or connection by marriage—his own marriage, in the first instance, or that of his relatives. Still others call him "my fellow clansman" or "my fellow tribesman."[146]

It is better, in fact, to have a cousin of one's own than a son in that [Socratic] way.

Nevertheless, it is not even possible to prevent people from having some suspicions about who their own brothers, sons, fathers, and mothers are. For the resemblances that occur between parents and children will necessarily be taken as convincing signs of this. And this is just what actually happens, according to the reports of some of those who write accounts of their world travels.[147] For they say that some of the inhabitants of upper Libya hold their women communally, and yet distinguish the children they bear by resemblances. And there are some women, as well as some females of other animals, such as mares and cows, that have a strong natural tendency to produce offspring resembling their sires, like the mare in Pharsalus called "Just."[148]

## II 4

Further, there are also other such difficulties that it is not easy for those establishing this sort of community to avoid, such as voluntary or involuntary homicides, assaults, or verbal abuse. None of these is pious when committed against fathers, mothers, or not too distant relatives (just as none is so even against outsiders).[149] But they will necessarily occur even more frequently among those who do not know their relatives than among those who do—and when they do occur, the latter can perform the customary expiations, whereas the former cannot.[150]

It is also strange that while making sons communal, he forbids only sexual intercourse between lovers, but does not prohibit sexual love itself or the other practices which, between father and son or a pair of brothers, are most unseemly, since even the love alone is so. It is strange, too, that Socrates forbids such sexual intercourse not for any other causes but solely because the pleasure that comes from it is so strong, but thinks that the lovers being father and son or brother and brother makes no difference.[151]

It would seem more useful to have the farmers rather than the guardians share their women and children.[152] For there will be less friendship where women and children are held communally.[153] But, with a view to obedience and prevent rebellion, it is the *ruled* who should be like that.

In general, the results of such a law as this must of necessity be the contrary of those that a correctly laid down law should cause, and the contrary of what caused Socrates to think that matters concerning children and women should be ordered in this way. For we think friendship to be the greatest of goods for cities, since in this way people are least likely to engage in faction.[154] And Socrates most of all praises a city's

being one—something that seems to be, and that he himself claims to be, the function of friendship. Similarly, in the accounts of erotic love, we know that Aristophanes says that lovers, because of their intense friendship, have an appetitive desire to grow together and become one instead of two.[155] The result in such circumstances, however, is that one or both have necessarily perished. And in a city friendship necessarily becomes watery through this sort of community, and the fact that a father hardly ever says "mine" of a son, or son of a father. For just as adding a lot of water to a drop of sweet wine makes the mixture imperceptible, so the same happens here with the kinship connections expressed in these names, it being hardly ever necessary in a constitution of this sort for a father to take care of his sons as sons, or a son his father as a father, or brothers each other as brothers. For there are two things above all that make human beings care and feel friendship, what is special [to them] and what is beloved—neither of which can exist among people under such a constitution.[156]

But then about the transference of the children, once born, from the farmers and craftsmen to the guardians, and vice versa, there is also much confusion about the way it will be done—that is, those who do the transferring and receiving must know who has been transferred to whom.[157]

Further, in these cases what we mentioned earlier—I mean assaults, love affairs, and murders—must of necessity happen even more often. For those who have been transferred to the other citizens will no longer call the guardians "brothers," "children," "fathers," or "mothers," nor will those who have been transferred to the guardians use these terms of the other citizens, so as to avoid, through kinship, committing any such offenses.

About the community of children and women, then, let this be the way our determinations are made.

## II 5

The next topic to investigate is property, and the way those who are going to be governed by the best constitution should establish it, and whether property should be held communally or not. One could investigate these questions even separately from the legislation dealing with children and women. I mean whether in matters concerning property, even if children and women are held separately (which is now the way it is everywhere), it still might be best for property at least, or its use, to be communal. For example, the land might be held separately, while the crops grown on it are brought into a communal store to be consumed [communally] (as happens in some nations). Or, contrariwise, the land

might be held communally and farmed communally, while the crops grown on it are divided up for private use (some barbarians are also said to share things in this way). Or both land and crops could be communal.

Now, if others worked the land, the way would be different and easier, whereas if the citizens do the work for themselves, matters concerning property will give rise to much discontent. For if the citizens happen to be unequal rather than equal both in the profits they enjoy and in the work they do, accusations will necessarily be made against those who enjoy or take a lot but do little work by those who take less but do more. In general, though, it is difficult to live together and to share in any human concern, above all in ones such as these. This is made clear by the community of travelers away from home. For pretty much the majority of them start quarreling, because they irritate each other in humdrum matters and little things. Further, the servants with whom we get most irritated are those we employ most regularly for day-to-day services.

The communal ownership of property, then, involves these and other similar difficulties. The way we have now, if adorned by [the relevant] habits and by the order characteristic of correct laws, would be superior, and not by a little, since it would have the good of both (I mean both of the property's being communal and of its being private). For while property should in a way be communal, in general it should be private, since dividing up the care of it will produce not mutual accusations, but rather will lead to greater care being given, as each will be attending to his own. But where use is concerned, it is thanks to virtue that, in accord with the proverb, "friends share everything communally."

Even now this way of arranging things exists in outline in some cities, on the supposition that it is not impossible. In well managed cities, in particular, some elements of it exist, while others could come about. For although each citizen does have his own private property, he makes available some things to be useful to his friends, and others to be useful communally. For example, in Sparta they use each other's slaves (one might almost say) as their own, and horses and dogs as well, and if they need supplies when on a journey, they may find them in the farms throughout the territory.[158] It is evident, therefore, that it is better for property to be private, but for its use to be made communal. And to see that people become disposed in such a way is the special function of the legislator.[159]

Further, it also makes an untold difference to one's pleasure to regard something as one's own. For it is not perhaps pointless that each self loves himself, but is rather something natural. Self-love is blamed, though, and justly so.[160] This is not loving oneself, however, but rather loving oneself more than one should, just as in the case of the love of money (since, one might almost say, everyone *does* love each of the things of this sort).

But then too it is very pleasant to assist one's friends, guests, or companions, and do them favors, and this happens when one has property of one's own. These things, then, do not take place for those who make the city too much one thing, and in addition it is evident that they do away with the function of two of the virtues, namely, temperance in regard to women (for to keep away from another man's woman due to temperance is noble work) and generosity with one's property (for one cannot show oneself to be generous, nor perform any generous action, since it is in the use made of property that generosity's work lies).

Such legislation indeed looks attractive and may seem to be philanthropic.[161] For anyone who hears of it accepts it gladly, thinking that all will have a wondrous friendship for all, especially when someone blames the evils now existing in constitutions on property's not being communal (I mean lawsuits against each other over contracts, perjury trials, and flattery of the rich).[162] Yet none of these bad things comes about because property is not communal but because of depravity.[163] For we see that those who own and share property communally have far more disagreements than those who own their property separately. But in theory we take those who disagree over what they own communally to be few in number, because we compare them to the many whose property is private. Further, it would be just to mention not only how many bad things people will be deprived of by sharing, but also how many good things. But their life appears altogether impossible.

The cause of Socrates going astray, we have to think, is that his hypothesis is incorrect. For a household and a city should indeed be one in a way, but not in every way. For as a city proceeds in this direction, there is a point at which it will in one way cease to be a city and at which, in another way, while it will still be a city, as it will come closer to not being a city, it will be a worse city. It is as if one were to reduce a harmony to a unison, or a rhythm to a single beat. But because a city is a multitude, as we said before, it must be unified and made into a community through education.[164] It is strange that the one who intends to introduce education, and who believes that through it the city would be excellent, should think to rectify it by measures of this sort, and not by habits, philosophy, and laws, just as in Sparta and Crete the legislator made property communal by means of communal messes.[165]

And we must not ignore this point either, namely, that we should consider the immense period of time and the many years during which it would not have gone unnoticed if these measures were any good. For pretty much everything has been discovered, although some things have not been collected, and others, though known, are not used.[166] The matter would become especially evident, however, if one could see by

the facts a constitution established in this way. For it is impossible to produce a city without separating the parts and dividing [them], some into communal messes, others into clans and tribes.[167]

So nothing else will result from the legislation except that the guardians will not farm—which is just what the Spartans are trying to do even as things stand. Neither, for that matter, has Socrates said what mode of the constitution as a whole applies to those who share in it, nor is it easy to say. And yet the multitude of the other citizens is pretty much the entire multitude of his city, but nothing has been determined about whether the farmers too should have communal property or each his own private property, or, further, whether both their women and their children should be private or communal.[168]

If, in fact, all is to be held communally by all in the same way, how will the farmers differ from the guardians? And what more will they get by submitting to their rule? Or what will they learn to make them submit to it—unless the guardians adopt some clever stratagem like that of the Cretans? For they allow their slaves to have the same other things as themselves, and forbid them only the gymnasia and the possession of weapons.

On the other hand, if the farmers too are to have such things, as they do in other cities, what way will their community be ordered? For of necessity there will be two cities in one, and those opposed to each other.[169] For Socrates makes the guardians into a sort of garrison, whereas he makes citizens of the farmers, craftsmen, and the others.[170] Accusations, lawsuits, and such other bad things as he says exist in other cities will all then exist among them too. And yet Socrates claims that because of their education they will not need many regulations (for example, town or market ordinances, or others of that sort), though he gives this education only to the guardians.

Further, he gives the farmers control of their property, although he requires them to pay a tax.[171] But this is likely to make them much more difficult to deal with and full of their own ideas than the helots, serfs, and slaves that some people have today.[172]

But whether the same things are indeed similarly necessary for the farmers or not, has in fact nowhere been discussed—and neither has the related question of what constitution, education, and laws they are to have. It is not easy, either, to discover what sort of people these are, nor is the difference it makes to the preservation of the community of the guardians a small one. But if at any rate Socrates is going to make their women communal and their property private, who will manage the household in the way the men manage things in the fields? Who will manage it, indeed, if the farmers' women and property are communal?

It is also absurd to draw a comparison with wild beasts in order to show that women should engage in the same practices as men, since wild beasts have no share in household management.[173]

The way Socrates appoints his rulers is also unstable. For he makes the same people rule all the time, which is a cause of faction even among people who have no recognized worth, and all the more so, of course, among spirited and warlike men.[174] But it is evident that it is necessary for him to make the same people rulers. For the gold from the god has not been mixed into the souls of one lot of people at one time and another at another, but always into the same ones. For he says that the god, immediately at their birth, mixed gold into the souls of some, silver into others, and bronze and iron into those who are going to be craftsmen and farmers.[175]

Further, even though Socrates does away with the happiness of the guardians, he says that the legislator should make the whole city happy. But it is impossible for the whole to be happy unless all, or most or some, of its parts possess happiness. For happiness is not the same thing as evenness, since it is possible for the latter to be present in the whole without being present in any of the parts, whereas happiness cannot.[176] But if the guardians are not happy, who is?[177] Surely not the craftsmen or the multitude of those who are vulgar.[178]

These, then, are the puzzles raised by the constitution Socrates describes, and there are others that are not inferior to these.

## II 6

Something pretty much similar holds in the case of the *Laws*, which was written later. So we had also better briefly examine the constitution there. After all, in the *Republic* Socrates has determined very few things: how things should stand concerning the community in women and children, concerning property, and the order characteristic of the constitution. For he divides the multitude of the inhabitants into two parts: the farmers and the part that goes to war for it. And from the latter comes a third, namely, the deliberative and controlling element in the city.[179] But about whether the farmers and craftsmen will share in ruling to some extent or not at all, and whether or not they too are to possess weapons and join in battle—about these matters Socrates has determined nothing.[180] He does think, though, that the women should join in battle and receive the same education as the other guardians. Otherwise, he has filled out his account with extraneous material, in particular about what sort of education the guardians should receive.

The *Laws* consists for the most part of laws, and he has said little about the constitution.[181] And, although he wishes to make this one more generally attainable by actual cities, he gradually turns it back toward the other.[182] For, with the exception of the community in women and property, the other things he assigns to both constitutions are the same: the same education, living in abstention from the necessary functions, and the communal messes in like manner—except that in this constitution he says that there are to be messes for women too, and that those possessing hoplite weapons should be five thousand, whereas it is one thousand there.[183] **1265ª1**

All the Socratic accounts are extraordinary, sophisticated, innovative, and exhibit a spirit of inquiry, but it is presumably difficult to do everything well. In the case of the multitude just mentioned, for example, we must not neglect to consider that it would need a territory the size of Babylon, or some other unlimitedly large territory, to nourish five thousand in idleness, and another mob of women and servants, many times as great, along with them.[184] We should assume conditions that answer to our prayers, to be sure, but not ones that are impossible.

It is stated that the legislator should look to just two things in setting up his laws: the territory and the human beings.[185] But, further, it would be good to add that he should also look to the neighboring territories, if, in the first place, the city is to live a political life and not a solitary one.[186] For it must then possess the weapons that are useful for war not only on its own territory but also against the regions outside it. If, however, one rejects this sort of life, both for the individual and for the city communally, the need to be fearsome to enemies is just as great, both when they have invaded its territory and when they have left it.

And the quantity of property should also be looked at, to see whether it would not be better to define it in another more perspicuous way.[187] For he says that there should be as much as is needed "to live temperately," which is as if one were to say, "to live well"—for this is too universal.[188] Further, it is possible to live temperately but miserably. A better definition would be "to live temperately and generously." For, when separated, the one will lead to poverty, the other to luxury. For these are the only choiceworthy states concerned with the use of property—for example, one cannot use property either in a mild-mannered way or in a courageous one, but one can do so temperately and generously. So the states concerned with its use must also be these.

Also, it is absurd that while property is equalized nothing is established concerning the number of citizens, but instead the production of children is allowed to be unlimited, on the supposition that it will remain sufficiently close to the same number, due to childlessness, no

matter how many births there are, because this seems to be what happens in present-day cities.[189] But the exactness this requires is not the same there as in cities nowadays. For nowadays, because properties are divided among however great a number there happens to be, no one is left without resources. In this city, by contrast, properties are indivisible, so that excess children will necessarily get nothing, no matter whether they are fewer or greater in number.[190] One might well take it, though, that it is the production of children that should be restricted, rather than property, so that no more than a certain number would be born, and that this number should be fixed by looking to the chances of some of those who are born dying, and of childlessness on the part of others. To leave the number unrestricted, however, as is done in most cities, necessarily causes poverty among the citizens; and poverty produces faction and crime. In fact, Pheidon of Corinth, one of the most ancient legislators, thought that the households and the number of citizens should be kept equal, even if the allotments of land they had were of unequal size to begin with.[191] But in the *Laws*, it is just the contrary.[192] But these matters, and how we think these matters could be better handled, will have to be spoken about later.[193]

Also omitted in these *Laws* are matters concerning the rulers and how they will differ from the ruled. For he says that just as warp and woof come from distinct sorts of wool, so should ruler stand in relation to ruled.[194]

And since he permits someone's total property to increase up to five times its original value, why should this not also hold of land up to a certain point?[195]

Also, the division of homesteads needs to be investigated, in case it is disadvantageous to household management. For to each individual he assigned two homesteads, dividing them and making them separate.[196] But it is difficult to manage two households.

The whole order is intended to be neither democracy nor oligarchy but a mean between them.[197] It is called a *polity*, since it is made up of those with hoplite weapons.[198] Now if he is establishing this, in comparison with other constitutions, as the most attainable by actual cities, what he has said is perhaps correct, but if as next best after the first constitution, it is not correct.[199] For one might well give more praise to the Spartan constitution, or some other more aristocratic one.[200] Indeed, some say that the best constitution is a mixture of all constitutions, which is why they praise the Spartan one.[201] For some assert that it is made up of oligarchy, monarchy, and democracy, saying that the kingship is a monarchy, the office of senators an oligarchy, and that it is governed democratically in virtue of the office of the overseers,

because the overseers come from the people as a whole, whereas others say that the overseership is a tyranny, and that the democratic governing lies in the communal messes and the rest of daily life.[202] But in these *Laws* it is said that the best constitution should be composed of democracy and tyranny—constitutions one might well take as not constitutions at all, or as the worst of all.[203] They speak better, then, who mix together a larger number, since the constitution composed of a larger number is better.[204]

Next, the constitution in the *Laws* evidently has no monarchical element at all, but only oligarchic and democratic ones, with a tendency to lean more toward oligarchy. This is clear from the appointment of officials. For while choosing by lot from a previously elected pool is common to both, to require richer people to attend the assembly and to vote for officials, or to do some other political task, without requiring these things of the others, is oligarchic.[205] The same is true of the attempt to make the majority of officials come from among the rich, with the most important ones coming from among those with the highest property assessment.[206]

He also makes the election of the council oligarchic.[207] For everyone is required to elect candidates from the first property assessment class, then again in the same way from the second, then from the third—except that not everyone is required to elect candidates from the third or the fourth, and only members of the first and second are required to elect candidates from the fourth.[208] Then from these, he says, an equal number must be designated from each assessment class. More of them, then, will come from the highest assessment classes and the better sort, because some of the people will not vote because they are not required to.

It is evident from these considerations, then, and from what will be said later, when our investigation turns to this sort of constitution, that a constitution of this sort should not be composed of democracy and monarchy.[209] But in fact where the election of officials is concerned, electing from the elected is dangerous. For if some are willing to combine, even if they are a relatively small number, the elections will always turn out according to their wish.

This, then, is the way matters stand concerning the constitution in the *Laws*.

## II 7

There are also certain other constitutions, proposed either by private individuals or by philosophers and politicians, but all of them are closer to the established constitutions, by which people are governed as things stand, than either of the ones we have discussed. For no one else

has ever suggested the innovations of sharing children and women, or of communal messes for women.[210] Instead, they start with the necessities. For to some of them it seems that the most important thing is to have matters concerning property ordered in a good way. For they say that it is over these matters that everyone creates factions.

That is why Phaleas of Chalcedon, the first to propose such a constitution, did so.[211] For he says that the property of the citizens should be equal. He thought this was not difficult to do when cities were just being settled, that in those already settled it would be more difficult, but that nevertheless a leveling could be very quickly achieved by the rich giving but not receiving dowries, and the poor receiving but not giving them.

Plato, when writing the *Laws*, thought that up to a certain point things should be left alone, but that no citizen should be permitted to have a property more than five times the size of the smallest, as we also said earlier.[212] But people who legislate in this way must not forget, as they now do, that, while regulating the quantity of property, they should also regulate the quantity of children. For if the number of children exceeds the size of the property, it is necessary for the law to be abrogated at least. But abrogation aside, it is a bad thing for many people to become poor after having been rich, since it is hard work for people like that not to become revolutionaries.

That is why the leveling of property does indeed have some influence on political communities. This was evidently recognized even by some in ancient times—for example, both in the legislation of Solon and in the law in force elsewhere that prohibits anyone from getting as much land as he might wish.[213] Laws likewise prevent the sale of [landed] property, as among the Locrians, where the law forbids it unless an evident misfortune can be shown to have occurred.[214] In yet other cases it is required that the original allotments be preserved. It was the abrogation of this provision at Leucas that made their constitution democratic too, since, as a result, offices were no longer filled from the designated assessment classes.[215] But equality of property may exist and yet the amount may be too great, so that it leads to luxury, or too low, so that living in a tightfisted way results.

It is clear, then, that it is not sufficient for the legislator to make property equal; he must also aim at the mean. Further, even if one were to arrange a moderate property for everyone, it would be no benefit. For one should rather level appetites than property, and that cannot happen unless people have been sufficiently educated by the laws.[216]

But perhaps Phaleas would reply that this is actually what he was saying. For he thinks that cities should have equality in these two