Politics

ARISTOTLE

384–322 BC

Politics

Πολιτικά

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited



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INTRODUCTION

"A human being is by nature a political animal." Aristotle's *Politics* begins from that claim and asks what a city is for, who should count as a citizen, and which form of government is best.

He compares constitutions (kingship, aristocracy, polity, and their corrupt forms: tyranny, oligarchy, democracy), gathers evidence from the Greek cities, including 158 constitutions his school had studied, and analyzes why governments fall into civil strife and revolution. He praises a large middle class as the source of stability and ends with a sketch of the best city and the education of its young.

Some of its arguments, notably the defense of slavery in Book I, are rightly rejected today; they are translated faithfully here as part of the historical record.

Book I

The household, slavery, and wealth-getting.

THE CITY AS THE HIGHEST COMMUNITY

Aristotle argues that the city is the community that aims at the highest good of all.

1252a We see that every city is a kind of community, and that every community is formed for the sake of some good—for everyone does everything for the sake of what they take to be good. Clearly, then, while all communities aim at some good, the community that is most authoritative of all and embraces all the others aims most of all at the most authoritative good of all. This is what is called the city, the political community.[1] Those who think that the statesman, the king, the household manager and the master of slaves are one and the same are mistaken. They suppose that each of these differs by the number of people ruled, not in kind: that someone who rules a few is a master, someone who rules more is a household manager, and someone who rules still more is a statesman or a king—as though a large household were no different from a small city. As for the statesman and the king, they say that when one person is in charge by himself he is a king, and when he rules and is ruled in turn according to the principles of this kind of knowledge, he is a statesman. None of this is true. What I mean will become clear if we examine the matter by the method we have been following. Just as in other cases we must divide a composite down to its

1 "City" translates *polis*, the self-governing Greek city-state: a town together with its territory and citizen body. It is not a "state" in the modern sense.

uncompounded elements (for these are the smallest parts of the whole), so too, by examining what a city is made up of, we will see more clearly how these rulers differ from one another, and whether it is possible to get any expert grasp of each of the kinds just mentioned.

THE CITY EXISTS BY NATURE

The household and the village grow into the city, and the human being is by nature a political animal.

If one looks at how things grow from their beginning, here as elsewhere, this is the best way to study them. First, then, those who cannot exist without each other must pair up. Female and male pair for the sake of reproduction—not by decision, but because, as with the other animals and with plants, it is natural to want to leave behind another like oneself. And what naturally rules pairs with what is naturally ruled, for the sake of survival. For what can look ahead with its mind is by nature ruler and by nature master, while what can carry out these tasks with its body is ruled and by nature a slave. That is why the same thing benefits master and slave. By nature, then, 1252b female and slave are distinct. For nature makes nothing in a stingy way, like the smiths who make the Delphic knife, but one thing for one purpose; each tool is best made when it serves not many tasks but one. Among non-Greeks, however, the female and the slave have the same rank. The reason is that they have no natural ruler: their community is one of a female slave and a male slave. That is why the poets say "It is fitting that Greeks rule non-Greeks"—on the assumption that the non-Greek and the slave are by nature the same. Out of these two communities, then, the household first arises, and Hesiod was right when he wrote, "First of all a house, a wife, and an ox to plough"—for the poor, an ox takes the place of a servant.[2] The community that is formed by

2 "Non-Greeks" translates *barbaroi* ("barbarians"), which for Greeks meant simply people who did not speak Greek. The Delphic knife was apparently a cheap multipurpose blade.

nature to meet everyday needs is the household, whose members Charondas calls "bread-bin sharers" and Epimenides the Cretan "manger sharers." The first community formed from several households for the sake of more than daily needs is the village. The village seems to be, most naturally, a colony of the household; some call its members "sharers of the same milk," children and children's children. That is why cities were at first ruled by kings, as non-Greek peoples still are: they came together from people already under kingly rule. For every household is ruled as a kingdom by its eldest member, and so too its offshoots, because of their kinship. This is what Homer means: "each lays down the law / for his children and wives." For they lived scattered, and that is how people lived in ancient times.[3] And this is why everyone says that the gods too are ruled by a king: because people themselves were ruled by kings, some still now and others in ancient times. Just as people imagine the gods' appearance to be like their own, so too they imagine their way of life.

The complete community formed from several villages is the city. It has reached the limit of self-sufficiency, practically speaking; it comes into being 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 do too. For the city is their end, and nature is an end: what each thing is when its coming-to-be is complete is what we call its nature—of a human being, a horse, a household. Further, that for the sake of which a thing exists, its end, is best; 1253a and self-sufficiency is both an end and best. It is evident from this, then, that the city is among the things that exist by nature, and that a human being is by nature a political animal. Anyone who is without a city because of his nature and not by chance is either a low sort or better than human—like the man Homer reviles as "clanless, lawless, hearthless." For someone like this by nature is at once a lover of war, being like an isolated piece in a board game. And it is clear

3 Charondas was a lawgiver of Catana in Sicily; Epimenides a Cretan seer of the sixth century BC.

why a human being is more of a political animal than any bee or any herd animal. For nature, as we say, does nothing in vain, and of the animals only human beings have speech. Voice is a sign of what is painful and pleasant, which is why other animals have it too: their nature has come this far—to perceive what is painful and pleasant and to signal it to one another. But speech serves to make clear what is beneficial and what is harmful, and so also what is just and unjust. For this is what is distinctive of human beings compared with the other animals: they alone perceive good and bad, just and unjust, and the rest. And it is community in these things that makes a household and a city. The city is also prior by nature to the household and to each of us. For the whole must be prior to the part. If the whole body is destroyed, there will be no foot or hand, except in name—as when someone speaks of a stone hand, for a dead hand will be like that. Everything is defined by its function and its capacity, so that when things are no longer such as to perform them, we should not say they are the same things, only that they share a name. It is clear, then, that the city is both natural and prior to each individual. For if each individual, when separated, is not self-sufficient, he will stand to the whole as other parts do to theirs. Anyone who cannot share in a community, or who needs nothing because he is self-sufficient, is no part of a city: he is either a beast or a god.

By nature, then, all people have an impulse toward this kind of community, and the person who first put one together was responsible for the greatest of goods. For just as a human being is the best of animals when perfected, so when separated from law and justice he is the worst of all. Injustice is most dangerous when it has weapons, and a human being is born with weapons for practical wisdom and excellence to use—weapons that can all too easily be used for the opposite ends. That is why, without excellence, he is the most unholy and savage of animals, and the worst where sex and food are concerned. But justice belongs to the city: for the administration of justice is the ordering of the political community, and justice is the judgment of what is just.

THE PARTS OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Household management is divided into the relations of master and slave, husband and wife, parent and child.

1253b Now that it is clear what parts the city is made up of, we must first discuss household management, since every city is composed of households. The parts of household management correspond to the parts that make up the household, and a complete household consists of slaves and free people. Since each thing should first be examined in its smallest parts, and the first and smallest parts of a household are master and slave, husband and wife, and father and children, we should consider these three relationships, what each is and what it should be like. They are mastership, the marital relationship (the union of wife and husband has no name of its own), and third, the parental relationship (this too has no special name). Let these be the three we have mentioned. There is another part, which some think is household management itself and others its largest part. We must consider how things stand with it; I mean what is called the art of acquiring wealth. But first let us discuss master and slave, so as to see what bears on necessary needs, and whether we can get a better understanding of the subject than the views now held. Some think that mastership is a kind of knowledge, and that household management, mastership, statesmanship and kingship are all the same, as we said at the beginning. Others think that being a master is contrary to nature: that it is by law that one person is a slave and another free, while by nature they do not differ at all—and so it is not just either, since it rests on force.

THE SLAVE AS A LIVING TOOL

Property is a collection of tools for living, and the slave is a living piece of property.

Property is part of the household, and the art of acquiring property is part of household management, since without the neces-

sities it is impossible to live, let alone to live well. Now just as the specialized crafts must have their proper tools if their work is to be accomplished, so too must the household manager. Some tools are lifeless and some are alive: for a ship's captain, the rudder is lifeless and the lookout is alive—for in the crafts an assistant is a kind of tool. In the same way, a piece of property is a tool for living, property as a whole is a collection of tools, a slave is a living piece of property, and every assistant is like a tool that comes before other tools. For if each tool could do its own work when ordered, or by anticipating what is wanted—like the statues of Daedalus in the story, or the tripods of Hephaestus, which the poet says "entered the gods' assembly of their own accord"—if shuttles wove by themselves and picks played the kithara, then master craftsmen would have no need 1254a of assistants, nor masters of slaves. Now the things called tools are tools of production, while a piece of property is a tool of action. From a shuttle something else comes about beyond its use, but from a garment or a bed there is only the use. Further, since production and action differ in kind, and both need tools, their tools must differ in the same way. Life is action, not production. That is why the slave, too, is an assistant in matters of action. A piece of property is spoken of in the same way as a part. A part is not only part of something else but belongs wholly to something else; and the same is true of property. That is why the master is only the master of the slave and does not belong to him, while the slave is not only the slave of the master but belongs to him wholly.

From this it is clear what the nature and capacity of the slave are. Anyone who, though human, belongs by nature not to himself but to another is by nature a slave. And a human being belongs to another if, though human, he is a piece of property; and a piece of property is a tool for action that can be separated from its owner.

NATURAL SLAVERY

Aristotle argues that some people are slaves by nature, for whom being ruled is beneficial and just.

We must next consider whether anyone is by nature like this or not, and whether it is better and just for anyone to be a slave, or whether all slavery is instead contrary to nature. It is not difficult either to see this by reasoning or to learn it from what actually happens. For ruling and being ruled are not only necessary but also beneficial, and some things are marked out right from birth, some to be ruled and others to rule. There are many kinds of rulers and ruled, and rule over better subjects is always better—rule over a human being, for instance, rather than over a beast; for work accomplished by better agents is better work, and where one thing rules and another is ruled, there is some work that belongs to them together. For wherever something is made up of several parts and becomes one common thing, whether from continuous parts or separate ones, a ruling element and a ruled element show up in all of them. This comes to living things from nature as a whole; even in things that do not share in life there is a kind of rule, as in a musical scale. But this perhaps belongs to an inquiry further removed from our subject. An animal, to begin with, consists of soul and body, of which one is by nature the ruler and the other the ruled. But we should look for what is natural in things that are in their natural condition, not in those that are corrupted. So we must study the human being who is in the best condition in both body and soul, since in him this is clear. For in those who are bad, or [1254b] in a bad condition, the body would often seem to rule the soul, because they are in a poor and unnatural state.

It is possible, then, as we say, to observe first in an animal both the rule of a master and the rule of a statesman. The soul rules the body with the rule of a master, and intellect rules desire with the rule of a statesman or a king. In these cases it is evident that it is natural and beneficial for the body to be ruled

by the soul, and for the part that has feelings to be ruled by intellect and the part that has reason, while equality between them, or the reverse, is harmful to all. The same holds again for human beings and the other animals. Tame animals have a better nature than wild ones, and it is better for all of them to be ruled by human beings, since that is how they are kept safe. Again, the male is by nature superior and the female inferior, and the one rules and the other is ruled. The same must hold for all human beings. Those who differ from others as much as soul differs from body, or human from beast—and people are in this condition when their work is the use of their body, and this is the best that can come from them—are natural slaves, and for them it is better to be ruled with this kind of rule, if it is better for the things just mentioned. For a natural slave is someone who is capable of belonging to another (which is why he does belong to another), and who shares in reason to the extent of perceiving it but not having it. The other animals obey not reason but their feelings. And the use made of them differs only a little: help with the body's necessities comes from both, from slaves and from tame animals. Nature tends, then, to make the bodies of free people and slaves different too: the one strong for necessary work, the other upright and useless for such tasks but useful for the life of a citizen (which in turn is divided between the needs of war and those of peace). But the opposite often happens as well: some have the bodies of free people, others the souls. For this much is evident: if some people were as superior in body alone as the statues of the gods, everyone would say that those who fell short deserved to be their slaves. And if this is true of the body, it is far more just to make this distinction in the case of the soul. But it is not as easy to see 1255a the beauty of the soul as that of the body. It is evident, then, that some people are by nature free and others slaves, and that for the latter being a slave is both beneficial and just.

SLAVERY BY LAW

Slavery by conquest is disputed, and Aristotle grants that not every slave is a slave by nature.

But it is not hard to see that those who assert the opposite are also right in a way. For "slavery" and "slave" are used in two senses. There is also a slave, and slavery, by law: the law in question is a kind of agreement under which whatever is conquered in war is said to belong to the victors. Many people versed in law challenge this claim of justice as they would indict a speaker for proposing an unlawful measure: they think it outrageous that whatever is overpowered should become the slave and subject of whatever is able to overpower it and is superior in power. Some hold one view, others the other, even among the wise. The cause of this dispute, and what makes the arguments overlap, is this: in a way, excellence, when it happens to have the resources, is best able to use force, and what prevails always does so by being superior in some good. So it seems that force does not come without excellence, and that the dispute is only about what is just. (That is why some think justice is goodwill, while others think it is just this: that the stronger should rule.) For when these arguments are set apart from each other, the other arguments—that the one who is better in excellence should not rule and be master—have nothing forceful or persuasive about them. Some, clinging, as they think, to a kind of justice (for law is a kind of justice), hold outright that slavery resulting from war is just; yet in the same breath they deny it. For the war may have been unjust in its origins, and no one would say that someone who does not deserve to be a slave is a slave. Otherwise, those thought to be of the noblest birth would turn out to be slaves and the children of slaves, if they happened to be captured and sold. That is why they are unwilling to call themselves slaves, but only non-Greeks. Yet when they say this, they are looking for nothing other than the natural slave we spoke of at the start. For they have to say that some people are

slaves everywhere and others nowhere. It is the same with good birth. They consider themselves well born not only at home but everywhere, while they think non-Greeks are well born only at home—as though there were one kind of good birth and freedom that is unqualified and another that is not. So Helen says in Theodectes' play: "Sprung from divine roots on either side, / who would think fit to call me a servant?" But when they say this, they are distinguishing slave and free, well born and 1255b low born, by nothing but excellence and vice. For they think that just as a human comes from a human and a beast from beasts, so a good person comes from good people. Nature does often tend to do this, but it cannot always manage it.[4]

It is clear, then, that the dispute has some reason in it, and that it is not simply the case that some are natural slaves and others naturally free. It is also clear that in some cases such a distinction does exist, where it benefits one person to be a slave and another to be master, and where one should be ruled and the other should exercise the rule for which they are naturally fitted—and so be master—while exercising it badly is harmful to both. For the same thing benefits the part and the whole, the body and the soul; and the slave is a kind of part of the master, a living but separate part of his body. That is why there is a common benefit and friendship between slave and master when they have been placed in these positions by nature, but the opposite when it is not so, but by law and force.

THE MASTER'S KNOWLEDGE

Rule over slaves differs from political rule; the master need only know how to use slaves.

It is evident from this too that the rule of a master and the rule of a statesman are not the same, and that all kinds of rule are not the same as one another, as some claim. The one is rule over those who are by nature free, the other over slaves; household management is monarchy (for every household is ruled by one

4 Theodectes was a fourth-century BC tragic poet and orator, a friend of Aristotle.

person), while political rule is rule over free and equal people. Now a master is not called a master because of knowledge, but because he is of a certain sort, and similarly with the slave and the free person. But there could be knowledge that belongs to a master and knowledge that belongs to a slave. Slave knowledge would be the kind that a man in Syracuse used to teach: there someone charged a fee to teach boys the routine household tasks. Instruction in such matters could go further, too, for instance cookery and other such kinds of service. For some tasks are more honorable and others more necessary—as the proverb says, "slave before slave, master before master." All such kinds of knowledge are slave knowledge. The master's knowledge is the knowledge of how to use slaves, for the master is a master not in acquiring slaves but in using them. There is nothing great or dignified about this knowledge: the master need only know how to order what the slave must know how to do. That is why those who can afford to avoid the trouble have a steward take on this office, while they themselves engage in politics or philosophy. The art of acquiring slaves—the just kind of acquisition, that is—is different from both of these, being a kind of warfare or hunting. So much for how master and slave are to be defined.

NATURAL ACQUISITION

Ways of life differ with ways of getting food, and natural acquisition of property has a limit.

1256a Let us now study property in general, and the art of acquiring wealth, following our usual method, since the slave too was one part of property. First one might ask whether the art of acquiring wealth is the same as household management, or a part of it, or subordinate to it; and if subordinate, whether in the way shuttle-making serves weaving or in the way bronze-working serves the making of statues. They do not serve in the same way: the one supplies tools and the other the material. By material I mean the underlying stuff from which a work is produced:

wool for the weaver, bronze for the sculptor. It is clear that household management is not the same as the art of acquiring wealth: it belongs to the latter to provide and to the former to use—for what art will use the things in the household besides household management? But whether it is a part of household management or a different kind of thing is disputed. For if it belongs to the person skilled in acquiring wealth to study where money and property will come from, and property and wealth include many parts, we must first ask whether farming is a part of household management or a different kind of thing, and in general the care and acquisition of food. Now there are many kinds of food, which is why there are many ways of life among both animals and human beings. It is not possible to live without food, so differences in food have made the ways of life of animals different. Among wild animals, some live in herds and others scattered, whichever is advantageous for getting their food, since some are carnivorous, others eat fruits and plants, and others eat everything. So nature has marked out their ways of life to suit the ease of getting, and the choice of, these foods. And since the same things are not naturally pleasant to each, but different things to different animals, the ways of life of the carnivores and of the plant-eaters themselves also differ from one another. The same is true of human beings, whose ways of life differ greatly. The laziest are nomads. They get their food from tame animals without toil, at their leisure; but since their herds have to move about in search of pasture, they are forced to follow along, as if they were farming a living farm. Others live by hunting, and different people by different kinds of hunting: some by raiding, some by fishing—those who live beside lakes, marshes, rivers or a sea suited to it—and some by hunting birds or wild animals. But the largest class of human beings lives from the land and its cultivated crops.

These, then, are roughly the ways of life, at least of those whose work is self-directed and who do not get their food by exchange and trade: [1256b] herding, raiding, fishing, hunting, farming. Some live pleasantly by combining them, supplement-

ing the more deficient way of life where it falls short of being self-sufficient: some are at once herders and raiders, others farmers and hunters, and similarly with the rest; they live in whatever way need compels. This kind of acquisition, then, is evidently given by nature herself to all creatures, both right at their first birth and when they are fully grown. At the very beginning of their birth, some animals produce along with their offspring enough food to last until the newborn can provide for itself—for instance, those that produce larvae or eggs. Those that bear live young carry food for their offspring within themselves for a certain time, the natural substance called milk. So in the same way it is clear that we must suppose that, once they are born, plants exist for the sake of animals, and the other animals for the sake of human beings: the tame ones for use and for food, and most if not all of the wild ones for food and other kinds of help, so that clothing and other tools can be made from them. If, then, nature makes nothing incomplete or in vain, it must have made all of them for the sake of human beings. That is why the art of war too will in a way be by nature an art of acquisition (hunting is a part of it). It ought to be used against wild animals and against those human beings who are by nature fitted to be ruled but are unwilling, since this kind of war is just by nature.

One kind of acquisition, then, is by nature a part of household management, insofar as household management must either have on hand, or itself provide so that there is on hand, the goods that can be stored—those necessary for life and useful to the community of a city or a household. And true wealth seems to consist of these. For the self-sufficiency of this kind of property for a good life is not unlimited, as Solon says it is in his poem: "For wealth no limit has been set or shown to men." But a limit has been set, just as in the other crafts. No tool of any craft is unlimited in number or size, and wealth is a collection of tools for household managers and statesmen. It is clear, then,

that there is a natural art of acquisition for household managers and statesmen, and why.[5]

MONEY AND TRADE

Exchange leads to money, and trade seeks wealth without limit, unlike household management.

But there is another kind of acquisition, which people especially call—and rightly call—the art of acquiring wealth, because of which there seems to be no 1257a limit to wealth and property. Many think it is one and the same as the kind just described, because it is close to it. It is neither the same as that one nor far from it: the one is natural, while the other is not natural but comes about rather through a kind of experience and skill. Let us take our starting point about it from here. Every piece of property has two uses. Both belong to the thing itself, but not in the same way: one is proper to the thing and the other is not. A shoe, for instance, can be worn or exchanged. Both are uses of a shoe. Someone who exchanges a shoe with a person who needs one, for money or food, is using the shoe as a shoe, but not in its proper use, since it was not made for the sake of exchange. The same holds for other possessions too. Exchange applies to all of them, and it began in the first place from what is natural, from the fact that people have more than enough of some things and less of others. (This also makes it clear that retail trade is not by nature part of the art of acquiring wealth, since people needed to make exchanges only to the extent of having enough.) In the first community, the household, it evidently has no work to do; it has a role only once the community has grown larger. For the members of a household shared all the same things, while those who had separated shared many different things, which they had to exchange with one another according to their needs, as many non-Greek peoples still do, by barter. They trade useful things directly for useful things, and nothing beyond that—giv-

5 Solon was the Athenian statesman and poet (early sixth century BC) whose reforms were remembered as the foundation of Athens' laws.

ing and taking wine for grain, for example, and so on with each thing of that kind. This kind of exchange is neither contrary to nature nor any form of acquiring wealth, since it existed to fill out natural self-sufficiency. Yet the other kind arose from it, reasonably enough. For as people came to rely more on foreign sources, importing what they lacked and exporting what they had in surplus, the use of money was necessarily introduced. For not all the natural necessities are easy to carry. So for their exchanges people agreed to give and take something that was itself one of the useful things and was easy to handle for the purposes of life—iron, silver, or anything else of this sort. At first its value was defined simply by size and weight, but eventually they also stamped it, to spare themselves from measuring it; for the stamp was put on as a sign of the amount.

1257b Once money had been introduced out of necessary exchange, the other form of acquiring wealth arose: trade. At first it probably happened in a simple way, but then through experience it became more skilled, as people learned where and how to exchange so as to make the most profit. That is why the art of acquiring wealth seems to be above all concerned with money, and its work seems to be the ability to see where a great quantity can come from—for it is thought to produce riches and money. Indeed people often take wealth to be a large quantity of money, because the art of acquiring wealth and trade are concerned with it. At other times, on the other hand, money seems to be nonsense, a pure convention with no basis in nature: if those who use it switch to another currency, it is worth nothing and useless for any of the necessities, and a person rich in money will often go short of the food he needs. Yet it is absurd for wealth to be something such that a person who has plenty of it will die of hunger—like Midas in the story, when, because of his insatiable prayer, everything set before him turned to gold. That is why people look for some other account of wealth and of the art of acquiring it, and they are right to look. For the art of acquiring wealth and wealth according to nature are something different: this belongs to household management, while the

other is trade, which produces wealth not in every way but only through the exchange of goods. And it seems to be concerned with money, since money is the starting point and the limit of exchange. The wealth that comes from this art of acquiring wealth is unlimited. Just as medicine pursues health without limit, and each of the crafts pursues its end without limit (for they want to achieve it as fully as possible), while the means to the end are not unlimited (since the end is a limit for all of them), so too this art of acquiring wealth has no limit to its end; its end is wealth of this sort, the acquisition of money. But the form of acquiring wealth that belongs to household management does have a limit, since this is not the work of household management. So in one way it appears that there must be a limit to all wealth; yet in practice we see the opposite happening, for all who are engaged in acquiring wealth increase their money without limit. The reason is that the two are so close. They overlap because each form of acquiring wealth makes use of the same thing. They use the same property, but not in the same way: for one the end is something else, for the other it is increase. So some people think this is the work of household management, and they go on believing that they must either preserve their money or increase it without limit. The reason for this attitude is that they are serious about living, but 1258a not about living well. Since that desire is unlimited, they desire unlimited means to satisfy it. And even those who aim at living well seek what contributes to bodily enjoyments; and since this too seems to depend on property, their whole activity is spent on making money, and this is how the other form of acquiring wealth has come about. For since enjoyment lies in excess, they look for the art that produces the excess that enjoyment requires. And if they cannot provide it through the art of acquiring wealth, they try to do so by some other means, using each of their capacities in a way contrary to nature. It is not the work of courage to make money, but to produce confidence; nor is it the work of generalship or medicine, but of the one to produce victory and of the other health. Yet these people make all of them

into ways of making money, as though that were the end, and everything had to be directed toward the end.

We have now discussed the unnecessary art of acquiring wealth: what it is, and why we come to need it. We have also discussed the necessary kind: that it is different from the other, and that it is the natural part of household management concerned with food, not unlimited like the other but having a boundary.

USURY

Natural acquisition belongs to household management, while lending at interest is the most unnatural kind.

What was puzzling at the start is now clear too: whether the art of acquiring wealth belongs to the household manager and the statesman or not. The answer is that wealth must already be available. Just as statesmanship does not make human beings but takes them from nature and uses them, so too nature must provide food, from land or sea or some other source; and it is the household manager's business to arrange these things as they should be. It is not the job of weaving to make wool but to use it, and to know which kind is good and suitable and which poor and unsuitable. One might also ask why the art of acquiring wealth is a part of household management while medicine is not, even though the members of the household must be healthy, just as they must live or have any other necessity. In a way it is the business of the household manager and the ruler to see to health, and in a way it is not, but the doctor's. So too with wealth: in a way it is the household manager's business, and in a way not, but that of a subordinate art. Above all, as was said before, it must be supplied by nature. For it is nature's work to provide food for what is born, since for everything, what remains of that from which it is born is its food. That is why the art of acquiring wealth from crops and animals is natural for everyone. The art of acquiring wealth is twofold, as we said: one kind belongs to trade, the other to household management. The latter is necessary and praised, while the [1258b] kind that is based

on exchange is justly blamed, since it is not natural but involves gain at one another's expense. So usury is hated with the best of reasons, because its gain comes from money itself and not from what money was introduced for. Money came into being for the sake of exchange, but interest makes it grow larger. (This is also where it got its name: offspring resemble their parents, and interest is money born of money.) So of all the forms of acquiring wealth this one is the most contrary to nature.[6]

PRACTICAL MONEY-MAKING

The practical branches of acquiring wealth are listed, with Thales' olive presses as an example of monopoly.

Now that we have dealt adequately with the theory, we must go through what concerns practice. With all such matters, studying the theory is fit for a free person, while practical experience is a matter of necessity. The useful parts of the art of acquiring wealth are these. First, experience with livestock: which kinds are most profitable, and where, and how—for example, what sort of horses, cattle or sheep to acquire, and similarly the other animals. One must know from experience which of these are most profitable compared with one another, and which do well in which places, for different ones thrive in different regions. Next, experience of farming, both of cleared land and of land planted with trees; of beekeeping; and of the other creatures, fish or birds, from which help can be had. These are the parts, and the primary ones, of the most proper art of acquiring wealth. Of the art of exchange, the largest part is commerce, which has three parts: shipowning, transport of goods, and retail selling. These differ from one another in that some are safer and others bring a larger return. The second part is lending at interest, and the third is working for wages—some in the vulgar crafts, some unskilled and useful only for their bodies. There is a third form of acquiring wealth between this one and the first, since it has something both of the natural kind and of

6 The Greek word for interest, *tokos*, also means "offspring."

exchange: all that comes from the earth and from things that grow from the earth which bear no fruit but are useful, such as logging and all mining. Mining itself already covers many kinds, since there are many kinds of things mined from the earth.[7] The most skilled occupations are those where chance plays the smallest part; the most vulgar are those that most damage the body; the most slavish are those that make the most use of the body; and the most ignoble are those that least require excellence. We have now spoken about each of these in general terms. To go into detail would be useful for those who practice them, but to dwell on it would be tedious.

Since some people have written on these subjects—for example, Charetides of Paros and [1259a] Apollodorus of Lemnos on farming, both of cleared and of planted land, and others on other subjects—anyone who is interested can study them from these writers. One should also collect the scattered stories of how some people have succeeded in making money, since all of these are useful to those who value the art of acquiring wealth—for example, the story of Thales of Miletus. It is a scheme for making money, which people attribute to him because of his wisdom, but it actually applies generally.[8] People were reproaching him for his poverty, the story goes, as proof that philosophy is useless. From his study of the stars he realized there would be a large olive crop, so while it was still winter he raised a little money and paid deposits on all the olive presses in Miletus and Chios, renting them cheaply since no one bid against him. When the season came, and many people wanted presses all at once and suddenly, he rented them out on whatever terms he liked. Having made a lot of money, he showed that it is easy for philosophers to be rich if they want to, but that this is not what they are serious about. This is how Thales is said to have given a demonstration of his wisdom. But

7 "Vulgar" renders *banausos*, used of manual and mechanical trades practiced for a living, which Greek aristocrats looked down on.

8 Thales of Miletus (early sixth century BC) was traditionally counted the first Greek philosopher and one of the Seven Sages.

as we said, this kind of thing is a general principle of making money: if one can create a monopoly for oneself. That is why some cities too resort to this source of revenue when they are short of money: they create a monopoly of goods for sale. In Sicily, a man with whom money had been deposited used it to buy up all the iron from the ironworks. Later, when merchants arrived from the markets, he was the only seller, and though he did not raise the price very much, he still made a hundred talents on his fifty. When Dionysius learned of this, he told the man to take his money away, but not to stay in Syracuse any longer, since he had found ways of making money that were harmful to Dionysius' own affairs. Yet Thales' insight and this are the same: both contrived to create a monopoly for themselves. It is useful for statesmen too to know these things. Many cities need money-making and sources of revenue like these, just as a household does, and even more so. That is why some statesmen even devote their political activity to these matters alone.[9]

RULE OVER WIFE AND CHILDREN

A husband rules his wife as a statesman rules, and a father rules his children as a king.

There were three parts of household management: one is the rule of a master, which we have discussed already; another is the rule of a father; and the third is the rule of a husband. For a man rules over his wife and children—over both as free people, but not with the same kind of rule: [1259b] over his wife he rules as a statesman, over his children as a king. For the male is by nature more fitted to lead than the female, unless things are somehow constituted contrary to nature, and the older and fully developed is more fitted than the younger and undeveloped. Now in most political offices, ruler and ruled change places, since they tend to be equal in nature and to differ in nothing. Even so, when one rules and the other is ruled, the ruler seeks a

9 Dionysius I was tyrant of Syracuse (405–367 BC). A talent was a very large sum of money.

distinction in dress, in forms of address and in honors—as in what Amasis said in his story about the footbath. The male always stands in this relation to the female.[10] Rule over children is kingly, since the parent rules both by affection and by age, which is the kingly kind of rule. That is why Homer was right to address Zeus, the king of them all, as "father of men and gods." For a king should be superior by nature, but the same in kind as his subjects—and this is the relation of older to younger, and of parent to child.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE RULED

Women, children, and slaves have excellence too, but not the same excellence as the ruler.

It is evident, then, that household management is more concerned with human beings than with acquiring lifeless things, and more with their excellence than with the excellence of property, which we call wealth; and more with free people than with slaves. First, then, one might raise a question about slaves: is there any excellence of a slave besides the excellences of a tool and a servant, some other more valuable one, such as moderation, courage, justice and the other states of this kind? Or is there none besides bodily service? Either answer presents a difficulty. If there is, how will slaves differ from free people? And if there is not, that is absurd, since they are human beings and share in reason. Much the same question arises about a woman and a child: do they too have excellences? Must a woman be moderate, courageous and just, and can a child be both undisciplined and moderate, or not? We must consider this question generally about what is by nature ruled and what rules: is their excellence the same or different? If both must share in being fine and good, why should one rule and the other be ruled once and for all? They cannot differ by more and less, since being

10 Amasis, a king of Egypt of humble origins, had a gold footbath recast into a statue of a god and told his people that he, like it, now deserved honor whatever he had been before (Herodotus 2.172).

ruled and ruling differ in kind, while more and less do not. But if one must have it and the other not, that is astonishing. For if the ruler is not to be moderate and just, how will he rule well? And if the one ruled is not, how will he be ruled [1260a] well? For if he is undisciplined and cowardly, he will do none of his duties. It is evident, then, that both must share in excellence, but that there are differences within it, as there are among those who are by nature ruled. And the nature of the soul shows us this directly: in it there is by nature a part that rules and a part that is ruled, and we say that each has a different excellence—the part that has reason and the part without reason. Clearly the same holds in other cases too, so that most instances of ruling and being ruled are natural. The free rules the slave in a different way from that in which the male rules the female and a man rules a child. The parts of the soul are present in all of them, but present in different ways. The slave does not have the deliberative part at all; the female has it, but without authority; the child has it, but not fully developed. So the ruler must have intellectual excellence complete (for his work, taken without qualification, is that of a master craftsman, and reason is the master craftsman), while each of the others must have as much as falls to them. We must suppose that the same necessarily holds for the excellences of character: all must share in them, but not in the same way, only as much as each needs for his own work. It is evident, then, that all those we have mentioned have excellence of character, and that the moderation of a woman and of a man is not the same, nor their courage and justice, as Socrates thought: one courage is that of a ruler, the other that of a subordinate, and the same holds for the other excellences.

This also becomes clear if we look at the matter in more detail. For those who speak in general terms deceive themselves when they say that excellence is the good condition of the soul, or acting rightly, or something of the sort. Those who enumerate the excellences, like Gorgias, speak much better than those who define it in this way. So we should consider that what the poet said about a woman holds for everyone: "Silence brings a

woman credit"—but not so a man. And since the child is not fully developed, clearly his excellence too is not his own in relation to himself, but relative to his completed self and to the one who guides him. Similarly, the slave's excellence is relative to the master. We laid down that the slave is useful for necessities, so clearly he needs only a little excellence—just enough not to fall short in his work through lack of discipline or cowardice.[11] If what we have just said is true, one might ask whether craftsmen too will need to have excellence, since they often fall short in their work through lack of discipline. Or is there a very great difference here? The slave shares his master's life, while the craftsman is further removed, and he has only as much excellence as he has servitude. For the vulgar craftsman 1260b has a kind of limited servitude; and while the slave is one of the things that exist by nature, no shoemaker is, nor any other craftsman. It is evident, then, that the master should be the cause of this sort of excellence in the slave, and not someone who has the art of teaching him his tasks. That is why those who deny slaves reason and say that one should only give them orders are wrong: slaves should be admonished even more than children.

But let this be how we settle these matters. As for husband and wife, children and father, the excellence belonging to each and their relations with one another—what is fine and what is not, and how one should pursue the good and avoid the bad—these must be gone into in our discussion of constitutions. For since every household is part of a city, and these relationships are parts of the household, and the excellence of the part must be viewed in relation to that of the whole, children and women must be educated with an eye to the constitution—if indeed it makes any difference to the city's being excellent that its children and its women are excellent. And it must make a difference, since women are half of the free population, and it is from children that those who share in the constitution come. So,

11 Gorgias of Leontini was a celebrated fifth-century BC rhetorician; the verse is from Sophocles' *Ajax*.

since these matters have been settled, and the rest must be discussed elsewhere, let us set aside the present discussion as complete and make a fresh start. And let us first examine the views of those who have put forward ideas about the best constitution.

Book II

Ideal constitutions proposed by others, and the best existing ones.

CHAPTER 1

Since we propose to study which political community is best of all for people able to live as closely as possible to what they would pray for, we must also examine other constitutions—both those in use in some of the cities said to be well governed, and any others that have been proposed by certain thinkers and are thought to be good. That way we can see what is right and useful in them, and also make it clear that looking for something different from them is not a matter of wanting to show off our cleverness, but that we have undertaken this inquiry because the constitutions now in existence are not good. We must begin at the natural starting point of this inquiry. Necessarily, either the citizens share everything, or nothing, or some things but not others. It is evident that sharing nothing is impossible. A constitution is a kind of community, and first of all the citizens must share a location: the location of [1261a] a single city is one, and the citizens are sharers in that one city. But is it better for a city that is to be well run to share everything that can be shared, or is it better to share some things and not others? For the citizens could share children, women and property with one another, as in Plato's *Republic*, where Socrates says that children, women and property should be held in common. Is it better as things are now, then, or according to the law described in the *Republic*?

TOO MUCH UNITY

Socrates' aim of making the city as unified as possible would destroy it.

Having the women common to all involves many difficulties. In particular, the reason Socrates gives for why it should be legislated in this way does not evidently follow from his arguments. Moreover, the end he says the city should have is impossible as he now states it, and he has not specified how it ought to be interpreted. I mean the idea that it is best for the whole city to be as much one as possible, since Socrates takes this as his premise. Yet it is evident that if a city goes on becoming more and more one, it will no longer be a city at all. For a city is by nature a kind of multitude, and as it becomes more one it will turn from a city into a household, and from a household into a single human being—for we would say that a household is more one than a city, and a single person more one than a household. So even if someone were able to do this, it should not be done, since it would destroy the city.

A city is made up not only of a number of human beings but of human beings who differ in kind: a city does not come from people who are alike. A military alliance and a city are different things. An alliance is useful by virtue of its size, even if its members are the same in kind, since an alliance exists by nature for mutual help—just as a heavier weight pulls the scale further down. But the things from which a unity is to come must differ in kind. (This is also how a city will differ from a people, when its population is not scattered in villages but lives like the Arcadians.) That is why reciprocal equality preserves cities, as was said earlier in the *Ethics*. This must exist even among people who are free and equal, since they cannot all rule at once, but must rule for a year or some other fixed period of time.[1] In this way it turns out that all rule, just as if shoemakers and car-

1 The Arcadians of the central Peloponnese lived in scattered communities loosely linked as a people rather than in a single city.

penters changed places, and the same people were not always shoemakers and carpenters. Since it is better for things to be like this in political communities too, it is clearly better for the same people always to rule, if possible. But where this is not possible because 1261b all are equal by nature—and where it is also just for all to share in ruling, whether ruling is a good thing or a bad one—then those who are equal taking turns to give way imitates the original inequality: some rule and others are ruled in turn, as if they had become different people. And in the same way, among those who rule, different people hold different offices. It is evident from this, then, that the city is not by nature one in the way some people say, and that what was said to be the greatest good in cities actually destroys them—yet the good of each thing preserves it. It is evident in another way too that seeking to unify the city excessively is not better. A household is more self-sufficient than one person, and a city than a household, and a city tends to be a city only once the community of its population is self-sufficient. If, then, what is more self-sufficient is more choiceworthy, what is less one is more choiceworthy than what is more one.

COMMON WIVES AND CHILDREN

Sharing women and children would weaken care and affection rather than create unity.

But even if it is best for the community to be as much one as possible, this does not appear to be demonstrated by the argument that the city is one if all say "mine" and "not mine" at the same time—which Socrates thinks is a sign that the city is completely one. For "all" has two senses. If it means each individually, perhaps this would come closer to what Socrates wants to achieve: each will call the same boy his son and the same woman his wife, and will speak in the same way of property and of everything that happens. But this is not how people with women and children in common will speak. They will all say it, but not each of them individually; and similarly with property,

all will say it, but not each of them individually. It is evident, then, that there is a fallacy in saying "all." For "all," "both," "odd" and "even," because of their double meaning, give rise to contentious arguments even in discussion. So for all to say the same thing is in one sense fine but impossible, and in the other sense does nothing for harmony. Besides, what is proposed has another drawback. What is shared by the most people receives the least care. People care most for what is their own, and less for what is common, or only as much as falls to each of them. Among other things, they neglect it more because they think someone else is looking after it—just as in household service many servants sometimes serve worse than fewer. Each citizen will have a thousand sons, and these will not be sons of each individually; any son will be equally the son of anyone 1262a whatever. So all will neglect them equally.

Further, each person says "mine" of any citizen who is doing well or badly only in the sense of being one of however many there are: he says "mine" or "so-and-so's," speaking this way of each of the thousand, or however many the city has—and even then he says it with doubt, since it is unclear who happened to have a child, and whether it survived once born. Yet is it better for each to say "mine" in this way, applying the same word to two thousand or ten thousand people, or rather in the way people now say "mine" in cities? Now one man calls someone his son, another calls the same person his brother, another his cousin, or some other relative by blood, or by kinship and marriage, whether his own or that of his relatives; and besides these, someone else calls him a fellow member of his phratry or tribe. It is better to be someone's own cousin than a son in that way.[2] And it is not possible to avoid people supposing that certain others are their brothers, children, fathers and mothers. They will inevitably come to believe things about one another from the resemblances that children bear to their parents. Some of those who write accounts of journeys around the world say

2 A phratry ("brotherhood") was a hereditary association of families; phratries and tribes were subdivisions of the citizen body.

this actually happens: among some of the peoples of inland Libya, the women are held in common, but the children who are born are assigned according to their resemblances. And there are some females, both women and those of other animals such as horses and cattle, who have a strong natural tendency to produce offspring resembling their parents, like the mare at Pharsalus called "Just."[3]

THE DANGERS OF COMMON FAMILIES

Common families would invite offenses against unrecognized kin and dilute friendship.

Further, those who set up this kind of community cannot easily guard against such harms as assaults and killings, some involuntary and some voluntary, and fights and verbal abuse. None of these is holy when committed against fathers, mothers and close relatives, as it is not against those more remote. And they are bound to happen more often when people do not know their relationship than when they do; and when they do happen, those who know can perform the customary expiations, while those who do not can perform none. It is also strange that, having made sons common, he forbids only sexual intercourse between lovers, but does not prohibit love itself, or the other intimacies that are most improper of all between father and son, or between brother and brother—since even love alone is improper. It is strange too that he forbids intercourse for no other reason than that the pleasure is too intense, while thinking it makes no difference that the two are father and son, or brothers of one another.

Having women and children in common seems to be more useful for the farmers than [1262b] for the guardians. For there will be less friendship when children and women are held in common, and that is how the ruled ought to be, so that they obey and do not attempt revolution. In general, such a law is bound to

3 Pharsalus was a town in Thessaly; the mare was named "Just" because her foals faithfully resembled their sires.

produce the opposite of what rightly laid-down laws should bring about, and the opposite of the reason why Socrates thinks the matter of children and women should be arranged in this way. For we think friendship is the greatest good for cities, since it makes them least likely to fall into civil strife; and Socrates praises the unity of the city above all, which he, like everyone, takes to be the work of friendship. So we know that in the discussion of love Aristophanes says that lovers, because of the intensity of their affection, long to grow together and become one instead of two. In that case both, or one of them, would necessarily be destroyed. But in the city, friendship is bound to become watery because of such a community, and a son will be least likely to say "my father," or a father "my son."[4] Just as a little sweet wine mixed into a lot of water makes the mixture imperceptible, so it turns out with the sense of kinship toward one another that these names convey: in such a constitution, there is the least necessity for a father to care for his sons, or a son for his father, or brothers for one another. For there are two things that most make people care and feel affection: that something is their own, and that it is precious to them. Neither can exist for those governed in this way. Moreover, there is a great deal of confusion about how the transfer of children will happen —moving those born among the farmers and craftsmen to the guardians, and those born among the guardians to the others. Those who hand them over and transfer them must know who is given to whom. Further, the things mentioned earlier—assaults, love affairs, killings—are bound to happen even more with these people. For those given to the other citizens will no longer call the guardians brothers, children, fathers and mothers, nor will those placed with the guardians call the other citizens so, and so be careful not to do any such thing because of their kinship.

So let this be our conclusion about the community of children and women.

4 In Plato's *Symposium*, the comic poet Aristophanes tells a myth of lovers as halves of a split being who long to be joined again. "Civil strife" renders *stasis*, conflict between factions within a city, often ending in bloodshed or revolution.

COMMON PROPERTY

Property should be private in ownership but common in use; the Republic has further flaws.

Next we must consider property: how should it be arranged for those who are to live under the best constitution—should property be common or not? This question could be considered separately from the laws about children and women. I mean, 1263a regarding property, even if children and women are held separately, as they are now everywhere, whether it is better for property, or its use, to be common. For example, the plots of land might be held separately, while the crops are brought into a common store and consumed (as some peoples do); or, on the contrary, the land might be common and farmed in common, while the crops are divided for private use (some non-Greeks are said to share things in this way too); or both the plots of land and the crops might be common. If the land is farmed by others, the situation would be different and easier. But if the citizens labor for themselves, arrangements about property would cause more trouble. For if people are not equal but unequal in what they enjoy and in what they do, complaints are bound to arise against those who enjoy or take a lot while working little, from those who take less and work more. In general, living together and sharing in any human affairs is difficult, and especially in things like these. Partnerships of fellow travelers show this: most of them quarrel, clashing with one another over everyday things and trifles. Again, among servants, we clash most with those we use most for routine services.

Holding property in common, then, has these and other such difficulties. The present arrangement, if improved by good habits and an order of right laws, would be much better. It would have the good of both—I mean the good of property being common and the good of its being private. For property should be common in a way, but private in general. When the care of property is divided, people will not complain against one

another, but will rather make more progress, since each will be attending to his own; while because of excellence, when it comes to use, it will be as the proverb says: "Friends share what they have." Even now this arrangement exists in outline in some cities, which shows it is not impossible; and especially in well-governed cities, parts of it are already in place and parts could come about. Each person has his own property, but he makes some of it available to his friends and uses some of theirs as common. In Sparta, for instance, people use one another's slaves as practically their own, and horses and dogs too, and if they need provisions on a journey they take them from the fields anywhere in the countryside. It is clear, then, that it is better for property to be privately owned but to make it common in use; and seeing to it that citizens become people of this kind is the lawgiver's own special task. Further, where pleasure is concerned, it makes an untold difference to regard something as one's own. It is surely not for nothing that each person has love [1263b] for himself: this is natural. Being selfish is rightly blamed; but that is not loving oneself, it is loving oneself more than one should—just as with loving money, since practically everyone loves each of these things. Again, doing favors for friends, guests, or companions and helping them out is a great pleasure, and this happens when property is private. These things, then, do not come about for those who make the city excessively one. Besides that, they plainly do away with the work of two excellences: moderation with regard to women (for it is a fine act to keep away, out of moderation, from a woman who belongs to another), and generosity with regard to property. No one will be seen to be generous, or do a single generous act, since the work of generosity lies in the use of possessions.

Legislation of this kind, then, looks attractive and might seem humane. The listener welcomes it gladly, imagining that there will be some wonderful friendship of everyone toward everyone —especially when someone blames the evils now found in constitutions on property not being held in common. I mean lawsuits against one another over contracts, trials for perjury, and

the flattering of the rich. None of these arises from the lack of common ownership; they arise from wickedness. In fact we see people who own and share things in common quarrelling far more than those who hold their property separately; it is just that we notice few people falling out over joint ownership, because we are comparing them with the many who own their property privately. Further, it is only fair to state not just how many evils people will be spared by sharing, but also how many good things they will lose; and that life appears to be altogether impossible.

We should consider the cause of Socrates' error to be his premise, which is not correct. The household and the city must be one in a certain way, but not in every way. For there is a point at which, as it goes further, it will not be a city at all; and a point at which it will still be a city, but, being close to not being one, a worse city—just as if someone were to turn a harmony into a unison, or a rhythm into a single beat. Rather, since the city is a plurality, as was said before, it must be made common and one through education. And it is strange that someone who intends to introduce education, and who believes that the city will become excellent through it, should think he can set things right by measures like these, and not by habits, philosophy, and laws—the way in Sparta and Crete the [1264a] lawgiver made property common through the common meals.[5] Nor should we ignore this very point: we must pay attention to the long stretch of time, the many years, in which it would not have gone unnoticed if these arrangements were good. Practically everything has been discovered already; but some things have not been brought together, and others people know about but do not put to use. It would become especially clear if one saw such a constitution actually being set up. He will not be able to create the city without dividing and separating its members, some into common meals, others into brotherhoods and tribes. So nothing

5 The common meals (syssitia) were communal messes to which citizens contributed from their own resources; in Sparta, belonging to one was a condition of full citizenship.

else will end up being legislated except that the guardians are not to farm—which is what the Spartans are trying to do even now.

Nor, for that matter, has Socrates said what form the constitution as a whole will take for those who share in it, and it is not easy to say. And yet the bulk of the city will pretty much consist of the bulk of the other citizens, about whom nothing has been settled: whether the farmers too should have their property in common or each privately, and further whether their wives and children should be private or common. If everything is common to all of them in the same way, how will they differ from the guardians? Or what more will they get for submitting to their rule? Or what will persuade them to submit to it—unless the guardians devise some trick like the Cretans? The Cretans allow their slaves everything else that they have themselves, and forbid them only the gymnasiums and the possession of arms. But if, as in other cities, these things are private among the farmers too, what form will the community take? There will inevitably be two cities in one, and these opposed to each other. For he makes the guardians a kind of garrison, and the farmers, craftsmen, and the rest the citizens. Accusations and lawsuits, and all the other evils he says exist in cities, will all exist among these people too. And yet Socrates says that thanks to their education they will not need many regulations—those on city management, on markets, and the like—even though he gives the education only to the guardians. Further, he makes the farmers the owners of their holdings, paying a share of the produce; but they are likely to be far more troublesome and full of pride than the helots, the penestae, and the slaves that some peoples have.[6] Whether these matters are equally necessary or not, nothing at any rate has been settled so far; nor on the related questions of what their constitution, their education, and their laws are to be. It is not easy to work out, and it makes no small difference, what sort of people these must be if the community of the

6 The helots of Sparta and the penestae of Thessaly were subject populations bound to the land and made to work it for their masters.

guardians is to be preserved. But [1264b] if he makes the wives common and the property private, who will manage the household, as the men manage things in the fields? And who will, even if both the property and the farmers' wives are common? It is strange, too, to draw the comparison from wild animals, arguing that women should pursue the same activities as men—animals, which have no household to manage.

The way Socrates appoints the rulers is also hazardous. He always makes the same people rulers; and this becomes a cause of civil strife even among people who have no standing at all, let alone among spirited and warlike men. That he has to make the same people rulers is clear: the gold from the god is not mixed into the souls of some people at one time and of others at another, but always of the same ones. He says that right at birth the god mixed gold into some, silver into others, and bronze and iron into those who are going to be craftsmen and farmers. Further, while taking happiness away from the guardians, he says that the lawgiver must make the whole city happy. But the whole cannot be happy unless most of its parts, or all, or at least some, have happiness.[7] Being happy is not like being even. Evenness can belong to a whole without belonging to either of its parts, but happiness cannot. And if the guardians are not happy, who else is? Surely not the craftsmen and the mass of vulgar workers. The constitution Socrates has described, then, has these difficulties, and others no smaller.

PLATO'S LAWS

The constitution of Plato's Laws is criticized for its size, its property rules, and its oligarchic leanings.

Much the same holds for the *Laws,* which was written later, so we had better examine the constitution there briefly too. In the *Republic* Socrates has settled very few matters: how the sharing

7 The reference is to the "noble lie" of Plato's *Republic*, the myth of metals mixed into citizens' souls at birth. "Happiness" renders *eudaimonia*: flourishing, a whole life going well.

of women and children should be arranged, property, and the structure of the constitution. (The mass of inhabitants is divided into two parts, the farmers and the part that fights for the city; a third, drawn from the latter, is the part that deliberates and is sovereign over the city.) But about the farmers and craftsmen—whether they will share in no office or in some, and whether they too must own arms and join in fighting or not—on these questions Socrates has settled nothing. He thinks the women should join in fighting and share the same education as the guardians; otherwise he has filled out the discussion with extraneous matters, and with what sort of education 1265a the guardians should have.[8] Most of the *Laws* in fact consists of laws; he has said little about the constitution. And though he wants to make it more suitable for cities in general, he gradually brings it back round to the other constitution. Apart from the sharing of women and property, he gives both constitutions the same features: the same education, living free of necessary work, and common meals likewise—except that in this one he says there should be common meals for women too, and that the former has a thousand men bearing arms and this one five thousand.

All of Socrates' discourses have brilliance, sophistication, originality, and a spirit of inquiry; but it is probably hard to get everything right. Take the population just mentioned: we must not overlook that so many people will need a territory the size of Babylon's, or some other land of boundless extent, to feed five thousand people who do no work, and around them another crowd, many times larger, of women and servants. One should make one's assumptions as one would wish, but nothing impossible. It is said that in laying down laws the lawgiver must keep two things in view: the territory and the people. It would also be good to add the neighboring regions, first, if the city is to live a political life. (It must use for war not only such weapons as are useful within its own territory, but also those that are useful against places outside it.) And if one does not accept such a life,

8 Plato's *Laws* was his last work. Its main speaker is an unnamed Athenian, not Socrates, but Aristotle treats both works as Socrates' discourse.

either for the individual or for the city in common, the citizens must nonetheless be formidable to their enemies, not only when these invade their territory but also when they withdraw from it.

The amount of property also needs looking at: it might be better to define it differently, more clearly. He says it should be enough to live moderately—as if one said "enough to live well." That is too general, since one can live moderately and yet wretchedly. A better definition is "moderately and generously" (taken separately, the one will lead to luxury, the other to a life of toil), since these are the only desirable dispositions concerning the use of wealth. One cannot use wealth gently or courageously, for instance, but one can use it moderately and generously; so these must be the dispositions that concern it. It is strange, too, to equalize property but make no provision about the number of citizens, leaving the begetting of children unlimited, on the grounds that the total will even out well enough to the same number because some couples are childless, however many children others have, [1265b] since that seems to be what happens in cities now. But this needs far more precision in that city than in cities now. Nowadays nobody is left destitute, because estates are divided among any number of heirs; but there, since estates cannot be divided, the extra children must have nothing, whether they are fewer or more numerous. One might rather suppose that the begetting of children should be limited, more than property, so that no one has more than a certain number; and that this number should be set with an eye to chance, in case some of the children die, and to the childlessness of others. Leaving it unregulated, as most cities do, inevitably causes poverty among the citizens, and poverty breeds civil strife and crime. Pheidon of Corinth, one of the most ancient lawgivers, thought that the households and the number of citizens should stay equal, even if at the start everyone's allotments were unequal in size; but in these *Laws* it is the opposite. How we think these matters would be better arranged must be discussed later. These *Laws* also leave out how the rulers are to differ from

the ruled. He says that, just as the warp is made from a different wool from the woof, so the rulers should stand toward the ruled. And since he allows a person's total property to increase up to fivefold, why should the same not hold for land, up to some limit? The division of house plots must also be examined, in case it does not serve household management well: he assigned each man two plots, set apart from each other, but it is hard to run two houses.

The whole arrangement aims to be neither democracy nor oligarchy but something in between, what people call a polity; for it is made up of those who serve as hoplites. If he is setting this up as the constitution most commonly shared by cities, perhaps he is right; but if as the best after the first constitution, he is not. One might well praise the Spartan constitution more, or perhaps some other that is more aristocratic.[9] Some people say that the best constitution must be a mixture of all constitutions, and for this reason they praise the Spartan one. Some of them say it is made up of oligarchy, monarchy, and democracy: the kingship is monarchy, the office of the elders oligarchy, and it is democratic in the office of the ephors, because the ephors come from the people. Others say that the ephorate is a tyranny, and that the constitution is democratic in its common meals and the rest of its [1266a] daily life. But in these *Laws* it is said that the best constitution should be composed of democracy and tyranny—which one would either not count as constitutions at all, or count as the worst of all. So those who mix more of them are closer to the truth; for a constitution made up of more elements is better.[10] Next, it plainly has nothing monarchic in it, only oligarchic and democratic features, and it tends to lean toward oligarchy. This is clear from how officials are appointed. Choosing by lot from elected candidates is common to both. But requiring the better-off to attend the assembly, vote for officials, or per-

9 Hoplites were heavy-armed infantry who supplied their own armor, and so had to own a certain amount of property. "Polity" renders *politeia*, the Greek word for "constitution," used also for this particular mixed form.

10 The ephors were five Spartan magistrates, elected annually from the whole citizen body, with wide powers over the kings and the city.

form some other political function, while the others are exempt, is oligarchic; so is trying to have most officials come from the well-off, and the highest offices from the highest property classes. He also makes the election of the council oligarchic. Everyone is required to vote, but first for candidates from the first property class, then again for an equal number from the second, then from the third—except that not everyone was obliged to vote for candidates from the third or fourth class, and for the fourth class only members of the first and second were obliged. Then from these, he says, an equal number must be designated from each property class. So those from the highest property classes will be more numerous and better, because some of the common people will not vote, since they are not compelled to. That a constitution of this kind should not be composed of democracy and monarchy is clear from these points and from what will be said later, when the inquiry turns to this sort of constitution. Electing officials from elected candidates is also dangerous. If some people, even a moderate number, choose to band together, the elections will always go as they wish. That, then, is how matters stand with the constitution in the *Laws*.

PHALEAS AND EQUAL PROPERTY

Phaleas proposes equal property, but desires need equalizing more than possessions.

There are also some other constitutions, proposed some by private individuals and some by philosophers and statesmen; but all of them are closer than these two to the constitutions that are established and under which people now live. No one else has introduced the novelty of sharing children and wives, or of common meals for women; they start instead from necessities. Some people think the most important thing is to have property well arranged, since they say all civil strife arises over it. That is why Phaleas of Chalcedon was the first to introduce this idea: he

says that the citizens' holdings should be equal.[11] This 1266b he thought would not be hard to do in cities that were just being founded. In those already settled it was more laborious, but even so, equality could be reached very quickly if the rich gave dowries but did not receive them, and the poor received them but did not give them. Plato, when writing the *Laws*, thought inequality should be allowed up to a point, but that no citizen should be permitted to acquire more than five times the smallest property, as was said earlier. Those who legislate in this way must not overlook something they now do overlook: in fixing the amount of property, they ought to fix the number of children as well. If the number of children outgrows the size of the property, the law is bound to be broken; and quite apart from its being broken, it is a bad thing for many people to go from rich to poor, since it is hard to keep such people from becoming revolutionaries. That equality of property has some power over the political community, some people in the past as well plainly recognized. Solon, for instance, made a law about it, and elsewhere there is a law preventing anyone from acquiring as much land as he wants. Laws likewise prevent people from selling their property: at Locri, for example, there is a law against selling unless one can show that an evident misfortune has befallen one; and there are laws requiring the ancient allotments to be preserved. (The repeal of this law at Leucas made their constitution excessively democratic, since it no longer came about that people entered office from the fixed property classes.) But it is possible for there to be equality of property, and yet for the amount to be either too great, so that people live in luxury, or too small, so that they live meanly. It is clear, then, that it is not enough for the lawgiver to make property equal; he must aim at the mean. And even if one assigned a moderate property to everyone, it would do no good; for one should equalize desires rather than properties, and that cannot happen unless people are adequately educated by the laws. Phaleas might perhaps reply that this is just what he says himself, since

11 Phaleas of Chalcedon, on the Bosporus, is known only from this discussion.

he thinks cities should have equality in these two things, property and education. But one has to say what the education is to be; its merely being one and the same is no help. It can be one and the same and yet be the kind that makes people inclined to grasp for more money, or honor, or both.

Further, people fall into civil strife not only because of inequality of property but also because of inequality of honors, though in opposite ways in each case: the many over inequality of property, 1267a the refined over honors, if these are equal—hence the line "in equal honor both the bad and the good." Nor do people do wrong only because of necessities, for which he thinks equality of property is the cure, so that no one will rob people of their cloaks because he is cold or hungry. They also do wrong for enjoyment, and so as not to be left wanting. If they have a desire beyond the necessities, they will do wrong to cure it; and not only for that reason, but also to enjoy pleasures that come without pain. What, then, is the cure for these three?[12] For the first, a modest property and work; for the second, moderation; and third, if some want to find enjoyment through themselves alone, they will find no cure for it except from philosophy, since the other pleasures need other people. In fact the greatest wrongs are done out of excess, not for the sake of necessities: people do not become tyrants to keep from being cold. That is why the honors are great for killing not a thief but a tyrant. So the kind of constitution Phaleas proposes helps only against small wrongs. Further, he mostly wants to set up arrangements that will let the citizens govern well among themselves; but they must also do so with respect to their neighbors and all outsiders. The constitution must therefore be organized with a view to military strength, about which he has said nothing. The same goes for property. It must be sufficient not only for use within the city but also against dangers from outside. So there should not be so much of it that nearby, stronger peoples will covet it while its owners are unable to fend off the attackers;

12 The line is from Homer, *Iliad* 9.319, where Achilles complains that brave and cowardly receive the same reward.

nor so little that they cannot sustain a war even against equals and peers. He has determined nothing about this, but we must not overlook it: what amount of wealth is advantageous. Perhaps the best limit is that it should not pay the stronger to go to war because of the excess, but that they would do so only as they would if the property were not so large. When Autophradates, for example, was about to besiege Atarneus, Eubulus told him to consider how long it would take to capture the place, and to reckon up what that length of time would cost; for he himself was willing to take less than that and abandon Atarneus at once. By saying this he made Autophradates think it over and give up the siege.[13]

Equality of property among citizens, then, is one of the things that help to prevent civil strife among them, but not, so to speak, a great one. The refined might resent it, feeling they deserve more than an equal share, and this is why they are often seen launching attacks and stirring up strife. Further, 1267b human wickedness is insatiable. At first two obols are enough, but once that has become traditional, people always want more, until they go on without limit. For the nature of desire is limitless, and most people live to satisfy it. The starting point in such matters, then, rather than equalizing property, is to train those who are decent by nature not to want to grasp for more, and to make the base unable to; and that happens if they are kept weaker and are not treated unjustly.[14] Nor has he dealt well with equality of property. He equalizes only landholding; but there is also wealth in slaves, livestock, and money, and a large stock of what are called movables. So one must seek equality in all of these, or some moderate regulation, or else leave them all alone. It also appears from his legislation that he is making the city small, if all the craftsmen are to be public slaves and not form any part of the citizen body. But if those who carry out public works are to

13 Eubulus ruled Atarneus, on the coast of Asia Minor opposite Lesbos; Autophradates was a Persian governor. The episode belongs to the mid-fourth century BC.

14 Two obols was the payment Athens made to citizens, apparently for attending festivals; the obol was a small silver coin.

be public slaves, it should be on the pattern followed at Epidamnus and once instituted by Diophantus at Athens. As for Phaleas' constitution, then, one can pretty well see from this whether he has said anything well or not.

HIPPODAMUS AND CHANGING LAWS

Hippodamus' planned city is examined, and Aristotle asks when ancestral laws should be changed.

Hippodamus of Miletus, son of Euryphon, invented the division of cities into planned districts and laid out the Piraeus. In the rest of his life, too, he became rather eccentric out of love of distinction, so that some people thought he lived too affectedly, with his long hair and costly ornaments, and his clothing, which was cheap but warm, worn not only in winter but in the summer months too; and he aspired to be learned about nature as a whole. He was the first of those not active in politics to try to say something about the best constitution. He designed the city with a population of ten thousand men, divided into three parts: one part craftsmen, one farmers, and a third the part that fights for the city and bears arms.[15] He divided the territory into three parts: sacred, public, and private. The sacred land was to provide for the customary offerings to the gods; the public land was to support the defenders; and the private land was to belong to the farmers. He thought there were also only three kinds of law, since the matters that lawsuits arise over are three in number: outrage, damage, and death. He also legislated a single supreme court, to which all cases thought to have been wrongly decided were to be appealed; he composed it of certain elected 1268a elders. He thought verdicts in the courts should not be given by casting ballots. Instead, each juror should carry a tablet: if he convicted outright, he would write the penalty on it; if he acquitted outright, he would leave it blank; and if he convicted on one point but not another, he would specify this. He thought

15 Hippodamus, a fifth-century BC town planner, is associated with the grid plan; the Piraeus is the port of Athens.

the present law was badly made, since it forces jurors to perjure themselves whichever way they vote. He also proposed a law that those who discover something useful to the city should receive an honor, and that the children of those who die in war should be brought up at public expense—as though this had never yet been legislated elsewhere, though in fact this law exists now at Athens and in other cities too. All the officials were to be elected by the people, and he made the people consist of the three parts of the city. Those elected were to take care of public affairs, matters concerning foreigners, and matters concerning orphans.

These, then, are most of the features of Hippodamus' arrangement, and the most noteworthy. The first difficulty one might raise concerns the division of the body of citizens. The craftsmen, the farmers, and those who bear arms all share in the constitution; but the farmers have no arms, and the craftsmen have neither land nor arms, so that they become practically slaves of those who possess the arms. It is impossible, then, for them to share in all the offices, since generals, guardians of the citizens, and, broadly speaking, the most authoritative officials must be appointed from those who bear arms. But if they have no share in the constitution, how can they feel friendly toward it? Well then, those who possess the arms must be stronger than both the other parts. That is not easy unless they are numerous; and if they are, why should the others share in the constitution and have authority over the appointment of officials? Again, what use are the farmers to the city? Craftsmen are necessary, since every city needs craftsmen, and they can make a living from their craft as in other cities. The farmers, if they supplied food to those who possess arms, might reasonably be some part of the city; but as it is, they have their own land and will farm it for themselves. Further, as for the common land from which the defenders are to get their food: if they farm it themselves, the fighting part would not be distinct from the farming part, which is what the lawgiver wants. If some other people are to farm it, distinct both from those who farm their own land and from the

fighters, this will be yet a fourth part of the city, sharing in nothing and alien to the constitution. And if one makes the same people farm both the private and the common land, the quantity of produce will be insufficient for 1268b each of them to farm for two households; and why will they not straight away take food for themselves and supply it to the fighters from the same land and the same allotments? All of this involves a great deal of confusion. Nor is the law about judging well made, the one requiring a juror to make distinctions in his verdict when the charge has been written without qualification, so that the juror becomes an arbitrator. In arbitration this is possible even with several arbitrators, since they confer with one another about the verdict; but in the courts it is not possible. On the contrary, most lawgivers take steps to prevent jurors from conferring with one another. Then how will the verdict not be a muddle, when a juror thinks the defendant owes something, but not as much as the plaintiff claims? The plaintiff claims twenty minas, but one juror will award ten (or the one more and the other less), another five, another four; clearly they will split it up in this way, while some will award the whole sum and others nothing.[16] How, then, will the votes be counted? Further, nothing forces a juror to perjure himself who simply acquits or convicts, provided the charge has been written without qualification, and rightly so. The one who acquits is not judging that nothing is owed, only that the twenty minas are not owed. It is the one who convicts who perjures himself, if he does not believe the twenty minas are owed.

As for his proposal that those who discover something useful to the city should receive some honor, it is not safe to legislate this; it only sounds attractive. It invites malicious prosecutions and, it may be, changes of constitution. It also leads into another problem and a different inquiry. Some people are puzzled whether it is harmful or beneficial to cities to change their ancestral laws when some other law is better. That is why it is not easy to agree readily with what he proposed, if in fact

16 The mina was a large sum of money: a hundred drachmas.

change is not beneficial; for people may propose the abolition of laws or of the constitution as a common good. Since we have mentioned it, it is better to set out a little more about it. It does, as we said, involve a difficulty, and it might seem better to change. At any rate, in the other sciences this has proved beneficial: medicine, for instance, has been changed from its ancestral ways, and gymnastic training, and in general all the arts and capacities. So since statesmanship too must be counted as one of these, it is clear that the same must hold for it as well. One might say that the facts themselves provide evidence: the ancient laws were excessively simple and uncivilized. The Greeks used to go about carrying iron weapons, and bought their wives from one another; and whatever remains of ancient custom anywhere is altogether foolish. 1269a At Cyme, for example, there is a law about homicide: if the prosecutor produces a certain number of witnesses from among his own relatives, the defendant is guilty of the murder.[17] In general, everyone seeks not what is ancestral but what is good. And it is likely that the first human beings, whether they were born from the earth or were survivors of some catastrophe, were like ordinary or even foolish people today—which is in fact what is said of the earthborn—so it would be strange to abide by their opinions. Besides, it is not better to leave even written laws unchanged. Just as in the other arts, so with political order it is impossible for everything to be written down precisely, since what is written must be universal, whereas actions concern particulars.

From these considerations it is clear, then, that some laws must be changed at certain times. But looked at another way, it would seem to call for great caution. When the improvement is small, and it is a bad thing to accustom people to abolish laws lightly, it is clear that some mistakes of both lawgivers and officials should be let stand. The city will not gain as much from the change as it will lose by being accustomed to disobey its officials. The analogy with the arts is also false: changing an art is not like changing a law. Law has no strength to secure obedi-

17 Cyme was a Greek city on the coast of Asia Minor.

ence except habit, and habit is formed only over a long period of time; so easily changing from existing laws to new ones weakens the power of law. Further, even if laws are to be changed, should all of them be, and in every constitution, or not? And by anyone at all, or by certain people? These questions make a great difference. So let us leave this inquiry for now; it belongs to another occasion.

THE SPARTAN CONSTITUTION

Sparta's serfs, women, land, offices, common meals, and finances are examined and criticized.

About the constitutions of Sparta and Crete, and indeed pretty much about the other constitutions as well, there are two questions to consider. One is whether some provision is well or badly made with respect to the best arrangement; the other is whether it runs counter to the fundamental principle and character of the constitution they have set before themselves. It is agreed that a city that is to be well governed must have leisure from the necessities; but how this is to be secured is not easy to grasp. The penestae of Thessaly often rose against the Thessalians, and in the same way the helots against the Spartans, for they are constantly lying in wait, as it were, for their masters' misfortunes. Among the Cretans, however, nothing of the kind has yet happened. The reason is perhaps that the neighboring [1269b] cities, even when at war with one another, never ally themselves with rebels, since that is not in their interest, as they too have subject populations of their own. The Spartans, by contrast, had neighbors who were all hostile—Argives, Messenians, and Arcadians. The Thessalians too first faced revolts because they were still at war with the peoples bordering them, the Achaeans, Perrhaebians, and Magnesians. And even if there were nothing else, the task of supervising them seems troublesome in itself: how one ought to deal with them. If given free rein they become insolent and claim equality with their masters; if made to live wretchedly, they plot against them and hate them. Clearly, then,

those who have this experience with their serf population have not found the best way.

Further, the laxity regarding women is harmful both to the aim of the constitution and to the happiness of the city. Just as man and woman are each a part of a household, clearly the city too must be regarded as divided nearly in two, into the body of men and the body of women. So in any constitution where matters concerning women are badly handled, half the city must be regarded as unregulated by law. That is what has happened there. The lawgiver wanted the whole city to be hardy, and he evidently made it so as far as the men are concerned, but he neglected the women; they live without restraint in every kind of licentiousness, and in luxury. So in such a constitution wealth is inevitably held in honor, especially if the men happen to be dominated by their women, as is true of most military and warlike peoples—apart from the Celts and any others who have openly held sexual relations between males in honor. The first teller of myths seems to have had good reason to pair Ares with Aphrodite, for all such peoples appear to be strongly drawn either to intimacy with males or to women. This is why it was so among the Spartans, and in the days of their empire many things were managed by women. And yet what difference is there between women ruling and rulers being ruled by women? The result is the same. Boldness is of no use in everyday affairs, but only, if at all, in war; yet even here Spartan women were extremely harmful.[18] They showed this at the time of the Theban invasion: they were of no use at all, as women in other cities are, and caused more confusion than the enemy. It seems, then, that from the beginning the laxity regarding women 1270a arose among the Spartans with some reason. The men spent long periods abroad away from their own land on campaign, fighting the war against the Argives and then again the one against the Arcadians and Messenians. When they had leisure they presented themselves to the lawgiver already prepared by military life,

18 Ares was the god of war, Aphrodite the goddess of love; in myth they were lovers.

which contains many elements of excellence. But as for the women, they say Lycurgus tried to bring them under the laws, but when they resisted he gave up.[19] These, then, are the causes of what happened, and so clearly of this error too. But we are not examining whom we should excuse or not excuse, but what is right and not right. The poor state of affairs concerning women seems, as was said before, not only to create a certain unseemliness in the constitution taken by itself, but also to contribute something to love of money. After what has just been said, one might criticize the unevenness in the distribution of property. Some Spartans have come to own far too much property, others very little indeed; that is why the land has fallen into the hands of a few. This too has been badly arranged by the laws. The lawgiver made it dishonorable to buy or sell land one already holds, and in this he did right; but he gave anyone who wished the freedom to give it away or bequeath it—and yet the same result must follow either way. Almost two-fifths of all the land belongs to women, both because there are many heiresses and because large dowries are given. Yet it would have been better to prescribe no dowry, or a small or at any rate moderate one. As it is, a man may give an heiress in marriage to whomever he likes; and if he dies without a will, whoever he leaves as heir gives her to whomever he wishes. The result is that although the land could support fifteen hundred cavalry and thirty thousand hoplites, their number fell below a thousand.[20] The facts themselves have made it clear that this arrangement of theirs was bad: the city could not withstand a single blow, but was ruined by its shortage of men. They say that under the earlier kings they used to grant citizenship to others, so that there was no shortage of men then, despite their being at war for long periods; and they say that the Spartiates once numbered as many as ten thousand. Whether or not this is true, it is better for the city

19 Thebes invaded Spartan territory in 369 BC, after defeating Sparta at Leuctra. Lycurgus was the legendary lawgiver of Sparta.

20 An heiress (epikleros) was a daughter with no brothers, through whom her father's estate passed to her husband and children.

to be full of men through the equalization of property. The law about having children also runs counter to this reform. 1270b Wishing the Spartiates to be as numerous as possible, the lawgiver encourages the citizens to have as many children as possible: they have a law that a man who has fathered three sons is exempt from military guard duty, and one who has fathered four is exempt from all taxes.[21] Yet it is clear that if many are born while the land is divided up as it is, many must inevitably become poor.

The arrangements concerning the ephorate are also bad. This office has authority over their most important affairs, but the ephors come from the whole people, so that very poor men often end up in office, who because of their poverty were open to bribery. They have often shown this in the past, and recently too in the affair at Andros: some of them, corrupted by money, did all they could to ruin the whole city. And because the office is too great and equal to a tyranny, even the kings were forced to court their favor, so that in this way too the constitution was damaged along with them: from an aristocracy it became a democracy.[22] This office does hold the constitution together: the people keep quiet because they share in the highest office, so whether it came about through the lawgiver or by chance, it serves their affairs well. For a constitution that is to be preserved must have all the parts of the city wanting it to exist and to continue on the same terms. The kings are in this state because of their own honor, the gentlemen because of the council of elders (for this office is a prize for excellence), and the people because of the ephorate (for it is filled from everyone). But while this office should be elected from everyone, it should not be in the way it is now, which is extremely childish. Further, the ephors have authority over important judgments, though they are just anyone; so it would be better for them to judge not on their own discretion but according to written rules and the

21 The single blow was the defeat at Leuctra. Spartiates were the full citizens of Sparta.

22 The Andros affair is otherwise unknown.

laws.[23] The way of life of the ephors, too, is not in keeping with the aim of the city. Their own is too relaxed, whereas for the others it goes rather to the extreme of harshness, so that they cannot endure it, but secretly evade the law and enjoy bodily pleasures.

Their arrangements concerning the office of the elders are not good either. If the elders were decent men, adequately educated in manly excellence, one might perhaps say that it benefits the city—though their having authority over important judgments for life is open to dispute, since the mind, like the body, grows old. 1271a But when they are educated in such a way that even the lawgiver himself distrusts them as not being good men, it is not safe. Those who have shared in this office are clearly guilty of taking bribes and of giving away much public property as favors. That is why it would be better for them not to be exempt from audit; but at present they are. It might seem that the office of the ephors audits all the offices; but this is far too great a prize for the ephorate, and this is not the way we say audits ought to be conducted.[24] Further, the way they elect the elders is childish in its method of decision, and it is not right for the person who is to be judged worthy of the office to ask for it himself: the man worthy of the office should hold it whether he wants to or not. As it is, the lawgiver is evidently doing here what he does in the rest of the constitution: he makes the citizens ambitious for honor and has used this in the election of the elders, since no one would ask to hold office unless he were ambitious. And yet most of the wrongs that people commit deliberately arise pretty much from love of honor and love of money.

As for kingship, whether or not it is better for cities to have it must be a subject for another discussion. But at any rate it is better that each king should be judged, not as now, but on the basis

23 "Gentlemen" renders *kaloi kagathoi*, literally "the fine and good," a standard Greek term for the upper class.

24 The Spartan council of elders (gerousia) had twenty-eight members over sixty, elected for life, together with the two kings.

of his own life. That the lawgiver himself does not think he can make them fine and good men is clear: at any rate he distrusts them as not being good enough men. That is why the Spartans used to send out the kings' enemies as fellow ambassadors with them, and thought the kings' quarrelling was the city's safety. Nor did the man who first instituted the common meals, the so-called *phiditia*, legislate well about them. The gathering should rather be at public expense, as in Crete. Among the Spartans each man must make his own contribution, even though some are very poor and cannot afford this expense, so that the result is the opposite of what the lawgiver intended.[25] The institution of the common meals is meant to be democratic, but legislated in this way it turns out to be the least democratic of all. It is not easy for the very poor to take part, yet their ancestral definition of citizenship is that anyone unable to pay this contribution does not share in it. The law about the admirals has also been criticized by others, and rightly so, since it becomes a cause of civil strife: alongside the kings, who are permanent generals, the admiralty has been set up as practically another kingship. One might also criticize 1271b the lawgiver's fundamental principle on this ground, as Plato too has criticized it in the *Laws*: the whole system of laws aims at one part of excellence, the military part, since this is useful for conquest.[26] So they remained secure while they were at war, but came to ruin once they had an empire, because they did not know how to use leisure and had never practiced any discipline higher than that of war. There is another mistake no smaller than this. They believe that the goods people fight over are won by excellence rather than by vice, and in this they are right; but they suppose that these goods are better than excellence, and in this they are wrong. The Spartiates' public finances are also badly managed. There is nothing in the city's treasury, even though they are compelled to fight major wars, and they are bad at paying their taxes: since

25 Sparta had two kings at once, from two royal houses.
26 The Spartan admiral (nauarch) held command of the fleet for a year, independently of the kings.

most of the land belongs to the Spartiates, they do not scrutinize one another's contributions. The outcome is the opposite of what benefits the lawgiver's aim: he has made the city short of money and its private citizens fond of it. So much, then, for the constitution of Sparta; these are the points one would most criticize.

THE CRETAN CONSTITUTION

Crete's institutions resemble Sparta's, with better common meals but worse officials.

The Cretan constitution comes close to this one. In a few respects it is no worse, but for the most part it is less polished. The Spartan constitution does seem—and is actually said—to have copied the Cretan in most respects, and most older things are less fully worked out than newer ones. They say that when Lycurgus gave up his guardianship of King Charillus and went abroad, he spent most of his time in Crete because of the kinship between the two peoples. The Lyctians were colonists of the Spartans, and those who went out to the colony found the system of laws already in place among the people then living there. That is why even now the subject population uses these laws in the same way, on the view that Minos first established the system of laws.[27] The island seems to be naturally suited, and well situated, to rule over the Greek world. It lies across the whole sea, around which nearly all the Greeks are settled: on one side it is not far from the Peloponnese, on the other from Asia, near Triopium and Rhodes. That is why Minos gained command of the sea, conquering some of the islands and settling others; and in the end he attacked Sicily and died there, near Camicus.[28]

The Cretan arrangement corresponds to the Spartan. The land is farmed for the Spartans by the helots, [1272a] for the Cretans by their subject population; and both have common meals. In early times the Spartans called them not *phiditia* but *andreia*, as

27 Lyctus was a city in central Crete. Minos was the legendary king of Crete.
28 Triopium is a cape in southwestern Asia Minor, near Rhodes.

the Cretans do—which also makes it clear that they came from there. The arrangement of the constitution corresponds too. The ephors have the same power as the officials in Crete called *kosmoi*, except that the ephors are five in number and the *kosmoi* ten. The elders correspond to the elders whom the Cretans call the council. There used to be a kingship, but later the Cretans abolished it, and the *kosmoi* hold command in war. Everyone takes part in the assembly, but it has authority over nothing except to ratify by vote what the elders and the *kosmoi* have decided.

The common meals are better arranged among the Cretans than among the Spartans. In Sparta each person contributes a fixed amount per head, and if he does not, the law bars him from sharing in the constitution, as was said earlier. In Crete it is done on a more communal basis. Of all the crops and livestock produced on public land, and of the tribute that the subject population pays, one portion is assigned to the gods and to public services, and another to the common meals, so that everyone—women, children, and men—is fed at public expense. The lawgiver has devised many ingenious measures to encourage eating little, as beneficial, and to keep men apart from their wives so that they will not have many children, instituting sexual relations between males. Whether this was bad or not, there will be another occasion to examine. It is clear, then, that the common meals are better arranged among the Cretans than among the Spartans; but the arrangements concerning the *kosmoi* are even worse than those concerning the ephors. The defect that the ephors' office has also belongs to them, since just anyone can become one; but what benefits the constitution there is absent here. There, because the election is made from everyone, the people share in the highest office and want the constitution to remain. Here they elect the *kosmoi* not from everyone but from certain families, and the elders from those who have served as *kosmoi*; and one might say the same about them as about those who hold the office in Sparta. Freedom from audit and tenure for life are a greater privilege than they

deserve, and ruling not according to written rules but at their own discretion is hazardous. That the people keep quiet though they have no share in office is no sign that things are well arranged. The *kosmoi* have no chance of profit, as the ephors do, since they live far [1272b] away, on an island, from anyone who might corrupt them.

The remedy they use for this defect is strange, and not constitutional but the mark of a clique of the powerful. Often some people band together, either some of their fellow officials or private citizens, and expel the *kosmoi*; and the *kosmoi* are also allowed to resign their office partway through their term. It would be better for all this to happen according to law rather than at the will of individuals, since that is not a safe standard. Worst of all is the suspension of the office of *kosmoi*, which powerful men often bring about when they do not want to submit to justice. This makes it clear that the arrangement has something of a constitution about it, but is not a constitution; it is rather the rule of a clique. They are in the habit of splitting the people and their own friends into rival camps, creating anarchy, falling into civil strife, and fighting one another. Yet how is such a state of affairs any different from the city ceasing, for a time, to be a city, and the political community being dissolved? A city in this condition is in danger from those who want to attack it and are able to. But, as was said, it is kept safe by its location, since its distance has had the effect of an expulsion of foreigners. That is also why the subject population stays loyal to the Cretans, whereas the helots frequently revolt. The Cretans take no part in any foreign empire, and only recently a foreign war has crossed over to the island, which has made plain the weakness of the laws there. So much, then, for this constitution.[29]

29 The foreign war is probably the campaign of mercenaries who crossed to Crete around 345 BC.

THE CARTHAGINIAN CONSTITUTION

Carthage's well-regarded constitution is examined, with its tendency to honor wealth.

The Carthaginians also seem to have a fine constitution, remarkable in many respects compared with the others, and especially close in some points to the Spartan. These three constitutions—the Cretan, the Spartan, and third the Carthaginian—are in a way close to one another and very different from the rest. Many of the Carthaginians' arrangements are good. It is a sign of a well-ordered constitution that the people willingly remain within the arrangement of the constitution, and that there has been neither civil strife worth mentioning nor a tyrant.[30] It resembles the Spartan constitution in these respects: the common meals of its associations correspond to the *phiditia*, and the office of the Hundred and Four to the ephors—except that it is not worse: the ephors come from just anyone, whereas the Carthaginians elect this office on the basis of merit. Their kings and council of elders correspond to the kings and elders there. It is also better that the kings are neither a separate family nor just any family, and that if a family is outstanding, they are elected from it rather than by seniority. Placed in authority over important matters, if they are worthless 1273a they do great harm, and they have already harmed the city of Sparta.

Most of the points one might criticize as deviations happen to be common to all the constitutions we have discussed. Of those that depart from the principle of aristocracy and polity, some lean more toward democracy, others toward oligarchy. The kings, together with the elders, have authority to decide whether to bring a matter before the people or not, if they all agree; if not, the people decide these matters too. And whatever the kings and elders do bring forward, they do not merely grant the people a hearing of the officials' decisions: the people have

30 Carthage, a Phoenician city in North Africa (near modern Tunis), was the great power of the western Mediterranean in Aristotle's time.

authority to judge, and anyone who wishes may speak against the proposals—which is not the case in the other constitutions. That the boards of five, which have authority over many important matters, are chosen by co-option, that they elect the Hundred, the highest office, and further that they hold office longer than the others (they are in power both after leaving office and before entering it)—all this is oligarchic. That they are unpaid and not chosen by lot must be counted aristocratic, as must any other such feature, and also that all lawsuits are judged by the boards, not some by some officials and others by others as in Sparta. But the arrangement of the Carthaginians deviates from aristocracy toward oligarchy most of all through an idea that most people share: they think officials should be chosen not only on merit but also on wealth, since it is impossible for a poor man to rule well and have leisure. If, then, choosing by wealth is oligarchic and choosing by excellence is aristocratic, this would be a third arrangement, the one on which the Carthaginian constitution is organized. They elect with an eye to these two things, especially for the highest offices, the kings and the generals.

But this deviation from aristocracy must be considered a lawgiver's mistake. One of the most necessary things is to see to it from the start that the best people can have leisure and not have to do anything unbecoming, not only while in office but also as private citizens. And if one must look to wealth too for the sake of leisure, it is bad that the highest offices, the kingship and the generalship, should be for sale. This law makes wealth more honored than excellence and makes the whole city fond of money. Whatever the authoritative element regards as honorable, the opinion of the other citizens is bound to follow it; and where excellence is not held in the highest honor, [1273b] the constitution cannot be securely aristocratic. It is reasonable to expect that those who buy office will get into the habit of making a profit from it, when they have spent money to hold it. It would be strange if a man who is poor but decent will want to make a profit, while a worse man who has spent money will not.

That is why those able to rule best should be the ones who rule. And even if the lawgiver passed over the wealth of decent people, it would be better at least to see to their leisure while they hold office. It would also seem bad for the same man to hold several offices, which is well regarded among the Carthaginians; for one task is best done by one person. The lawgiver must see to it that this happens, and not require the same man to play the pipes and make shoes. So where the city is not small, it is more constitutional, and more democratic, for more people to share in the offices. It is more widely shared, as we said, and each task is done better and more quickly when the same people do the same things. This is clear in military and naval affairs: in both of these, ruling and being ruled extend through pretty much everyone. Although the constitution is oligarchic, they escape its dangers very well by growing rich, constantly sending out part of the people to the cities. In this way they cure the problem and make the constitution stable. But this is the work of fortune, whereas freedom from civil strife should be due to the lawgiver. As it is, if some misfortune occurs and the mass of those who are ruled revolt, the laws provide no remedy to restore peace. Such, then, are the constitutions of Sparta, Crete, and Carthage, which are justly well regarded.

SOLON AND OTHER LAWGIVERS

A survey of lawgivers, from Solon and Zaleucus to Draco and Pittacus.

Of those who have put forward views about constitutions, some took no part whatever in political affairs but lived their whole lives as private individuals; about them we have said pretty much everything worth mentioning. Others have been lawgivers, some for their own cities and some for certain foreign ones too, having taken part in politics themselves. Of these, some were framers only of laws, others of constitutions as well, like Lycurgus and Solon, who established both laws and constitutions. The Spartan constitution has been discussed. As for Solon, some think he was a good lawgiver: he did away with an

oligarchy that was too unmixed, put an end to the enslavement of the people, and established the ancestral democracy by mixing the constitution well. The council of the Areopagus was oligarchic, the election of officials aristocratic, and the courts democratic.[31] But it seems that Solon 1274a did not abolish the institutions that already existed, the council and the election of officials, but established the people's power by making the courts open to all. That is why some people blame him: they say he undid the other elements by making the court, which was chosen by lot, sovereign over everything. For once the court grew strong, people courted the favor of the people as if it were a tyrant and changed the constitution into the present democracy. Ephialtes and Pericles curtailed the council of the Areopagus; Pericles introduced pay for jurors; and in this way each of the demagogues increased the people's power and carried the constitution forward to the present democracy.[32] But this seems to have happened not according to Solon's intention, but rather by circumstance. The people, having been responsible for naval supremacy in the Persian Wars, grew proud and took up worthless demagogues when the decent people opposed their policies. Solon, at any rate, seems to have given the people only the most necessary power, that of electing officials and auditing them (for if the people did not have authority even over this, they would be enslaved and hostile). He appointed all the officials from the notable and well-off, from the five-hundred-bushel men, the teamsters, and a third class called the knights; the fourth class, the laborers, had no share in any office.[33]

Other lawgivers were Zaleucus for the Western Locrians, and Charondas of Catana for his own citizens and for the other Chalcidian cities in Italy and Sicily. Some people also try to link them together: Onomacritus, they say, was the first to become skilled

31 The Areopagus was the ancient council of Athens, made up of former chief magistrates and named for the hill where it met.

32 Ephialtes and Pericles were Athenian popular leaders of the mid-fifth century BC; Ephialtes' reform of the Areopagus came in 462 BC.

33 These were Solon's four property classes, defined by annual yield of produce; the laborers (thetes) were the poorest citizens.

in lawmaking, and he trained in Crete, being a Locrian who was staying there to practice the art of divination; Thales was his companion, and Lycurgus and Zaleucus were pupils of Thales, and Charondas of Zaleucus. But in saying this they pay too little attention to chronology. Philolaus of Corinth also became a lawgiver for the Thebans. Philolaus was by birth a member of the Bacchiad family; he became the lover of Diocles, the Olympic victor, and when Diocles left the city in disgust at the passion his mother Alcyone had for him, Philolaus went away to Thebes. There they both ended their lives.[34] Even now people point out their tombs, which are in full view of each other, but one of which is in view of the territory of Corinth while the other is not. The story goes that they arranged their burial in this way: Diocles, out of loathing for what he had suffered, so that Corinthian land would not be visible from his burial mound, and Philolaus so that it 1274b would. That, then, is why they settled among the Thebans. Philolaus became their lawgiver on various matters, including the having of children—the laws they call laws of adoption. This is his distinctive legislation, meant to preserve the number of allotments. There is nothing distinctive of Charondas except lawsuits for perjury, since he was the first to introduce the formal denunciation of false witnesses; but in the precision of his laws he is more polished even than present-day lawgivers.

Distinctive of Phaleas is the equalization of property. Distinctive of Plato are the sharing of women, children, and property, the common meals for women, the law about drunkenness, that the sober should preside over drinking parties, and military training designed to make people ambidextrous through practice, on the grounds that one of the two hands should not be useful and the other useless. There are laws by Draco, but he laid them down for an already existing constitution; there is nothing distinctive in them worth mentioning except their harshness,

34 This Thales is Thaletas, a Cretan poet and musician, not the philosopher. The Bacchiads were the ruling family of early Corinth.

owing to the severity of the penalties.[35] Pittacus too was a craftsman of laws, though not of a constitution. A law peculiar to him is that drunk people who commit some offense pay a heavier penalty than sober ones. Because more people commit violent outrages when drunk than when sober, he looked not to the leniency that one might think drunk people deserve, but to what is advantageous. Androdamas of Rhegium also became lawgiver to the Chalcidians in Thrace; the laws about homicide and about heiresses are his. Still, there is nothing peculiar to him that one could point to. So let our study of constitutions, both those actually in force and those proposed by particular thinkers, be taken as complete in this way.[36]

35 Draco gave Athens its first written laws, in the late seventh century BC.
36 Pittacus was a statesman and sage of Mytilene on Lesbos, around 600 BC.

Book III

Citizenship and the classification of constitutions.

CHAPTER 1

For anyone investigating constitutions, what each one is and what sort of thing it is, the first inquiry, more or less, is to look at the city and ask what exactly a city is. At present there is a dispute: some claim that the city performed a given action, others that it was not the city but the oligarchy or the tyrant. And we see that the whole business of the statesman and the lawgiver concerns the city, while a constitution is a certain ordering of those who live in the city. Since the city is a composite, like any other thing that is a whole but made up of many parts, it is clear that we must first inquire into the citizen; for a city is a certain multitude of citizens. 1275a So we must consider whom we should call a citizen, and what the citizen is. For the citizen too is often disputed: not everyone agrees that the same person is a citizen. Someone who is a citizen in a democracy is often not a citizen in an oligarchy. Now we should set aside those who obtain the title in some other way, such as citizens by grant. A citizen is not a citizen by living in a place (resident foreigners and slaves share the place of residence too). Nor are those citizens who share in legal rights only to the extent of being able to be sued and to sue (this belongs also to those who share in them under treaties [for they too have these rights]—indeed in many places resident foreigners do not share fully even in this, but must take a patron, so that they share in this sort of community incompletely). Rather, just as with children who are not yet enrolled because of their age, and old men who have been released from their

duties, we must say they are citizens in a sense, but not quite without qualification: we must add that the former are incomplete and the latter past their prime, or something else of the kind (it makes no difference, since what is meant is clear).[1] For we are looking for the citizen without qualification, the one with no defect of this kind that needs correcting; similar difficulties can be raised, and solved, about those who have lost their civic rights and about exiles. The citizen without qualification is defined by nothing else so much as by sharing in judgment and office. Some offices are limited in time, so that some may not be held twice by the same person at all, or only after fixed intervals. Another kind is indefinite, like that of the juror and the assembly member. Now someone might perhaps say that such people are not officials at all, and do not share in office through these roles; yet it's ridiculous to deny office to those who hold the most authority. But let this make no difference, since the argument is about a word: what is common to juror and assembly member, the thing we should call them both, has no name. For the sake of a definition, then, let it be called "indefinite office." We set down, then, as citizens those who share in office in this way.

The definition of citizen that would best fit all those called citizens, then, is roughly of this kind. But we must not overlook that in things whose underlying members differ in kind, one coming first, another second, another next in line, there is either nothing at all that they have in common, insofar as they are such, or only barely. Now we see that constitutions differ from one another in kind, and that some are posterior and others [1275b] prior; for those that are mistaken and deviant must be posterior to those without mistakes (what we mean by "deviant" will become clear later). So the citizen too must be different under each constitution. That is why the citizen as we have described him is a citizen above all in a democracy; in the other

1 Resident foreigners (metics) were free non-citizens living in a city; at Athens each had to be represented by a citizen patron. Square brackets mark words the editor of the Greek text judges to be later additions.

constitutions he may be, but need not be. For in some there is no popular element, and they do not recognize an assembly but only specially summoned councils, and they judge lawsuits by sections. In Sparta, for instance, the ephors judge suits about contracts, different ephors taking different cases, while the elders judge homicide cases, and perhaps some other office judges still others. It's not the same way in Carthage either, where certain offices judge all the lawsuits. But our definition of the citizen admits of correction. For in the other constitutions it is not the holder of indefinite office who is assembly member and juror, but the holder of an office defined by its term; it is to all or some of these that deliberating and judging are assigned, either about all matters or about some. What the citizen is, then, is evident from this: anyone who has the right to share in deliberative or judicial office we now say is a citizen of that city, and a city, to put it simply, is a multitude of such people large enough for a self-sufficient life.

CITIZENS BY DESCENT

Citizenship by descent and citizenship granted after a change of constitution are examined.

For practical purposes, though, people define a citizen as one born of citizens on both sides, and not of just one, father or mother; some push this further back, to two or three or more generations of grandparents. But when it is defined in this way, politically and hastily, some raise the puzzle of how that third or fourth ancestor will be a citizen. Gorgias of Leontini, partly perhaps in real puzzlement and partly in irony, said that just as mortars are what mortar-makers make, so Larisaeans are what the magistrates make, since some of them are "Larisa-makers." But the matter is simple. If they shared in the constitution according to the definition given, they were citizens; for "born

of a citizen father or a citizen mother" cannot even be applied to the first inhabitants or founders.[2]

But perhaps there is more of a puzzle about those who gained a share after a change of constitution, like those whom Cleisthenes enrolled at Athens after the expulsion of the tyrants: he put many foreigners and slave resident foreigners into the tribes. The dispute about these people is not who is a citizen, but whether they are citizens unjustly or justly. And yet one might raise the further puzzle 1276a whether someone who is not justly a citizen is not a citizen at all, as though "unjust" amounted to the same thing as "false." But since we also see some people holding office unjustly, whom we will say do hold office, though not justly, and since the citizen is defined by a kind of office (for one who shares in such office is a citizen, as we said), it is clear that these people too must be called citizens.[3]

WHEN IS A CITY THE SAME?

A city's identity depends on its constitution, not on its walls or its inhabitants.

Whether justly or not justly connects with the dispute mentioned earlier. For some raise the puzzle of when an act is the city's and when it is not, for instance when a democracy arises out of an oligarchy or a tyranny. At such times some people are unwilling to honor contracts, on the ground that it was not the city but the tyrant who took the money, and unwilling to honor many other things of that sort, on the ground that some constitutions exist by force and not for the common advantage. Well then, if some democracies too are run in this way, we must say that the acts of this constitution belong to the city in the same way as those of the oligarchy and the tyranny. The argument seems to be closely connected with the puzzle of how we should

2 A pun: at Larisa in Thessaly the magistrates were called dēmiourgoi, "craftsmen," and a larisa was also a kind of kettle made there.

3 Cleisthenes reorganized the Athenian tribes and constitution in 508/7 BC, after the fall of the tyranny of Peisistratus' sons.

say that a city is the same, or not the same but different. The most superficial way of investigating the puzzle concerns the place and the people: for the place and the people can be split apart, and some can settle in one place and others in another.

This form of the puzzle should be regarded as the easier one: since "city" is said in many ways, the inquiry is fairly easy in a sense. Similarly, when people live in the same place, when should we consider the city to be one? Certainly not by its walls, since one could throw a single wall around the Peloponnese. Babylon is perhaps like this, and any place that has the circumference of a nation rather than a city; it is said that when Babylon was captured, part of the city hadn't noticed by the third day.

But the examination of this puzzle will be useful on another occasion (for the statesman must not overlook the size of the city, both how large it should be and whether it is advantageous for it to consist of one people or several). But when the same people inhabit the same place, should we say that it is the same city as long as the inhabitants are of the same stock, even though some are always dying and others being born, just as we customarily say that rivers and springs are the same, even though some water is always flowing in and some flowing away? Or should we say that the people are the same for this sort of reason, but the [1276b] city is different? For if the city is a kind of community, and it is a community of citizens in a constitution, then when the constitution becomes different in kind and changes, it would seem necessary that the city too is not the same. Just so, we say a chorus is different when it is comic at one time and tragic at another, though it is often made up of the same people. Likewise every other community and combination is different if the form of the combination is different: we say, for instance, that a musical mode made of the same notes is different if it is Dorian at one time and Phrygian at another. If this is how things stand, it is evident that we should call a city the same chiefly by looking to its constitution; it is possible to call it by a different name or the same one whether the same people

inhabit it or entirely different people. Whether it is just to discharge obligations or not when a city changes to a different constitution is another question.

THE GOOD MAN AND THE GOOD CITIZEN

The good citizen's excellence is relative to the constitution and differs from the good man's.

Next after what has just been said, we should examine whether the excellence of a good man and of a good citizen is to be set down as the same or not. But if this is to be investigated, we must first grasp the excellence of the citizen in outline. Just as a sailor is one member of a community, so, we say, is the citizen. And although sailors are unlike in capacity (one is a rower, another a helmsman, another a lookout at the prow, another has some other such title), it is clear that the most precise account of the excellence of each will be specific to him, but likewise that some common account will fit them all. For the safety of the voyage is the work of them all; this is what each of the sailors strives for. Similarly, then, with citizens: though they are unlike, their work is the safety of the community, and the community is the constitution. That is why the excellence of the citizen must be relative to the constitution. If, then, there are several kinds of constitution, it is clear that there cannot be a single excellence of the good citizen, the complete excellence; but the good man, we say, is good in virtue of a single excellence, the complete one.

It is evident, then, that it is possible to be a good citizen without possessing the excellence by which one is a good man. But one can also go through the same argument in another way, by raising puzzles about the best constitution. If it is impossible for a city to consist entirely of good people, yet each person must do his own work well, and this comes from excellence, then, since it is impossible for all the citizens to be alike, the excellence of citizen and of good man [1277a] could not be one. For the excellence of the good citizen must belong to all (this is how the city must be the best), but that of the good man cannot,

unless all the citizens in a good city must be good men. Again, a city is made up of unlike parts. Just as an animal consists, to begin with, of soul and body, and soul of reason and desire, and a household of husband and wife, and property of master and slave, in the same way a city is composed of all these and of other unlike kinds besides. So the excellence of all the citizens cannot be one, just as the excellence of a chorus leader and of the dancer beside him is not.

Why the excellence is not the same without qualification, then, is evident from this. But will the excellence of a good citizen and a good man be the same for some particular citizen? We say that a good ruler is good and practically wise, but a citizen need not be practically wise. Some say, too, that the education of a ruler is different from the start, as the sons of kings are evidently educated in horsemanship and war, and as Euripides says, "No clever refinements for me... but what the city needs," implying that there is a special education for a ruler. But if the excellence of a good ruler and of a good man is the same, and the one who is ruled is also a citizen, then the excellence of citizen and man would not be the same without qualification, though it would be for a particular citizen; for the excellence of a ruler and of a citizen is not the same. And perhaps this is why Jason said he went hungry whenever he was not a tyrant, meaning that he did not know how to be a private individual.[4]

Yet being able to rule and to be ruled is praised, and the excellence of a citizen is thought, I suppose, to be the ability both to rule and to be ruled well. If, then, we set down the good man's excellence as a ruling one, and the citizen's as both, the two would not be equally praiseworthy. Since, then, both views seem to hold at times, that ruler and ruled should not learn the same things, and that the citizen should know both and share in both, one can see the answer from what follows. There is the rule of a master. By this we mean rule concerned with necessary tasks, which the ruler need not know how to do, but rather how to make use of; the other capacity is actually servile. By "the

4 Jason of Pherae was tyrant in Thessaly until his assassination in 370 BC.

other" I mean being able to perform menial services. We speak of several kinds of slave, since there are several kinds of work. One class of these is made up of manual laborers, who are, as their very name indicates, those who live by 1277b their hands; the vulgar craftsman belongs among them. That is why in some places, in the old days, craftsmen had no share in offices, before the extreme form of democracy arose. So neither the good man, nor the statesman, nor the good citizen should learn the tasks of those who are ruled in this way, except perhaps for his own personal use; otherwise the distinction between master and slave no longer holds.

But there is a kind of rule by which one rules those who are similar in birth and free. This we call political rule, and the ruler must learn it by being ruled: as one learns to command cavalry by serving under a cavalry commander, and to be a general by serving under a general and by having commanded a regiment and a company. That is why this too is well said: that one cannot rule well without having been ruled. The excellence of each of these is different, but the good citizen must know how, and be able, both to be ruled and to rule; and this is the excellence of a citizen, to understand rule over free people from both sides. Both belong to the good man as well, even if the moderation and justice of a ruler are of a different kind. For clearly the excellence of a good man who is ruled but free, justice for example, would not be single; it would have kinds, one by which he will rule and one by which he will be ruled, just as a man's moderation and courage differ from a woman's. (A man would seem a coward if he were brave the way a brave woman is, and a woman would seem talkative if she were as reserved as a good man; since household management too is different for a man and a woman: his work is to acquire, hers to preserve.) Practical wisdom is the only excellence peculiar to the ruler. The others, it seems, must be common to both the ruled and the rulers; but for the ruled, the excellence is not practical wisdom but true opinion. The one ruled is like a pipemaker, while the ruler is like the piper who uses the pipe.

Whether, then, the excellence of a good man and of a good citizen is the same or different, and how it is the same and how different, is evident from this.

SHOULD WORKERS BE CITIZENS?

Whether vulgar craftsmen and hired laborers are citizens depends on the constitution.

But one of the puzzles about the citizen still remains. Is the citizen really someone who is permitted to share in office, or should vulgar craftsmen also be counted as citizens? If these too are to be counted, though they have no share in offices, then this kind of excellence cannot belong to every citizen (since this man is a citizen). But if none of these is a citizen, in what class should each be placed? For he is neither a resident foreigner nor a visitor. Or shall we say that, on this argument at least, 1278a nothing absurd follows? For slaves are not any of the classes mentioned either, nor are freedmen. This is true: not everyone without whom there would be no city is to be counted a citizen, since children are not citizens in the same way as men either. Men are citizens without qualification, children only on a presupposition: they are citizens, but incomplete ones. In ancient times, in some places, the vulgar class was slave or foreign, which is why most vulgar craftsmen are such even now. The best city will not make a vulgar craftsman a citizen. But if he too is a citizen, then the citizen's excellence we described must be said to belong not to everyone, nor to the free alone, but only to those who are released from necessary work. Of those who do the necessary work, those who serve one person are slaves, while those who serve the public are vulgar craftsmen and hired laborers. How things stand with them is evident with a little further examination [indeed, what has been said makes it plain, once it is understood]. For since there are several constitutions, there must also be several kinds of citizen, and especially of the citizen who is ruled. So in one constitution the vulgar craftsman and the hired laborer must be citizens, while in others this is

impossible: for example, in any constitution that people call aristocratic, in which honors are given according to excellence and merit, since one cannot pursue the things of excellence while living the life of a vulgar craftsman or a hired laborer. In oligarchies a hired laborer cannot be a citizen (since a share in offices depends on high property assessments), but a vulgar craftsman can, since even most craftsmen become rich. At Thebes there was a law that anyone who had not kept away from the market for ten years could not share in office. In many constitutions the law even draws in some foreigners: in some democracies a man born of a citizen mother is a citizen, and in many places the same holds for illegitimate children. But since they make such people citizens through a shortage of legitimate citizens (it is underpopulation that leads them to use their laws this way), when they are well supplied with a population they gradually exclude first those with a slave father or slave mother, then those whose citizenship comes through their mothers, and finally they make citizens only of those born of two citizen parents.

That there are several kinds of citizen, then, is evident from this, and also that the one who shares in honors is called a citizen in the fullest sense. So Homer too wrote, "like some dishonored wanderer"; for someone who does not share in honors is like a resident foreigner. Where this is concealed, it is for the sake of deceiving those who live alongside. Whether we should set down as different or the same [1278b] the excellence by which a man is good and that by which he is a good citizen is clear from what has been said: in some cities they belong to the same person, in others to different people; and even there, not to everyone, but to the statesman, the one who has authority, or is capable of having authority, over the care of common affairs, whether by himself or with others.[5]

5 "Honors" (timai) also means public offices. The line is Achilles' complaint against Agamemnon in *Iliad* 9.

RULE FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Constitutions that aim at the common advantage are correct; those that serve the rulers are deviations.

With these points determined, we must next consider whether we should set down one constitution or several, and if several, which they are and how many, and what the differences between them are. A constitution is the ordering of a city's offices, and especially of the one that has authority over everything. For the governing body is everywhere sovereign in the city, and the governing body is the constitution. I mean, for example, that in democracies the people are sovereign, and in oligarchies, by contrast, the few; and we say the constitution of each is different. We will give the same account of the others too. We must first lay down for the sake of what a city has been formed, and how many kinds of rule there are over human beings and over the community of life. It was said in our first discussions, in which household management and mastery were determined, that the human being is by nature a political animal. That is why, even when they need no help from one another, people desire to live together no less. Nonetheless the common advantage also brings them together, to the extent that each gets a share of living well. This, above all, is the end, both for all in common and for each separately. But they also come together for the sake of life itself, and maintain the political community for that; for perhaps there is some share of what is fine even in mere living, as long as life's hardships are not too overwhelming. It is evident that most people endure much suffering in their clinging to life, as if there were a kind of joy and natural sweetness in it.

Again, it is easy to distinguish the ways of ruling that are commonly spoken of; indeed we often draw distinctions about them in our exoteric discussions too. Rule by a master, although in truth the same thing is advantageous to the natural slave and the natural master, nonetheless rules for the master's advantage,

and for the slave's only incidentally, since mastery cannot be preserved if the slave perishes. Rule over children and wife [and over the whole household, which we call household management] is either for the sake of the ruled or for some good common to both: in itself for the sake of the ruled, as we see with the other 1279a arts too, such as medicine and physical training, though incidentally it may be for the rulers' own sake too.[6] For nothing prevents the trainer from sometimes being one of those in training himself, just as the helmsman is always one of the sailors. The trainer or helmsman looks to the good of those under his rule, but when he himself becomes one of them, he shares in the benefit incidentally: the helmsman is a sailor, and the trainer, while remaining a trainer, becomes one of those in training. That is why, in the case of political offices too, when the constitution is established on the basis of equality and similarity among the citizens, they think it right to rule in turn. In earlier times, as is natural, people thought it right to serve in turn, and for someone else in his turn to look to their good, just as they themselves, when in office, had looked to his advantage. But now, because of the benefits to be had from public property and from office, people want to be in office continuously, as if officeholders, sickly as they were, always happened to be healthy while in office. In that case they would perhaps chase after offices in just this way. It is evident, then, that all constitutions that look to the common advantage are correct according to what is just without qualification, while all those that look only to the rulers' own advantage are mistaken, deviations from the correct constitutions. For they are like the rule of a master, whereas the city is a community of free people.

6 "Exoteric" discussions were those aimed at a wider audience, as opposed to technical lectures within the school.

THE SIX CONSTITUTIONS

Kingship, aristocracy, and polity are the correct constitutions; tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy are their deviations.

With these points determined, the next thing is to examine the constitutions, how many there are and what they are, and first the correct ones, since once these are defined the deviations will be evident too. "Constitution" and "governing body" mean the same thing, and the governing body is what is sovereign in cities, and the sovereign must be either one person, or a few, or the many. So whenever the one or the few or the many rule for the common advantage, these constitutions must be correct, while those that rule for the private advantage of the one, the few, or the multitude are deviations. For either those who take part should not be called citizens, or they must share in the advantage. Among monarchies, we usually call the one that looks to the common advantage kingship; rule by a few, but more than one, we call aristocracy (either because the best people rule, or because it aims at what is best for the city and those who share in it); and when the multitude governs for the common advantage, it is called by the name common to all constitutions: polity. (This happens with good reason. It is possible for one person or a few to be outstanding in excellence, but for larger numbers it is hard 1279b to be accomplished in every excellence, except above all in military excellence, since this arises in a multitude. That is why in this constitution the class that fights in its defense is most sovereign, and those who possess arms share in it.) The deviations from those mentioned are tyranny from kingship, oligarchy from aristocracy, and democracy from polity. For tyranny is monarchy aimed at the advantage of the monarch, oligarchy at that of the well-off, and democracy at the advantage of the poor; none of them aims at what benefits the community.

WEALTH, NOT NUMBERS

Oligarchy and democracy are defined by wealth and poverty rather than by few and many.

We must say at a little more length what each of these constitutions is, since there are some puzzles involved, and for someone who pursues philosophy in each inquiry, and does not look only to practice, it is proper not to overlook or leave out anything, but to make clear the truth about each. Tyranny is monarchy, as has been said, that rules the political community as a master rules; oligarchy is when those who hold property are sovereign over the constitution; democracy, by contrast, is when those who have not acquired much property, the poor, are sovereign. The first puzzle concerns this definition. For suppose the majority, being well-off, were sovereign over the city, when democracy is when the multitude is sovereign; and similarly, again, suppose it somewhere happened that the poor were fewer than the well-off but stronger, and sovereign over the constitution, when people say that where a small number is sovereign there is oligarchy. Then the constitutions would not seem to have been well defined.

Again, suppose one combines fewness with wealth and multitude with poverty, and names the constitutions accordingly: oligarchy as the one in which the well-off, being few in number, hold the offices, and democracy as the one in which the poor, being many in number, do. This has another puzzle. What shall we call the constitutions just mentioned, the one in which the well-off are more numerous and the one in which the poor are fewer, each being sovereign over its constitution, if there is no other constitution besides those stated? The argument seems, then, to make clear that whether few or many are sovereign is incidental, the one to oligarchies and the other to democracies, because everywhere the well-off are few and the poor are many (which is also why the factors mentioned do not turn out to be the causes of the difference). What democracy and oligarchy

really differ by is poverty and wealth; [1280a] and necessarily, wherever people rule because of wealth, whether they are fewer or more, this is oligarchy, and wherever the poor rule, democracy. But it happens, as we said, that the one group is few and the other many. For few are well-off, but all share in freedom; and these are the grounds on which both lay claim to the constitution.

WHAT THE CITY IS FOR

The city exists for living well and for fine actions, not merely for trade or defense.

We must first grasp what definitions people give of oligarchy and democracy, and what oligarchic and democratic justice are. For all of them lay hold of some kind of justice, but they go only so far, and do not state the whole of what is just in the proper sense. For example, justice seems to be equality, and it is, but not for everyone, only for equals. And inequality seems to be just, and indeed it is, but not for everyone, only for unequals. But they strip away this "for whom," and so judge badly. The reason is that the judgment concerns themselves, and most people, more or less, are poor judges in their own case. So since justice is for certain persons, and is divided in the same way with respect to the things and to the persons, as was said earlier in the *Ethics*, they agree about the equality of the thing but dispute about the equality of the persons. This is chiefly for the reason just given, that they judge badly about what concerns themselves, but also because both sides speak of justice up to a point and think they are speaking of justice without qualification. The one side think that if they are unequal in some respect, such as wealth, they are wholly unequal; the others think that if they are equal in some respect, such as freedom, they are wholly equal.

But the most important point they do not state. If people formed a community and came together for the sake of possessions, they share in the city exactly as much as they share in the

property, so that the oligarchs' argument would seem strong. (It isn't just, they say, for someone who contributed one mina out of a hundred to have an equal share with the one who gave all the rest, either of the original sum or of what accrues.) But suppose they came together not only for the sake of living but rather for living well (otherwise there could be a city of slaves or of other animals, but as it is there is not, since these have no share in happiness or in a life guided by decision); and not for the sake of an alliance, so as to suffer wrong from no one; nor for exchange and dealings with one another. For then the Etruscans and the Carthaginians, and all who have agreements with one another, would be like citizens of a single city. They do at any rate have compacts about imports, agreements about not wronging each other, and written treaties of alliance. But neither are there offices common to all of them for [1280b] these purposes, each side having its own; nor does either side care what sort of people the others are, or that no one covered by the agreements should be unjust or have any vice at all, but only that they not wrong one another. Those who care about good order, though, look into political excellence and vice. Hence it is evident that a city that is truly so called, and not just for the sake of the word, must concern itself with excellence. Otherwise the community becomes an alliance, differing only in location from the other alliances whose members live far apart. And the law becomes a compact and, as the sophist Lycophron said, a guarantor of just dealings with one another, but not the sort of thing to make the citizens good and just. That this is how things are is evident. For even if someone were to bring the places together into one, so that the city of the Megarians and that of the Corinthians touched each other's walls, it would still not be one city, not even if they gave each other rights of intermarriage, though this is one of the forms of community peculiar to cities. Likewise, suppose some people lived apart, but not so far apart as to have no dealings, and had laws against wronging one another in their exchanges: for instance, one was a carpenter, another a farmer, another a shoemaker, another something else of the kind, and they

numbered ten thousand. If they shared in nothing else but things like exchange and alliance, even so this would not yet be a city.

Why is that? Surely not because their community is not close at hand. For even if they came together while sharing in this way (each, however, treating his own household as a city), and helped one another only against wrongdoers, as though in a defensive alliance, even so it would not seem a city to those who examine it precisely, if their dealings were the same when they came together as when they were apart. It is evident, then, that the city is not a community of place, nor one for the sake of not wronging each other and of exchange. These things must be present if there is to be a city, but even when they are all present there is not yet a city. The city is the community of living well, for households and families, for the sake of a complete and self-sufficient life. This will not be possible, however, unless they inhabit one and the same place and practice intermarriage. That is why marriage connections arose in cities, and brotherhoods, sacrifices, and the cultivated pastimes of living together. This sort of thing is the work of friendship, since friendship is the decision to live together. The end of the city, then, is living well, and these things are for the sake of the end. A city is the community of families and villages [1281a] in a complete and self-sufficient life, and this, as we say, is living happily and finely. The political community must therefore be set down as existing for the sake of fine actions, not for the sake of living together. That is why those who contribute most to such a community have a greater share in the city than those who are equal or greater in freedom and birth but unequal in political excellence, or than those who surpass others in wealth but are surpassed in excellence. It is evident, then, from what has been said, that all who dispute about constitutions speak of some part of justice.

WHO SHOULD BE SOVEREIGN?

Every candidate for sovereign power—the many, the rich, the decent, one man—raises difficulties.

There is a puzzle about what should be sovereign in the city: the multitude, or the rich, or the decent, or the one best person of all, or a tyrant. But all these seem to involve difficulties. Why so? If the poor, because they are more numerous, divide up the property of the rich among themselves, isn't this unjust? "No, by Zeus, since the sovereign body decided it justly!" Then what should we call the extreme of injustice? And again, taking everyone together, if the majority divide up the property of the minority, it is evident that they are destroying the city. Yet excellence surely does not destroy what possesses it, nor is justice destructive of a city; so it is clear that this law too cannot be just. Again, all the actions a tyrant has performed would have to be just, since he uses force because he is stronger, just as the multitude does with the rich. But then is it just for the minority, the rich, to rule? If they too do the same, plundering and seizing the possessions of the multitude, is that just? Then so is the other. That all these things are bad and unjust, then, is evident. But should the decent rule and be sovereign over everything? Then all the others must be without honor, not honored with political offices; for we say that offices are honors, and when the same people are always in office, the others must be without honor. Is it better, then, for the one most excellent person to rule? But that is still more oligarchic, since those without honor are more numerous. But perhaps someone might say that it is bad for a human being, rather than law, to be sovereign at all, since a human being is subject to the feelings that arise in the soul. But if the law is oligarchic or democratic, what difference will it make to the puzzles raised? The same results described before will follow.

THE WISDOM OF THE MANY

Many people judging together may do better than a few excellent ones.

Let the other cases be discussed another time. But the view that the multitude should be sovereign rather than the best people, who are few, would seem to be defensible; it involves some puzzle, but perhaps also some truth. For the many, each of whom is [1281b] not an excellent man, may nonetheless, when they come together, be better than those few, not individually but all together, just as dinners to which many contribute are better than those provided at one person's expense. For when there are many, each has some portion of excellence and practical wisdom, and when they come together the multitude becomes like a single human being with many feet, many hands, and many senses, and so too with regard to character and thought. That is why the many are also better judges of works of music and of the poets: different people judge different parts, and all of them judge the whole. But excellent men differ from each individual among the many in the same way as beautiful people, they say, differ from those who are not beautiful, and painted images from real things: by bringing together into one what is scattered separately. For taken separately, this person's eye, or some other part of someone else, would be more beautiful than the painted figure.

Whether this difference between the many and the excellent few can hold for every people and every multitude is unclear; or rather, by Zeus, perhaps it is clear that for some it is impossible (for the same argument would apply to beasts too; and yet how do some people differ from beasts, practically speaking?). But nothing prevents what was said from being true of some multitude. Through these considerations, then, one might resolve the puzzle stated earlier and the one connected with it: over what things should the free, the mass of citizens, be sovereign? These are the people who are neither rich nor have any claim to excel-

lence at all. For it is not safe for them to share in the highest offices, since through injustice and folly they would inevitably do wrong in some things and make mistakes in others. But not to give them a share, and not to let them participate, is dangerous, since when many people are without honor and poor, that city is bound to be full of enemies. What remains, then, is for them to share in deliberating and judging. That is why Solon and some other lawgivers assign them to the election of officials and the auditing of officials, but do not allow them to hold office individually. For all of them together have adequate perception, and mixed with the better sort they benefit their cities, just as impure food mixed with pure makes the whole more useful than a small amount of pure; but each of them on his own is incomplete in judging.[7]

This arrangement of the constitution involves a puzzle. First, it would seem that judging who has treated a patient correctly belongs to the same person who can treat him and make him healthy from his present illness, namely the doctor. And the same goes 1282a for the other kinds of expertise and crafts. So just as a doctor must submit his audit to doctors, so must others submit theirs to their peers. But "doctor" means the ordinary practitioner, the master of the craft, and, third, the person educated in the craft (there are people of this sort in practically all the crafts); and we grant the right to judge no less to the educated than to those who know. Next, it would seem the same holds for elections. For choosing correctly is also the work of those who know: a geometer should be chosen by those who know geometry, and a helmsman by those who know navigation. Even if in some tasks and crafts some laymen also have a say, they do not have more of one than those who know. So by this argument the multitude should not be made sovereign over either the election of officials or their audits. But perhaps not all of this is well said. This is partly because of the earlier argument, provided the multitude is not too servile (for each individual will be a worse judge than those who know, but all of them

7 The audits (*euthynai*) were reviews of officials' conduct at the end of their term.

together will be better, or no worse). It is also because in some cases the maker would not be the only or the best judge: in the case of those things whose products are recognized even by people who lack the craft. For instance, knowing a house is not only for the one who built it; the one who uses it will judge it even better (and the user is the householder). Likewise a helmsman will judge a rudder better than a carpenter, and a guest will judge a feast, not the cook.

This puzzle, then, one might think is adequately resolved in this way. But there is another connected with it. It seems absurd for inferior people to be sovereign over greater matters than the decent are, and audits and elections of officials are the greatest matters; yet in some constitutions, as has been said, these are assigned to the people, since the assembly is sovereign over all such things. And yet people take part in the assembly, sit on the council, and serve on juries with small property assessments and at any age, while treasurers, generals, and holders of the greatest offices come from those with large assessments. One might resolve this puzzle in the same way; for perhaps these things too are correct. For it is not the individual juror, council member, or assembly member who rules, but the court, the council, and the people; each of those mentioned is a part of these (by "part" I mean the council member, the assembly member, and the juror). So it is just for the multitude to be sovereign over greater matters, since the people, the council, and the court are made up of many. And the combined property assessment of all of these is greater than that of those who hold the great offices individually or in small numbers. Let these points be settled [1282b] in this way. The first puzzle mentioned makes nothing so evident as that the laws, rightly laid down, should be sovereign, and that the ruler, whether one or more, should be sovereign over those matters on which the laws cannot speak precisely, since it is not easy to make universal determinations about everything. But what sort of laws the rightly laid down ones should be is not yet clear at all; the puzzle raised long ago still remains. For laws too must be bad or good, just or unjust, at

the same time and in the same way as constitutions. This much, at any rate, is evident: the laws must be laid down to suit the constitution. But if so, it is clear that laws in accordance with the correct constitutions must be just, and those in accordance with the deviant ones unjust.

JUSTICE AS EQUALITY

Offices should be distributed by claims relevant to the city, not by any superiority whatever.

In all sciences and crafts the end is a good, and the greatest good, the good in the highest degree, is the end of the most authoritative of them all, which is political capacity. The political good is justice, and this is the common advantage. Now everyone thinks justice is some kind of equality, and up to a point they agree with the philosophical discussions in which ethical matters have been determined (for they say justice is something, and is for certain persons, and that it should be equal for equals). But equality in what, and inequality in what? This must not be overlooked, for it involves a puzzle and calls for political philosophy. For perhaps someone might say that offices should be distributed unequally on the basis of superiority in any good whatever, provided that in every other respect people did not differ but happened to be alike; for those who differ, what is just and what accords with merit are different. But if this is true, then complexion, height, or any good at all will give those who excel in it some advantage in political rights. Or is this falsehood obvious? It is evident in the other sciences and capacities. Among pipers who are alike in their craft, the better pipes should not be given to those of better birth (they won't play any better); it is the one who excels at the work who should be given the superior instruments. If what is being said is not yet clear, it will become more evident if we take it further. Suppose someone excels at piping but falls far short in good birth or beauty. Even if each of these is a greater good than piping (I mean good birth and beauty), and even if proportionally they

exceed piping by more than he excels at piping, still the outstanding [1283a] pipes must be given to him. For superiority in wealth and good birth ought to contribute to the work, and they contribute nothing.

Again, by this argument every good would be commensurable with every other. For if a certain height counted for more, height in general would compete both with wealth and with freedom. So if this person excels more in height than that one in excellence, and height in general is superior to excellence, then all goods would be commensurable; for if so much of one is better than so much of another, clearly some amount is equal. Since this is impossible, it is clear that in political matters too people reasonably do not dispute over offices on the basis of every kind of inequality. (If some are slow and others fast, that is no reason for the one to have more and the other less; it is in athletic contests that this difference wins its honor.) The dispute must be conducted on the basis of the things of which a city is made up. That is why the well-born, the free, and the rich reasonably lay claim to honor. For there must be free people and people who pay property taxes, since a city could not consist entirely of the poor, any more than of slaves. But if these are needed, clearly justice and political excellence are needed too, since without these a city cannot be managed either; except that without the former a city cannot exist, while without the latter it cannot be managed well.

RIVAL CLAIMS AND OSTRACISM

Rival claims to rule are weighed, along with ostracism and the case of one surpassingly excellent man.

For the existence of a city, then, it would seem that all or at least some of these have a correct claim; but for a good life, education and excellence would have the most just claim, as was said before too. But since those who are equal in one thing only should not have an equal share of everything, nor those unequal in one thing an unequal share of everything, all constitutions of

this sort must be deviations. It has been said before too that all dispute with a kind of justice, but not all with justice without qualification. The rich claim because they have a greater share of the land, and the land is common property, and further because they are for the most part more reliable in contracts. The free and the well-born claim on grounds closely connected with each other (for the better born are more truly citizens than the lowborn, and good birth is held in honor at home among every people); and further, because those from better parents are likely to be better, since good birth is excellence of family. Likewise we shall say that excellence too has a just claim, since we say justice is the excellence of community, which all the others must follow. And the majority too have a claim against the minority, since they are stronger, richer, and better, when the majority is taken together in comparison with the minority.

Suppose, then, [1283b] that all were present in one city, I mean, for example, the good, the rich, and the well-born, and besides them some other citizen multitude: will there be a dispute about who should rule, or not? Under each of the constitutions mentioned, the decision about who should rule is undisputed, since they differ from one another in what is sovereign: one, for example, is rule by the rich, another rule by excellent men, and each of the others in the same way. Nevertheless, let us consider how the matter is to be determined when all these are present at the same time. If those who have excellence are extremely few in number, how should we decide? Should "few" be judged with reference to the work, by whether they are able to manage the city, or by whether they are numerous enough to make up a city by themselves? There is a puzzle facing all who dispute over political honors. Those who claim to rule because of their wealth would seem to have nothing just to say, and likewise those who claim on the basis of birth. For clearly, if again some one person is richer than all the rest, then by the same justice this one person will have to rule over all; and likewise the one outstanding in good birth will have to rule over those whose claim rests on freedom. Perhaps the same will happen with aris-

tocracies in the case of excellence: if some one man were better than the others in the governing body, excellent though they are, then by the same justice this man should be sovereign. Then if the multitude too should be sovereign because they are stronger than the few, then if one person, or more than one but fewer than the many, were stronger than the rest, these would have to be sovereign rather than the multitude. All this seems to make evident that none of these definitions is correct by which people claim that they themselves should rule and everyone else be ruled by them. For against those who claim to be sovereign over the governing body on the basis of excellence, and likewise against those who claim on the basis of wealth, the multitudes could offer a just argument: nothing prevents the multitude from sometimes being better and richer than the few, not individually but collectively. So this is also how one may respond to the puzzle that some people investigate and put forward. For some raise the puzzle whether a lawgiver who wishes to lay down the most correct laws should legislate for the advantage of the better people or for that of the majority, when the situation described arises. What is correct must be taken as what is equal; and what is correct in the sense of equal is correct with a view to the advantage of the whole city and the common good of the citizens. A citizen in general is one who shares in ruling and being ruled, [1284a] but he differs under each constitution, and under the best constitution he is one who is able and chooses to be ruled and to rule with a view to the life that accords with excellence.

But suppose there is one person so outstanding in superiority of excellence, or several, though not enough to make up the full complement of a city, that the excellence and political capacity of all the others are not comparable with theirs (if there are several) or with his alone (if there is one). Then such people should no longer be counted as part of the city. They would be wronged if treated as deserving equal shares, being so unequal in excellence and political capacity; for such a person would likely be like a god among human beings. From this it is clear that legisla-

tion too must concern those who are equal in birth and in capacity, while for people like these there is no law: they themselves are law. Indeed, anyone who tried to legislate for them would be ridiculous. For they would perhaps say what Antisthenes' lions said when the hares made speeches in the assembly and claimed that everyone should have equal shares. That is why democratically governed cities institute ostracism, and for this sort of reason. They seem to pursue equality above all things, so they used to ostracize those who seemed to be superior in power because of wealth or many friends or some other political strength, and remove them from the city for fixed periods. The story goes that the Argonauts left Heracles behind for this sort of reason too: the Argo refused to carry him along with the other sailors, since he so far surpassed them.[8] So those who criticize tyranny, and Periander's advice to Thrasybulus, should not be thought entirely right in their censure. (They say that Periander said nothing to the herald sent to ask his advice, but leveled the field by lopping off the ears of grain that stood out; the herald did not understand the reason for what was happening, but reported what had occurred, and Thrasybulus realized that he should do away with the outstanding men.) For this is not only advantageous to tyrants, nor do tyrants alone do it; it is the same with oligarchies and democracies. Ostracism has in a way the same effect, by cutting down and exiling those who stand out.[9] Those who control power do the same to cities and peoples: the Athenians, for instance, to the Samians, Chians, and Lesbians (once they had a firm hold on their empire, they humbled them in violation of the treaties), while the Persian 1284b king repeatedly cut down the Medes, the Babylonians, and any others who had grown proud from having once held power.

The problem is universal and concerns all constitutions, even the correct ones. The deviant ones do this looking to their

8 In the fable the lions reply, "Where are your claws and teeth?" Ostracism was a vote by which Athens exiled a citizen for ten years without loss of property.
9 Periander was tyrant of Corinth and Thrasybulus tyrant of Miletus, around 600 BC.

private advantage, but the same holds for those that look to the common good. This is clear in the other crafts and sciences too. A painter would not let a figure have a foot out of proportion, even if it were outstandingly beautiful, nor would a shipbuilder allow this with the stern or any other part of the ship; nor will a chorus master let someone who sings louder and more beautifully than the whole chorus be a member of it. So for this reason nothing prevents monarchs from being in harmony with their cities when they do this, provided their own rule benefits the cities. Hence, in cases of acknowledged superiority, the argument for ostracism has a certain political justice. It is better, then, for the lawgiver to establish the constitution from the start in such a way that it needs no such remedy; but the second-best course, if the need arises, is to try to set things right with a corrective of this kind. This is not what happened in the cities: they did not look to the advantage of their own constitution but used ostracism as a weapon in civil strife. In the deviant constitutions, then, it is evident that ostracism is advantageous and just from their own point of view; perhaps it is also evident that it is not just without qualification. But in the best constitution there is a great puzzle, not about superiority in other goods, like strength, wealth, and many friends, but about what should be done if someone turns up who is outstanding in excellence. Surely people would not say that such a man should be expelled and banished; but neither should he be ruled, since that would be like claiming to rule Zeus by sharing out the offices. What remains, and what seems natural, is for everyone to obey such a person gladly, so that people like this are permanent kings in their cities.

KINDS OF KINGSHIP

Five kinds of kingship are distinguished, from Spartan generalship to absolute rule.

Perhaps it is good, after the arguments just given, to move on and examine kingship, since we say it is one of the correct con-

stitutions. We must consider whether it is advantageous for a city and territory that is to be well managed to be ruled by a king, or not, but rather by some other constitution, or whether it is advantageous for some and not for others. We must first determine whether it is a single kind or has several [1285a] varieties. This at least is easy to see: it includes several kinds, and the manner of rule is not the same in all of them. The kingship in the Spartan constitution seems to be the most of all a kingship according to law, but it is not sovereign over everything: when the king leaves the country he is the leader in matters of war, and matters concerning the gods are also assigned to the kings.

> This kingship, then, is a kind of generalship with full powers, held for life. For the king has no authority to put anyone to death, except in certain circumstances, as in ancient times on military expeditions, by right of force. Homer shows this: Agamemnon put up with being abused in the assemblies, but when they had marched out he had authority even to kill. At any rate he says: "Whomever I see away from the battle...
> ... he will have no sure hope
> of escaping the dogs and birds;
> for death is in my hands."[10]

This, then, is one kind of kingship, generalship for life, some of these being hereditary and some elected. Besides this there is another kind of monarchy, such as the kingships found among some non-Greeks. These all have power close to that of tyrannies, but they are according to law and ancestral. For because non-Greeks are by nature more servile in character than Greeks, and those in Asia than those in Europe, they endure the rule of a master without resentment. These kingships are tyrannical, then, for this reason, but secure because they are ancestral and according to law. Their bodyguard, too, is that of a king and not of a tyrant, for the same reason. For citizens guard kings with their arms, while tyrants are guarded by a foreign force; kings

10 Adapted from *Iliad* 2.391–393; the last phrase is not in our text of Homer.

rule according to law and over willing subjects, tyrants over unwilling ones, so that kings have a guard drawn from the citizens, tyrants a guard against them.

These, then, are two kinds of monarchy. Another is the one that existed among the early Greeks, whose rulers are called aisymnetes. This is, to put it simply, an elected tyranny, differing from the non-Greek kind not in being contrary to law but only in not being ancestral. Some held this office for life, others for certain fixed periods or for particular tasks, as when the Mytileneans once elected Pittacus against the exiles led by Antimenides and Alcaeus the poet. Alcaeus shows in one of his drinking songs that they chose Pittacus as tyrant, for he rebukes them because "the lowborn Pittacus, of that spiritless and 1285b ill-starred city, they set up as tyrant, all of them heaping praise on him."[11]

These, then, are and were tyrannical because they rule as masters, but kingly because they are elected and rule over willing subjects. A fourth kind of kingly monarchy is that of the heroic age, which was voluntary, ancestral, and according to law. Because the first kings had been benefactors of the multitude in crafts or war, or by bringing them together or providing them with land, they became kings over willing subjects, and the kingship passed down to their successors. They had authority over leadership in war and over sacrifices, except those reserved for priests, and in addition they judged lawsuits. Some did this without taking an oath, others under oath; the oath consisted in raising the scepter. In ancient times, then, these kings ruled continuously over the affairs of the city, both at home and beyond the borders. But later, as the kings gave up some of these powers and the crowds took away others, in most cities only the sacrifices were left to the kings, and where there was anything worth calling a kingship, they held only the leadership in wars beyond the borders.

These, then, are the kinds of kingship, four in number. One is that of the heroic age (this was over willing subjects, but in cer-

tain defined areas, since the king was general and judge and had authority over matters concerning the gods). The second is the non-Greek kind (this is hereditary rule, like a master's, according to law). The third is what they call aisymnetia (this is elected tyranny). The fourth of these is the Spartan (this is, to put it simply, hereditary generalship for life). These, then, differ from one another in this way. A fifth kind of kingship is when one person is sovereign over everything, just as each nation and each city is over its common affairs, arranged on the model of household management. For just as household management is a kind of kingship over a household, so absolute kingship is household management of a city, or of one nation or several.

THE BEST MAN OR THE BEST LAWS?

Rule by one excellent man is weighed against rule by law and by the many.

There are, then, roughly speaking, two kinds of kingship to consider: this one and the Spartan. Most of the others lie between these, since they are sovereign over fewer things than absolute kingship, and over more than the Spartan. So the inquiry is roughly about two questions: one, whether it is advantageous for cities to have a general for life, and whether by family or in rotation, [1286a] or not; the other, whether it is advantageous for one person to be sovereign over everything, or not. Examining this sort of generalship has more the character of an inquiry into laws than into constitutions, since it can occur under any constitution; so let us set the first question aside. The remaining mode of kingship is a kind of constitution, so we must study it and run through the puzzles it involves. The starting point of the inquiry is this: whether it is more advantageous to be ruled by the best man or by the best laws.

Those who think it advantageous to be ruled by a king hold that laws speak only in general terms and do not give instruc-

11 An aisymnete was a ruler elected with extraordinary powers, often to end civil strife. Alcaeus, lyric poet of Lesbos, was Pittacus' political opponent.

tions for circumstances as they arise, so that in any craft whatever it is foolish to govern by written rules. (In Egypt, doctors are allowed to change the treatment after the fourth day; if they do so earlier, it is at their own risk.) It is clear, then, that for the same reason the constitution that goes by written rules and laws is not the best. And yet rulers must have that general principle too. And what has no emotional element at all is better than what has one by nature. Law does not have this element, whereas every human soul necessarily has it. But perhaps someone might say that, in exchange, a human being will deliberate better about particular cases. Clearly, then, he must himself be a lawgiver, and there must be laws laid down; but they must not be authoritative where they go astray, though they should be authoritative in all other matters. As for the things the law cannot decide, either at all or well, should the one best man rule, or everyone? For as things are now, people come together to try cases, deliberate and make judgments, and these judgments all concern particulars. Taken one at a time, any one of them is perhaps inferior. But the city is made up of many, and just as a feast to which many contribute is finer than a single, simple one, so for this reason a crowd also judges many things better than any one person.

Moreover, the many are less corruptible: like a larger quantity of water, the multitude is less easily corrupted than the few. When a single person is overcome by anger or some other such feeling, his judgment is bound to be corrupted, whereas in the other case it is hard for everyone to get angry and go wrong at the same moment. Let the multitude be the free, doing nothing contrary to the law except in matters where it necessarily falls short. And if this is not easy with a large number, still, suppose there were several who were good both as men and as citizens: would the one ruler be less corruptible, or rather those who are more in number but [1286b] all good? Isn't it clear that the several are? "But the many will fall into civil strife, while the one will be free of it." To this one should perhaps reply that they are excellent in soul, just like that one man. If, then, the rule of a number

of people who are all good men is to be counted as aristocracy, and the rule of one as kingship, aristocracy would be preferable to kingship for cities—whether the office is backed by force or not—provided it is possible to find a number of people who are alike. And perhaps this is why people were ruled by kings in earlier times: it was rare to find men who greatly surpassed others in excellence, especially since in those days they lived in small cities. Besides, they appointed their kings on the strength of benefactions, which is the work of good men. But when it came about that there were many people alike in excellence, they no longer put up with this; they looked for something shared in common and established a constitution. And when they grew worse and began enriching themselves from public property, it is reasonable to suppose that oligarchies arose from something of this sort, for they made wealth a thing of honor. From oligarchies they changed first into tyrannies, and from tyrannies into democracy. For by constantly narrowing power into fewer hands out of greed for gain, they made the multitude stronger, so that it rose against them and democracies came into being. And now that cities have in fact grown larger, it is perhaps no longer easy for any constitution other than democracy to arise.

But if someone does take being ruled by a king to be best for cities, how will things stand with the children? Should the family reign as well? But if the children turn out as some happen to, that is harmful. "But the king, being sovereign, won't hand power over to his children." That is no longer easy to believe: it is hard, and calls for greater excellence than human nature allows. There is also a difficulty about force: should the man who is to be king have some armed strength around him with which he can compel those unwilling to obey, or how else can he administer his office? For even if he were sovereign in accordance with law, doing nothing by his own wish contrary to the law, he would still need to have a force with which to protect the laws. Perhaps, then, it is not hard to settle matters concerning such a king. He should have a force, and it should be large

enough to be stronger than any one individual, or even several together, but weaker than the multitude. This is how the ancients assigned bodyguards whenever they appointed someone over the city whom they called an aesymnete or tyrant; and when Dionysius asked for bodyguards, someone advised the Syracusans to give him guards in that number.

THE RULE OF LAW

Critics of absolute kingship argue that the law, as intellect without desire, should rule.

1287a But it is the king who does everything by his own wish that our discussion has now reached, and we must make the inquiry. For the so-called king in accordance with law is not, as we said, a kind of constitution. A permanent generalship can exist in any constitution, for instance in democracy and aristocracy, and many cities make one person sovereign over their administration: there is an office of this kind at Epidamnus, and at Opus too, though with somewhat less power. As for so-called absolute kingship (this is where the king rules over everything by his own wish), some people think it is not even in accordance with nature for one person to be sovereign over all the citizens where the city is made up of people who are alike. For those who are alike by nature must have the same justice and the same worth by nature. And so, if it is harmful to the body for unequal people to have equal food or clothing, the same holds for honors; and likewise, too, for equal people to have unequal shares. That is why it is just for no one to rule any more than to be ruled, and so for people to take turns in the same way.[12] And this is already law, since an arrangement is a law. It is therefore preferable for the law to rule rather than any one of the citizens. And by this same reasoning, even if it is better for certain people to rule, they should be appointed as guardians of the law and servants of the laws. For there must be some offices, but it is not just,

12 Epidamnus was a Greek city on the Adriatic coast (modern Durrës in Albania); Opus was the chief city of eastern Locris in central Greece.

they say, for this to be one person—at least when all are alike. And yet whatever the law seems unable to determine, a human being could not discern either. Rather, the law deliberately educates the officials and then sets them to judge and administer the remaining matters "by the most just judgment." Further, it allows them to amend whatever seems to them, from experience, to be better than the established laws. Anyone who bids the law to rule, then, seems to bid god and intellect alone to rule; whoever bids a human being to rule adds a wild beast as well. For appetite is like that, and spiritedness distorts rulers, even the best of men. That is why law is intellect without desire. The example from the crafts seems to be false—that doctoring by the book is poor, and it is preferable to rely on those who have the craft. For doctors do nothing contrary to reason out of friendship; they earn their fee by curing the sick. But those in political offices are accustomed to do many things out of spite or to curry favor. Indeed, when people suspect that doctors have been won over by their enemies to do away with them for gain, then they would rather look for treatment by the book. And yet doctors [1287b] who fall ill call in other doctors to treat them, and trainers who are exercising call in other trainers, on the grounds that they can't judge the truth, because they are judging their own case and are under the influence of feeling. So it is clear that in seeking what is just people are seeking the mean, for the law is the mean. Further, laws based on custom are more authoritative, and concern more authoritative matters, than written laws; so even if a human ruler is safer than written laws, he is not safer than customary ones.

Again, it isn't easy for one person to oversee many things. So there will need to be a number of officials appointed by him—and then what difference is there between having this arrangement right from the start and having one man appoint them in this way? Further, as was said earlier, if the excellent man is entitled to rule because he is better, then two good men are better than one. This is the point of "two going together," and of Agamemnon's prayer, "Would I had ten such counselors." Even

now there are offices with authority to judge, as a juror does, those matters the law is unable to determine; for where it is able, no one disputes that the law would rule and judge best.[13] But since some things can be covered by the laws and others cannot, it is the latter that make people raise the difficulty and ask whether it is preferable for the best law to rule or the best man. For the things people deliberate about are among those that can't be legislated for. So they don't deny that it must be a human being who judges such matters; they say only that it should not be one alone but many.

For every official who has been educated by the law judges well. And it would perhaps seem odd if one person, judging with two eyes and two ears and acting with two feet and two hands, could see better than many people with many. Indeed, even now monarchs make many eyes and ears and hands and feet for themselves, since they make those who are friendly to their rule and to themselves into their co-rulers. Now if these are not friends, they will not act in line with the monarch's decision; but if they are friends of both him and his rule—well, a friend is an equal and alike, so if he thinks these people should rule, he thinks that those who are equal and alike should rule just as he does. These, then, are roughly the arguments of those who dispute the case against kingship.

WHEN KINGSHIP IS JUST

Kingship suits only a people with a family or person of surpassing excellence.

But perhaps these things hold in this way for some people and not for others. For there is what is by nature suited to rule by a master, and another to rule by a king, and another to political rule; and what is just and advantageous differs for different people. But nothing is by nature suited to tyranny, or to any of the other constitutions that are deviations, for these come about contrary to nature. From what has been said, 1288a though, it is

13 Both quotations are from Homer's *Iliad* (10.224 and 2.372).

clear that among people who are alike and equal it is neither advantageous nor just for one person to be sovereign over all—whether there are no laws and he is himself, as it were, the law, or there are laws—nor for a good man to be sovereign over good men, nor one who isn't good over those who aren't good; nor even if he is superior in excellence, except in a certain way. What that way is must now be stated, though in a sense it has already been stated earlier.

First we must determine what is suited to kingship, what to aristocracy and what to polity. Suited to kingship is a multitude of the kind that naturally produces a family surpassing in excellence with respect to political leadership. Suited to aristocracy is one that naturally produces a multitude capable of being ruled, with the rule appropriate to free people, by those whose excellence makes them fit to lead in political rule. Suited to polity is one in which there naturally arises a multitude fit for war, capable of ruling and being ruled under a law that distributes offices to the well-off according to merit. So when it happens that either a whole family, or even some one individual among the rest, becomes so outstanding in excellence that his excellence surpasses that of all the others, then it is just for this family to be royal and sovereign over all, and for this one man to be king. For, as was said earlier, this is so not only according to the kind of justice that those who establish constitutions usually put forward—whether aristocratic, oligarchic or, again, democratic ones (for they all claim rights on the basis of superiority, though not the same superiority)—but also according to what was said before. It is surely not fitting to kill such a person, or exile him, or ostracize him, nor to expect him to be ruled in turn. For it is not natural for the part to surpass the whole, and that is what has happened in the case of someone with so great a superiority. So the only remaining option is to obey such a person, and for him to be sovereign not in turn but without qualification. As for kingship, then—what varieties it has, whether it is advantageous for cities or not, for which ones and how—let this be our account.

TOWARD THE BEST CONSTITUTION

In the best city the good man and the good citizen coincide, and the inquiry turns to that city.

We say there are three correct constitutions, and of these the best must be the one managed by the best people. Such is the constitution in which it happens that either one individual out of everyone, or a whole family, or a multitude surpasses in excellence, the ones able to be ruled and the others to rule with a view to the most choiceworthy life. And in our first discussions it was shown that in the best city the excellence of a man and of a citizen must be the same. It is clear, then, that a man becomes excellent in the same way and by the same means by which one would establish a city governed by an aristocracy or a king; so the 1288b education and habits that make a man excellent will be roughly the same as those that make him fit for politics and for kingship. With these points settled, we must now try to discuss the best constitution: in what way it naturally arises and how it is established. [So anyone who is going to conduct the appropriate inquiry into it must...][14]

14 This incomplete sentence, bracketed by editors, reappears as the opening of Book VII.

Book IV

The varieties of actual constitutions and their elements.

CHAPTER 1

In all the crafts and sciences that are not partial but are complete with respect to some one kind of thing, it belongs to a single one to study what is fitting for each kind. For instance: what sort of exercise is beneficial for what sort of body, and which is best (for the best must suit the body that is finest by nature and best equipped); and which single exercise suits most bodies, all of them together (this too is the work of gymnastic training). Further, if someone does not want the condition or the knowledge proper to competition, it belongs no less to the trainer and the gymnastic expert to produce this level of capacity too. And we see the same thing happening in medicine, in shipbuilding, in the making of clothes and in every other craft. So it is clear that it belongs to the same science to study the best constitution—what it is and what it would be like if it were to be most as one would pray for, with nothing external standing in its way—and also which constitution suits which people. (For many, perhaps, cannot attain the best, so the good lawgiver and the true politician must not overlook either the best without qualification or the best given the circumstances.) Third, there is the constitution based on a hypothesis: one must also be able to study a given constitution, both how it might originally come into being and, once it exists, how it might be preserved for the longest time. I mean, for instance, if a city happens to be governed neither by the best constitution—being unequipped even with the necessities—nor by the best possible in its circum-

stances, but by some inferior one. Besides all these, one must know the constitution that best suits all cities. So most of those who have set out views about constitutions, even if they say other things well, miss what is useful. For one must study not only the best constitution but also the possible one, and likewise the one that is easier and more widely shared by all. As it is, some seek only the highest, which needs a great deal of equipment, while others, though speaking of a more common one, do away with the existing constitutions and praise the Spartan 1289a or some other. What one should do is introduce an arrangement that people will easily be persuaded to accept and be able to take part in, given their existing circumstances; for it is no less a task to reform a constitution than to set one up from the beginning, just as unlearning something is no less a task than learning it from the beginning. That is why, in addition to what has been said, the politician must also be able to help existing constitutions, as was said earlier too. But this is impossible if he doesn't know how many kinds of constitution there are. As it is, some people think there is one democracy and one oligarchy; but that is not true. So one must not overlook the varieties of the constitutions—how many there are, and in how many ways they are combined. And after that, it takes this same practical wisdom to see both the best laws and those that suit each of the constitutions. For laws should be laid down to suit constitutions, and all laws are, not constitutions to suit laws. A constitution is the arrangement of the offices in cities: how they have been distributed, what is sovereign in the constitution and what the end of each community is. Laws, distinct from what defines the constitution, are those by which the officials must rule and must guard against those who transgress them. So it is clear that one must grasp the varieties of each constitution, and how many there are, with a view to the enactment of laws as well. For the same laws cannot be advantageous to all oligarchies, or to all democracies, given that there are several kinds and not just one democracy or one oligarchy.

RANKING THE CONSTITUTIONS

Tyranny is the worst deviation, oligarchy next, democracy the most moderate; the remaining tasks are set out.

In our first inquiry into constitutions we distinguished three correct constitutions—kingship, aristocracy and polity—and three deviations from them: tyranny from kingship, oligarchy from aristocracy and democracy from polity. Aristocracy and kingship have been discussed (for studying the best constitution is the same as discussing these names, since each aims to be established on the basis of excellence furnished with resources); and how aristocracy and kingship differ from each other, and when one should adopt kingship, has been determined earlier. It remains to go through the constitution called by the common name, polity, and the other constitutions: oligarchy, democracy and tyranny. Now it is clear which of these deviations is worst, and which second. For the deviation from the first and most divine constitution must be the worst. Kingship must either have the name only, not [1289b] being a kingship in fact, or it must rest on the great superiority of the man who reigns; so tyranny, being the worst, is the furthest removed from a constitution, oligarchy second (for aristocracy is far removed from this constitution), and democracy the most moderate. Someone before us has already expressed this view, but he was not looking at the same thing we are. He judged that when all of them are decent—a good oligarchy, for instance, and so on—democracy is the worst, but when they are bad it is the best. We, by contrast, say that these are wholly mistaken, and that it is not right to call one oligarchy better than another, only less bad.[1] But let us set aside that sort of judgment for now. We must first distinguish how many varieties of constitution there are, given that there are several kinds of democracy and of oligarchy. Next, which is the most common, and which the most choiceworthy after the best constitution; and if there happens to be some other one that is

1 The predecessor is Plato, in the *Statesman* (302e–303b).

aristocratic and well constituted but not suited to most cities, which it is. Next, which of the others is choiceworthy for which people (for perhaps democracy is necessary for some rather than oligarchy, and for others the latter rather than the former). After that, in what way someone who wants to establish these constitutions should do so—I mean each kind of democracy and, again, of oligarchy. Finally, when we have briefly made what mention we can of all these, we must try to go over what destroys and what preserves constitutions, both in general and each one separately, and through what causes these things most naturally come about.

WHY THERE ARE MANY CONSTITUTIONS

Cities have many parts, so constitutions differ in how power is distributed among them.

The reason there are several constitutions is that every city has several parts. First, we see that all cities are made up of households. Next, of this multitude some must be well-off, some poor and some in the middle; and of the well-off and the poor, one part is heavily armed and the other unarmed. We also see that the people consists partly of farmers, partly of traders in the marketplace and partly of vulgar craftsmen. Among the notables, too, there are differences according to wealth and the size of their property—for instance, in horse-breeding, which is not easy to do without being rich. (That is why in ancient times the cities whose strength lay in horses had oligarchies; they used horses in their wars against their neighbors, as did the Eretrians, the Chalcidians, the Magnesians on the Maeander and many others in Asia.) Further, in addition to differences in wealth there is difference by birth and [1290a] by excellence, and anything else of this sort that was called a part of the city in the discussion of aristocracy; for there we distinguished how many necessary parts every city has. Of these parts, sometimes all

share in the constitution, sometimes fewer, sometimes more.[2] It is clear, then, that there must be several constitutions differing in kind from one another, since these parts too differ in kind from one another. For a constitution is the arrangement of the offices, and everyone distributes these either according to the power of those who share in them or according to some equality common to them—I mean, for instance, of the poor, or of the well-off, or some equality common to both. There must therefore be as many constitutions as there are arrangements according to the kinds of superiority and the differences of the parts.

People think there are chiefly two. Just as with the winds some are called northerly and others southerly, and the rest are deviations from these, so too there are two constitutions, the rule of the people and oligarchy. For they count aristocracy as a kind of oligarchy, on the grounds that it is a sort of oligarchy, and what is called polity as a kind of democracy—just as among the winds they count the west wind as a kind of north wind and the east wind as a kind of south wind. It is the same with musical modes, as some say: there too they posit two kinds, the Dorian and the Phrygian, and call the other arrangements either Dorian or Phrygian. This is chiefly how people are accustomed to think about constitutions. But it is truer and better to divide them as we did: there are one or two that are well constituted, and the others are deviations—some from the well-blended mode, others from the best constitution—the oligarchic ones being the more tightly strung and more like the rule of a master, the relaxed and soft ones democratic.

KINDS OF DEMOCRACY

Democracy is rule by the free and poor, and it has several kinds, down to rule by decree.

One should not posit democracy simply, in the way some people are now accustomed to, as where the multitude is sovereign (for

2 Eretria and Chalcis were rival cities on the island of Euboea; Magnesia on the Maeander was a Greek city in Asia Minor.

in oligarchies too, and everywhere, the larger part is sovereign), nor oligarchy as where a few are sovereign over the constitution. For suppose there were thirteen hundred people in all, and a thousand of them were rich, and they gave no share in office to the three hundred poor who were free and otherwise like them: no one would say these people were governed democratically. Likewise, if the poor were few but stronger than the well-off, who were more numerous, no one would call that sort of constitution an oligarchy either, if the others, who were rich, had no share in honors. Rather, one should say that [1290b] it is rule by the people when the free are sovereign, and oligarchy when the rich are; it just happens that the former are many and the latter few, since many are free but few are rich. For if offices were distributed by height, as some say happens in Ethiopia, or by beauty, it would be an oligarchy, since the number of the beautiful and of the tall is small. Still, it isn't adequate to distinguish these constitutions by these features alone either. Since there are several parts both of a democracy and of an oligarchy, we must further grasp that it is not rule by the people if the free, being few, rule over a majority who are not free—as in Apollonia on the Ionian Gulf and in Thera, where in each of these cities the honors were held by those who were outstanding in good birth and had been the first to settle the colonies, a few ruling over many. Nor is it rule by the people if the rich rule because they are superior in number, as in Colophon long ago, where the majority had acquired large properties before the war against the Lydians. Rather, it is democracy when the free and poor, being the majority, are sovereign over office, and oligarchy when the rich and better-born, being few, are.[3]

That there are several constitutions, then, and for what reason, has been stated. Let us now say why there are more than those mentioned, which they are and why, taking as our starting point what was said before. For we agree that every city has not

3 Apollonia (on the Adriatic, then called the Ionian Gulf) and Thera (modern Santorini) were Greek colonies; Colophon was a Greek city in Asia Minor, near the kingdom of Lydia.

one part but several. Suppose we set out to grasp the kinds of animal. We would first mark off what every animal must have: for instance, some of the sense organs, the parts that work on and take in food, such as the mouth and stomach, and in addition the parts by which each of them moves. Now if there were only this many parts, but there were varieties of them—I mean, for instance, several types of mouth and stomach and sense organs, and also of the parts for locomotion—then the number of ways of combining these would necessarily produce several types of animal. (For the same animal cannot have several varieties of mouth, nor likewise of ears.) So when all the possible pairings of these have been taken, they will produce kinds of animal, and there will be as many kinds of animal as there are combinations of the necessary parts. It is the same way with the constitutions we have mentioned. For cities too are made up not of one part but of many, as has often been said. One is the multitude concerned with food, the so-called farmers. 1291a Second is what is called the vulgar class: this is the part concerned with the crafts without which a city cannot be lived in—some of these crafts must exist out of necessity, others for luxury or living finely. Third is the market class—by "market class" I mean those who spend their time buying and selling, in wholesale and retail trade. Fourth is the laboring class. The fifth type is the one that will fight in defense, which is no less necessary than these if the people are not to become slaves of those who attack them. For surely it is impossible for something that is by nature slavish to deserve the name of city, since a city is self-sufficient, and what is slavish is not self-sufficient. That is why this point is made cleverly, but not adequately, in the *Republic*. Socrates says that a city is made up of the four most necessary people, and he says they are a weaver, a farmer, a shoemaker and a builder. Then, as if these were not self-sufficient, he adds a smith, those in charge of the necessary livestock, and also a merchant and a retailer. All these together make up the complement of his first city—as if every city were constituted for the sake of necessities rather than of the fine, and needed shoemakers and farmers equally.

He does not assign the part that fights in defense until the territory grows, encroaches on that of its neighbors, and they end up at war.[4] But even among the four, or however many partners there are, there must be someone to assign and judge what is just. So if one would count the soul as more a part of an animal than the body, then in cities too one should count parts of this sort more than those that contribute to necessary uses: the warrior part, the part that shares in judicial justice and, in addition, the deliberative part, which is the work of political intelligence. Whether these belong to separate groups or to the same people makes no difference to the argument, for it often happens that the same people serve as heavy infantry and farm. So if both these and those are to be counted as parts of the city, it is clear that the heavy-armed part, at any rate, is a necessary part of the city.

The seventh is the part that serves the public with its property, those we call the well-off. The eighth is the part that holds magistracies and serves in the offices, since a city cannot exist without officials. There must therefore be some people who are able to rule and who perform this service for the city, either continuously or in turn. There remain the parts we happened to define just now, the deliberative part and the part that judges what is just for those in dispute. Now if these things must exist in cities, and exist finely and justly, [1291b] there must also be some people who share in the excellence of politicians.[5] Many people think the other capacities can belong to the same people—that the same people can be defenders, farmers and craftsmen, and also those who deliberate and judge. Everyone lays claim to excellence, too, and thinks he is able to hold most offices. But the same people cannot be both poor and rich. That is why these seem to be the parts of the city above all, the well-off and the poor. Further, because for the most part the one group is few and the other many, these appear to be the opposing parts

4 The reference is to Plato's *Republic*, 369b–374a.

5 Wealthy Greeks were required to perform "liturgies," public services such as funding a warship or a festival chorus at their own expense.

among the city's parts. So people establish constitutions according to the superiority of one or the other, and there seem to be two constitutions, democracy and oligarchy.

That there are several constitutions, then, and for what reasons, has been stated earlier. Let us now say that there are also several kinds of democracy and oligarchy. This is clear from what has been said as well. For there are several kinds both of the people and of the so-called notables. Kinds of the people, for instance: one is the farmers; another the part concerned with crafts; another the market class that spends its time buying and selling; another the part connected with the sea, and of this, one section is naval, another commercial, another ferries passengers and another fishes. (In many places each of these is numerous—fishermen in Tarentum and Byzantium, for instance, the crews of triremes in Athens, merchants in Aegina and Chios, ferrymen in Tenedos.) In addition there are day laborers and those with so little property that they cannot have leisure; also those who are not free on both sides of their parentage; and any other kind of multitude of this sort. Among the notables, the kinds are wealth, good birth, excellence, education and the things spoken of under the same sort of difference.

The first democracy is the one said to be based most of all on equality. For the law of such a democracy says that equality means the poor having no more superiority than the well-off, and neither group being sovereign, but both being alike. For if freedom and equality are found above all in democracy, as some suppose, this would be most so when everyone shares in the constitution most fully and alike. And since the people are the majority, and what the majority resolves is sovereign, this must be a democracy. This, then, is one kind of democracy. Another is where offices are based on property assessments, though these are low; a person who acquires the amount must be allowed to take part, and one who loses it must not. 1292a Another kind of democracy is where all the citizens who are not open to challenge share in office, but the law rules. Another kind of democracy is where everyone shares in the offices, provided only that

he is a citizen, but the law rules. Another kind of democracy is the same in other respects, but the multitude is sovereign and not the law. This happens when decrees are sovereign and not the law, and it comes about because of the demagogues. In democracies governed according to law there is no demagogue; the best of the citizens hold the foremost place. But where the laws are not sovereign, demagogues arise.[6] For the people become a monarch, one made up of many, since the many are sovereign not as individuals but all together. Which kind of "rule of many" Homer means when he says it is not good—this kind, or when there are several rulers acting as individuals—is unclear. At any rate, a people of this kind, being a monarch, seeks to rule as a monarch because it is not ruled by law, and it becomes like a master, so that flatterers are held in honor. Such a people is the counterpart of tyranny among monarchies. That is why their character is also the same: both lord it over the better sort, decrees are like the commands issued there, and the demagogue and the flatterer are the same, or counterparts. Each has the most power in his own sphere, flatterers with tyrants and demagogues with peoples of this kind.[7] These people are responsible for decrees being sovereign rather than laws, since they refer everything to the people. They become great because the people are sovereign over everything, and they are sovereign over the people's opinion, since the multitude obeys them. Further, those who bring charges against officials say that the people should judge, and the people gladly accept the invitation, so that all the offices are dissolved. It would seem reasonable to object that such a democracy is not a constitution at all. For where the laws do not rule, there is no constitution. The law should rule over everything, while the offices decide particular matters, and one should judge this to be a constitution. So if democracy is one of the constitutions, it is clear that an arrangement of this kind, in which everything is administered by

6 "Not open to challenge" probably means those whose descent qualifies them as citizens beyond dispute.

7 Homer, *Iliad* 2.204: "The rule of many is not good; let there be one ruler."

decrees, is not even a democracy in the strict sense, since no decree can be universal. Let the kinds of democracy, then, be distinguished in this way.

KINDS OF OLIGARCHY

Four kinds of oligarchy run from moderate property qualifications to hereditary dynasty.

Of oligarchy, one kind is where offices are based on property assessments so high that the poor, though they are the majority, do not share in them, but anyone who acquires the amount may share in the constitution. Another [1292b] is when offices are based on high property assessments and the officials themselves elect to fill vacancies. (If they do this from among all those qualified, it seems to be more aristocratic; if from certain designated people, oligarchic.) Another kind of oligarchy is when son succeeds father. A fourth is when what was just mentioned holds and it is not the law that rules but the officials. This is the counterpart among oligarchies to tyranny among monarchies, and to the democracy we mentioned last among democracies; and people call this sort of oligarchy a "dynasty."

These, then, are the kinds of oligarchy and of democracy. But one should not overlook the fact that in many places it has come about that the constitution laid down by the laws is not democratic, yet it is run democratically because of custom and upbringing; and likewise, conversely, elsewhere the constitution laid down by the laws is more democratic, but through upbringing and customs it is run more oligarchically. This happens especially after constitutions change. For people don't change over immediately; at first they are content with gaining small advantages over one another, so that the laws that existed before remain in force, while those who changed the constitution hold power.

HOW THE KINDS ARISE

The kinds of democracy and oligarchy arise from who has leisure and how property is spread.

That there are this many kinds of democracy and oligarchy is clear from what has been said itself. For either all the parts of the people we mentioned must share in the constitution, or some must and others not. When the farming class and those who own a moderate amount of property are sovereign over the constitution, they govern according to laws. For they can live by working, but they cannot have leisure; so they put the law in charge and hold only the assemblies that are necessary. The others may take part once they acquire the property assessment defined by the laws, which is why all who acquire it may take part. For, in general, for participation not to be open to everyone is oligarchic, but for everyone to be able to have leisure is impossible unless there are revenues. This, then, is one kind of democracy, for these reasons. Another kind arises from the next distinction. It is possible for participation to be open to everyone whose descent is not open to challenge, but for only those able to have leisure actually to take part. That is why in this sort of democracy the laws rule: because there are no revenues. A third kind is where all who are free may share in the constitution, but do not actually take part for the reason just given, so that in this one too the law must rule. The fourth kind of democracy [1293a] is the one that has arisen in cities most recently. Because cities have become much larger than they were originally, and there are ample revenues available, everyone shares in the constitution because of the superior numbers of the multitude, and they take part and govern because even the poor can have leisure, since they receive pay. This sort of multitude, in fact, has the most leisure of all. For looking after their private affairs doesn't hinder them at all, whereas it does hinder the rich, so that they often take no part in the assembly or in the

courts. That is why the multitude of the poor becomes sovereign over the constitution, and not the laws.

These, then, are the kinds of democracy, their number and their character, arising from these necessities. The kinds of oligarchy are as follows. When a larger number of people have property, but less of it and not too much, this is the first kind of oligarchy. For they allow anyone who acquires the amount to take part; and because there is a large number of people sharing in the governing body, it must be the law and not human beings that is sovereign. (For the further they are from monarchy, and the more they have neither so much property that they can have leisure without attending to it nor so little that they need to be supported by the city, the more they must want the law to rule them, rather than ruling themselves.) But if those who have property are fewer than before, and have more of it, the second kind of oligarchy arises. Being stronger, they claim to have more; so they themselves choose from among the rest those who are to enter the governing body, but since they are not yet strong enough to rule without law, they lay down a law to this effect. If they tighten things further by being fewer and having larger properties, the third stage of oligarchy arises: they hold the offices themselves, but under a law requiring sons to succeed their fathers when they die. And when they come to far surpass others in their properties and their many connections, this sort of dynasty is close to monarchy, and it is human beings who become sovereign and not the law. This is the fourth kind of oligarchy, the counterpart of the last kind of democracy.

ARISTOCRACIES

Besides true aristocracy, some mixed constitutions that honor excellence are called aristocracies.

There are, further, two constitutions besides democracy and oligarchy. One of them everyone mentions, and it has been spoken of as one of the four kinds of constitution (people speak of four: monarchy, oligarchy, democracy and, fourth, what is

called aristocracy). The fifth is the one called by the name common to them all, since they call it "constitution" or polity. But because it doesn't occur often, it escapes the notice of those who try to enumerate the kinds of constitution, and they use only the four 1293b (as Plato does) in their works on constitutions. Now it is right to give the name "aristocracy" to the constitution we went through in our first discussions. For only the constitution made up of those who are best, without qualification, in excellence—and not good men relative to some assumption—is justly called an aristocracy, since only in it is the same person a good man and a good citizen without qualification, whereas those who are good in the others are good relative to their own constitution. Still, there are some constitutions that differ both from those governed oligarchically and from what is called polity, and they are called aristocracies. For where offices are chosen not only on the basis of wealth but also on the basis of merit, this constitution differs from both and is called aristocratic. For even in cities that do not make excellence a common concern there are nonetheless some people of good repute who are thought to be decent. So where the constitution looks to wealth, excellence and the people, as in Carthage, it is aristocratic; and so also those that look to only two, as the Spartan constitution does, to excellence and the people, so that there is a mixture of these two, democracy and excellence. These, then, are two kinds of aristocracy besides the first, the best constitution; and a third is those forms of so-called polity that lean more toward oligarchy.

POLITY

Polity is a mixture of oligarchy and democracy, of wealth and freedom.

It remains for us to discuss the so-called polity, and tyranny. We have placed polity here, though neither it nor the aristocracies just mentioned is a deviation, because in truth they have all fallen short of the most correct constitution, and so they are counted along with these, and these are deviations from them,

as we said at the beginning. It is reasonable to mention tyranny last, because it is the least of all a constitution, and our inquiry is about constitutions. That is the reason, then, why things have been arranged in this way. Now we must set out our view of polity. Its character is clearer now that the matters concerning oligarchy and democracy have been determined. For polity is, to put it simply, a mixture of oligarchy and democracy. People are accustomed to call those that lean toward democracy polities, and those that lean more toward oligarchy aristocracies, because education and good birth tend to go along with the better-off. Further, the well-off are thought to have the things for whose sake wrongdoers do wrong; that is why people call them gentlemen and notables. So since aristocracy aims to assign superiority to the best of the citizens, people say that oligarchies too are made up more of gentlemen. 1294a And it seems impossible for a city governed not by the best but by the worst to be well governed, and likewise for a city that isn't well governed to be an aristocracy. But being well governed is not a matter of the laws being well laid down if they are not obeyed. So we must take good government to be, in one sense, obedience to the established laws, and in another, the laws that people abide by being finely laid down (for it is possible to obey laws that are badly laid down, too). This second can happen in two ways: people may obey the best laws possible for them, or the laws that are best without qualification.

Aristocracy is thought to consist above all in honors being distributed according to excellence; for the defining mark of aristocracy is excellence, of oligarchy wealth, and of rule by the people freedom. The principle that whatever the majority resolves prevails is present in them all: in oligarchy, in aristocracy and in democracies alike, whatever the larger part of those who share in the constitution resolves is sovereign. Now in most cities this is the kind of constitution that is called polity, since the mixture aims only at the well-off and the poor, at wealth and freedom (for among most people the well-off are thought to occupy the place of gentlemen). But since there are

three things that lay claim to equal standing in the constitution —freedom, wealth and excellence (the fourth, which they call good birth, goes along with the other two, since good birth is ancient wealth and excellence)—it is clear that the mixture of the two, of the well-off and the poor, should be called polity, and the mixture of the three should be called aristocracy more than any of the others, apart from the true and first one. It has been stated, then, that there are other kinds of constitution besides monarchy, democracy and oligarchy, and what they are, and how the aristocracies and the polities differ from each other; and it is clear that these are not far apart from each other.

MIXING A POLITY

Three ways of combining oligarchic and democratic arrangements produce a polity, as in Sparta.

Next after what has been said, let us state how the so-called polity arises alongside democracy and oligarchy, and how it should be established. At the same time it will also be clear by what features people define democracy and oligarchy. For we must grasp the division between these, and then put the polity together from them, taking, as it were, a token from each. There are three guidelines for this combination and mixture. One may take both of the things that each side legislates—concerning jury service, for instance. In oligarchies they impose a fine on the well-off if they don't serve on juries, and give no pay to the poor; in democracies they give pay to the poor and impose no fine on the well-off. What is common to them and in the middle is to do both, which is why it is [1294b] characteristic of polity, since it is a mixture of both. This, then, is one way of combining them. Another is to take the middle between what each side prescribes: for instance, one side sets no property qualification, or a very small one, for attending the assembly, and the other a high one; what is common here is neither, but a property qualification midway between the two. A third is from two arrangements, taking some features from the oligarchic law and others

from the democratic. I mean, for instance, it is thought democratic for offices to be filled by lot and oligarchic for them to be elected, and democratic for them not to be based on property qualification and oligarchic for them to be so based. It is aristocratic and characteristic of polity, then, to take one feature from each: from oligarchy, making offices elective, and from democracy, not basing them on property qualification.

This, then, is the way to mix them. The mark of democracy and oligarchy being well mixed is when it is possible to call the same constitution a democracy and an oligarchy. For clearly people speak this way because it has been finely mixed. And the middle has this feature too, since each of the extremes shows up in it. This is what happens with the Spartan constitution. Many people try to describe it as a democracy because its arrangement has many democratic features. First, for instance, there is the upbringing of the children: the children of the rich are brought up in the same way as those of the poor, and educated in a way that the children of the poor could manage too. The same holds for the next age group, and when they become men it is the same again, for in this way there is nothing to distinguish rich from poor: the food is the same for everyone at the common messes, and the rich wear clothing of a kind that any of the poor could afford. Further, of the two highest offices, the people elect to one and share in the other: they elect the elders, and they share in the ephorate. Others call it an oligarchy because it has many oligarchic features—for instance, all offices are elected and none filled by lot, a few people have authority to impose death and exile, and many other such things. In a finely mixed constitution it should seem to be both and neither. It should be preserved through itself and not from outside—and through itself not because those outside who want it preserved are the majority (for that could be true of a bad constitution too), but because no part of the city at all would even want a different constitution. How one should establish a polity, then, and likewise the so-called aristocracies, has now been stated.

TYRANNY

Three kinds of tyranny are distinguished, the worst being unaccountable rule for the ruler's own good.

1295a It remained for us to speak about tyranny—not that there is much to say about it, but so that it may have its share in our inquiry, since we count it too as one of the constitutions. We dealt with kingship in our first discussions, where we examined kingship in the fullest sense of the word: whether it is disadvantageous or advantageous for cities, whom one should establish as king, from where and how. While we were examining kingship, we distinguished two kinds of tyranny, because their character somehow overlaps with kingship too, since both these kinds of rule are in accordance with law. For among some non-Greeks they elect monarchs with absolute power, and in the old days among the ancient Greeks some people became monarchs in this way, whom they called aesymnetes. These differ from each other in certain ways, but they were kingly insofar as they were in accordance with law and ruled as monarchs over willing subjects, and tyrannical insofar as they ruled like masters and according to their own judgment. There is a third kind of tyranny, the one that seems to be tyranny above all, the counterpart of absolute kingship. Any monarchy that rules without being accountable over people who are all equal or better, with a view to its own advantage and not that of the ruled, must be a tyranny of this kind. That is why it is involuntary, for no free person willingly endures rule of this sort. These, then, are the kinds of tyranny and their number, for the reasons stated.

THE MIDDLE CLASS

The best constitution for most cities rests on a large middle class.

What is the best constitution, and what is the best life, for most cities and most people? That is, judging not by an excellence beyond the reach of ordinary people, nor by an education that needs natural gifts and resources that depend on luck, nor by

the constitution one would pray for, but by a life that most people can share and a constitution most cities can attain? For the so-called aristocracies we have just spoken of fall in some respects beyond the reach of most cities, and in others border on what is called polity (which is why we should speak of both as one). And the judgment on all these matters rests on the same basic principles. For if it was rightly said in the *Ethics* that the happy life is the life in accordance with excellence, unimpeded, and that excellence is a mean, then the middle life must be the best—the life of attaining the mean that is possible for each. And these same criteria must hold for the excellence and badness of a city and of a constitution, since the constitution [1295b] is a sort of life of the city. Now in all cities there are three parts of the city: the very well-off, the very poor and, third, the middle class between them. Since it is agreed, then, that what is moderate and in the middle is best, it is clear that in the goods of fortune too a middling possession is the best of all.[8] For it is easiest to obey reason with such possessions. But someone who is exceedingly beautiful, or strong, or well-born, or rich—or the opposite, exceedingly poor, or weak, or utterly without honor—finds it hard to follow reason. The first sort tend to become arrogant and wicked on a grand scale, the second criminal and wicked in petty ways; and some wrongs are done out of arrogance, others out of criminality. Further, the middle class are the least likely either to shun office or to chase after it, both of which are harmful to cities. In addition, those who have an excess of the goods of fortune—strength, wealth, friends and other such things—neither want to be ruled nor know how. This starts right at home when they are children: because of their luxurious upbringing they don't get used to being ruled even at school. Those who are in excessive need of these things, on the other hand, are too abject. So the latter don't know how to rule, only how to be ruled with the rule of a slave, while the former don't know how to be ruled with any kind of rule, only how to rule with the rule of a master. The result is a city not of free people but of slaves and

8 Aristotle refers to his *Nicomachean Ethics*.

masters, the one group envious and the other contemptuous—which is the furthest thing from friendship and political community. For community involves friendship: people don't want to share even a road with their enemies. But the city wants to be made up of people who are equal and alike as far as possible, and this is true above all of the middle class. So this city must be the best governed, the one made up of those we say are the natural constituents of a city. And these are also the citizens who are safest in cities. For they neither covet the property of others, as the poor do, nor do others covet theirs, as the poor covet that of the rich. And since they neither are plotted against nor plot, they live out their lives free of danger. That is why Phocylides was right to pray: "Many things are best for those in the middle; in the middle I want to be in the city."[9]

It is clear, then, that the best political community is the one formed by the middle class, and that those cities can be well governed in which the middle class is large and stronger, preferably than both the other parts together, or if not, than either one of them. For when it joins one side, it tips the balance and prevents the opposing extremes from arising. That is why it is the greatest good fortune for those taking part in politics to have a middling and sufficient property, 1296a since where some possess a great deal and others nothing, there arises either extreme rule by the people or unmixed oligarchy, or tyranny as a result of both extremes. For tyranny arises from the most headstrong democracy and from oligarchy, but much less from middle constitutions and those close to them. We will state the reason later, in our discussion of changes in constitutions. That the middle constitution is best is clear, since it alone is free of civil strife. Where the middle class is large, civil strife and divisions among the citizens are least likely to arise. Large cities are freer of civil strife for the same reason, because the middle class is large. In small cities, by contrast, it is easy to divide everyone into two groups, leaving nothing in the middle, and almost everyone is

9 Phocylides of Miletus was a poet of the sixth century BC, known for moral maxims.

either poor or well-off. Democracies, too, are safer and longer-lasting than oligarchies because of the middle class, who are more numerous and have a greater share of honors in democracies than in oligarchies. For when the poor predominate in numbers without these people, things go badly and democracies are quickly destroyed. One should also take it as a sign that the best lawgivers come from the middle class. Solon was one of them, as is clear from his poetry; so was Lycurgus, for he was not a king; and so were Charondas and nearly all the others.

It is clear from this, too, why most constitutions are either democratic or oligarchic. Because the middle class is often small in them, whichever side predominates, whether the property owners or the people, departs from the middle and draws the constitution toward itself, so that it becomes either rule by the people or oligarchy. In addition, because civil strife and fighting arise between the people and the well-off, whichever side happens to get the better of its opponents does not establish a constitution that is common or equal; rather, they take superiority in the constitution as the prize of victory, and the one side creates a democracy and the other an oligarchy. Further, of those who came to hold the leadership of Greece, each looked to its own constitution and set up democracies in the cities or oligarchies, with an eye not to the cities' advantage but to their own. So for these reasons the middle constitution either never arises or does so rarely and in few places. Among those who have held leadership in the past, only one man was ever persuaded to grant this arrangement. And by now it has become a habit 1296b among the people in the cities not even to want equality, but either to seek to rule or, if they are overpowered, to put up with it.[10] What the best constitution is, then, and for what reason, is clear from this. As for the others, since we say there are several democracies and several oligarchies, it is not hard to see, once the best has been determined, which should be placed first, which second and so on in order, according to whether one is

10 The leading powers are Athens, which supported democracies, and Sparta, which supported oligarchies. Aristotle does not name the one man.

better and another worse. For the one nearest to the best must always be better, and the one further removed from the middle worse—unless one is judging relative to a hypothesis. By "relative to a hypothesis" I mean that often, although one constitution is more choiceworthy, nothing prevents a different one from being more advantageous for some people.

CONSTITUTIONS TO SUIT PEOPLES

Which constitution suits a city depends on the balance of quality and numbers among its parts.

Next after what has been said we must go through which constitution is advantageous for which people, and what kind for what kind. First we must grasp a general principle that holds for all of them: the part of the city that wants the constitution to remain must be stronger than the part that does not. Every city consists of quality and quantity. By quality I mean freedom, wealth, education and good birth; by quantity, the superiority of numbers. It is possible for quality to belong to one of the parts of which the city is made up and quantity to another: for instance, the low-born may be more numerous than the well-born, or the poor than the rich, yet not surpass them in quantity as much as they fall short in quality. So these must be weighed against each other. Where the number of the poor exceeds the proportion we mentioned, there it is natural for there to be democracy, and each kind of democracy according to the predominance of each kind of people. For instance, if the number of farmers predominates, the first democracy; if that of vulgar craftsmen and wage earners, the last; and likewise the others in between. But where the well-off and notable class exceeds in quality more than it falls short in quantity, there it is natural for there to be oligarchy, and in the same way each kind of oligarchy according to the predominance of the oligarchic multitude.

The lawgiver should always bring the middle class into the constitution. If he lays down oligarchic laws, he should aim at the middle class; if democratic ones, he should win them over

by the laws. Where the number of the middle class outweighs both extremes together, or even just one of them, there a stable constitution is possible. For there is no fear that 1297a the rich will ever come to an agreement with the poor against them, since neither side will ever want to be slaves of the other, and if they look for a constitution more common to both, they will find none other than this. They would not put up with ruling in turn, because they distrust each other; and everywhere the most trusted person is the arbitrator, and the one in the middle is an arbitrator. The better mixed the constitution, the more stable it is. Many, even among those who want to create aristocratic constitutions, make a mistake not only in giving too much to the well-off, but also in deceiving the people. For in time, sooner or later, a genuine evil must come of false goods, since the grasping ways of the rich destroy the constitution more than those of the people.

CONSTITUTIONAL DEVICES

Oligarchies and democracies use devices about the assembly, courts, and arms; a polity combines them.

The devices used in constitutions as pretexts against the people are five in number, concerning the assembly, the offices, the courts, arms and athletic training. Concerning the assembly: everyone is allowed to attend, but a fine is imposed on the well-off if they don't attend, either on them alone or a much larger one. Concerning the offices: those who meet the property qualification are not allowed to decline office on oath, but the poor are. Concerning the courts: the well-off are fined if they don't serve on juries, but the poor are exempt, or else the former are fined heavily and the latter lightly, as in the laws of Charondas. In some places everyone who has registered may attend the assembly and serve on juries, but if after registering they don't attend or serve, heavy fines are imposed on them. The aim is that the fine will make people avoid registering, and not being registered will keep them from serving on juries or attending

the assembly. They legislate in the same way about owning arms and about athletic training. The poor are allowed not to own arms, but the well-off are fined if they don't; and if they don't train, there is no fine for the former, but the well-off are fined—so that the latter will take part because of the fine, and the former will not take part because they have nothing to fear. These, then, are oligarchic devices in legislation. In democracies they have counter-devices: they provide pay for the poor to attend the assembly and serve on juries, but impose no fine on the well-off. So it is clear that if one wants to mix them justly, one must combine what each side does, and provide pay for the one group and fines for the other. For in this way everyone would take part, whereas in the other ways the constitution comes to belong [1297b] to one side only. The constitution should be made up only of those who bear arms. As for the size of the property qualification, it isn't possible to lay down without qualification that it must be so much; one should look for the highest figure that still makes those who share in the constitution more numerous than those who don't, and set that. For the poor are willing to keep quiet even without a share in honors, provided no one treats them with arrogance or takes away any of their property. But this isn't easy, since those who share in the governing body don't always happen to be gracious. And when there is a war they tend to hang back, if they are poor and don't receive rations; but if someone provides rations, they are willing to fight.

In some cities the constitution is made up not only of those serving as hoplites but also of those who have served. Among the Malians the citizen body was drawn from these, but they elected their officials from those on active service. The first constitution among the Greeks after the kingships was also drawn from those who did the fighting—at first from the cavalry. (War's strength and superiority lay with the cavalry, since without organized formation heavy infantry is useless, and the people of ancient times had no experience or system of tactics for such things; so strength lay with the cavalry.) But as cities grew and

those strong in arms gained more strength, more people came to share in the constitution. That is why what we now call polities, people in earlier times called democracies. And the ancient constitutions were, understandably, oligarchic and kingly.[11] For with their small populations they had no large middle class, and so, being few in number and poorly organized, they put up with being ruled. We have now stated why there are several constitutions, and why there are others besides those commonly named (for democracy is not one in number, and the same goes for the others); further, what their differences are and why they arise; and in addition, which constitution is best, speaking generally, and which of the other constitutions suits which kinds of people.

THE DELIBERATIVE ELEMENT

The ways of assigning deliberation over war, laws, and audits differ by constitution.

Let us speak again, both in general and about each constitution separately, about what comes next, taking the appropriate starting point. There are, then, three parts of all constitutions, and with respect to these the excellent lawgiver must consider what is advantageous for each constitution. When these are in good order the constitution is necessarily in good order, and constitutions differ from one another by differing in each of these. Of these three, one is the part that deliberates 1298a about common affairs; the second concerns the offices—that is, which offices there should be, what they should have authority over, and how they should be filled; and the third is the part that judges. The deliberative part has authority over war and peace, the making and breaking of alliances, laws, sentences of death, exile and confiscation, and the election of officials and their audits. Necessarily, either all these decisions are assigned to all the citizens, or all of them to some (for instance to a single office or to sev-

11 The Malians lived in central Greece, near Thermopylae.

eral, or different ones to different offices), or some of them to all and some to some.

For all to decide about everything is democratic, since this is the kind of equality the people seek. But there are several ways for all to take part. One is by turns rather than all together. (This is how it is in the constitution of Telecles of Miletus; and in other constitutions too the boards of officials meet together to deliberate, but everyone enters office by turns, from the tribes and the very smallest subdivisions, until it has gone through everyone.) The citizens then meet together only about the enactment of laws and matters concerning the constitution, and to hear the announcements of the officials.[12] Another way is for all to meet together, but only to elect officials, to legislate, to decide about war and peace, and to conduct audits, while the offices assigned to each area deliberate about everything else, these being chosen from all either by election or by lot. Another way is for the citizens to meet about the offices and the audits, and to deliberate about war and alliances, while the offices manage everything else, being elected wherever possible—and these are the offices that must be held by those with expert knowledge. A fourth way is for all to meet and deliberate about everything, while the offices decide nothing but only make preliminary examinations. This is how the final form of democracy is run nowadays—the one we say is analogous to dynastic oligarchy and tyrannical monarchy. All these ways, then, are democratic. For some to deliberate about everything is oligarchic. This too has several varieties. When they are elected on the basis of fairly moderate property assessments, and there are many of them because the assessment is moderate, and they do not tamper with what the law forbids but follow it, and anyone who acquires the required property may take part, such an arrangement is an oligarchy, but one with the character of a polity, because of its moderation. When not everyone shares in deliberation 1298b but only people selected in advance, who nonetheless rule according to law as in the previous case, it is oligarchic.

12 Telecles of Miletus is otherwise unknown.

And when those with authority over deliberation choose themselves, and son succeeds father, and they have authority over the laws, this arrangement is necessarily oligarchic. When some decide some things—for instance, when all decide about war and peace and audits, while officials decide the rest, and these are elected, not chosen by lot—the constitution is an aristocracy. If for some matters the officials are elected and for others chosen by lot, and chosen by lot either simply or from a preselected list, or elected and chosen by lot jointly, then some of these arrangements belong to an aristocratic polity, others to polity itself.

This, then, is how the deliberative part is divided according to the constitutions, and each constitution manages it according to the distinction just stated. But for a democracy of the kind that is now thought most of all to be a democracy (I mean one in which the people have authority even over the laws), it is advantageous, for the sake of better deliberation, to do in the case of assemblies the same thing that is done with the courts in oligarchies. (There they fix a fine for those they want to sit as jurors, to make them sit, whereas democrats pay the poor.) For they will deliberate better if all deliberate together, the people with the notables and the notables with the multitude. It is also advantageous for those who deliberate to be elected, or chosen by lot in equal numbers from the parts of the city. And if the democratic element far outnumbers those qualified for political life, it is advantageous either not to give pay to all, but only to as many as balance the number of notables, or to eliminate the excess by lot. In oligarchies, on the other hand, it is advantageous either to co-opt some members from the multitude, or to set up an office such as exists in some constitutions under the name of "preliminary councillors" or "guardians of the law," and to deal only with business on which these have deliberated in advance. (In this way the people will share in deliberation, but will not be able to overturn anything in the constitution.) Further, the people should either vote for the same measures, or for nothing contrary to what is brought before them; or everyone

should be allowed to give advice, while the officials do the deliberating. One should also do the opposite of what happens in polities. The multitude should be made authoritative when it votes to acquit, but not when it votes to condemn; in that case the matter should be referred back to the officials. In polities they do the reverse: the few are authoritative when they vote to acquit, but not when they vote to condemn; the matter is referred instead to the majority [1299a] every time. Let this, then, be how we determine the deliberative part, which is the part that has authority in the constitution.

THE OFFICES

Offices are classified by number, tenure, and method of appointment under each constitution.

Next to these comes the division concerning the offices. This part of the constitution too has many variations: how many offices there are, what they have authority over, and their duration—how long each office lasts (some make offices last six months, some less, some a year, some longer)—and whether offices should be held for life, or for a long period, or neither, but the same people may hold them several times, or the same person not twice but only once; and further, concerning the appointment of officials, from whom they should be drawn, by whom, and how. On all these points one must be able to distinguish in how many ways things can be arranged, and then match which kinds suit which kinds of constitution. Nor is it easy to determine which ought to be called offices. The political community needs many supervisors, so not all those who are elected or chosen by lot should be counted as officials—first of all the priests, for instance (this must be counted as something different from the political offices); and again, sponsors of choruses and heralds are elected, and ambassadors too. Some supervisory posts are political, concerned either with all the citizens in some activity—as a general has charge of those on campaign—or with a section of them, like the supervisor of women or of

children; others concern household-type management (they often elect grain-measurers); others are menial, and to these, if the city is well off, they assign slaves. But, speaking simply, those are most properly to be called offices to which it has been assigned to deliberate about certain matters, to judge, and to give orders—and especially the last, since giving orders is most characteristic of ruling.[13] This makes practically no difference in practice (no judgment has yet been given between people disputing over the name), though it does raise another, theoretical question.

What kinds and how many offices are necessary if there is to be a city at all, and which are not necessary but useful for an excellent constitution—this is a question one might raise about every constitution, and especially about small cities. In large cities it is both possible and necessary for one office to be assigned to one task. (Many people can enter the offices because the citizens are many, so that some offices come round again only after a long interval and others are held only once; and each task is better attended to when attention is given to one thing 1299b rather than to many.) In small cities, however, many offices must be concentrated in a few hands (with so small a population it is not easy for many to hold office—for who will there be to succeed them in turn?). Small cities sometimes need the same offices and laws as large ones, except that the large need them often, while for the small the need comes round only at long intervals. So nothing prevents assigning many duties to one person at once (they will not get in each other's way), and, given the small population, the offices must be made like spit-lamps. If, then, we can say how many offices every city must have, and how many it need not have but should, anyone who knows this could more easily see which offices it is appropriate to combine into one.[14] It is also right not to overlook which matters should

13 A chorus sponsor (choregos) was a wealthy citizen who paid for training a chorus for a dramatic or religious festival.

14 The "spit-lamp" (obeliskolychnion) was a soldier's implement that served both as a roasting spit and as a lamp-holder.

be supervised by many local offices and which by one office with authority everywhere. Take good order, for instance: should there be a market supervisor in the marketplace and a different official in each other place, or the same one everywhere? And should the division be made by task or by persons—I mean, for instance, one official for good order, or one for children and another for women? And with regard to the constitutions, too: does the kind of offices differ with each, or not at all? For instance, in democracy, oligarchy, aristocracy and monarchy, are the same offices authoritative, only not filled from equal or similar people but from different people in different constitutions—in aristocracies from the educated, in oligarchies from the rich, in democracies from the free? Or are there some offices that correspond to these very differences, while in some cases the same offices are advantageous and in others different ones (for in one place it suits the same offices to be large, in another small)?

Still, some offices are peculiar to certain constitutions, such as that of the preliminary councillors; this is not democratic. A council, on the other hand, is democratic. There must be some such body whose task is to prepare business in advance for the people, so that the people can attend to their own work; and this, if its members are few, is oligarchic. The preliminary councillors must be few in number, so they are oligarchic. But where both these offices exist, the preliminary councillors are placed over the councillors; for a councillor is a democratic element, a preliminary councillor an oligarchic one. The power of the council is also undermined in those democracies in 1300a which the people meet in person and deal with everything. This usually happens when there is plenty of pay for those who attend the assembly; for having leisure, they meet often and decide everything themselves. A supervisor of children and a supervisor of women, and any other official with authority over this sort of oversight, is aristocratic, not democratic (how could one stop the wives of the poor from going out?), nor oligarchic (for the wives of oligarchs live in luxury).

But let that be enough on these matters for now. We must try to go through the appointment of officials from the beginning. The differences lie in three factors, and by combining these all the ways must be covered. Of these three, one is who appoints to the offices, the second is from whom, and the last is in what manner. Each of these three has three variants. Either all the citizens appoint, or some; and either from all, or from some defined group (defined, for instance, by property assessment, by birth, by excellence, or some other such thing—as at Megara, from those who had returned from exile together and fought together against the people); and these either by election or by lot. And again these can be combined—I mean some offices appointed by some and others by all, some from all and others from some, and some by election and others by lot.

For each of these variants there will be four modes. Either all appoint from all by election; or all from all by lot—and from all either as a whole, or by sections, for instance by tribes, demes and phratries, until it has gone through all the citizens, or always from the whole; or some offices one way and some the other. Again, if the appointers are some, they appoint either from all by election or from all by lot, or from some by election or from some by lot, or some offices one way and some the other —I mean some by election and some by lot, and some from some by election and others by lot. So there turn out to be twelve modes, apart from the two combinations.[15] Of these, three modes of appointment are democratic: for all to appoint from all by election, or by lot, or by both—some offices by lot and some by election. For not all to appoint at once, but to appoint from all or from some, by lot or by election or both, or some offices from all and others from some, by both (by "both" I mean some by lot and some by election), is characteristic of polity. For some to appoint from all, either by election or by lot or by both (some by lot, some by election), is oligarchic—though doing it by both is more oligarchic. For some offices to be filled from all and others from some is characteristic of polity, of an aristocratic kind, 1300b

15 Demes were the local districts of a city's territory.

or some by election and others by lot. For some to appoint from some by election is oligarchic, and so is for some to appoint from some by lot (even if this does not actually occur, it is oligarchic all the same), and for some to appoint from some by both. For some to appoint from all, and for all to appoint from some by election, is aristocratic. This, then, is the number of the modes concerning the offices, and this is how they are divided according to the constitutions. Which suit which, and how appointments ought to be made, will become clear together with what the powers of the offices are. By the power of an office I mean, for instance, authority over revenues or authority over the city's defense; for the power of a generalship, say, is a different kind from that of the office with authority over contracts in the marketplace.

THE COURTS

The kinds of courts and ways of appointing jurors are set out and matched to constitutions.

The remaining one of the three is the judicial part. Here too we must take the modes on the same principle. The differences among courts lie in three factors: from whom, about what, and how. By "from whom" I mean whether from all or from some; by "about what," how many kinds of courts there are; by "how," whether by lot or by election. First, then, let us distinguish how many kinds of courts there are. There are eight in number: one for audits; another for anyone who wrongs the public interest; another for matters that bear on the constitution; a fourth for officials and private individuals who dispute about penalties; a fifth concerning private contracts of some size; and besides these the homicide court and the court for foreigners. (There are kinds of homicide court—whether with the same jurors or with others—for premeditated killings, for involuntary ones, for cases where the act is admitted but its justice is disputed, and a fourth for charges brought against those exiled for homicide on their return, like the court at Phreatto, as it is called, at Athens;

but such cases are few over the whole course of time, even in large cities. Of the court for foreigners, one kind is for foreigners against foreigners, another for foreigners against citizens.) And besides all these, there is one for small contracts, those involving one drachma, five drachmas, or a little more.[16] These too must be decided, but they do not come before a large body of jurors.

But let us leave aside these, and the homicide and foreigners' courts, and speak about the political courts; when these are not run well, divisions and upheavals of constitutions result. Necessarily, either all judge all the cases distinguished, being appointed by election or by lot; or all judge all cases, some being appointed by lot, some by election; or for some of the same cases some jurors are chosen by lot and others 1301a elected. These modes, then, are four in number; and there are as many again when appointment is partial. For again, the jurors may be drawn from some and judge all cases, by election; or be from some for all cases, by lot; or some be appointed by lot and some by election; or some courts dealing with the same cases may be made up of jurors both chosen by lot and elected. These modes, then, as stated, are the counterparts of those already mentioned. Further, the same can be combined—I mean, for instance, some from all, some from some, some from both (for instance, if in the same court some were from all and some from some), and either by lot or by election or by both. We have now said in how many ways courts can be constituted. Of these, the first kinds are democratic—those drawn from all and judging all matters; the second are oligarchic—those drawn from some and judging all matters; and the third are aristocratic and characteristic of polity—those drawn partly from all and partly from some.

16 The court "at Phreatto" sat by the shore at Piraeus; the exiled defendant pleaded from a boat so as not to set foot on Attic soil.

Book V

Revolution: its causes and prevention.

CHAPTER 1

We have now said practically everything about the other topics we set out to discuss. What we must consider next, following on from what has been said, is from what causes constitutions change, how many and of what kind these are; what destroys each constitution; from what kind into what kind they most often change; further, what preserves constitutions, both in general and each one separately; and further, by what means each constitution would best be preserved.

First we must take as our starting point that many constitutions have come into being because, while everyone agrees about justice—that it is proportional equality—they go wrong about it, as was also said earlier. Democracy arose from the belief that those who are equal in any respect are equal absolutely (because all are alike free, they think they are equal absolutely); oligarchy from supposing that those unequal in one respect are wholly unequal (being unequal in property, they suppose they are unequal absolutely). Then the one side, as equals, claim to share equally in everything; the other, as unequal, seek to have more, since "more" is unequal. All these constitutions, then, have some element of justice, but absolutely speaking they are mistaken. And that is why, when either side does not share in the constitution in accordance with the con-

ception it happens to hold, they turn to civil strife.[1] Of all people, those outstanding in excellence would have the most justice on their side in stirring up strife, yet they are the least likely to do it; 1301b for they alone can most reasonably be regarded as unequal absolutely. There are also some who, being superior in birth, think themselves too good for merely equal shares because of this inequality; for people are thought to be well born who have ancestral excellence and wealth.

These, then, are, so to speak, the origins and sources of strife, the things that lead people into strife. Hence changes also occur in two ways. Sometimes they are aimed at the constitution, to change the established one into another—for instance from democracy into oligarchy, or into democracy from oligarchy, or into polity and aristocracy from these, or into these from those. At other times they are not aimed at the established constitution: people choose to keep the same arrangement, but want it in their own hands—an oligarchy or a monarchy, for instance. Again, a change can be a matter of more and less: for instance, making an existing oligarchy more oligarchic or less, or an existing democracy more democratic or less, and similarly with the other constitutions, so as to tighten or loosen them. Again, it may aim at changing some part of the constitution, for instance to establish or abolish some office—as some say Lysander tried to abolish the kingship at Sparta, and King Pausanias the ephorate. At Epidamnus too the constitution changed in one part: they set up a council in place of the tribal chiefs; but it is still compulsory for the officials alone, of those in the citizen body, to attend the popular court whenever an office is put to the vote; and the single supreme official was also an oligarchic feature of that constitution.[2] Everywhere, strife arises from inequality, where the unequal do not receive what is proportionate (a permanent kingship is unequal if it exists among equals); for in general it is in seeking equality that people turn to strife. Equal-

1 Civil strife (stasis) covers the whole range of factional conflict within a city, from party feuding to revolution and civil war.

2 Lysander was the Spartan commander who won the Peloponnesian War (404 BC).

ity is twofold: numerical, and according to worth. By numerical I mean what is the same and equal in number or size; by according to worth, what is equal by ratio. For example, numerically three exceeds two by the same amount as two exceeds one; but by ratio four exceeds two as two exceeds one, since two is the same fraction of four as one is of two—both are halves. While agreeing that what is just absolutely is what accords with worth, they differ, as was said earlier: some because, if they are equal in some respect, they think themselves equal entirely; others because, if unequal in some respect, they claim an unequal share of everything. That is also why there come to be chiefly two constitutions, democracy and oligarchy. Good birth and excellence [1302a] are found in few, the other qualities in more: nowhere are there a hundred well-born and good men, but in many places there are plenty of well-off people. But to arrange things simply and entirely according to either kind of equality is bad. This is clear from what happens: none of such constitutions lasts. The reason is that when there is an error at the first, at the beginning, it is impossible for something bad not to result in the end. So one should use numerical equality in some things, and equality according to worth in others.

Nevertheless democracy is safer and less prone to strife than oligarchy. In oligarchies two kinds of strife arise, the oligarchs' strife with one another and also their strife with the people; in democracies there is only strife against the oligarchs, while no strife worth mentioning arises between the people and itself. Further, the constitution based on the middle class is closer to the people's than to that of the few; and it is the safest of constitutions of this kind.

THE CAUSES OF CIVIL STRIFE

Aristotle sets out the conditions, aims and occasions that lead people into civil strife.

Since we are examining what gives rise to civil strife and to changes in constitutions, we must first grasp in general their

origins and causes. They are, roughly speaking, three in number, and we must first define them in outline by themselves. We must grasp in what condition people turn to strife, for the sake of what, and third, what the origins are of political disturbances and of strife between citizens. The cause of people's being disposed in some way toward change must be taken, in general and above all, to be the one we have already happened to speak about. Those who aim at equality turn to strife if they think they have less though they are equal to those who have more; and those who aim at inequality and superiority turn to strife if they suppose that, though unequal, they have not more but equal or less. (It is possible to desire these things justly, and also unjustly.) For those who are lesser turn to strife to become equal, and those who are equal, to become greater. That, then, is the condition in which people turn to strife. What they fight over is gain and honor and their opposites; for people engage in strife in cities to avoid dishonor and loss, either for themselves or for their friends. The causes and origins of the upheavals—which lead people to be disposed in the way described and about the things mentioned—are in one way seven in number, in another way more. Two of them are the same as those mentioned, but not in the same way. For people are provoked against one another through gain and honor, not in order to acquire these for themselves, as was said before, but because they see others, [1302b] some justly and some unjustly, getting more of them. Further, there is insolence, fear, preeminence, contempt, and disproportionate growth; and, in another way, electioneering, negligence, small changes, and dissimilarity.

INSOLENCE, FEAR, CONTEMPT AND DISPROPORTION

Each cause of strife is illustrated, from ostracism to mixed settlers and divided territory.

Of these, it is fairly clear what force insolence and gain have and how they are causes. When those in office behave insolently and grasp for more, people turn to strife both against one another

and against the constitutions that give those officials their power; and the grasping comes sometimes at the expense of private property, sometimes of public funds. It is plain too what force honor has and how it is a cause of strife: people turn to strife both when they themselves are dishonored and when they see others honored. This happens unjustly when people are honored or dishonored contrary to their worth, justly when it is in accordance with their worth. Through preeminence, when someone—one person or more—has power too great for the city and for the power of the citizen body; for from such people a monarchy or a dynastic clique tends to arise. That is why in some places they practice ostracism, as at Argos and Athens. Yet it is better to see to it from the start that no one so preeminent arises, than to let them arise and heal the damage afterward. Through fear, people turn to strife both when they have done wrong, afraid of paying the penalty, and when they are about to be wronged, wanting to strike first—as at Rhodes, where the notables combined against the people because of the lawsuits being brought against them. Through contempt, too, people turn to strife and make attacks: for instance in oligarchies, when those who have no share in the constitution are more numerous (for they think they are stronger), and in democracies, when the well-off come to despise the disorder and anarchy. So at Thebes, after the battle of Oenophyta, the democracy was destroyed because they were badly governed; so too the Megarian democracy, when they were defeated through disorder and anarchy; so at Syracuse before the tyranny of Gelon; and at Rhodes, the people before the uprising.[3]

Changes of constitution also arise through disproportionate growth. A body is made up of parts and must grow proportionately so that its symmetry is kept; otherwise it is ruined—when the foot is four cubits long and the rest of the body two spans—and sometimes it might even change into the shape of another animal, if it grew disproportionately not only in quantity but

3 At Oenophyta (457 BC) the Athenians defeated the Boeotians; Gelon became tyrant of Syracuse in 485 BC.

also in quality. In the same way a city too is made up 1303a of parts, one of which often grows without being noticed, for instance the number of the poor in democracies and polities. This sometimes happens through chance events, too. At Tarentum, for instance, when many notables were defeated and killed by the Iapygians a little after the Persian Wars, the polity became a democracy. At Argos, when those who fell on the seventh had been killed by Cleomenes the Spartan, they were forced to admit some of the perioikoi to citizenship. And at Athens, when they met with disasters on land, the notables became fewer, because in the war against Sparta the soldiers were drawn from the muster roll. This happens in democracies too, though less often: when the well-off become more numerous or their properties grow, democracies change into oligarchies and dynastic cliques.[4] Constitutions also change without strife: through electioneering, as at Heraea (they switched from election to lot for this reason, because they kept electing those who canvassed); and through negligence, when people let those who are not friendly to the constitution into the authoritative offices—as at Oreus the oligarchy was overthrown when Heracleodorus became one of the officials, and he set up a polity and a democracy in place of the oligarchy. Also through small changes. By "small changes" I mean that often a large change in customs takes place unnoticed when people overlook something small—as at Ambracia the property qualification was small, and in the end people held office with none at all, on the ground that little is close to nothing, or no different from it.

Difference of stock is also a cause of strife, until people come to breathe as one. For just as a city does not come from any chance multitude, neither does it come into being in any chance length of time. That is why most of those who have admitted people to settle with them or join them later have fallen into strife. For instance, the Achaeans settled Sybaris jointly with the

4 The Argives were massacred by the Spartan king Cleomenes at Sepeia (c. 494 BC); perioikoi ("dwellers around") were free but non-citizen inhabitants of the surrounding territory.

Troezenians, and then, becoming more numerous, the Achaeans drove the Troezenians out—the source of the curse that fell on the Sybarites. And at Thurii the Sybarites fell out with those who had settled with them (claiming more on the ground that the land was theirs, they were expelled). At Byzantium the later settlers were caught plotting and driven out by force. The people of Antissa took in exiles from Chios and then drove them out by force. The Zanclaeans took in Samians and were themselves driven out. The people of Apollonia on the Black Sea fell into strife after bringing in new settlers. The Syracusans, after the period of the tyrants, made the foreigners [1303b] and mercenaries citizens, fell into strife, and came to blows. And the people of Amphipolis took in settlers from Chalcis and most of them were driven out by these. In oligarchies it is the many who turn to strife, on the ground that they are wronged because they do not share equally although they are equal, as was said before; in democracies it is the notables, because they share equally although they are not equal. Cities sometimes fall into strife also because of their location, when the territory is not naturally suited to being a single city—for instance at Clazomenae, the people at Chytrum against those on the island, and the Colophonians and the Notians. At Athens too people are not alike: those who live in the Piraeus are more democratic than those in the town. For just as in war the crossing of ditches, even very small ones, breaks up the ranks of the phalanx, so, it seems, every difference makes a division. The greatest division is perhaps that between excellence and wickedness, then between wealth and poverty, and so on, one being greater than another; and one of these is the one just mentioned.

SMALL OCCASIONS, GREAT QUARRELS

Private quarrels over love, marriage and inheritance grow into revolutions; force and deception overturn constitutions.

Strife arises, then, not about small things but from small things; but what people fight about is large. And even small quarrels are

especially powerful when they occur among those in authority, as happened at Syracuse in ancient times. The constitution there changed because two young men who held office fell out over a love affair. While one was away, the other, his companion, won over his beloved; the first, angry with him in turn, persuaded the other's wife to come to him. From there they drew in those in the citizen body and split them all into factions. That is why one must guard against such things when they begin, and settle the quarrels of leaders and powerful people. For the error occurs at the beginning, and the beginning is said to be half of the whole; so even a small error at the beginning is proportionate to all the errors in the other parts. In general, the quarrels of the notables make the whole city suffer with them, as happened at Hestiaea after the Persian Wars, when two brothers quarreled over the division of their father's estate. The poorer one, claiming that the other was not declaring the property or the treasure their father had found, drew the democratic party to his side, while the other, who had much property, drew in the well-off. And at Delphi a quarrel arising from a marriage was the beginning of all the later strife: 1304a the bridegroom, taking some mishap as a bad omen when he came for his bride, left without taking her; her family, regarding themselves as insulted, slipped some of the sacred valuables among his things while he was sacrificing, and then killed him as a temple robber. At Mytilene too, strife arising over heiresses was the beginning of many evils, including the war against the Athenians in which Paches captured their city. Timophanes, a wealthy man, left two daughters; Dexander, who was rebuffed and did not get them for his sons, started the strife and stirred up the Athenians, whose proxenos he was. And among the Phocians, when strife arose over an heiress involving Mnaseas, the father of Mnason, and Euthycrates, the father of Onomarchus, this strife became the beginning of the Sacred War for the Phocians. At Epidamnus too the constitution changed as a result of a marriage: a man had promised his daughter in marriage, and the father of the young man she was promised to, having become an official, fined him; the other,

feeling that he had been insulted, took those outside the constitution as his allies.[5]

Constitutions also change into oligarchy, into democracy, and into polity when some office or part of the city gains prestige or grows. For instance, the Council of the Areopagus, having gained prestige during the Persian Wars, was thought to have made the constitution tighter; and again the naval crowd, having been responsible for the victory at Salamis, and through it for Athens' leadership based on sea power, made the democracy stronger. At Argos the notables, having won prestige in the battle against the Spartans at Mantinea, tried to overthrow the people. At Syracuse the people, having been responsible for the victory in the war against the Athenians, changed the polity into a democracy. At Chalcis the people, together with the notables, did away with the tyrant Phoxus and at once took hold of the constitution. And again at Ambracia likewise, the people joined the conspirators in expelling the tyrant Periander and brought the constitution round to themselves. In general one must not overlook this: those who have been responsible for power—whether private individuals, offices, tribes, or in general any part or group whatever—set strife in motion. Either those who envy them for being honored start the strife, or they themselves, because of their preeminence, are unwilling to remain on equal terms. Constitutions are also disturbed when parts of the city that are thought to be opposed are evenly matched 1304b with each other—for instance the rich and the people—and there is no middle class, or only a very small one. For if either part is far superior, the rest is unwilling to take risks against what is clearly stronger. That is also why those outstanding in excellence practically never cause strife: they are few against many. Such, then, in general, for all constitutions, are the origins and causes of strife and change. People overturn constitutions sometimes by force, sometimes by deception. By force, either right from the start or by compulsion later. Deception too is twofold. Sometimes, having first deceived people, they change the consti-

5 A proxenos was a citizen who looked after another city's interests in his own.

tution with their consent, and later keep hold of it by force against their will—as under the Four Hundred they deceived the people by claiming that the Persian King would provide money for the war against the Spartans, and after lying, tried to keep hold of the constitution. At other times they persuade people at the start, and later persuade them again and rule them with their consent. Put simply, then, in all constitutions changes have come about from the causes mentioned.[6]

HOW DEMOCRACIES FALL

Demagogues who attack the wealthy drive them to overthrow democracies, or become tyrants themselves.

We must study what happens to each kind of constitution separately, dividing it up on this basis. Democracies change most of all through the recklessness of the demagogues. Sometimes, by bringing malicious prosecutions against the property owners individually, they make them band together (for a common fear unites even the bitterest enemies); at other times, they set the multitude on them publicly. One can see this happening in many cases. At Cos the democracy was overturned when wicked demagogues arose (for the notables combined); and at Rhodes, the demagogues provided pay, and prevented the payment of what was owed to the trierarchs, who, because of the lawsuits brought against them, were forced to combine and overthrow the people.[7] At Heraclea too the democracy was overthrown right after the colony was founded, because of the demagogues. The notables, wronged by them, went into exile; then the exiles gathered, returned, and overthrew the people. The democracy at Megara was overthrown in much the same way. The demagogues, to have property to confiscate, drove many of the notables out, until they had made the exiles numerous; these returned, defeated the people in battle, and set up the oligarchy.

6 The Four Hundred were the oligarchs who seized power at Athens in 411 BC.
7 Trierarchs were wealthy citizens required to fit out and command a warship at their own expense.

The same thing happened at [1305a] Cyme with the democracy that Thrasymachus overthrew. One can see, looking at other cases too, that changes generally follow this pattern. Sometimes, to curry favor, they wrong the notables and so make them band together—either by redistributing their property or by draining their incomes through public services; sometimes by slandering them, so as to be able to confiscate the possessions of the rich.

In ancient times, whenever the same man became both demagogue and general, the constitution changed into a tyranny; for most of the ancient tyrants, roughly speaking, arose from demagogues. The reason it happened then but not now is that then the demagogues came from among the generals (for people were not yet skilled at speaking), whereas now, with the growth of rhetoric, those who are able speakers become demagogues, but through inexperience in warfare they do not make attempts at tyranny, except where something of the kind has happened briefly. Tyrannies also arose more often in the past than now because great offices were entrusted to certain people, as at Miletus arising from the office of prytanis (for the prytanis had authority over many important matters). Further, because cities were not large then, and the people lived out in the fields, busy with their work, the people's champions, when they were warlike, would attempt tyranny. They all did this after winning the people's trust, and the basis of that trust was their hostility toward the rich. So at Athens Pisistratus, by leading a faction against the men of the plain; so Theagenes at Megara, by slaughtering the flocks of the well-off, which he caught grazing beside the river; and Dionysius, by denouncing Daphnaeus and the rich, was judged fit for tyranny, trusted because of that enmity as a man of the people.[8] Democracies also change from the traditional form into the newest one. Where offices are elective but without property qualifications, and the people elect, those eager for office, playing the demagogue, bring things to the point where the people have authority even over the laws. A remedy that prevents this, or makes it happen less, is for the

8 Pisistratus was tyrant of Athens in the sixth century BC.

tribes, rather than the whole people, to put forward the officials. The changes in democracies, then, practically all come about for these reasons.

HOW OLIGARCHIES FALL

Oligarchies fall by wronging the people, through internal rivalry, extravagance, and reliance on mercenaries.

Oligarchies change chiefly in two ways, the most obvious ones. One is if they wrong the multitude; for then anyone at all is good enough as their champion, especially when the leader happens to come from the oligarchy itself, like Lygdamis at Naxos, who later actually became tyrant of the [1305b] Naxians. Strife that begins from other quarters also has various forms. Sometimes the overthrow comes from the well-off themselves—those not in office—when the people holding honors are very few, as has happened at Massalia, at Istros, at Heraclea, and in other cities. Those who had no share in the offices kept agitating until first the elder brothers were admitted, and later the younger ones in turn. (In some places father and son may not hold office at the same time, and in others an elder and a younger brother may not.) In one case the oligarchy became more like a polity; at Istros it ended in democracy; at Heraclea it went from a smaller number to six hundred. At Cnidus too the oligarchy changed when the notables fell into strife among themselves, because few shared in office and, as has been said, if a father took part his son could not, nor, if there were several brothers, any but the eldest. The people seized on their strife, took a champion from among the notables, attacked, and won—for a side divided by strife is weak. And at Erythrae, under the oligarchy of the Basilids in ancient times, although those in the constitution managed things well, the people nonetheless resented being ruled by a few and changed the constitution.

Oligarchies are also upset from within through the rivalry of those who play the demagogue. (Demagoguery is of two kinds. One occurs among the few themselves—for a demagogue can

arise even when they are very few: among the Thirty at Athens, for instance, Charicles and his circle gained power by courting the Thirty, and among the Four Hundred, Phrynichus and his circle did the same. The other is when those in the oligarchy court the crowd—as at Larisa the guardians of the citizens courted the crowd because it elected them. It happens in all oligarchies where the offices are not elected by those from whose ranks the officials come, but the offices are filled from those with large property assessments or from the political clubs, while the hoplites or the people do the electing, as used to happen at Abydos; and where the courts are not drawn from the citizen body—for by courting the people over verdicts they change the constitution, as happened at Heraclea on the Black Sea; and further when some try to draw the oligarchy into fewer hands, for those who seek equality are forced to bring in the people to help them.)[9] Changes in oligarchy also happen when its members squander their private means in dissolute living. Such people seek revolution, and either attempt a tyranny themselves or 1306a set someone else up—as Hipparinus did Dionysius at Syracuse; and at Amphipolis a man named Cleotimus brought in the settlers from Chalcis and, when they came, set them at odds with the well-off; and at Aegina the man who carried out the transaction with Chares tried to change the constitution for a reason of this kind. Sometimes, then, they try at once to stir up change; at other times they steal public funds, and then strife arises against them, either from these men themselves or from those who fight them for stealing—as happened at Apollonia on the Black Sea. But an oligarchy that is of one mind is not easily destroyed from within. Evidence of this is the constitution at Pharsalus: there, few as they are, they are masters of many, because they treat one another well.

Oligarchies are also overthrown when they create another oligarchy within the oligarchy. This happens when, though the whole citizen body is small, not all of the few share in the highest offices. This once happened at Elis. The constitution was

9 The Thirty were the oligarchs who ruled Athens after its defeat in 404–403 BC.

in the hands of a few, and very few became members of the council of elders, because there were only ninety, holding office for life, and the election was dynastic, like that of the elders at Sparta. Oligarchies also change both in war and in peace. In war, because distrust of the people forces them to use mercenaries. (The man they put in charge often becomes a tyrant, as Timophanes did at Corinth; and if they put several in charge, these secure a dynastic power for themselves; and sometimes, fearing this, they give the multitude a share in the constitution, because they are forced to make use of the people.) In peace, through distrust of one another, they hand over their protection to mercenaries and a neutral commander, who sometimes becomes master of both sides—as happened at Larisa under the rule of the Aleuadae, Simus and his circle, and at Abydos in the time of the political clubs, one of which was that of Iphiades.

Strife also arises when some members of the oligarchy itself are pushed aside by others and are attacked by faction over marriages or lawsuits. From causes connected with marriage there are the cases mentioned earlier (and Diagoras overthrew the oligarchy of the knights at Eretria after being wronged over a marriage). From a court verdict arose the strife at Heraclea and that at Thebes, when on a charge of adultery the punishment was inflicted justly but in a factional spirit—at Heraclea on Eurytion, [1306b] at Thebes on Archias (their enemies pressed the matter so far that they were put in the pillory in the marketplace). Many oligarchies too have been overthrown because they were too despotic, by some within the constitution who resented it, like the oligarchies at Cnidus and at Chios. Changes also occur by accident, both in so-called polity and in those oligarchies where serving on the council, sitting on juries and holding the other offices depend on a property assessment. Often the assessment was first fixed to suit the circumstances of the time, so that in an oligarchy few would take part, and in a polity the middle class; but when prosperity comes through peace or some other good fortune, the same properties turn out to be worth many times the assessment, so that everyone takes part in

everything. Sometimes the change comes gradually, little by little and unnoticed, and sometimes faster. Oligarchies, then, change and fall into strife for such reasons. (In general, both democracies and oligarchies sometimes turn not into the opposite constitutions but into those of the same kind—for instance, from law-abiding democracies and oligarchies into ones where the rulers are sovereign, and from these into those.)

HOW ARISTOCRACIES AND POLITIES FALL

Narrow honors, a bad mix of elements and gradual erosion undermine aristocracies and polities.

In aristocracies strife arises partly because few share in honors —which has been said to upset oligarchies too, since aristocracy too is in a way an oligarchy (in both the rulers are few, though not few for the same reason). Indeed, it is for this reason that aristocracy is thought to be an oligarchy. This is bound to happen especially when there is a large group of people who are high-spirited on the ground that they are equal in excellence—as at Sparta the so-called Partheniae (who were descended from the Equals), whom the Spartans caught conspiring and sent away to found Tarentum; or when some men who are great, and inferior to no one in excellence, are dishonored by others more highly honored—as Lysander was by the kings; or when a man of courage has no share in honors, like Cinadon, who organized the attack on the Spartiates in the reign of Agesilaus. Again, when some are very poor and others well-off (this happens most in wartime; it happened at Sparta at the time of the Messenian War, as is clear from Tyrtaeus' poem called [1307a] *Good Order*, for some who were hard-pressed because of the war demanded that the land be redistributed). Again, when someone is great and capable of becoming still greater, so as to rule alone—as Pausanias, who commanded in the Persian War, seems to have done at Sparta, and Hanno at Carthage.[10]

10 The Equals (homoioi) were the full Spartan citizens; Tyrtaeus was a Spartan poet of the seventh century BC.

Polities and aristocracies are overthrown chiefly through a departure from justice within the constitution itself. The origin lies in a bad mixture—in polity, of democracy and oligarchy; in aristocracy, of these and excellence, but especially of the two; by the two I mean democracy and oligarchy. For polities and most of the so-called aristocracies try to mix these. Aristocracies differ from what are named polities in this respect, and because of it some of them are less and some more stable. Those that lean more toward oligarchy they call aristocracies, and those that lean toward the multitude polities. That is why the latter are safer than the former: the larger number is stronger, and people are more content when they have an equal share, whereas those who are prosperous, if the constitution gives them superiority, seek to be insolent and to grasp for more. In general, whichever way the constitution leans, it shifts in that direction as each side increases its own—polity into democracy, aristocracy into oligarchy—or else into the opposites: aristocracy into democracy (for the poorer people, feeling wronged, drag it round to the opposite), and polities into oligarchy (for the only stable thing is equality according to worth, and people having what is their own). What I have described happened at Thurii. Because the offices were based on a rather high property assessment, the assessment was changed to a lower one and the offices were divided among more boards; and because the notables had bought up all the land against the law (for the constitution was rather oligarchic, so that they were able to grasp for more), the people, trained in the war, became stronger than the garrison troops, until those who had more land than was allowed gave it up.[11]

Further, because all aristocratic constitutions are oligarchic, the notables tend to grasp for more—at Sparta, for instance, property is passing into few hands. And the notables have more freedom to do whatever they like and to marry into any family they like; that is why the city of the Locrians was ruined by the

11 Aristotle's sentence breaks off and restarts in the Greek; it is given here in its evident sense.

marriage alliance with Dionysius, which would not have happened in a democracy, or in a well-mixed aristocracy. Most of all, [1307b] aristocracies change unnoticed by being dissolved little by little—as was said earlier in general about all constitutions, that even a small thing can cause changes. For when people give up something bearing on the constitution, afterward they change something else a little larger more easily, until they have changed the whole order. This happened in the constitution of Thurii too. There was a law that one could serve as general only at intervals of five years. Some of the younger men, who had become good soldiers and were popular with the mass of the garrison troops, came to despise those in charge of affairs and, thinking they would easily get control, first tried to repeal this law so that the same men could serve as generals continuously, since they saw that the people would eagerly vote for them. The officials in charge of this matter, called the advisers, at first moved to oppose it but were won over, supposing that once these men had changed this law they would leave the rest of the constitution alone. Later, when they wanted to stop other changes, they could no longer do anything; and the whole order of the constitution turned into a dynastic regime of those who had set out to make innovations.

All constitutions are destroyed sometimes from within, and sometimes from outside, when there is a constitution of the opposite kind either nearby or far away but powerful. This used to happen in the time of the Athenians and the Spartans: the Athenians overthrew oligarchies everywhere, the Spartans democracies. We have now said, more or less, what gives rise to changes in constitutions and to civil strife.

PRESERVING CONSTITUTIONS

Guarding small beginnings, adjusting property assessments and preventing profit from office keep constitutions stable.

Next we must speak of preservation, both in general and for each constitution separately. First, it is clear that if we know

what destroys constitutions, we also know what preserves them; for opposites produce opposites, and destruction is the opposite of preservation. In well-blended constitutions, then, if anything needs watching so that people do nothing against the law, it is above all small things that must be guarded against. For lawlessness creeps in unnoticed, just as small expenses, often repeated, eat up fortunes. The spending goes unnoticed because it does not happen all at once; the mind is misled by it, as by the sophistic argument "if each is small, then so are all." This is true in one way and not in another: the whole, the total, is not small, but it is made up of small things.

This, then, is one precaution to take against the beginning of change. Next, one should not trust the devices contrived 1308a to trick the multitude, for they are shown up by the facts (what we mean by constitutional tricks was said earlier). Further, one should observe that some constitutions—not only aristocracies but oligarchies too—last not because the constitutions are secure, but because those who come into office treat well both those outside the constitution and those in the citizen body. They treat those who have no share well by not wronging them, and by bringing their natural leaders into the constitution, and by not wronging the ambitious in the matter of dishonor or the many in the matter of gain; and they treat themselves and those who share in the constitution well by dealing with one another democratically. For the equality that democrats seek for the multitude is, among peers, not only just but also advantageous. So if there are many in the citizen body, many democratic institutions are advantageous, such as having offices last six months, so that all the peers may take part; for the peers are already like a people (which is why demagogues often arise even among them, as was said earlier). Then too, oligarchies and aristocracies fall less into dynastic rule. (It is not as easy to do mischief when holding office for a short time as for a long time; for it is from this cause that tyrannies arise in oligarchies and democracies: either the greatest men in each attempt tyranny—in the one

the demagogues, in the other the dynasts—or those holding the greatest offices, when they hold them for a long time.)

Constitutions are preserved not only because they are far from what destroys them, but sometimes also because they are near it; for when afraid, people keep a firmer hold on the constitution. So those who care about the constitution should create alarms, so that people stay on guard and do not relax their watch over the constitution, as if it were a night watch, and should make what is far off seem near. Further, one must try to guard against the rivalries and quarrels of the notables, by means of the laws as well, and to protect those not yet involved in the rivalry before they too are drawn in; for to recognize an evil as it arises at the beginning is the work not of an ordinary person but of a statesman. As for the change from oligarchy and polity that comes about because of the property assessments, when this happens because the assessments stay the same while money becomes plentiful, it is advantageous to review the total assessed wealth of the community in comparison with the past —in cities where assessment is annual, over that period, 1308b and in larger cities every third or fifth year—and if it is many times greater or many times smaller than before, when the qualifications for the constitution were set, there should be a law to tighten or relax the assessments too: tightening them in proportion to the increase if it has grown, and relaxing them and making the qualification smaller if it has fallen short. For in oligarchies and polities, if they do not do this, in the one case the result is oligarchy in one place and dynastic rule in another; in the other case, democracy arises from polity, and polity or democracy from oligarchy.

It is common to democracy, oligarchy and every constitution not to raise anyone too high out of proportion, but rather to try to give small honors over a long period than large ones quickly (for people are corrupted, and not every man can bear good fortune); and failing that, at least not to give honors all at once and then take them away all at once, but gradually. Above all, one should try so to regulate things by the laws that no one arises

who is far superior in power, whether of friends or of money; failing that, to see that such people are removed by being sent abroad. Since people also start revolutions because of their private lives, one should set up an office to watch over those who live in a way that is out of keeping with the constitution—in a democracy, with democracy; in an oligarchy, with oligarchy; and similarly for each of the other constitutions. For the same reasons one must guard against any one part of the city prospering at the expense of the rest. The remedy for this is always to entrust business and offices to the opposing parts (by opposing I mean the respectable as against the multitude, and the poor as against the well-off), and to try either to blend the mass of the poor with that of the well-off or to increase the middle class (for this dissolves strife caused by inequality). But the most important thing in every constitution is to have things so arranged, by the laws and the rest of the administration, that officials cannot make a profit from office.

This must be watched especially in oligarchies. The many are not so resentful at being excluded from office—they are even glad if someone leaves them free to attend to their own affairs—but if they think the officials are stealing public funds, then both things hurt: not sharing in the honors and not sharing in the profits. Indeed, this is the only way democracy and aristocracy can exist together, if someone could bring it about; for then both the 1309a notables and the multitude could have what they want. For everyone being allowed to hold office is democratic, while the notables holding the offices is aristocratic; and this will happen when there is no profit to be made from office. The poor will not want to hold office because there is no gain in it, but will rather attend to their own affairs, while the well-off will be able to hold office because they need nothing from public funds. So the result will be that the poor become well-off by spending their time at their work, and the notables are not ruled by just anyone. To prevent public funds from being stolen, let the handing over of the money take place in the presence of all the citizens, and let copies of the accounts be deposited with the

phratries, the military companies and the tribes. And to ensure that officials hold office without profit, there must be honors established by law for those who earn a good reputation. In democracies the well-off must be spared: not only should their properties not be redistributed, but not their incomes either, as happens unnoticed in some constitutions; and it is better to prevent them, even if they are willing, from undertaking public services that are expensive but useless, such as sponsoring choruses, torch races, and the like. In an oligarchy, on the other hand, one must take great care of the poor, and assign them the offices that bring some income; and if any of the well-off commits an outrage against them, the penalties should be greater than for outrages among themselves; and inheritances should pass not by bequest but by kinship, and no one should inherit more than one estate. In this way properties would be more equal, and more of the poor would become well-off. It is also advantageous, in both democracy and oligarchy, to give either equality or precedence in other matters to those who have less share in the constitution—in a democracy to the well-off, in an oligarchy to the poor—except for the offices with authority over the constitution; these should be entrusted only, or mostly, to those who belong to the constitution.

LOYALTY, THE MEAN, AND EDUCATION FOR THE CONSTITUTION

Officials need loyalty, ability and justice; constitutions last through moderation and suitable education.

Those who are to hold the sovereign offices must have three qualities: first, loyalty to the established constitution; second, the greatest capacity for the work of the office; third, excellence and justice of the kind suited to each constitution (for if what is just is not the same under all constitutions, there must also be different kinds of justice). When these qualities do not all belong to the same person, there is a difficulty about how the choice should be made. [1309b] Suppose, for example, that one man is a good general but a bad man and no friend to the constitution,

while another is just and loyal: how should one choose? It seems one must look to two things: which quality everyone has more of, and which less. So in choosing a general one should look to experience rather than excellence, since people share less in generalship and more in decency. In choosing a guardian or a treasurer, the opposite: these posts need more excellence than most people have, while the knowledge involved is common to all.

Someone might raise the question: if a man has capacity and loyalty to the constitution, what need is there of excellence as well? Those two will be enough for him to do what is beneficial. Or is it that people who have both can still lack self-control, so that, just as they fail to serve their own interests although they know them and love themselves, nothing prevents some of them from behaving in the same way toward the common interest? In general, all the provisions in laws that we describe as beneficial to constitutions preserve those constitutions, and so does the most important principle, which has often been stated: to see to it that the part of the population that wants the constitution is stronger than the part that does not. Besides all this, one must not lose sight of what the deviant constitutions now lose sight of: the mean. For many measures that seem democratic destroy democracies, and many that seem oligarchic destroy oligarchies. Those who think that this defining feature is the one and only excellence push it to excess. They do not see that a nose may deviate from the most beautiful straightness toward the hooked or the snub and still be beautiful and pleasing to look at; but if someone exaggerates it still further toward the extreme, first he will destroy the proportion of the feature, and in the end he will make it not look like a nose at all, because it has too much of one opposite and too little of the other. The same holds for the other features, and it happens with constitutions too. An oligarchy or a democracy can be adequate even though it has departed from the best arrangement; but if someone intensifies either of them further, first he will make the constitution worse, and in the end it will not be a constitution at all. That is why the

lawgiver and the statesman must not be ignorant of which democratic measures preserve a democracy and which destroy it, and which oligarchic measures preserve or destroy an oligarchy. For neither of them can exist and endure without both the well-off and the multitude; when property becomes equal, the constitution must become a different one. 1310a So when they destroy one of these groups with laws that go to extremes, they destroy their constitutions.

Mistakes are made in both democracies and oligarchies. In democracies the demagogues make them, where the multitude is sovereign over the laws: they always split the city in two by fighting the well-off, whereas they ought always to seem to speak on behalf of the well-off. In oligarchies, likewise, the oligarchs ought to seem to speak on behalf of the people, and they should swear oaths opposite to the ones they swear now. At present, in some oligarchies, they swear, "I will be hostile to the people and will plan whatever harm I can against them." They ought instead to take and to act the opposite part, declaring in their oaths, "I will not wrong the people."

But the most important of all the things we have mentioned for making constitutions last, and one that everyone now neglects, is education suited to the constitution. The most beneficial laws, even laws approved by all the citizens, are of no use unless people are habituated and educated in the constitution—democratically if the laws are democratic, oligarchically if they are oligarchic. For if there is lack of self-control in an individual, there is also lack of self-control in a city. And being educated for the constitution does not mean doing what pleases the oligarchs or those who want democracy, but doing what will enable the ones to run an oligarchy and the others to govern themselves democratically. As things are, in oligarchies the sons of the rulers live in luxury, while the sons of the poor are hardened by exercise and toil, so that they are both more willing and more able to start a revolution. And in the democracies that are thought most democratic, the opposite of what is beneficial has become established. The reason is that they define freedom

badly. There are two things by which democracy is thought to be defined: the sovereignty of the majority, and freedom. What is just is thought to be what is equal; what is equal, that whatever the multitude decides is sovereign; and freedom, doing whatever one wants. So in democracies of this kind everyone lives as he likes, "for whatever end he craves," as Euripides says. But this is bad. One should not think that living in accordance with the constitution is slavery; it is one's preservation. These, then, broadly speaking, are the causes from which constitutions change and are destroyed, and the means through which they are preserved and endure.

HOW MONARCHIES ARE DESTROYED

Kingship and tyranny differ in origin; outrage, fear and contempt drive attacks on monarchs.

It remains to go through monarchy as well: the causes by which it is destroyed and the means by which it is naturally preserved. What happens to kingships and tyrannies is roughly similar 1310b to what we have said about constitutions. Kingship corresponds to aristocracy, while tyranny is compounded of the most extreme oligarchy and democracy. That is exactly why it is the most harmful to its subjects: it is made up of two bad constitutions and has the deviations and errors of both. The two kinds of monarchy originate from directly opposite sources. Kingship arose to protect the decent against the people, and a king is appointed from among the decent on the basis of superiority in excellence, or in the actions that come from excellence, or on the basis of the superiority of a family of that kind. The tyrant, by contrast, is set up from the people and the multitude against the notables, so that the people may suffer no wrong from them. This is clear from what has happened: nearly all tyrants, one might say, began as demagogues, who won people's trust by slandering the notables. Some tyrannies were established in this way when cities had already grown large. Others, earlier, arose from kings who overstepped ancestral custom and reached for a

more despotic rule; others from men elected to the sovereign offices (for in the old days peoples appointed their magistrates and sacred envoys for long terms); and others from oligarchies that chose a single man as sovereign over the greatest offices. In all these ways it was easy to succeed, if only they wanted to, because they already had power—some the power of kingly rule, others that of high office. Thus Pheidon at Argos and other tyrants established themselves where there was already a kingship; the tyrants in Ionia and Phalaris rose from high offices; and Panaetius at Leontini, Cypselus at Corinth, Pisistratus at Athens, Dionysius at Syracuse and others rose in the same way from demagoguery. As we said, then, kingship is ranked with aristocracy. For it is based on merit—either individual excellence or family, or benefactions, or these together with power. For all who obtained this honor had benefited, or were able to benefit, their cities or peoples: some by saving them from enslavement in war, like Codrus; others by setting them free, like Cyrus; or by founding a city or acquiring territory, like the kings of the Spartans, the Macedonians and the Molossians. The king aims to be a guardian, so that 1311a those who own property suffer no injustice and the people suffer no abuse. Tyranny, as has often been said, looks to nothing common except for the sake of its own private benefit. The tyrant's aim is pleasure, the king's the fine. That is why, among the advantages they seek, money belongs to the tyrant, while what brings honor belongs rather to the king; and a king's guard is made up of citizens, a tyrant's of foreigners.[12]

That tyranny has the evils of both democracy and oligarchy is plain. From oligarchy it takes making wealth its end (for only in this way can the guard and the luxury be maintained), and trusting the multitude in nothing (which is why tyrants disarm them); and ill-treating the common crowd, driving them out of the town and scattering them is common to both, oligarchy and tyranny alike. From democracy it takes waging war on the not-

12 Codrus was the legendary last king of Athens, who gave his life to save the city from invaders; Cyrus the Great freed the Persians from the Medes.

ables, destroying them secretly and openly, and exiling them as rivals and obstacles to its rule. For it is from the notables that plots arise, some of them wanting to rule themselves, others not wanting to be slaves. Hence also Periander's advice to Thrasybulus, the cutting down of the ears of grain that stood out, meaning that one must always do away with the outstanding citizens. As was roughly said, then, one must consider the sources of change to be the same for constitutions and for monarchies. Many subjects attack monarchies because of injustice, fear and contempt; and, among forms of injustice, most of all because of outrage, but sometimes also because they have been deprived of their property.[13]

The ends, too, are the same for tyrannies and kingships as they were for constitutions: monarchs have great wealth and honor, and these are what everyone desires. Of attacks, some are aimed at the person of the rulers, others at their rule. Those caused by outrage are aimed at the person. Outrage takes many forms, and each of them becomes a cause of anger; and most people who act in anger attack for the sake of revenge, not of superiority. For example, the attack on the Pisistratids came about because they insulted Harmodius' sister and treated Harmodius with contempt (Harmodius acted because of his sister, and Aristogeiton because of Harmodius). There was a plot against Periander, the tyrant of Ambracia, because while drinking with [1311b] his beloved he asked the boy whether he was pregnant by him yet. Pausanias' attack on Philip came about because Philip allowed him to be outraged by Attalus and his circle; Derdas' attack on Amyntas the Little because Amyntas boasted of having enjoyed Derdas in his youth; and the eunuch's attack on Evagoras of Cyprus: he killed him, feeling outraged, because Evagoras' son had taken his wife away from him. Many attacks have also happened because certain monarchs have sexually

13 Herodotus tells the story with the roles of Periander and Thrasybulus reversed.

disgraced others.[14] An example is Crataeus' attack on Archelaus. He had always resented the relationship, so that even a smaller pretext would have been enough—or perhaps it was because Archelaus had promised him one of his daughters and gave him neither, but instead, hard pressed by his war against Sirras and Arrabaeus, gave the elder to the king of Elimeia and the younger to his son Amyntas, thinking that this would make Amyntas least likely to quarrel with his son by Cleopatra. But the start of the estrangement, at any rate, was his resentment at providing sexual favors. Hellanocrates of Larisa joined in the attack for the same reason: Archelaus had enjoyed his youth but had not restored him from exile as he promised, so Hellanocrates thought the relationship had come about through outrage and not through erotic desire.[15] Python and Heraclides of Aenus killed Cotys to avenge their father, and Adamas revolted from Cotys because Cotys had had him castrated as a boy, and he felt outraged.[16]

Many others, too, enraged at being physically abused with blows and feeling outraged, have killed or tried to kill people in office or members of royal dynasties. For example, at Mytilene, when the Penthilidae went around striking people with clubs, Megacles and his friends attacked and killed them; and later Smerdis, who had been beaten and dragged away from his wife, killed Penthilus. Decamnichus, too, became leader of the attack on Archelaus, being the first to stir up the attackers. The cause of his anger was that Archelaus had handed him over to the poet Euripides to be flogged; Euripides was angry because Decamnichus had said something about his bad breath. And many others have been killed or plotted against for such reasons.[17] Fear works in the same way; it was one of the causes, in monarchies as in constitutions. For example, Artapanes attacked Xerxes

14 The Pisistratids, Hippias and Hipparchus, were the sons of Pisistratus; Harmodius and Aristogeiton killed Hipparchus in 514 BC. Philip is Philip II of Macedon, murdered in 336 BC.

15 Archelaus, king of Macedon, was assassinated in 399 BC.

16 Cotys was king of Thrace, assassinated in 360/359 BC.

17 The Penthilidae were the ruling clan of Mytilene on Lesbos.

because he feared the accusation over Darius: he had hanged Darius without Xerxes' order, thinking Xerxes would forgive him, since he had been at dinner and would not remember. Other attacks come from 1312a contempt, as when someone saw Sardanapallus carding wool with the women (if what the storytellers say is true—and if not of him, it could well be true of someone else); and Dion attacked Dionysius the Younger out of contempt, seeing that the citizens felt the same way and that Dionysius himself was always drunk. Even some of a monarch's friends attack him out of contempt: because they are trusted, they despise him, thinking they will not be found out.[18] Those who think they can seize power also attack, in a way, out of contempt: because they have power and, because of it, despise the danger, they readily make the attempt. So it is with generals against their monarchs—Cyrus, for example, against Astyages, whose way of life and power he despised because Astyages' power had grown idle while he himself lived in luxury; and Seuthes the Thracian against Amadocus, whose general he was. Others attack for more than one of these reasons, for instance both from contempt and for gain, as Mithridates did against Ariobarzanes. Those who make the attempt mainly for this reason are men bold by nature who hold military honors under the monarchs; for courage that has power is boldness, and it is because of both that they make their attacks, expecting to win easily.

Among those who attack out of ambition, the cause works in a different way from those mentioned before. Some attack tyrants because they see the great gains and great honors the tyrants have; but it is not in this way that each of those who attack out of ambition chooses to run the risk. The former act for the reason stated; the latter attack monarchs just as they would undertake any other extraordinary deed that would make them famous and known to others, wanting to acquire not a monarchy but glory. Still, those who set out for this reason are very

18 Sardanapallus was a legendary last king of Assyria, a byword for luxury and effeminacy.

few in number, for it must be taken for granted that they care nothing for their own survival if they are not going to succeed in the deed. They must follow Dion's way of thinking, but it is not easy for many to have it. Dion marched against Dionysius with a few men, saying that this was how he felt: however far he managed to advance, it would be enough for him to have taken that much part in the undertaking; if, for instance, he should die as soon as he set foot on land, that death would be a fine one for him.[19]

A tyranny is destroyed in one way, like each of the other constitutions, from outside, 1312b if there is an opposed constitution that is stronger. (The wish will clearly be there because of the opposition in their principles, and everyone does what they wish when they can.) The opposed constitutions are democracy, opposed to tyranny as "potter to potter," in Hesiod's phrase (for the extreme democracy is a tyranny), and kingship and aristocracy, because their constitution is the opposite. That is why the Spartans overthrew a great many tyrannies, as did the Syracusans during the period when they were well governed. In another way a tyranny is destroyed from within, when those who share in it fall into faction. This happened to the tyranny of Gelon's family, and in our own day to that of Dionysius. In Gelon's case, Thrasybulus, the brother of Hiero, courted Gelon's son like a demagogue and pushed him toward pleasures so that he himself might rule; the family banded together so that not the tyranny as a whole would be overthrown but only Thrasybulus; but those who had joined them, seeing their opportunity, drove them all out. Dion, who was related to Dionysius by marriage, marched against him, won the people over, drove him out, and was then killed.[20] There are two causes, above all, for which people attack tyrannies: hatred and contempt. One of these, hatred, is always present for tyrants; but many overthrows

19 Dion, brother-in-law of Dionysius the Elder and an associate of Plato, sailed against Dionysius the Younger of Syracuse in 357 BC.
20 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 25: "potter is angry with potter," that is, rivalry is sharpest between those of the same kind.

come from their being held in contempt. Here is evidence: most of those who won their rule also kept it, whereas those who inherited it lose it almost at once, one might say, every one of them. Living a life of enjoyment, they become easy to despise and give their attackers many opportunities. Anger too should be counted as a part of hatred, since in a way it is the cause of the same actions. It is often even more effective than hatred, since angry people attack more intensely, because the passion does not use reasoning. (People are especially apt to follow their anger because of outrage; this was the cause of the overthrow of the Pisistratids' tyranny and of many others.) Hatred, however, reasons more; for anger comes with pain, which makes it hard to reason, while enmity comes without pain.

To put it summarily, all the causes we have given for the destruction of unmixed, extreme oligarchy and of the last kind of democracy should be counted as causes for tyranny as well; for these are in fact tyrannies divided among many. Kingship, by contrast, is least destroyed from outside, which is why it is long-lasting; most of its destructions come from within. It is destroyed in two ways: one [1313a] when those who share in the kingship fall into faction, the other when kings try to govern more like tyrants, claiming to be sovereign over more things, even against the law. Kingships no longer arise nowadays; if monarchies do arise, they are rather tyrannies. For kingship is rule over willing subjects and sovereign over greater matters, and there are many people of similar standing, with none so outstanding as to measure up to the greatness and dignity of the office. So for this reason people do not willingly submit; and if someone rules by deceit or force, that is at once thought to be tyranny. In hereditary kingships one must also count as a cause of destruction, besides those mentioned, the fact that many of the kings become contemptible, and that, though they possess not tyrannical power but only kingly honor, they commit outrages. Overthrow then used to be easy: once the subjects are unwilling, the king will at once no longer be king, whereas a tyr-

ant is a tyrant even over the unwilling. Monarchies, then, are destroyed through these causes and others like them.

HOW KINGSHIPS AND TYRANNIES ARE PRESERVED

Kingships last by limiting their power; tyrants survive by repression or by acting like a good king.

They are preserved, clearly, speaking generally, by the opposite causes; and, taking each kind in turn, kingships are preserved by being brought toward greater moderation. The fewer things kings are sovereign over, the longer their whole rule must last: they themselves become less despotic and more equal in character to their subjects, and they are less envied by them. This is why the kingship among the Molossians lasted a long time, and the Spartan one too—both because from the beginning the office was divided into two, and again because Theopompus moderated it in various ways, in particular by setting up the office of the ephors over it. By taking away from its power he increased the kingship's duration, so that in a way he made it not smaller but greater.[21] This, they say, was his reply when his wife asked whether he was not ashamed to hand the kingship down to his sons smaller than he had received it from his father: "Not at all," he said, "for I am handing it down longer-lasting."

Tyrannies are preserved in two ways that are completely opposed. One of them is the traditional way, the one in which most tyrants administer their rule. Periander of Corinth is said to have instituted most of its features, and many such things can also be found in the Persian empire. These include the measures mentioned long ago for preserving a tyranny as far as possible: cutting down those who stand out and doing away with the high-spirited; allowing no common meals, no clubs, no education, or anything else of the kind, but guarding 1313b against everything from which two things usually arise, high spirit and mutual trust; not permitting leisure groups or any other gatherings for leisured discussion, and doing everything to keep

21 Theopompus was a Spartan king of the eighth century BC.

everyone as unknown to one another as possible (for acquaintance creates more trust in one another); making the people in town always visible and having them spend their time at the palace doors (for in this way what they are doing would least escape notice, and by always acting as slaves they would grow used to thinking small); and all the other Persian and non-Greek practices of this kind, which are tyrannical (for they all have the same effect); and trying to let nothing the subjects happen to say or do go unnoticed, but keeping spies, like the women called "informers" at Syracuse, and the eavesdroppers whom Hiero used to send wherever there was a meeting or gathering (for people speak less freely when they fear such men, and if they do speak freely, they are less likely to escape notice); and setting people against one another with slander and making them clash —friends with friends, the people with the notables, and the rich among themselves. It is also tyrannical to make the subjects poor, so that no guard can be maintained and they are so busy with their daily needs that they have no leisure to plot. Examples of this are the pyramids of Egypt, the dedications of the Cypselids, the building of the temple of Olympian Zeus by the Pisistratids, and the works of Polycrates at Samos (all these have the same effect, keeping the subjects busy and poor); and the levying of taxes, as at Syracuse, where under Dionysius the citizens ended up paying in their entire property within five years. The tyrant is also a warmonger, so that people will be kept busy and constantly in need of a leader. And whereas a kingship is preserved by its friends, it is characteristic of a tyrant to distrust his friends most of all, on the grounds that everyone wants to overthrow him, but these above all are able to.

The things that happen in the extreme democracy are also all tyrannical: the dominance of women in the household, so that they will inform against their husbands, and license for slaves, for the same reason. For slaves and women do not plot against tyrants, and if they are doing well, they are bound to be well disposed both to tyrannies and to democracies; for the people too wants to be a monarch. That is why the flatterer is honored

under both: under democracies, the demagogue (for the demagogue is the people's flatterer), and under tyrants, those who associate with them obsequiously, [1314a] which is the work of flattery. This is also why tyranny loves the base: tyrants enjoy being flattered, and no one with a free spirit would do that; decent people are friends, or at least they do not flatter. And the base are useful for base purposes: "nail drives out nail," as the proverb says. It is also tyrannical to take no pleasure in anyone dignified or free-spirited. The tyrant claims that he alone is such, and anyone who displays a rival dignity and free spirit takes away the tyranny's superiority and its despotic character; so tyrants hate such people as subverting their rule. It is also tyrannical to have foreigners rather than citizens as dinner companions and daily associates, since the citizens are enemies while the foreigners make no rival claim. These and similar practices are tyrannical and preserve the rule, but there is no depravity they fall short of. All of them, one might say, fall under three headings. For tyranny aims at three things. First, that its subjects think small (for a small-minded person would plot against no one). Second, that they distrust one another (for a tyranny is not overthrown until some people trust one another; that is also why tyrants make war on the decent as harmful to their rule, not only because they refuse to be ruled despotically, but also because they are loyal both to one another and to others, and do not inform on each other or on others). Third, that they are powerless to act (for no one attempts the impossible, so no one tries to overthrow a tyranny either without having power). These, then, are the three aims to which the policies of tyrants reduce. All tyrannical measures could be traced back to these principles: some aim at keeping people from trusting one another, some at keeping them powerless, some at making them think small.

This, then, is one way in which tyrannies are preserved. The other goes about it in almost the opposite way to what has been described. It can be understood from the way kingships are destroyed. Just as one way of destroying a kingship is to make the

rule more tyrannical, so a tyranny is preserved by making it more kingly, as long as the tyrant holds on to one thing only, power, so that he rules not only willing subjects but unwilling ones too; for if he gives this up, he gives up being a tyrant as well. This must remain as a fixed assumption; but for the rest, he should do some things and seem to do others, playing the part of the king well. First, he should seem to [1314b] take care of public funds, not spending them on gifts of the kind that anger the masses, when money is taken from them as they work and toil in hardship and then handed out lavishly to courtesans, foreigners and craftsmen. He should also render accounts of what he receives and spends, as some tyrants have already done (for by governing in this way he would seem to be a household manager and not a tyrant; and he need not fear ever running short of money while he is master of the city. Indeed, for tyrants who go abroad, away from home, this is actually more advantageous than leaving behind money they have amassed, since those guarding it would be less likely to make an attempt on power; and to tyrants who travel abroad, the guards are more to be feared than the citizens, since the citizens travel with him while the guards stay behind). Next, he should be seen to collect taxes and public services for the sake of administration, and in case he should ever need them in time of war; and in general he should present himself as guardian and treasurer of funds that are common, not his own. He should appear not harsh but dignified, and moreover such that those who meet him feel not fear but rather respect. This, however, is not easy to achieve if he is easy to despise; so even if he takes no care of the other excellences, he must take care of military excellence and create a reputation of that kind for himself. Further, not only must he himself be seen to commit no outrage against any of his subjects, young man or young woman, but neither must anyone else around him; and the women of his household should behave in the same way toward other women, since many tyrannies have been lost through outrages committed by women. As for bodily pleasures, he should do the opposite of what some

tyrants do now (for they not only indulge in them from dawn onward and continuously for days on end, but also want others to see them doing it, so that they will admire them as happy and blessed). Rather, he should above all be moderate in such things, or if not, at least avoid being seen by others; for it is not the sober man who is easy to attack or despise, but the drunk, and not the wakeful man, but the sleeper. He must do the opposite of nearly all the things mentioned earlier: he should build up and adorn the city as if he were its steward and not a tyrant. Further, he should always be seen to be exceptionally earnest about the gods; for people are less afraid of suffering anything unlawful from such men 1315a if they think their ruler god-fearing and mindful of the gods, and they plot against him less, thinking he has even the gods as allies. But he must appear so without foolishness. He should honor those who prove good at something in such a way that they would think they could never be more honored by citizens living under their own laws; and he should award such honors himself, but inflict punishments through other officials and courts. A safeguard common to every monarchy is to make no single man great, but, if anyone, several (for they will keep watch on one another); and if it is necessary to make someone great, at least not someone of bold character (for such a character is the readiest to make an attempt in every sort of action); and if it seems right to strip someone of his power, to do it gradually, and not take away all his authority at once. Further, he should refrain from every kind of outrage, and above all from two: physical punishment, and sexual outrage against the young. He should take this precaution especially with the ambitious; for while lovers of money take slights to their property hard, it is slights to their honor that the ambitious and decent people take hard. Therefore he should either not treat such people in this way at all, or be seen to inflict punishment like a father and not out of contempt, and to have relations with the young out of erotic love and not because of his power; and in general he should buy off apparent dishonors with greater honors. Of those who make attempts on his life, the most dangerous,

and those who need to be guarded against most, are those who do not care about saving their own lives once they have killed him. That is why he must be most on guard against those who think that they themselves, or those they care about, have been outraged. For those who act from anger do not spare themselves, as Heraclitus too said, claiming that anger is hard to fight, for it buys what it wants at the price of the soul.

Since cities are made up of two parts, the poor and the well-off, it is best that both should believe they owe their safety to his rule, and that neither should suffer any wrong from the other; but whichever of the two is stronger, he should attach them especially to his rule. If this is secured, the tyrant need neither free slaves nor disarm the citizens; for one part added to his power is enough to make them stronger than their attackers. It is superfluous to discuss each such point in detail; the aim is plain: he must appear to his subjects not a tyrant [1315b] but a household manager and a king, not one who takes things for himself but a steward; he must pursue moderation in his way of life, not excess; and further, he must keep company with the notables while courting the many. For as a result of these things, not only will his rule necessarily be finer and more enviable, because he rules better people who have not been humbled and does not go on being hated and feared, but his rule will also be longer-lasting; and further, he himself will be disposed in character either finely toward excellence, or half-good—not wicked but half-wicked.

THE LONGEST TYRANNIES, AND PLATO ON REVOLUTION

Aristotle lists the most durable tyrannies and criticizes the account of change in Plato's Republic.

And yet oligarchy and tyranny are the shortest-lived of all constitutions. The longest-lived tyranny was the one at Sicyon, that of the sons of Orthagoras and of Orthagoras himself; it lasted a hundred years. The reason is that they treated their subjects moderately and in many matters were subject to the laws; Cleis-

thenes, being a warrior, was not easy to despise; and for the most part they won over the people by looking after them. It is said, at any rate, that Cleisthenes put a crown on the man who judged that he had not won a contest; and some say that the seated statue in the marketplace is a likeness of the man who judged that way. It is also said that Pisistratus once submitted to a summons to stand trial before the Areopagus. Second is the tyranny of the Cypselids at Corinth, which lasted seventy-three years and six months: Cypselus was tyrant for thirty years, Periander for forty-four, and Psammetichus son of Gordias for three. The causes were the same in this case too: Cypselus was a popular leader and throughout his rule went without a bodyguard, while Periander, though tyrannical, was a warrior. Third is that of the Pisistratids at Athens. It was not continuous, for Pisistratus was driven into exile twice while tyrant, so that in thirty-three years he was tyrant for seventeen, and his sons for eighteen, so that the total came to thirty-five years. Of the rest, there is the tyranny of Hiero and Gelon at Syracuse.[22] It too did not last many years, only eighteen in all: Gelon was tyrant for seven years and died in the eighth, Hiero reigned ten, and Thrasybulus was driven out in the eleventh month. Most tyrannies have all been very short-lived indeed.

As for constitutions and monarchies, then, the causes by which they are destroyed and in turn preserved have now been discussed 1316a almost completely. In the *Republic*, Socrates discusses changes of constitution, but he does not discuss them well. For he gives no change specific to the best constitution, the first one. He says the cause is that nothing stays the same, but everything changes in a certain cycle, and that the origin lies in those numbers whose "base of four to three, joined with five, yields two harmonies"—meaning when the number of this figure becomes solid—on the grounds that nature sometimes produces people who are bad and beyond the reach of education. In saying this much he is perhaps not wrong (for there may be

22 The reign lengths given add up to seventy-seven years, not seventy-three and a half; the figures in the text are probably corrupt.

some people whom it is impossible to educate and make into excellent men). But why would this be a change peculiar to what he calls the best constitution, rather than to all the others and to everything that comes into being? And do even things that did not begin to come into being at the same time change at the same time, because of the time through which, he says, everything changes? If something came into being the day before the turning point, for instance, does it change at the same time?[23] Besides, for what reason does it change from this constitution into the Spartan one? For all constitutions change more often into their opposite than into the one next to them. The same argument applies to the other changes too. He says the Spartan constitution changes into oligarchy, oligarchy into democracy, and democracy into tyranny. Yet changes also go the other way, for example from democracy into oligarchy, and more often than into monarchy.

Further, about tyranny he does not say whether there will be a change or not, nor, if there will be, for what reason and into what constitution. The reason is that he could not easily have said: it is left undetermined, since on his view it should change into the first and best constitution, for that way there would be a continuous cycle. But tyranny also changes into tyranny, as at Sicyon from Myron's tyranny to Cleisthenes'; into oligarchy, like Antileon's at Chalcis; into democracy, like that of Gelon's family at Syracuse; and into aristocracy, like Charillus' at Sparta, and at Carthage. And constitutions change from oligarchy into tyranny, as did most of the ancient ones in Sicily, roughly speaking: at Leontini into the tyranny of Panaetius, at Gela into that of Cleander, at Rhegium into that of Anaxilaus, and similarly in many other cities. It is also strange to think that change into oligarchy happens because those [1316b] in office are money-lovers and money-makers, and not because those who far exceed others in property think it unjust for those who own nothing to have an equal share in the city with those who own property. In

23 Aristotle quotes the deliberately obscure "nuptial number" of Plato's *Republic* (546b–c), which fixes the period after which the ideal city begins to decline.

many oligarchies, moreover, making money is not permitted; there are laws that prevent it. At Carthage, on the other hand, which is governed democratically, they do make money, and they have not yet changed their constitution.

It is also strange to say that the oligarchic city is two cities, one of the rich and one of the poor. Why is this more true of it than of the Spartan constitution, or of any other where not everyone owns an equal amount or not everyone is equally good? And even if no one has become poorer than before, cities change nonetheless from oligarchy to democracy if the poor become more numerous, and from democracy to oligarchy if the well-off are stronger than the multitude and the one side is careless while the other pays attention. And although there are many causes through which changes come about, he mentions only one: that people become poor by living extravagantly and being ruined by interest payments, as though all or most of them had been rich to begin with. But this is false. When some of the leaders lose their property, they stir up innovations; but when others do, nothing terrible happens, and even then the change is no more into democracy than into any other constitution. Further, people form factions and change constitutions if they do not share in honors, or if they are wronged or outraged, even if they have not squandered their property through being free to do whatever they like—the cause of which, he says, is too much freedom. And although there are several kinds of oligarchy and democracy, Socrates discusses their changes as though there were only one of each.

Book VI

Organizing democracies and oligarchies.

CHAPTER 1

We have already discussed how many varieties there are, and what they are, of the deliberative or sovereign element of the constitution, of the arrangement of offices, and of courts; which variety is fitted to which constitution; and further, the destruction and preservation of constitutions—from what sources and for what causes they come about. But since there happen to be several forms of democracy, and likewise of the other constitutions, it would be no bad thing to examine at the same time anything that remains to be said about them, and to assign to each the mode of organization that is proper and beneficial to it. We must also examine the combinations of all the [1317a] modes of organization we have mentioned; for when these are paired together they make constitutions overlap, so that there are oligarchic aristocracies and polities that lean toward democracy. I mean the combinations that ought to be examined but have not been examined so far: for example, if the deliberative body and the election of officials are organized oligarchically, but the courts aristocratically; or if these and the deliberative body are organized oligarchically, but elections aristocratically; or if in some other way not all the elements proper to the constitution are put together.

Which democracy suits which city, and likewise which oligarchy suits which population, and which of the remaining constitutions benefits which people, has been said before. Still, since it must be made clear not only which of these constitu-

tions is best for cities but also how to set up both these and the others, let us go through this briefly. And let us discuss democracy first; at the same time the constitution opposed to it will also become clear, the one some people call oligarchy. For this inquiry we must take all the features that are democratic and that are thought to go with democracies; for it is from the combining of these that the forms of democracy arise, and that there turn out to be more democracies than one, and different ones. There are two reasons why there are several democracies. The first is the one mentioned before: peoples differ. For there is a farming population, and a population of vulgar craftsmen and of laborers; and when the first is added to the second, and the third in turn to both, the democracy differs not only in becoming better or worse but in not being the same democracy. The second reason is the one we are now discussing. The features that go with democracies and are thought proper to this constitution make democracies different when they are combined: one will have fewer of them, another more, another all. It is useful to know each of them, both for setting up whichever of them one happens to want and for reforming them. Those who set up constitutions try to gather together all the features proper to the basic principle, but they go wrong in doing so, as was said earlier in the discussion of the destruction and preservation of constitutions. Let us now discuss the claims of democracies, their characters, and what they aim at.

FREEDOM, THE PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRACY

Democracy rests on freedom: ruling and being ruled in turn, and living as one likes.

The basic principle of the democratic constitution is freedom. (People commonly say this, implying that only in this constitution [1317b] do people share in freedom; for this, they say, is what every democracy aims at.) One element of freedom is ruling and being ruled in turn. For democratic justice is having equality according to number, not according to merit; and if this is what

is just, the multitude must be sovereign, and whatever the majority decides must be final and must be what is just. For they say that each citizen must have an equal share. So in democracies it turns out that the poor are more sovereign than the well-off, since they are more numerous, and what the majority decides is sovereign. This, then, is one mark of freedom, which all democrats lay down as the defining principle of the constitution. Another is living as one likes. For this, they say, is the function of freedom, since not living as one likes is the mark of a slave. This is the second defining principle of democracy. From it has come the demand not to be ruled—preferably by no one, or, failing that, only in turn; and in this way it contributes to freedom based on equality.

With these as the foundations, and this being the nature of its principle, the following features are democratic: electing officials from all by all; all ruling each, and each in turn ruling all; filling offices by lot, either all of them or those that do not require experience and skill; having no property qualification for office, or as small a one as possible; no one holding the same office twice, or only rarely, or holding only a few offices, apart from military ones; short terms of office, either for all or for as many as possible; all serving as jurors, drawn from all, and judging all matters, or most of them and the greatest and most important, such as the audits of officials, the constitution and private contracts; the assembly being sovereign over everything, or over the greatest matters, and no office sovereign over anything, or over as little as possible—or else a council being sovereign over the greatest matters (the council is the most democratic of offices where there is not plenty of pay for everyone; for where there is, even this office is stripped of its power, since a people well supplied with pay draws all decisions to itself, as was said earlier in the inquiry before this one); next, pay for public service—ideally for everyone, in the assembly, the courts and the offices, or failing that, for the offices, the courts, the council and the sovereign assemblies, or for those offices whose holders must take their meals together. Further, since

oligarchy is defined by birth, wealth and education, the democratic features are thought to be their opposites: low birth, poverty and vulgar occupations. Further, as regards offices, none should be held for life, [1318a] and if any has survived from some ancient change of constitution, its power should at least be curtailed, and it should be filled by lot instead of by election. These, then, are the features common to democracies. From the kind of justice agreed to be democratic—that is, everyone having equality according to number—comes what is thought to be democracy and rule by the people in the fullest sense. For equality means that the poor rule no more than the well-off and are not alone sovereign, but all are sovereign equally, according to number; for in this way people would think that both equality and freedom belong to the constitution.

DEMOCRATIC EQUALITY

Aristotle proposes a way of deciding that weighs both numbers and property.

The next difficulty is how they will achieve equality. Should the property assessments be divided so that the property of five hundred equals that of a thousand, and the thousand have power equal to the five hundred? Or should equality on this basis not be set up in that way, but rather the division be made like this, and then an equal number be taken from the five hundred and from the thousand, and these be sovereign over elections and courts? Is this constitution, then, the most just by the standard of democratic justice, or rather the one based on numbers? For the democrats say that what is just is whatever the majority decides, while the oligarchs say it is whatever the greater amount of property decides; for they say decisions should be made according to the quantity of property. Both views involve inequality and injustice. If it is whatever the few decide, that is tyranny (for if one man has more than the other well-off people, then by oligarchic justice it is just for him alone to rule). If it is whatever the numerical majority decides, they

will do injustice by confiscating the property of the rich minority, as was said before.

What sort of equality both sides would agree on, then, must be examined in light of the definitions of justice that both give. They say that whatever the majority of the citizens decides must be sovereign. Let this be granted, though not without qualification. Since the city happens to consist of two parts, the rich and the poor, let whatever both decide, or a majority of both, be sovereign; but if they decide opposite things, let the decision of those who are more numerous and whose assessed property is greater prevail. For example, suppose there are ten rich and twenty poor, and six of the rich have voted one way and fifteen of the poorer the other; then four of the rich have joined the poor, and five of the poor have joined the rich. Whichever side's assessed property is greater, when the property of both classes on each side is added up—that decision is sovereign. If the two sides come out equal, this must be regarded as a difficulty shared with the present situation, when the assembly or the court is split down the middle; [1318b] one must either draw lots or do something else of the kind. As for equality and justice, even if it is very hard to find the truth about them, it is still easier to hit on it than to persuade those who have the power to take more than their share. For it is always the weaker who seek equality and justice, while the stronger give them no thought.

THE BEST DEMOCRACY: A FARMING PEOPLE

A democracy of farmers and herdsmen is best; the extreme democracy is hardest to sustain.

Of the four democracies, the best is the first in order, as was said in the discussions before these; it is also the oldest of all. I call it first in the sense in which one would divide the kinds of people. The best people is a farming people, so that it is possible to create a democracy wherever the multitude lives by farming or herding. Because they do not have much property, they have no leisure, so that they do not often attend the assembly; and

because they have the necessities, they spend their time at their work and do not covet other people's property. Working is more pleasant to them than taking part in politics and holding office, where there are no great profits to be had from office; for most people desire gain more than honor. Here is evidence: they used to put up with the old tyrannies, and they put up with oligarchies, as long as no one prevents them from working or takes anything away from them; for some of them quickly grow rich, and the others at least are not poor. Further, being sovereign over elections and audits makes up for any lack, if they have any ambition. Among some peoples, even if they do not share in electing officials—certain men chosen in turn from all do that, as at Mantinea—as long as they are sovereign over deliberation, the many are satisfied. And this too should be regarded as a form of democracy, as it once was at Mantinea. That is why it is beneficial for the democracy just mentioned, and customary in it, for everyone to elect officials, audit them and sit on juries, but for the greatest offices to be held by men who are elected and meet a property qualification, the greater offices requiring greater qualifications; or else for no office to depend on property, but for those who are capable to hold them. People governed in this way are bound to be governed well (for the offices will always be in the hands of the best, with the people willing and not envious of the decent), and this arrangement is bound to satisfy the decent and notable; for they will not be ruled by others who are worse, and they will rule justly because others are sovereign over their audits. For to be answerable to others, and not be permitted to do whatever one thinks fit, is beneficial; the license to do whatever one wants cannot guard against the baseness in [1319a] every human being. So the result is necessarily what is most beneficial in constitutions: the decent rule without going wrong, and the multitude loses nothing.

That this is the best of the democracies is clear, and also why: it is because its people is of a certain kind. For making the people a farming people, some of the laws established in many places in the old days are thoroughly useful: either prohibiting

outright the ownership of more land than a certain amount, or of more than a certain amount within a certain distance of the town and the city. (In the old days, at any rate, many cities had legislation forbidding even the sale of the original allotments; and there is the so-called law of Oxylus, which has a similar effect, forbidding lending against a certain portion of each person's land.) Now, however, one should also correct matters using the law of the Aphytaeans, for it is useful for our purpose. Though they are many and own little land, they all nonetheless farm, since they are assessed not on their whole holdings but by dividing them into portions small enough that even the poor can exceed the assessment.[1]

After a farming population, the best people is found where there are herdsmen who live off their flocks. Their life has much in common with farming, and for military action they are especially well trained in their habits, physically fit and able to live in the open. Almost all the other multitudes, of which the remaining democracies are composed, are far inferior to these; for their way of life is base, and none of the work that the multitude of vulgar craftsmen, market traders and laborers engages in involves excellence. Further, because this whole class of people circulates around the marketplace and the town, they attend the assembly easily, one might say; whereas the farmers, being scattered over the countryside, neither meet together nor feel the same need for this kind of gathering. Where the land happens to be so situated that the countryside lies far from the city, it is easy to create both a good democracy and a polity; for the multitude is forced to make its homes out in the fields, so that even if there is a market crowd, one should not hold assemblies in democracies without the multitude from the countryside. How the best and first democracy should be set up, then, has been said; it is also clear how the others should be. One should deviate step by step, [1319b] always excluding the worse multitude. The last democracy, because everyone takes part in

1 Oxylus was the legendary founding king of Elis in the western Peloponnese; Aphytis was a city in Chalcidice.

it, is not something every city can bear, nor can it easily endure unless its laws and customs are well arranged. (What destroys both this and the other constitutions has been said before, for the most part.) To establish this kind of democracy and make the people strong, its leaders usually add as many people as possible, and make citizens not only of the legitimate but also of the illegitimate and of those with a citizen on either side—I mean father or mother; for all this is especially congenial to a people of this kind. Demagogues usually go about things this way. But one should add people only up to the point where the multitude outnumbers the notables and the middle class, and not go beyond it; for when they exceed this, they make the constitution more disorderly and provoke the notables still more to find democracy hard to bear—which is what caused the civil strife at Cyrene. A little badness is overlooked, but when it becomes large, it is more in plain view.[2] Further, measures of the kind that Cleisthenes used at Athens when he wanted to strengthen the democracy, and that those who established the democracy at Cyrene used, are useful for a democracy of this sort. More new tribes and brotherhoods should be created, private religious rites should be combined into a few public ones, and every device should be contrived to mix everyone together with everyone else as much as possible and break up their previous associations. Further, the measures of tyrants all seem democratic too—I mean, for example, lack of control over slaves (which may be beneficial up to a point), and over women and children, and letting everyone live as he likes. For a constitution of this kind will have plenty of support, since for most people it is more pleasant to live without discipline than moderately.[3]

2 Cyrene was a Greek city on the coast of north Africa, in modern Libya.
3 This is Cleisthenes of Athens (not the tyrant of Sicyon mentioned earlier), who reorganized the citizen body into ten new tribes in 508/507 BC.

KEEPING DEMOCRACIES STABLE

Democracies last by curbing confiscations and giving the poor lasting prosperity.

For the lawgiver and those who wish to establish a constitution of this sort, setting it up is not the greatest task, nor the only one; the task is rather to see that it is preserved. For it is not hard for people to last one, two or three days under any constitution whatever. So one must draw on what was studied earlier, the means of preservation and the causes of destruction of constitutions, and from these try to secure stability, guarding against what destroys and enacting laws, both unwritten and written, [1320a] that will best comprise what preserves constitutions. And one must not think that what is democratic or oligarchic is whatever will make the city as democratic or as oligarchic as possible, but whatever will make it so for the longest time. Demagogues nowadays, to gratify the people, confiscate a great deal of property through the courts. That is why those who care about the constitution must counteract this by making it law that nothing confiscated from the condemned is to become public property and go to the treasury, but is to be consecrated to the gods. Wrongdoers will be no less careful, since they will be punished just the same, while the crowd will be less inclined to condemn defendants, since it stands to gain nothing. Further, public lawsuits should always be kept as few as possible, by deterring those who bring charges recklessly with heavy penalties; for they usually prosecute not ordinary people but the notables. In this constitution too, ideally all the citizens should be well disposed to it, or failing that, they should at least not regard those in power as their enemies.

The last democracies are populous, and it is hard for people to attend the assembly without pay; and this, where there happen to be no public revenues, is hostile to the notables, since the pay must come from a property tax, confiscations and corrupt courts, which have already overthrown many democracies.

Where there happen to be no revenues, then, one should hold few assemblies, and courts with many jurors but sitting for few days. This helps the rich not to fear the expense, even if the well-off take no jury pay and only the poor do; and it also helps cases to be judged much better, since the well-off are unwilling to be away from their private affairs for many days, but are willing for a short time. Where there are revenues, one should not do what demagogues do now: they distribute the surplus, and people take it and at the same time need the same again, for this sort of help for the poor is the proverbial leaky jar. But the truly democratic statesman must see to it that the multitude is not too poor, since that is what makes a democracy bad. So one must contrive to bring about lasting prosperity. And since this benefits the well-off too, what comes in from the revenues should be gathered together and distributed to the poor in lump sums—ideally, if one can collect that much, enough to buy a small plot of land, or failing that, to give them a start in trade or [1320b] farming. If this is not possible for everyone, the distribution should be made in turn by tribes or some other division; meanwhile the well-off should contribute pay for the necessary meetings, and be released from useless public services. By governing in some such way, the Carthaginians have kept the people friendly; for they are always sending some of the people out to the dependent towns and so making them well-off. It is also the mark of gracious and sensible notables to divide up the poor among themselves and set them to work by giving them a start. It is good, too, to imitate the practice of the Tarentines. By making their property common to the poor for their use, they keep the multitude well disposed. Further, they made all their offices double, some elected and some chosen by lot: by lot so that the people may share in them, by election so that the city may be better governed. This can also be done by dividing the same office between some who are chosen by lot and some who are elected. How democracies should be set up, then, has been said.[4]

4 Tarentum (modern Taranto) was a wealthy Greek city in southern Italy.

ORGANIZING OLIGARCHIES

Oligarchies are built from features opposite to democracy's and need good order to survive.

From this it is also more or less clear how oligarchies should be set up. One should assemble each oligarchy from the opposite features, reasoning by analogy with the opposite democracy. Take the best-blended and first of the oligarchies—the one close to what is called polity. In it one should divide the property qualifications, making some lower and some higher: lower ones for sharing in the necessary offices, higher ones for the more authoritative. Anyone who acquires the qualifying amount should be permitted to share in the constitution, and enough of the people should be admitted through the qualification that, with them, those who share in it will be stronger than those who do not; and the partners should always be taken from the better part of the people. The next oligarchy should be set up in the same way, tightening it a little. The oligarchy opposite to the last democracy, the most dynastic and tyrannical of oligarchies, needs guarding all the more, the worse it is. Bodies in good condition for health, and ships well fitted out with crews for sailing, can tolerate more mistakes without being destroyed by them, while sickly bodies, and ships whose timbers have come loose and which have bad crews, cannot bear even small mistakes; in the same way the worst constitutions need the most [1321a] guarding. Democracies, in general, are preserved by a large population (for this stands opposed to justice based on merit); an oligarchy, clearly, must win its preservation from the opposite, good order.

OLIGARCHY AND MILITARY POWER

Kinds of armed force shape oligarchies, which should admit some of the people and attach costs to high office.

There are four main parts of the multitude—farmers, vulgar craftsmen, traders and laborers—and four kinds of force useful

in war—cavalry, heavy infantry, light-armed troops and navy. Where the land happens to be suited to horses, conditions are naturally favorable for setting up a powerful oligarchy (for the inhabitants' safety depends on this force, and horse-breeding belongs to those who own large estates); where it suits heavy infantry, the next kind of oligarchy (for heavy infantry belongs to the well-off rather than the poor); while light-armed and naval forces are wholly democratic. As things are, where there is a large multitude of this kind, when the two sides fall out the oligarchs often fare worse in the fighting. The remedy for this should be taken from skilled generals, who combine with their cavalry and heavy infantry a suitable force of light-armed troops. It is in this way that the people get the better of the well-off in civil conflicts: being light-armed, they fight easily against cavalry and heavy infantry.

So to establish this force from among these people is to establish it against oneself. Rather, since the population is divided by age into older and younger, the oligarchs should have their own sons taught light-armed, unencumbered exercises while they are still young, and once they have been selected out of the boys, they should themselves be trained competitors in these exercises. The multitude should be given a share in the governing body either, as was said before, when they acquire the property qualification; or, as at Thebes, when they have abstained from vulgar work for a certain time; or, as at Massalia, by selecting those who are worthy, whether inside or outside the governing body. Further, the most authoritative offices, which must be held by those within the constitution, should have public services attached to them, so that the people will be willing not to share in them and will forgive the officials, as paying a high price for office.[5] It is also fitting for them, on entering office, to offer magnificent sacrifices and to build some public work, so that the people, sharing in the feasts and seeing the city adorned with dedications and buildings, are glad to see the constitution endure. It will also turn out that the notables have memorials of

5 Massalia is modern Marseille, a Greek colony in southern Gaul.

their expenditure. But those involved in oligarchies nowadays don't do this; they do the opposite, since they seek profit no less than honor. That is why one may well say [1321b] that these are democracies in miniature. So let this be our account of how democracies and oligarchies should be established.

THE NECESSARY OFFICES

Aristotle surveys the offices a city needs, from market supervisors to generals, auditors and priests.

Following on what has been said is to distinguish properly the matters concerning offices: how many there are, which they are, and what they deal with, as was also said before. Without the necessary offices a city cannot exist, and without those concerned with good order and decorum it cannot be well managed. Further, small cities must have fewer offices and large ones more, as it happens was said before; so we must not overlook which offices it is fitting to combine and which to keep separate. First among the necessary concerns, then, is the supervision of the marketplace, over which there must be an office to oversee contracts and good order. For practically every city has to buy some things and sell others to meet people's necessary needs of one another, and this is the most immediate means to self-sufficiency, for the sake of which people seem to have come together into a single constitution. Another concern, connected with this one and close to it, is the supervision of public and private property in the town, so that there is good order; the preservation and repair of buildings and roads that are falling into ruin; and of the boundaries between people's properties, so that there are no disputes; and all the other concerns of a similar kind. Most people call this sort of office the city-wardenship. It has several divisions, and in more populous cities different officials are appointed to different parts of it—for instance, wall-builders, supervisors of springs, and harbor guards. Another office is both necessary and closely similar to this one: it deals with the same matters, but for the countryside and the areas

outside the town. Some call these officials country-wardens, others forest-wardens. These, then, are three offices concerned with these matters. Another is the office to which the public revenues are delivered; its holders keep them and distribute them to each branch of administration. These officials are called receivers and treasurers. Another office is the one with which private contracts and the verdicts of the courts must be registered; with these same officials the filing of lawsuits and their introduction into court must also take place. In some places this office too is divided among several people, while elsewhere a single office has authority over all these matters. Its holders are called sacred recorders, overseers, recorders, and other names close to these.

Next after this, and closely connected with it, is perhaps the most necessary and the most difficult of the offices: the one concerned with exacting penalties from those who have been condemned, and from those posted 1322a on the lists of public debtors, and with the custody of prisoners. It is difficult because it incurs a great deal of hatred, so that where there is no large profit to be made, people will neither consent to hold it nor, having consented, be willing to act in accordance with the laws. But it is necessary, because there is no benefit in having lawsuits about people's rights if the verdicts are not carried out. So if people cannot live in community with one another when there are no lawsuits, neither can they when penalties are not exacted. It is better, therefore, that this should not be a single office, but that different people, drawn from different courts, should carry it out; and one should try to divide up the posting of those registered as debtors in the same way. Further, some penalties should be exacted by the other offices as well, and those imposed by outgoing officials should rather be exacted by the new ones; and where sitting officials have imposed a penalty, one office should condemn and a different one exact—for instance, the city-wardens should exact the penalties imposed by the market-wardens, and other officials those imposed by the city-wardens. For the less hatred attaches to those who exact

penalties, the more fully the penalties will be carried out. When the same people both condemn and exact, the hatred is doubled; and when the same people do so in every case, it makes them enemies of everyone. In many places, too, the office that guards prisoners is kept separate from the one that exacts penalties—at Athens, for example, the office of the so-called Eleven. So it is better to separate this office too, and to look for some clever device in its case as well.[6] For it is no less necessary than the one just mentioned, but it happens that decent people especially avoid this office, while it is not safe to put bad people in charge of it, since they themselves need guarding more than they are able to guard others. So there should not be one office assigned to guarding prisoners, nor the same one continuously. Instead, different people should take charge of it in turn—drawn from the young men, where there is an organization of ephebes or garrison troops, and from the officials.[7]

These offices, then, must be ranked first, as the most necessary. After them come offices that are no less necessary but are ranked at a higher level of dignity, since they require much experience and trustworthiness. Such would be the offices concerned with guarding the city and those assigned to military needs. Both in peace and in war there must be officials to supervise the guarding of gates and walls, and the inspection and marshaling of the citizens. In some places there are several offices for all these functions, in others fewer—in small cities, for instance, a single one for all of them. Officials of this kind are called generals and [1322b] polemarchs.[8] Further, if there are cavalry, light-armed troops, archers, or a navy, an office is sometimes set up over each of these too. These are called the admiralty, the cavalry command, and the infantry command, and, in turn, the subordinate commands of trierarchs, company cap-

6 The Eleven: the Athenian officials in charge of the prison and of carrying out executions.

7 Ephebes: young men of about eighteen to twenty doing their military training and service.

8 Polemarchs: literally "war-leaders," a title for military commanders in many Greek cities.

tains, and tribal cavalry commanders, with all their subdivisions. But the whole of this is one kind of thing: the supervision of military affairs.

That is how things stand with this office. Since some offices, if not all, handle a great deal of public money, there must be another office to receive their accounts and audit them, which itself handles nothing else. Some call these officials examiners, others accountants, others auditors, others advocates. Besides all these offices there is the one that has the most authority over everything. For the same office often has control over both the final decision and the introduction of proposals, or presides over the multitude where the people is sovereign; for the body that convenes the sovereign body must itself be sovereign in the constitution. In some places it is called the preliminary council, because it deliberates in advance; but where there is a popular multitude, it is rather called the council. These, then, are roughly the political offices. Another kind of supervision concerns the gods: for instance, priests, and supervisors of matters concerning the temples—the preservation of existing buildings and the restoration of those falling into ruin—and of everything else assigned to the gods. In some places this supervision is a single office, as in small cities; in others there are many, separate from the priesthood—for instance, supervisors of sacrifices, temple guardians, and treasurers of sacred funds. Connected with this is the office set apart for all the public sacrifices that the law does not assign to the priests, but whose honor derives from the common hearth of the city. Some call these officials archons, others kings, others prytaneis.[9]

To sum up, then, the necessary kinds of supervision concern: religious matters and military matters; revenues and expenditures; the marketplace, the town, the harbors, and the countryside; further, the courts, the registration of transactions, the exaction of penalties, and the custody of prisoners; the auditing, inspection, and examination of officials; and, finally, the offices

9 Archons, kings, prytaneis: titles of magistrates with religious duties; at Athens, for example, the "king archon" oversaw the ancestral rites.

concerned with deliberating about public affairs. Peculiar to cities that have more leisure and are more prosperous, and that also care about decorum, are the supervision of women, guardianship of the laws, supervision of children, [1323a] and management of the gymnasia; and in addition to these, the supervision of athletic and Dionysiac contests and of any other such public spectacles there may happen to be. Some of these offices are plainly not democratic—for instance, the supervision of women and of children; for the poor have no choice but to use their wives and children as attendants, since they have no slaves. Of the three offices under which some cities choose their sovereign officials—guardians of the law, preliminary councilors, and a council—the guardians of the law are an aristocratic feature, the preliminary councilors oligarchic, and a council democratic. So much, then, for a sketch covering practically all the offices.

Book VII

The best life and the ideal city.

CHAPTER 1

Anyone who is going to conduct a proper inquiry into the best constitution must first determine what the most choiceworthy life is. For as long as this is unclear, the best constitution must be unclear too, since it is fitting that those who live under the best constitution their circumstances allow should fare best, unless something unexpected happens. So we must first agree on what life is most choiceworthy for practically everyone, and after that whether the same life is most choiceworthy in common and for individuals, or a different one. Now, since we think that much of what is said about the best life in our popular discussions is adequate, we should make use of it here too. For truly, with regard to one division at least, no one would dispute that, of the three classes of goods—external goods, goods of the body, and goods of the soul—all of them ought to belong to those who are blessed.[1] No one would call a person blessed who has no share of courage, moderation, justice, or practical wisdom, but is afraid of the flies buzzing past him, stops at nothing, however extreme, when he wants something to eat or drink, ruins his dearest friends for the sake of a quarter-obol, and is just as senseless and deluded in his thinking as a child or someone out of his mind. But while everyone would agree with these claims once they are stated, people differ about the amount and the

1 "Popular discussions" (exōterikoi logoi): accounts meant for a wider audience than Aristotle's own school.

degrees of superiority. They think it enough to have any amount of excellence at all, but they pursue wealth, property, power, reputation, and all such things to an unlimited excess. We, however, will tell them that it is easy to become convinced about these matters from the facts as well, when we see that people do not acquire and keep the excellences by means of external goods, but external goods by means of the excellences; [1323b] and that living happily—whether for human beings it consists in enjoyment, or in excellence, or in both—belongs more to those who are cultivated to an exceptional degree in character and thought but moderate in their acquisition of external goods, than to those who possess more of those goods than is useful but are deficient in these. Not only that: the matter is also easy to see if one considers it by argument. For external goods have a limit, like any tool (and everything useful is useful for something), and an excess of them must either harm their possessors or be of no benefit to them; whereas each of the goods of the soul is the more useful the more it exceeds—if one should apply to these goods not only the word "fine" but also "useful." And in general it is clear that we will say that the best condition of each thing stands to that of another in accordance with the same superiority that the things themselves, whose conditions we say these are, have over each other. So if the soul is more precious than both property and the body, both without qualification and for us, the best condition of each must stand in the same proportion as they do. Further, it is for the sake of the soul that these things are by nature choiceworthy, and that everyone of good sense ought to choose them—not the soul for their sake.

Let us take it as agreed, then, that each person has just as much happiness as he has excellence and practical wisdom and action in accordance with them. We can call on god as a witness to this: he is happy and blessed, but not because of any external good; rather, because of himself and because he is of a certain nature. This is also why good fortune must be different from happiness; for the cause of goods external to the soul is chance and fortune, but no one is just or moderate from fortune or

because of fortune. Following from this, and depending on the same arguments, is that the best city is the one that is happy and does well. It is impossible for those who do not do fine things to do well; and there is no fine deed, either of a man or of a city, without excellence and practical wisdom. The courage, justice, and practical wisdom of a city have the same power and form as the qualities by sharing in which each human being is called just, practically wise, and moderate. But let this much serve as a preface to our discussion. It is impossible not to touch on these matters, yet it is not possible to go through all the arguments proper to them—that is a task for another occasion. For now let us take this much as our basis: that the best life, both for each individual separately and for cities in common, is the life of excellence equipped 1324a with enough resources to take part in the actions that accord with excellence. As for those who dispute this, we must set them aside for the present inquiry and consider them later, if anyone happens to be unpersuaded by what has been said.

THE POLITICAL LIFE AND THE LIFE OF CONQUEST

Is the political life best for a person, and should a city aim at ruling its neighbors?

It remains to say whether we should declare the happiness of each individual human being to be the same as that of a city or not. This too is evident: everyone would agree that it is the same. Those who place living well in wealth in the case of an individual also call the whole city blessed if it is rich; those who honor the tyrant's life above all would say that the city that rules over the most people is happiest; and if someone approves of an individual because of his excellence, he will also say that the more excellent city is happier. But there are now two questions that need investigation. One is which life is more choiceworthy: the life of taking part in politics along with others and sharing in a city, or rather the life of a foreigner, released from the political community. The other is which constitution and what

arrangement of the city we should regard as best—whether sharing in a city is choiceworthy for everyone, or not for some but for most. Since it is the task of political thought and study to consider this second question, and not what is choiceworthy for each individual, and this is the inquiry we have now chosen, the first question would be a side issue, while the second is the task of this inquiry. That the best constitution must be the arrangement under which anyone at all would do best and live blessedly is evident. But even among those who agree that the life accompanied by excellence is most choiceworthy, there is dispute whether the political and practical life is choiceworthy, or rather the life released from all external things—a life of contemplation, say, which some claim is the only life for a philosopher. For these are roughly the two lives that the people most ambitious for excellence, in earlier times and now, appear to choose: I mean the political life and the philosophical. And it makes no small difference which way the truth lies; for the person of good sense must direct himself toward the better goal—each individual human being, and the constitution in common. Some think that ruling over one's neighbors, if it is done in the manner of a master, involves injustice of the gravest kind, and if it is done politically, involves no injustice but does get in the way of one's own well-being. Others hold views that are, so to speak, the opposite of these: they think that the practical and political life is the only life for a man, since the actions that express each excellence are no more open to private individuals [1324b] than to those who engage in public affairs and politics. Some, then, take this view; others say that only the despotic and tyrannical form of constitution is happy. And among some peoples this is actually the defining aim of the constitution and the laws: that they may rule as masters over their neighbors. That is why, although most customary laws among most peoples lie about in a jumble, so to speak, still, where laws do look to a single thing, they all aim at domination—as in Sparta and Crete, where both the education and the bulk of the laws are organized, more or less, for war. Further, among all the nations that

are able to aggrandize themselves, this sort of power is held in honor—for instance, among the Scythians, Persians, Thracians, and Celts. Among some there are even laws that spur people on to this kind of excellence. At Carthage, they say, men receive an ornament of rings for each campaign they have served on; and there was once a law in Macedonia that a man who had not killed an enemy had to wear a halter in place of a belt. Among the Scythians, a man who had not killed an enemy was not allowed to drink from the cup passed around at a certain festival; and among the Iberians, a warlike people, they fix as many spikes around a man's tomb as the number of enemies he has killed. And there are many other such practices among other peoples, some established by laws, others by custom.

Yet it would perhaps seem utterly absurd to anyone willing to reflect on it if the work of the statesman were to be able to figure out how to rule and master his neighbors, whether they are willing or not. How could that be a matter of politics or legislation, when it is not even lawful? And it is not lawful to rule not only justly but also unjustly—and one can dominate even without justice. Nor do we see this in the other sciences: it is not the work of the doctor or of the ship's pilot to persuade or to force, respectively, his patients or his passengers. But most people seem to think that mastery is statesmanship, and they are not ashamed to practice toward others what each of them says is neither just nor advantageous for themselves. Among themselves they seek just rule, but where others are concerned they care nothing for what is just. But this is absurd, unless by nature some things are fit to be mastered and others are not. So if that is how things stand, one should not try to master everyone, but only those fit to be mastered—just as one should not hunt human beings for a feast or a sacrifice, but only what is fit to be hunted for that purpose; and what is fit to be hunted is any wild animal that is edible. And yet a single city could also be happy 1325a on its own—one that is, obviously, well governed—if it is possible for a city to be settled somewhere by itself and to live under excellent laws. The structure of its constitution will not be

directed toward war or toward dominating enemies, since we are to suppose there is nothing of that kind. It is clear, then, that all concerns with war should be regarded as fine, but not as the highest end of all; they are for the sake of that end. It is the work of the excellent lawgiver to consider how a city, a people, and every other community will share in the good life and in the happiness open to them. Some of the laws laid down will differ, however; and it also belongs to legislative science to see, if there are neighbors, what sorts of practices should be cultivated toward what sorts of people, or how to adopt the appropriate practices toward each. But this question—what end the best constitution should aim at—may well receive its proper consideration later.

THE ACTIVE LIFE AND THE LIFE OF THOUGHT

The best life is active, but self-contained thought is the most complete kind of activity.

To those who agree that the life accompanied by excellence is most choiceworthy but disagree about how it is to be exercised, we must address both sides. Some reject political offices, thinking that the life of a free person is different from the political life and most choiceworthy of all; others think the political life is best, since it is impossible for someone who does nothing to do well, and doing well and happiness are the same thing. We must tell them that each side is partly right and partly wrong. The first side is right that the life of a free person is better than that of a master. That is true: there is nothing dignified in using a slave as a slave, for giving orders about necessities has no share in anything fine. But it is not correct to think that all rule is the rule of a master. Rule over free people differs from rule over slaves no less than the naturally free differs from the natural slave; these matters were adequately distinguished in our first discussions. And it is not true to praise inaction above action; for happiness is action, and the actions of just and moderate people have as their end the achievement of many fine things.

Yet someone might perhaps suppose, given these distinctions, that having authority over everyone is best, since that way one would have authority over the greatest number of the finest actions. So, on this view, someone who is able to rule should not give way to his neighbor but rather take power from him, and a father should take no account of his children, nor children of their father, nor in general any friend of a friend, nor give this any thought; for the best is most choiceworthy, and doing well is best. Now perhaps what they say would be true if 1325b the most choiceworthy thing there is will belong to those who rob and use force. But perhaps it cannot belong to them, and this assumption is false. For a person's actions can no longer be fine if he does not surpass others as much as a husband surpasses his wife, a father his children, or a master his slaves. So someone who transgresses could never later achieve anything great enough to make up for how far he has already departed from excellence. For among those who are similar, the fine and the just consist in taking turns, since that is what is equal and similar; and to give what is unequal to equals and what is dissimilar to similars is contrary to nature, and nothing contrary to nature is fine. That is why, if there is someone else who is superior in excellence and in the capacity to carry out the best actions, it is fine to follow him and just to obey him. But he must have not only excellence but also the capacity that will make him effective in action. If these things are well said, and happiness is to be regarded as doing well, then the practical life would be the best life both for every city in common and for each individual. But the practical life need not be directed toward others, as some think, nor are only those thoughts practical that are pursued for the sake of the results of acting. Much more practical are the kinds of contemplation and thinking that are complete in themselves and pursued for their own sake. For doing well is the end, and so it too is a kind of action; and those whom we say act in the most authoritative sense, even in the case of external actions, are the master builders who direct them by their thinking. Nor, again, need cities that are situated on their

own and have chosen to live that way be inactive, since activity can take place among their parts: the parts of a city have many kinds of community with one another. The same holds for any single human being too. Otherwise god and the whole universe could hardly be in a fine condition, since they have no external actions besides their own proper ones. It is evident, then, that the best life must be the same both for each human being and for cities and human beings in common.

THE SIZE OF THE IDEAL CITY

The best city is the largest self-sufficient population that can be taken in at a single view.

What has now been said about these matters is by way of preface, and we have already studied the other constitutions earlier. So the starting point for the rest is first to say what the presuppositions should be for the city that is to be established as we would pray for it. For the best constitution cannot come into being without commensurate resources. So we must presuppose many things as if praying for them—though none of them should be impossible. I mean, for instance, the number of citizens and the territory. For just as other craftsmen, such as a weaver or a shipbuilder, must have 1326a material suitable for their work (the better prepared it is, the finer the product of the craft is bound to be), so too the statesman and the lawgiver must have their proper material in a suitable condition.

The first of the political resources is the population: how many human beings there should be, and of what sort by nature; and likewise with the territory: how large and of what sort it should be. Now most people think that a happy city must be large. But even if that is true, they don't know what sort of city is large and what sort is small. They judge a large city by the number of its inhabitants, but one should look not to number but to capacity. For a city too has a certain function, so the city best able to fulfill it should be regarded as the largest—just as one would say that Hippocrates is greater, not as a human being

but as a doctor, than someone who exceeds him in bodily size.[2] Still, even if one should judge by looking to the number, one should not go by any chance multitude (for cities must perhaps contain a large number of slaves, resident foreigners, and visitors), but only by those who are a part of the city—the proper parts of which a city is composed. A preponderance of these in number is a sign of a large city; but a city from which many vulgar craftsmen go out to war, but few hoplites, cannot be large. For a large city and a populous one are not the same.

Moreover, this too is evident from the facts: it is difficult, perhaps impossible, for an excessively populous city to be well governed. At any rate, of the cities reputed to be well governed, we see none that is lax about the size of its population. This is also clear from argument. Law is a kind of order, and good government must be good order; but an excessively large number cannot share in order—that would be the work of a divine power, the kind that holds this whole universe together. Hence the finest city must be the one that combines size with the limit just mentioned. For beauty usually lies in number and magnitude; but there is also a measure of size for a city, as for everything else—animals, plants, tools. None of these will have its proper capacity if it is either too small or excessively large; sometimes it will be wholly deprived of its nature, sometimes it will be in poor condition. A ship a span long, for instance, will not be a ship at all, nor will one two stades long; and when it reaches a certain size, sometimes [1326b] its smallness will make it sail badly, sometimes its excessive size. Similarly, a city made up of too few people is not self-sufficient (whereas a city is something self-sufficient), while one made up of far too many is self-sufficient in necessities, like a nation, but is not a city, since it is not easy for it to have a constitution. Who will be general of an excessively large multitude? Or who will be its herald, unless he has the voice of Stentor?[3] So the first city must be one made up of a pop-

2 Hippocrates of Cos: the most famous physician of the fifth century BC.
3 Stentor: a herald in the *Iliad* whose voice was as loud as fifty men's. A stade was about 600 feet.

ulation large enough to be the smallest number self-sufficient for living well in a political community. It is possible for a city that exceeds this in number to be a greater city, but, as we said, this is not unlimited. What the limit of the excess is can easily be seen from the facts. The actions of a city are those of the rulers and those of the ruled, and the work of a ruler is to give orders and to judge. To judge about matters of justice and to distribute offices according to merit, the citizens must know one another and what sort of people they are; where this does not happen, things are bound to go badly with offices and judgments. It is unjust to improvise about either—which is plainly what happens in an excessively large population. Further, it is easy for foreigners and resident aliens to share in the constitution, since it is not hard to escape notice when the population is so excessively large. It is clear, then, that the best limit for a city is this: the largest population, for self-sufficiency of life, that can be taken in at a single view. Let this be our account of the size of a city.

THE TERRITORY

The territory should be self-sufficient, defensible and large enough for a life of leisure.

The same holds, roughly, for the territory. As for what sort it should be, clearly everyone would praise the most self-sufficient; and such a territory must be one that produces everything, since to have everything and need nothing is self-sufficiency. In extent and size it should be large enough that its inhabitants can live a life of leisure, liberally and at the same time moderately. Whether we are right or wrong to set this limit must be examined more precisely later, when we come to discuss property in general and wealth in possessions—how and in what way one should be disposed toward their use. For there are many disputes about this question, owing to those who pull toward one or the other extreme of life, some toward stinginess, others toward luxury. The configuration of the territory is not hard to state (though on some points one must also take the

advice of those experienced in generalship): it should be difficult for enemies to invade and easy for the inhabitants to march out of. [1327a] Further, just as we said that the population should be easy to take in at a glance, so should the territory; and a territory easy to take in at a glance is one that is easy to defend. As for the site of the city, if it is to be as we would pray for, it should be well situated with regard both to the sea and to the territory. One criterion is the one already mentioned: the city should be accessible from every part of the territory for sending out help. The other is that the crops produced should be easy to transport to it, as well as timber, and any other such material for working that the territory may happen to have.

THE CITY AND THE SEA

Access to the sea and a navy are useful if trade and sailors are kept in their place.

Concerning communication with the sea, there is much dispute whether it is beneficial or harmful to well-governed cities. People say that having visitors who have been brought up under other laws is detrimental to good government, and so is a large population. For this arises, they say, from using the sea to send out and receive a crowd of merchants, and it runs contrary to good government. Well, if these consequences do not follow, it is clear that it is better, both for security and for a good supply of necessities, for the city and its territory to have access to the sea. For to bear wars more easily, those who are to be kept safe must be easy to assist both ways, by land and by sea; and to harm attackers, if one cannot do so both ways, one will be better able to do so one way if one has access to both. Also, importing what they happen not to have at home, and exporting the surplus of what they produce, are among the necessities. For a city should be a trading city for its own benefit, not for others'. Those who make themselves a market for everyone do so for the sake of revenue; but a city that ought not to share in that kind of profiteering ought not to have that sort of trading post either. We see

even now that many territories and cities have ports and harbors conveniently situated in relation to the city, so that they neither form part of the same town nor are too far away, but are commanded by walls and other such fortifications. It is evident, then, that if some good comes from communication through them, the city will have it, and if something harmful, it is easy to guard against it by laws stating and defining who must and who must not mix with one another.

As for naval power, it is clear that it is best to have it up to a certain size (for a city should be formidable, and able to help, not [1327b] only for itself but also for some of its neighbors, by sea as well as by land). As for the number and size of this force, one must look to the city's way of life. If it is going to live a life of leadership and politics, it must have this power too, in proportion to its activities. But the large population that comes with the mass of sailors need not be present in cities, since these people should be no part of the city. The marines are free and belong to the infantry; it is they who are in authority and command the ship. And if there is a large number of perioikoi and of those who farm the land, there is bound to be an abundance of sailors as well. We see this even now in some cases—for instance, the city of the Heracleots: they man many triremes, though the city they possess is more modest in size than others.[4]

Let this, then, be our account of the territory, the harbors of cities, the sea, and naval power. As for the citizen body, we said earlier what its limit should be; let us now say what sort of people they should be by nature.

THE NATURE OF THE CITIZENS

Citizens should be both spirited and intelligent, as Aristotle says the Greeks are.

One could get a fair idea of this by looking at the Greek cities that are well regarded and at the whole inhabited world, and how it is divided among the nations. The nations in cold places,

4 Probably Heraclea on the southern coast of the Black Sea.

and those in Europe, are full of spirit but somewhat lacking in thought and skill; that is why they remain comparatively free but lack political organization and are unable to rule their neighbors. Those in Asia are intelligent and skillful in soul but lack spirit; that is why they remain ruled and enslaved. The Greek race, just as it lies in the middle geographically, shares in both: it is both spirited and intelligent. That is why it remains free, is best governed, and would be able to rule everyone if it happened to form a single constitution.[5] The Greek nations also differ from one another in the same way: some have a one-sided nature, while others are well blended with respect to both these capacities. It is evident, then, that those who are going to be easily guided toward excellence by the lawgiver should be both intelligent and spirited by nature. Some say that the guardians should be affectionate toward those they know and fierce toward strangers; but it is spirit that produces affection, since it is the capacity 1328a of the soul by which we love. A sign of this: spirit is roused more against intimates and friends than against strangers when it thinks itself slighted. That is why Archilochus, fittingly, when reproaching his friends, addresses his own spirit: "For it's by your friends that you are choked."[6]

Both ruling and freedom come to everyone from this capacity, for spirit is commanding and unconquerable. But it is not well said that they should be harsh toward strangers; one should not be like that toward anyone, and people who are great-souled are not fierce by nature, except toward wrongdoers. And they feel this still more toward their intimates, as was said before, if they think they have been wronged. This happens with good reason: where they think a benefit is owed to them, they consider themselves deprived of it on top of the harm done. Hence the sayings "For wars between brothers are harsh" and "Those who loved beyond measure / also hate beyond measure."[7]

5 Spirit (thumos): the passionate, assertive element of the soul, source of anger and courage.
6 The guardians allude to Plato's *Republic*. Archilochus: a Greek poet of the seventh century BC.
7 The first line is a fragment of Euripides; the source of the second is unknown.

Concerning those who take part in the constitution, then—how many there should be and of what sort by nature—and also the territory, how large and of what sort, we have pretty much reached our determinations (for one should not seek the same precision in theoretical discussions as in what comes to us through perception).

WHAT A CITY NEEDS, AND WHAT IS PART OF IT

Aristotle lists the functions a city requires: food, crafts, arms, wealth, worship and judgment.

In other things composed by nature, the things without which the whole could not exist are not parts of the whole composition. So it is clear that we should not regard as parts of a city all the things that cities must have—nor of any other community from which some single kind of thing results (for there must be some one thing that is common to the partners and the same for all of them, whether they share in it equally or unequally)—whether this is food, or an amount of land, or something else of that kind. But when one thing is for the sake of something and the other is that for the sake of which, they have nothing in common, except that the one produces and the other receives. I mean, for instance, any tool, and the craftsmen, in relation to the work produced: there is nothing that comes to be in common between a house and a builder; rather, the builders' craft is for the sake of the house. So cities need property, but property is no part of the city—though many parts of property are living things. The city is a community of similar people, for the sake of the best life possible. Since happiness is the best thing, and it is an activity and a complete exercise of excellence, and it has turned out that some people can share in it while others can do so only a little or not at all, this is clearly the reason why there come to be different kinds and varieties of cities and a plurality of constitutions. For each people pursues happiness in a different way and by [1328b] different means, and so they make their ways of life and their constitutions different. We must also con-

sider how many there are of these things without which a city could not exist; for what we call the parts of a city would be among them, which is why they must be present. We must therefore take stock of the number of functions, since from these it will become clear. First, there must be food; next, crafts (for life needs many tools); third, arms (for those who share in the community must have arms among themselves too, both to maintain rule, because of those who disobey, and against those from outside who try to do them wrong); further, a certain abundance of money, so that they have it both for their own needs and for the needs of war; fifth—and first—the care of the divine, which they call priesthood; and sixth in number, and most necessary of all, judgment about what is advantageous and what is just in people's dealings with one another. These, then, are the functions that practically every city needs (for a city is not just any multitude but one self-sufficient for life, as we say, and if any of these happens to be lacking, it is impossible for this community to be self-sufficient without qualification). So a city must be organized in accordance with these functions. There must therefore be a multitude of farmers to provide the food, and craftsmen, and the fighting element, and the well-off, and priests, and judges of what is necessary and advantageous.

WHO SHOULD BE CITIZENS

Citizens serve as soldiers when young, rulers when older and priests in old age; laborers are excluded.

With these distinctions made, it remains to consider whether everyone should share in all of these (for it is possible for the same people all to be farmers and craftsmen and those who deliberate and judge), or whether we should assume different people for each of the functions mentioned, or whether some of them are necessarily private and others common. It is not the same in every constitution. For, as we said, it is possible for all to share in all, or for not all to share in all but some in some. That is precisely what makes constitutions different: in demo-

cracies all share in all, and in oligarchies the opposite. We are investigating the best constitution, and this is the one under which the city would be happiest; and it was said earlier that happiness cannot exist without excellence. It is evident from this that in the city governed most finely—the one that possesses men who are just without qualification, not just relative to some presupposition—the citizens should not live the life of vulgar craftsmen or of traders (such a life is ignoble and opposed to excellence). Nor should those who are going [1329a] to be citizens be farmers (for leisure is needed both for the development of excellence and for political activities).

Since the military element, and the element that deliberates about what is advantageous and judges about what is just, are also present, and appear to be parts of the city in the fullest sense, should these too be regarded as distinct, or should both be assigned to the same people? This too is evident: in one way to the same people, in another way to different ones. Insofar as each of these functions belongs to a different prime of life, and one requires practical wisdom and the other strength, to different people. But insofar as it is impossible for those who are able to use force and resist to put up with always being ruled, to the same people. For those who control the arms also control whether the constitution survives or not. It remains, then, to assign this constitution to the same people for both functions, but not at the same time. Rather, just as by nature strength is found in younger people and practical wisdom in older ones, it seems both advantageous and just to distribute the functions between them in this way, since this division accords with merit. Moreover, the property too must belong to these people. For the citizens must be well off, and these are the citizens. The vulgar class has no share in the city, nor does any other class that is not a producer of excellence. This is clear from our presupposition: happiness must go together with excellence, and one should call a city happy not by looking at some part of it but at all its citizens. It is also evident that the property must belong to them, if the farmers must be slaves or non-Greek perioikoi. Of

the groups we listed, what remains is the class of priests. Their place too is evident. Neither a farmer nor a vulgar craftsman should be appointed priest, since it is fitting for the gods to be honored by citizens. And since the citizen body has been divided into two parts, namely the armed and the deliberative, and it is fitting that those who have retired because of their age should render worship to the gods and find their rest in their service, it is to these that the priesthoods should be assigned.

We have now said what a city cannot be constituted without, and what the parts of a city are: farmers, craftsmen, and the whole class of hired laborers are necessary to cities, while the parts of the city are the armed and the deliberative elements; and each of these is separate from the others, the one permanently, the other by turns.

ANCIENT PRECEDENTS AND THE DIVISION OF LAND

Class divisions and common meals are ancient; the land is split into public and private portions.

It seems that it is not now, or recently, that this has become known to those who philosophize about constitutions: that the city should be divided into separate classes 1329b and the fighting class kept distinct from the farming one. In Egypt things are still arranged that way even now, and in Crete too; Sesostris, they say, legislated this way for Egypt, and Minos for Crete. The institution of common meals also seems to be ancient: in Crete it arose during the reign of Minos, but in Italy it is far older than that.[8] The learned among the inhabitants there say that a certain Italus became king of Oenotria, and that from him they changed their name and were called Itali instead of Oenotrians, and that this promontory of Europe took the name Italy—the part lying between the Scylletic and Lametic gulfs, which are half a day's journey apart. This Italus, they say, turned the Oenotrians from nomads into farmers, gave them various laws, and was the first to establish common meals. That is why even now some of his

8 Sesostris: a legendary lawgiving king of Egypt.

descendants still use common meals and some of his laws. The region toward Tyrrhenia was inhabited by the Opici, who both formerly and now bear the name Ausonians; the region toward Iapygia and the Ionian Sea, the so-called Siritis, by the Chones, who were also Oenotrians by descent.[9] The institution of common meals, then, originated there first, while the division of the citizen body by classes came from Egypt; for the reign of Sesostris long predates that of Minos. We should suppose, roughly, that other things too have been discovered many times over in the long course of time—or rather countless times. For it is likely that need itself teaches what is necessary, and that once this is in place, things contributing to refinement and abundance should reasonably develop. So we must suppose that the same holds for constitutional arrangements too. That all these things are ancient is shown by the case of Egypt: the Egyptians are reputed to be the most ancient people, yet they have always had laws and a political order. So we should make adequate use of what has been discovered, and try to seek out what has been neglected.

It was said earlier that the land should belong to those who possess arms and share in the constitution, and why those who farm it should be different from them, and how large and of what sort the territory should be. We must now first discuss the distribution of land and the farmers—who they should be and of what sort. For we say that property should not be common, 1330a as some have said, but should become common in use, in a friendly way, and that no citizen should lack sustenance. As for common meals, everyone agrees that it is useful for well-organized cities to have them; why we too agree, we will say later. All the citizens should share in them; but it is not easy for the poor both to contribute the assessed amount from their private means and to manage the rest of their household. Further, expenses relating to the gods are common to the whole city. So the territory must be divided into two parts, one public and the

9 Oenotria: the toe of southern Italy (modern Calabria). Tyrrhenia is Etruria; Iapygia, the heel of Italy.

other private, and each of these divided in two again. Of the public land, one part should go to the service of the gods and the other to the expense of the common meals; of the private land, one part should be near the frontier and the other near the city, so that, with two lots assigned to each person, everyone shares in both locations. That way there is equality and justice, and greater unanimity about wars with neighbors. For where things are not arranged this way, some make light of hostility with the neighboring peoples, while others worry about it too much and beyond what is fine. That is why in some places there is a law that those whose land borders on neighboring peoples may not take part in deliberation about wars against them, on the grounds that their private interest would keep them from deliberating well. The territory, then, must be divided in this way for the reasons stated. Those who are to farm it should ideally, if we are to have what we would pray for, be slaves—not all of the same stock, and not spirited (that way they would be useful for work and safe from attempting revolution); and second best, non-Greek perioikoi similar in nature to those just described. Of these, those on private land should belong privately to the owners of the estates, and those on public land should be public. How slaves should be treated, and why it is better for all slaves to have their freedom held out as a reward, we will say later.

THE SITE OF THE CITY AND ITS WALLS

The city needs a healthy, defensible site, good water, mixed street plans and walls.

That the city should, as far as possible, have access alike to the mainland, the sea, and the whole territory has been said earlier. As for its own site, we should pray that it be on a slope, looking to four considerations. First, as something necessary, health: cities that slope toward the east, and toward the winds that blow from the sunrise, are healthier; second, those that face north, since these are better in winter. Among the remaining considerations, 1330b it should be well situated for political and military

activities. For military activities, it should be easy for the inhabitants to march out of but hard for their opponents to approach and to surround. It should ideally have its own plentiful supply of water and springs; but failing that, a way has been found: constructing large and plentiful cisterns for rainwater, so that water never runs short when the inhabitants are cut off from the countryside by war. And since one must take thought for the health of the inhabitants, and this depends, first, on the place being well situated in a healthy spot and facing a healthy direction, and second, on using healthy water, this too must be attended to seriously. For the things we use most and most often for the body contribute most to health; and water and air have this sort of effect. That is why in cities with good sense, if not all water is equally good and there is no abundance of such springs, drinking water should be kept separate from water for other uses.

As for fortified positions, what is advantageous is not the same for all constitutions. An acropolis, for instance, suits oligarchy and monarchy; level ground suits democracy; and neither suits aristocracy, but rather a number of strongholds. The layout of private houses is thought pleasanter and more useful for other activities if it is well laid out in straight streets in the newer, Hippodamian style; but for security in war the opposite is better, as things were in ancient times, since that arrangement was hard for foreign troops to get into and hard for attackers to find their way around. So a city should have both. This is possible if one lays out the houses the way some farmers plant what they call "clusters" of vines; and one should not lay out the whole city in straight streets, but only certain parts and districts. That way it will be well arranged both for security and for beauty.

As for walls, those who say that cities laying claim to excellence should not have them hold a very old-fashioned view—and this when they see that the cities that prided themselves on that have been refuted by events. Against those who are similar and not much superior in number, it is not fine to try to save oneself

by the strength of one's walls. But since it can happen that the superiority of the attackers is too great for human excellence, present in a few, to withstand, then, if the city is to be saved and not suffer harm or outrage, one must regard the strongest fortification of walls as the most warlike measure, 1331a especially now that projectiles and siege engines have been developed to such precision.[10] For to demand that cities not be surrounded by walls is like wanting the territory to be easy to invade and removing its mountainous areas—or, similarly, like not putting walls around private houses, on the grounds that their inhabitants will become cowardly. Nor should we overlook this: those who have walls around their city can treat their cities in both ways, as walled and as unwalled, whereas those who have none cannot. If so, not only should walls be built, but care should also be taken that they be a fitting ornament for the city and suited to military needs, both the others and those newly devised. For just as attackers take care to find ways of gaining the advantage, so too some means have been discovered, and others the defenders must seek out and think up; for people do not even attempt to attack those who are well prepared in the first place.

MARKETPLACES, TEMPLES AND GUARDHOUSES

Aristotle lays out a free marketplace, a trading market, temples and guardhouses.

Since the citizen body must be distributed among common meals, and the walls divided at suitable places by guardhouses and towers, it is clear that these circumstances invite us to set up some of the common meals in these guardhouses. These things, then, might be arranged in this way. The dwellings assigned to the gods and the common meals of the most authoritative offices should have a suitable location, and the same one —except for those temples that the law, or some oracle from Delphi, sets apart. Such a place would be one conspicuous enough for the excellence of its position, and better fortified in

10 Chiefly an allusion to Sparta, which long prided itself on having no walls.

relation to the neighboring parts of the city. Below this place it is fitting to lay out a marketplace of the kind they have in Thessaly, which they call the "free" marketplace. This is one that must be kept clear of all goods for sale, and no vulgar craftsman, farmer, or anyone else of that sort may enter it unless summoned by the officials. The place would be pleasant if the gymnasia of the older men were located there too. For this ornament too should be divided by ages: some officials should spend their time among the younger men, while the older men spend theirs among the officials. For the presence of officials before people's eyes, above all, instills true respect and the fear befitting free [1331b] people. The marketplace for goods should be different from this one and separate, in a location convenient for collecting everything sent from the sea and from the countryside.

Since the leading element of the city is divided into priests and officials, it is fitting that the priests' common meals too be located near the sacred buildings. Of the offices, those that supervise contracts, the filing of lawsuits, summonses, and other such administration, and also market supervision and what is called city supervision, should be established near a marketplace and some common meeting place; and the area around the marketplace for necessities is such a place. For we assign the upper marketplace to leisure, and this one to necessary activities. The same arrangement should also be imitated in the countryside. There too the officials whom some call forest-wardens and others country-wardens must have guardhouses and common meals for defense, and there should also be temples distributed throughout the countryside, some to gods and some to heroes. But it is idle to spend time now going into precise detail and discussing such matters. It is not hard to think of such things, but rather to carry them out: talking about them is a matter of prayer, but their coming about is a matter of fortune. So let us leave any further discussion of such matters aside for now.

HAPPINESS AND THE MAKING OF GOOD CITIZENS

Happiness is the complete exercise of excellence; people become good through nature, habit and reason.

We must now discuss the constitution itself: of what and of what sort of people the city must be composed if it is going to be blessed and well governed. There are two things on which everyone's well-being depends: one is that the target and end of actions be rightly set; the other, finding the actions that lead to that end. (These can either conflict or agree with each other. Sometimes the target is well set, but people fail to achieve it in their actions; at other times they succeed in everything that leads to the end, but have set a bad end; and sometimes they fail in both, as in medicine:

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sometimes doctors do not judge well what a healthy body should be like, nor do they hit on the means productive of the goal they have set themselves. In the arts and sciences both must be mastered: the end and the actions leading to the end.) Now it is evident that everyone aims at living well and at happiness; but some have the opportunity for them and others do not, owing to fortune or nature (for living finely also requires some [1332a] equipment—less for those in a better condition, more for those in a worse); while others, though they have the opportunity, go about seeking happiness wrongly from the start. Since our purpose is to see the best constitution, and this is the one under which a city would be best governed, and a city would be best governed under the constitution under which it can be happiest, clearly we must not overlook what happiness is.

We say—and we have defined it in the *Ethics*, if those discussions are of any use—that it is a complete activity and exercise of excellence, and this not conditionally but without qualification. By "conditionally" I mean what is necessary, and by "without qualification" what is fine. For example, in the case of just

actions, just penalties and punishments spring from excellence, but they are necessary, and they are fine only in a necessary way (it would be more choiceworthy if neither individual nor city needed anything of the kind); whereas actions aimed at honors and prosperity are the finest actions without qualification. For the former are the removal of some evil, whereas actions of this kind are the opposite: they are the provision and creation of goods. The excellent man would deal finely with poverty, disease, and other bad fortune; but blessedness lies in their opposites. (This too was defined in our ethical discussions: the excellent person is the sort for whom, because of his excellence, the things that are good without qualification are good; and clearly his uses of them must also be excellent and fine without qualification.) That is why people think that external goods are the causes of happiness—as if one were to credit a brilliant and fine performance on the kithara to the instrument rather than to the skill.

From what has been said, then, some things must be present already and others must be provided by the lawgiver. That is why we pray that the city's composition be fortunate in the things over which fortune has authority (for we assume it does have authority over them); but the city's being excellent is no longer a matter of fortune but of knowledge and decision. Now a city is excellent through its citizens who share in the constitution being excellent; and in our city all the citizens share in the constitution. So we must consider how a man becomes excellent. For even if it were possible for all to be excellent without each of the citizens being so individually, the latter is more choiceworthy, since all being excellent follows from each being so. Now people become good and excellent through three things. These three are nature, habit, and reason. For first one must be born—as a human being, say, and not some other animal; and then with a certain sort of body and soul. But with some qualities it is no use [1332b] being born, since habits change them: there are some that are by nature capable of going either way, and through habits they are turned toward the worse or the

better. The other animals live mostly by nature, and some a little by habits too; but a human being lives also by reason, since he alone has reason. So these three must be in harmony with one another. For people do many things contrary to their habits and nature because of reason, if they are persuaded that some other way is better. What sort of nature those who are to be easily shaped by the lawgiver should have, we have determined earlier; the rest is now the work of education. For people learn some things by habituation and others by listening.

RULING IN TURN, AND WAR FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE

Citizens rule and are ruled by turns, and education must aim at peace and leisure, not conquest.

Since every political community is composed of rulers and ruled, we must consider whether rulers and ruled should be different people or the same throughout life; for clearly education too will have to follow this division. Now if one group differed from the others as much as we believe gods and heroes differ from human beings—having, first of all, a great superiority in body, and then in soul—so that the superiority of the rulers was indisputable and evident to the ruled, it would clearly be better for the same people always to rule and the others always to be ruled, once and for all. But since this is not easy to find, and there are no kings so different from their subjects as Scylax says there are among the Indians, it is evident that for many reasons everyone must share alike in ruling and being ruled in turn. For equality means the same for those who are similar, and it is hard for a constitution established contrary to justice to last.[11] For all those in the countryside side with the ruled in wanting revolution, and for those within the governing body to be so numerous as to be stronger than all of these is an impossibility. And yet that rulers must differ from the ruled is beyond dispute. How this is to happen, then, and how they are to share in rule, is

11 Scylax of Caryanda: a Greek explorer who sailed down the Indus for the Persian king Darius in the late sixth century BC.

something the lawgiver must consider. We have spoken of it before. Nature has supplied the distinction by making what is the same in kind partly younger and partly older; it is fitting for the younger to be ruled and the older to rule. No one resents being ruled on account of age, or thinks himself better than his rulers, especially when he is going to get back his contribution in turn once he reaches the proper age.

So in one sense we must say that the same people rule and are ruled, and in another sense different people. Hence 1333a education too must in one sense be the same and in another sense different. For people say that whoever is going to rule well must first be ruled. (Rule, as was said in our first discussions, is of two kinds: one is for the sake of the ruler, the other for the sake of the ruled. The first we call the rule of a master, the second rule over free people. Some of the tasks that are commanded differ not in the work itself but in what it is done for. That is why many tasks thought to be menial can be fine for free young people to perform: actions in themselves do not differ so much in being fine or not fine as in their end and in what they are done for.) Since we say that the excellence of a citizen and ruler is the same as that of the best man, and that the same person must first be ruled and later rule, the lawgiver would have to work out how men become good, through what practices, and what the end of the best life is.

The soul is divided into two parts: one has reason in itself, while the other does not have it in itself but is able to obey reason. To these belong, we say, the excellences in virtue of which a man is called good in some way. In which of the two the end lies more is not unclear, for those who divide the soul as we do. For the worse is always for the sake of the better, and this is evident alike in what comes about by craft and in what comes about by nature; and the part that has reason is the better. It in turn is divided in two, in the way we usually divide it: reason is either practical or theoretical. So this part too must clearly be divided in the same way. We will say that actions correspond to these parts, and that the actions of the part that is naturally bet-

ter must be more choiceworthy for those who are able to attain either all of them or two. For to each person that is always most choiceworthy which is the highest it is possible for him to attain. All of life, too, is divided into work and leisure, and into war and peace; and of the things we do, some aim at what is necessary and useful, others at what is fine. Here the same preference must hold as for the parts of the soul and their actions: war for the sake of peace, work for the sake of leisure, and necessary and useful things for the sake of fine ones. The statesman, then, must legislate with an eye to all of these, both to the parts of the soul and to their actions, but more to the better things and to the ends. The same holds for ways of life and for choices of what to do. One must be able to work and to wage war, [1333b] but still more to live in peace and at leisure; and to do what is necessary and useful, but still more what is fine. So it is with these aims in view that people must be educated, both while they are still children and at the other ages that need education.

But those Greeks who are now thought to have the best constitutions, and the lawgivers who established those constitutions, evidently did not arrange their constitutions with a view to the best end, nor their laws and education with a view to all the excellences; instead they vulgarly veered toward those that seemed useful and more likely to bring gain. Some later writers have expressed the same opinion in much the same way: praising the Spartan constitution, they admire the lawgiver's aim, because he framed all his laws for conquest and war. These views are easy to refute by argument, and events have now refuted them too. Just as most people envy mastery over many, because it supplies good fortune in abundance, so Thibron evidently admires the Spartan lawgiver, as does each of the others who write about their constitution, because training for danger enabled them to rule over many. Yet clearly, now that the Spartans no longer hold their empire, they are not happy, nor was their lawgiver good. And it is ridiculous that, though they have kept to his laws and nothing prevents them from using

those laws, they have lost the fine life. Nor do these writers have the right idea about the kind of rule the lawgiver should be seen to honor: rule over free people is finer than rule like a master's, and more bound up with excellence.[12] Further, a city should not be thought happy, nor its lawgiver praised, because he trained it to conquer so as to rule its neighbors; for this does great harm. Clearly it implies that any citizen who is able to should also try to achieve this very thing—to be able to rule his own city. That is exactly what the Spartans accused King Pausanias of, even though he held so great an honor.[13]

No argument or law of this kind, then, is statesmanlike, beneficial or true. The same things are best for individuals and for communities, and it is these that the lawgiver must instill in people's souls. Training for war should be practiced not in order to enslave those who do not deserve it, but, first, so that they themselves are not enslaved to others; second, so that they may seek leadership 1334a for the benefit of those they lead, not mastery over everyone; and third, so as to be masters of those who deserve to be slaves. That the lawgiver should rather strive to arrange his legislation on military matters, as on everything else, for the sake of leisure and peace, the facts bear witness to the arguments. Most cities of this kind survive while they are at war but perish once they have won their empire. Like iron, they lose their temper when they are at peace. The lawgiver is to blame, for not educating them to be able to use leisure.

THE EXCELLENCES OF LEISURE

A city needs courage for work and philosophy for leisure; education starts with body and appetite.

Since human beings evidently have the same end both communally and individually, and the best man and the best constitution

12 Thibron: otherwise unknown as a writer; possibly the Spartan commander of that name in the 390s BC.

13 Pausanias: Spartan regent who commanded the Greeks at Plataea (479 BC) and was later accused of plotting to seize power.

must have the same standard, it is clear that the excellences that serve leisure must be present. For, as has often been said, peace is the end of war, and leisure the end of work. The excellences useful for leisure and its cultivated pastime are both those whose work is done in leisure and those whose work is done in work. For many necessities must be available before one can be at leisure. That is why a city should be moderate, courageous and able to endure: as the proverb says, "No leisure for slaves," and those who cannot face danger courageously are the slaves of whoever attacks them. Courage and endurance, then, are needed for work, philosophy for leisure, and moderation and justice at both times, but more for those who are at peace and at leisure. For war compels people to be just and moderate, whereas the enjoyment of good fortune and leisure in peacetime tends rather to make them arrogant. Much justice and much moderation, then, are needed by those who seem to be faring best and who enjoy everything thought blessed—if there are any such people, as the poets say, in the Islands of the Blessed. These above all will need philosophy, moderation and justice, the more so as they live at leisure amid an abundance of such goods. It is clear, then, why the city that is to be happy and excellent must share in these excellences.[14] For if it is shameful to be unable to use good things, it is still more shameful to be unable to use them at leisure—to appear good when at work and at war, but servile when at peace and at leisure. So excellence should not be cultivated in the way the Spartan city cultivates it. It is not in this that the Spartans differ from others, [1334b] in not regarding the same things as the greatest goods, but in thinking these are to be won through one particular excellence. But since these goods, and the enjoyment of them, are greater than the enjoyment of the excellences … [gap in the text] … and that excellence is to be pursued for its own sake is clear from this.

14 Islands of the Blessed: in Greek myth, the paradise at the edge of the world where favored heroes live after death.

How and by what means it will come about—that is what we must now consider.[15]

We have in fact already distinguished that three things are needed: nature, habit and reason. Of these, what sort of nature people should have has been determined earlier; it remains to consider whether they should be educated first through reason or through habits. These must be in harmony with each other, and in the best harmony; for it is possible for reason to have missed the best principle, and for people to have been led astray in the same way through their habits. This much at least is clear. First, as in other things, coming into being starts from a beginning, and the end that comes from a certain beginning is itself directed to another end; and reason and intellect are the end of our nature, so that the process of coming into being and the training of habits must be arranged with a view to these. Second, just as soul and body are two, so we see that the soul too has two parts, the non-rational and that which has reason, and that their states are two in number, desire and intellect. And just as the body is prior in coming into being to the soul, so the non-rational part is prior to the part that has reason. This too is evident: spirit and wish, and appetite as well, are present in children right from birth, whereas reasoning and intellect naturally arise in them as they grow. That is why care of the body must come first, before care of the soul, and next care of desire; but care of desire is for the sake of intellect, and care of the body for the sake of the soul.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDBEARING

Aristotle sets ages for marriage and rules for pregnancy, the number of children and fidelity.

If, then, the lawgiver must see from the outset that the bodies of those being reared turn out as good as possible, he must first

15 Some words are lost here; they probably said that the Spartans pursued excellence only as a means to external goods, whereas it should be pursued for its own sake.

attend to marriage: when, and with what qualities, people should enter into married union with each other. In legislating for this partnership he should look both to the couple themselves and to their span of life, so that they arrive together at the same stage of life and their capacities are not out of tune—the husband still able to beget children and the wife unable, or she able and he not (for this produces quarrels and disagreements between them);

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and then he should look to the succession of children. Children should not lag too far behind their fathers in age (for then the old get no benefit from their children's gratitude, nor the children from their 1335a fathers' help), nor be too close to them in age (this causes much difficulty: there is less respect between people who are nearly contemporaries, and the closeness in age leads to complaints in the running of the household); and further, to return to where we began this digression, he should see that the bodies of the children born accord with his wishes.

Nearly all these aims can be met by attending to one thing. Since the end of procreation is set, speaking generally, at seventy years at the outside for men and at fifty for women, the start of their union should be timed so that in age they reach these points together. The mating of young people is bad for producing children: in all animals the offspring of the young are imperfect, more often female, and small in form, so the same must necessarily happen with human beings too. There is evidence for this: in all the cities where it is the local custom for young men and young women to marry, people are imperfect and small in body. Further, young women suffer more in childbirth and more of them die. That is why some say the oracle was given to the people of Troezen for this very reason—that many were dying because girls were married too young—and that it had nothing to do with harvesting crops. Moreover, it also helps toward moderation to give daughters in marriage when they are

older; for women who have sexual intercourse young are thought to be more licentious.[16] The bodies of males too are thought to be harmed in their growth if they have intercourse while their seed is still growing; for this too has a fixed time, after which it no longer increases, or only a little. So it is fitting for women to marry at about eighteen and men at thirty-seven or a little before. At such ages their union will take place when their bodies are in their prime, and they will reach the end of childbearing together at the right time. Moreover, the children will succeed their parents at the beginning of their own prime, if they are born promptly as one would expect, when the parents' vigor has already declined toward the age of seventy.

So much for when marriage should take place. As for the season, we should follow the practice of most people, who rightly, even now, set winter as the time to begin living together. The couple should also themselves study, with a view to having children, what doctors and natural philosophers say. The doctors say enough about the right bodily condition, [1335b] and the natural philosophers about winds, praising north winds over south. What bodily condition in the parents would most benefit the offspring must be discussed more fully in our treatment of the supervision of children; but it is enough to say something in outline now. The athlete's condition is not useful for a citizen's fitness, nor for health and procreation, and neither is a condition that needs too much tending and is too unfit for exertion; what is useful is the one in between. The condition should be exercised, then, but by exertions that are not violent, and not directed to one thing only, like the athlete's condition, but to the activities of free people. And this should apply alike to men and to women.

Pregnant women too must take care of their bodies, not being idle and not eating a meager diet. The lawgiver can easily bring this about by requiring them to make a journey every day to worship the gods whose office is to preside over birth. Their

16 Troezen: a city in the northeastern Peloponnese. The oracle reportedly told its people, "Do not plough a young furrow."

minds, however, unlike their bodies, it is fitting to keep rather relaxed; for the unborn evidently draw on the mother as plants draw on the earth. As for the exposure and rearing of children, let there be a law that no disabled child be reared; but where the established customs forbid exposing any child merely because of their number, there must be a limit set on the number of children; and if any couple conceive beyond this limit, abortion must be induced before sensation and life have begun. For what is permissible and what is not will be marked off by sensation and life.[17] Since the age at which man and woman should begin their union has been determined, let us also determine how long they should serve the city by having children. The offspring of older parents, like those of too young ones, turn out imperfect in body and in mind, and those of the aged are weak. So the limit should be set by the prime of the mind. In most people this comes, as some of the poets who measure life in periods of seven years have said, at around the age of fifty. So when they are four or five years past this age they should be released from producing children openly; for the rest of their lives they should be seen to have intercourse only for the sake of health or for some other such reason.[18] As for relations with another woman or another man, let it be regarded as simply dishonorable to be seen engaging in them at all, in any way, so long as one is a husband and is called one. If anyone is found doing such a thing during the time for having children, 1336a let him be punished with a loss of civic honor suited to the offense.

INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Children up to seven need suitable diet, exercise and play, and protection from shameful talk and sights.

Once children are born, one must recognize that the kind of nourishment they receive makes a great difference to their bod-

17 Exposure: abandoning a newborn to die or be taken in by others, a practice accepted in many Greek cities.

ily strength. It is clear from looking at other animals, and at the peoples who make it their concern to develop a warlike condition, that a diet rich in milk is best suited to the body, and one with little wine, because of illnesses. It is also beneficial for children of that age to make as many movements as they can. To keep their limbs from being bent out of shape because they are so soft, some peoples even now use certain mechanical devices that keep such children's bodies straight. It is beneficial too to accustom them to cold from early childhood; this is most useful both for health and for military activities. That is why many non-Greeks have the custom of dipping newborns in a cold river, or, as the Celts do, of dressing them in only a light covering. For whatever children can be habituated to, it is better to habituate them to it from the very start, but to do so gradually; and because of its warmth, children's constitution is naturally suited to training against cold.

In this first stage, then, it is beneficial to give this kind of care and care like it. In the next stage, up to five years old, when it is not good to direct them to any study or to compulsory exertions, so as not to hinder their growth, they should get enough movement to avoid physical sluggishness; this should be provided through various activities, and through play. Their games should be neither unworthy of free people nor strenuous nor slack. As for the stories and tales children of this age should hear, let this be the concern of the officials called Supervisors of Children. All such things should pave the way for their later pursuits; that is why most of their games should be imitations of what they will take seriously later.[19] Those who in the *Laws* forbid children's straining and crying are wrong to prohibit them; these help growth, since they are in a way exercise for the body. For holding the breath gives strength to those who are exerting them-

18 The poets: chiefly Solon, whose elegy divides a man's life into ten periods of seven years.

19 Supervisors of Children: *paidonomoi*, officials found in some Greek cities, including Sparta.

selves, and this is just what happens with children when they strain.[20]

The Supervisors of Children must oversee how children spend their time, in general and especially so that they spend as little of it as possible with slaves. For at this age, 1336b up to seven, they must be brought up at home, so it is reasonable to expect that even at so young an age they will pick up unfree ways from what they hear and see. The lawgiver should banish shameful talk from the city altogether, as much as anything (for speaking lightly of anything shameful soon leads to doing it), and above all from the young, so that they neither say nor hear anything of the kind. If anyone is found saying or doing anything forbidden, a free person not yet admitted to reclining at the common meals should be punished with disgrace and beatings, and one older than this with the kind of disgrace unfit for free people, because of his slavish conduct.[21] Since we are banishing the speaking of anything of this kind, clearly we are also banishing the viewing of indecent pictures or stories. So let the officials take care that no statue or painting represents such actions, except in the worship of certain gods to whom the law grants even ribaldry. For these gods, the law allows those who have reached the suitable age to pay honor on behalf of themselves, their children and their wives. The young should not be allowed to watch iambic lampoons or comedy until they reach the age at which they may now take part in reclining at meals and drinking, by which time their education will have made them wholly immune to the harm that comes from such things.[22]

For now we have discussed this in passing. Later we must stop and define it more precisely, first raising the question whether it should be so or not, and how. For the present we have mentioned it as far as was necessary. Perhaps Theodorus, the tragic actor, was not wrong in what he used to say on this sort of

20 Plato, *Laws* 792a, where the Athenian recommends keeping infants from crying.
21 Being allowed to recline at the common meals marked a young man's coming of age.
22 Iambic lampoons: *iamboi*, a genre of mocking and often obscene verse.

point: he never let anyone go on stage before him, not even one of the cheap actors, because audiences take to what they hear first. The same thing happens in our dealings with people and with things: we always like best what comes first. That is why everything bad must be kept foreign to the young, above all whatever involves wickedness or malice. When the first five years are over, for the two years up to seven they should now become spectators of the lessons they will have to learn.[23] There are two ages by which education must be divided: from seven to puberty, and then again from puberty to twenty-one. Those who divide ages into periods of seven years are for the most part 1337a wrong, but one should follow nature's own division; for every craft and all education aim to fill in what nature leaves lacking. First, then, we must consider whether there should be some regulation concerning children; next, whether it is better for their supervision to be public or private (as happens even now in most cities); and third, what sort of supervision it should be.

23 Theodorus: one of the most celebrated tragic actors of the fourth century BC.

Book VIII

The education of the young.

CHAPTER 1

No one would dispute that the lawgiver must be especially concerned with the education of the young. Where this does not happen in cities, it harms their constitutions. People must be educated to suit each constitution; for the character proper to each constitution usually preserves it and establishes it in the first place—the democratic character democracy, the oligarchic character oligarchy. And a better character always produces a better constitution. Further, for every capacity and craft there are things in which people must be educated and habituated beforehand for their respective work; so clearly this holds for the actions of excellence too. And since the whole city has a single end, it is evident that education must be one and the same for all, and that its supervision must be public and not private, in the way each person now looks after his own children privately and teaches them whatever private lessons he sees fit. Training in what is common should itself be common. At the same time, no citizen should think he belongs to himself; rather, all belong to the city, since each is a part of the city, and the care of each part naturally looks to the care of the whole. One might praise the Spartans in this respect: they take the greatest pains over their children, and do so in common.

WHAT THE YOUNG SHOULD LEARN

Free people should learn useful subjects only so far as these do not make them vulgar.

That there must be legislation about education, and that education must be common, is clear. But what education is to be, and how people should be educated, must not be overlooked. At present there is disagreement about what its tasks are. Not everyone thinks the young should learn the same things, either for excellence or for the best life, nor is it clear whether education should be aimed more at the intellect or at the character of the soul. The education current around us makes the inquiry confused, and it is not at all clear whether one should practice what is useful for life, or what leads to excellence, or what is out of the ordinary; for each of these has won some [1337b] supporters. And about what leads to excellence nothing is agreed: to begin with, people do not all value the same excellence, so it is natural that they differ about how to practice it too. That the necessary ones among useful things should be taught is not unclear; but clearly not all of them, since the tasks of free people and those of the unfree are distinct, and one should take part only in such useful things as will not make the participant vulgar. A task, craft or study should be regarded as vulgar if it renders the body or the mind of free people useless for the practice and activities of excellence. That is why we call vulgar the crafts that put the body in a worse condition, and also wage-earning work; for they leave the mind without leisure and degraded. Even among the sciences worthy of free people, it is not unworthy of a free person to take part in some of them up to a point, but to apply oneself to them too assiduously, to reach precision, is liable to the harms just mentioned. It also makes a great difference for what purpose one does or learns something. To do it for one's own sake, or for one's friends, or for the sake of excellence is not unworthy of a free person; but someone doing the very same

thing for others would often seem to be acting like a hired laborer or a slave.

The subjects now established, as was said before, point both ways. There are roughly four things customarily taught:

MUSIC AND THE USE OF LEISURE

Music belongs in education as a cultivated pastime for leisure, not as something useful.

reading and writing, gymnastics, music, and, fourth, as some add, drawing. Reading and writing and drawing are taught as useful for life and useful in many ways, gymnastics as contributing to courage. But about music one might well raise a question. Nowadays most people take part in it for pleasure; but those who originally gave it a place in education did so because nature itself seeks, as has often been said, not only to work rightly but also to be able to use leisure finely. For this is the one first principle of everything—let us speak of it once more. If both are needed, but leisure is more choiceworthy than work and is its end, we must ask what we should do when we are at leisure. Certainly not play; for then play would have to be the end of our life. If that is impossible, and play should rather be used during work (for someone who toils needs rest, and play is for the sake of rest, while working involves toil and strain), then we should bring in play, carefully watching for the right times to use it, applying it as a kind of medicine. For such movement of the soul is relaxation, [1338a] and because of its pleasure it is rest. But leisure seems to contain in itself pleasure, happiness and the blessed life. This belongs not to those who are working but to those at leisure: one who works does so for the sake of some end he does not yet have, whereas happiness is an end, and everyone thinks it comes not with pain but with pleasure. People no longer agree, however, that this pleasure is the same; each sets it according to himself and his own state of character, and the best person sets the best pleasure, the one that arises from the finest things. So it is clear that there are some things one must learn

and be educated in for the cultivated pastime of leisure, and that these subjects and these studies are for their own sake, whereas those for work are studied as necessary and for the sake of other things. That is why our predecessors gave music a place in education not as something necessary (it has nothing of that kind), nor as useful (as reading and writing are useful for making money, managing a household, learning and many political activities, and drawing too is thought useful for judging the works of craftsmen better), nor again, like gymnastics, for health and strength (for we see neither of these resulting from music). It remains, then, that it is for the cultivated pastime of leisure, which is evidently what they introduce it for. They place it in what they consider the pastime of free people. That is why Homer wrote, "But the one it is right to invite to the rich feast," and, after naming certain others first, "who invite the singer," he says, "who will delight all."[1] And elsewhere Odysseus says that this is the best pastime, when people are enjoying themselves and "the banqueters throughout the hall listen to the singer, / sitting in their rows."

It is clear, then, that there is a kind of education in which sons should be educated not because it is useful or necessary but because it is worthy of free people and fine. Whether it is one in number or several, and what they are and how they are to be taught, must be discussed later. For now we have got this far, that we also have some testimony from the ancients, drawn from the established subjects: music makes this plain. Further, children should be taught some of the useful subjects not only because they are useful, like learning to read and write, but also because many other studies become possible through them. So too with drawing: not so that they won't go wrong in their private purchases and won't be cheated in the buying [1338b] and selling of goods, but rather because it makes them observant of the beauty of bodies. To look everywhere for what is useful is least suited to the great-souled and the free. Since it is evident

1 Loosely quoted from the *Odyssey* (17.382–385); the first line is not in our text of Homer.

that education must come through habits before reason, and must concern the body before the mind, it is clear from this that children must be handed over to gymnastics and to the trainer: the first produces a certain condition of the body, the second its performance.

GYMNASTICS

Physical training should aim at the fine, not the brutish, and must not overstrain the young.

At present, of the cities thought to take most care of their children, some instill an athletic condition, damaging the form and growth of their bodies; the Spartans have not made this mistake, but they make their children brutish through hard exertions, on the view that this is most conducive to courage. Yet, as has often been said, the care should not look to one excellence only, or to this one above all; and even if it does look to this, they do not achieve even that. For neither among the other animals nor among peoples do we see courage going with the most savage, but rather with gentler, lion-like characters. There are many peoples that are quite ready to kill and to eat human flesh, such as the Achaeans and Heniochi around the Black Sea, and some of the peoples of the mainland, some as much as these and some more so; they are given to banditry, but have no share in courage. Again, we know that the Spartans themselves, so long as they alone persisted in hard training, were superior to others, but now they fall behind others in both athletic and military contests. They did not excel because they trained their young in this way, but only because they trained against people who did not train.[2] So it is the fine, not the brutish, that should play the leading part. No wolf or any other wild animal would face a fine danger; a good man would. Those who let their children go too far in these exercises, and leave them untutored in the necessary things, make them truly vulgar, rendering them useful to

2 Achaeans and Heniochi: tribes of the eastern Black Sea coast, not the Achaeans of Greece.

statesmanship for one task only, and even for that, as the argument shows, worse than others. One should judge the Spartans not by their former achievements but by their present ones; for now they have rivals in education, whereas before they had none.

That gymnastics must be used, then, and how it must be used, is agreed. (Until puberty lighter exercises should be applied, excluding forced diets and compulsory exertions, so that nothing hinders growth. There is no 1339a small sign that these can produce this effect: among Olympic victors one would find only two or three who won both as men and as boys, because training in youth robbed them of their strength through compulsory exercises. But when they have spent three years after puberty on their other studies, it is then fitting to occupy the following period of life with exertions and compulsory diets. For one should not work hard with mind and body at the same time; each kind of exertion naturally has the opposite effect, bodily exertion hindering the mind, and mental exertion the body.)

WHAT MUSIC IS FOR

Music serves play, character and cultivated pastime, and its melodies and rhythms shape the soul.

About music we have already raised some questions in our discussion, but it is good to take them up again now and carry them further, to give a sort of keynote for the arguments one might put forward in declaring one's views on it. It is not easy to determine what power music has, nor for what purpose one should take part in it—whether for play and relaxation, like sleep and drinking (these are not in themselves serious things, but pleasant, and they "put an end to care," as Euripides says; that is why people class music with them and use all of them alike, sleep, drinking and music, and they put dancing among them too); or whether we should rather think that music tends toward excellence, since, just as gymnastics gives the body a

certain quality, music can give character a certain quality, accustoming people to be able to enjoy things rightly; or whether it contributes to cultivated pastime and to practical wisdom (for this must be set down as the third of the options mentioned). It is clear that the young should not be educated for the sake of play (for they are not playing while they learn; learning comes with pain). Nor, again, is it fitting to assign cultivated pastime to children and to those of that age; for an end does not suit anything that is incomplete. But perhaps it might be thought that children's serious effort is for the sake of their play once they have become men and are complete. But if that is so, why should they learn music themselves, rather than share in its pleasure and learning through others performing it, like the kings of the Persians and Medes? For those who have made this very thing their work and craft must perform it better than those who have practiced it only long enough to learn. And if they must labor at such things themselves, then they would also have to prepare their own fine dishes—which is absurd. The same difficulty arises if music can make characters better: why must they learn it themselves, rather than [1339b] enjoy it rightly and be able to judge it by listening to others, like the Spartans? For the Spartans, without learning it, are still able, so they say, to judge correctly which melodies are good and which are not. The same argument applies if music is to be used for well-being and for a pastime worthy of free people: why must they learn it themselves, rather than enjoy it when others perform? We can consider the conception we have of the gods: in the poets Zeus does not himself sing and play the lyre. On the contrary, we call such performers vulgar, and think performing is not for a man unless he is drunk or joking.

But perhaps these matters should be considered later. The first question is whether music should be given a place in education or not, and which of the three things we raised questions about it can achieve—education, play or pastime. It is reasonable to place it under all three, and it seems to share in them all. Play is for the sake of relaxation, and relaxation must be pleas-

ant (for it is a kind of cure for the pain that comes from exertion); and cultivated pastime, it is agreed, must involve not only the fine but also pleasure (for happiness is made up of both). And we all say that music is among the most pleasant things, whether on its own or with singing (Musaeus, at any rate, says that "singing is sweetest for mortals"; that is why people reasonably bring it into their gatherings and pastimes, since it can cheer them). So from this too one might suppose that the young should be educated in it.[3] For harmless pleasures are suited not only to the end but also to relaxation. And since people rarely attain the end, but often relax and use amusements not only for some further purpose but also for the pleasure, it would be useful to let them rest now and then in the pleasures that come from music.

But people happen to make amusements their end. For the end too perhaps involves a certain pleasure, though not just any pleasure; and in seeking this pleasure they take the other for it, because it bears a certain resemblance to the end of their actions. For the end is not chosen for the sake of anything that will come later, and pleasures of this kind are not for the sake of anything to come but for what has already happened, such as toil and pain. This, then, one might reasonably suppose, is the reason why people seek to find happiness through these pleasures. But as for taking part in music, it is not for this reason alone, but also, it seems, because music is useful for relaxation. Nevertheless we must ask whether this is not [1340a] incidental, and whether the nature of music is more valuable than the use we have mentioned, so that one should not only share in the common pleasure it gives, which everyone perceives (for music has a natural pleasure, which is why its use is welcome to all ages and all characters), but also see whether it somehow bears on character and on the soul. This would be clear if we come to be of a certain character through it. That we do is evident from many other things, and not least from the melodies of Olympus; for these, as everyone agrees, make souls ecstatic, and ecstasy is

3 Musaeus: a legendary early poet and singer, associated with Orpheus.

an affection of the character of the soul.[4] Moreover, everyone who listens to imitations comes to share the feelings they express, even apart from rhythms and melodies themselves.

Since music happens to be one of the pleasant things, and excellence is concerned with enjoying, loving and hating rightly, clearly nothing should be learned and made habitual so much as judging rightly and enjoying decent characters and fine actions. In rhythms and melodies there are likenesses, very close to their true natures, of anger and gentleness, and of courage and moderation and all their opposites, and of the other traits of character (this is clear from experience: our souls change when we listen to such things). And habituation to feeling pain and pleasure at likenesses is close to having the same response to the real things (for example, if someone enjoys looking at an image of something for no other reason than its form itself, he must also find it pleasant to look at the very thing whose image he is looking at). Among the other objects of perception there happens to be no likeness of character—in objects of touch and taste, for example—though there is a faint one in objects of sight (for shapes are of this kind, but only to a small degree, and not everyone shares in this kind of perception; besides, these are not likenesses of character, but rather the shapes and colors that arise are signs of character, and these appear on the body in states of emotion. Still, insofar as there is a difference even in viewing these, the young should not look at the works of Pauson but at those of Polygnotus, or of any other painter or sculptor who portrays character); but in melodies themselves there are imitations of character (and this is evident:[5] from the outset the natures of the modes differ, so that listeners are affected differently and do not respond in the same way to each of them. To some they respond in a more mournful [1340b] and constrained way, such as the one called Mixolydian; to

4 Olympus: a legendary Phrygian musician, credited with the earliest melodies for the pipes.

5 Polygnotus: fifth-century BC painter admired for depicting character; Pauson was known for caricature.

others with a softer frame of mind, such as the relaxed modes; to another in a moderate and settled way above all, as the Dorian alone of the modes seems to do; while the Phrygian makes people ecstatic.[6] Those who have studied this kind of education philosophically say this well, for they draw the evidence for their arguments from the facts themselves.) The same holds for rhythms (some have a more steady character, others a more moving one, and of the latter some have more vulgar movements, others movements more worthy of free people). From all this it is clear that music can give the character of the soul a certain quality; and if it can do this, clearly the young must be directed to it and educated in it. Instruction in music suits a nature of that age: because of their age the young will not willingly put up with anything unsweetened, and music is by nature one of the sweetened things. There also seems to be a kind of kinship between us and modes and rhythms; that is why many of the wise say that the soul is a harmony, others that it has a harmony.

LEARNING TO PERFORM

The young should play music themselves, but not to a professional standard and not on the pipes.

Whether they should learn by singing and playing themselves or not, as was raised earlier, must now be discussed. Clearly it makes a great difference to acquiring a certain character if one takes part in the performance oneself; it is one of the impossible, or at least difficult, things for those who have not taken part to become good judges. At the same time children must have something to occupy them, and we should think the rattle of Archytas, which people give to little children so that by using it they won't break anything in the house, was a fine invention; for the young cannot keep still. This rattle suits

6 Modes: *harmoniai*, types of scale or tuning, each felt to have its own character.

infants, and education is the rattle for older children.[7] That they should be taught music in such a way as to take part in performance, then, is clear from these considerations. It is not hard to determine what is and is not fitting for different ages, and to answer those who say that the pursuit is vulgar. First, since one should take part in performing for the sake of judging, they should practice performing while young, and when they are older give up performing but be able to judge fine things and enjoy them rightly thanks to what they learned in youth. As for the criticism some make, that music makes people vulgar, it is not hard to answer by considering to what extent those being educated for political 1341a excellence should take part in performance, what melodies and what rhythms they should take part in, and further on what instruments they should do their learning—for this too is likely to make a difference. The answer to the criticism lies here; for nothing prevents certain kinds of music from producing the effect mentioned. Clearly, then, learning music should neither hinder later activities nor make the body vulgar and useless for military and civic training, whether for use now or for use later.

This would be achieved in learning if they did not labor at what leads to professional competitions, nor at the astonishing and extravagant feats that have now entered the competitions and have passed from the competitions into education, but practiced even what is not of that kind only until they are able to enjoy fine melodies and rhythms, and not merely the common element in music, which even some of the other animals enjoy, as well as the mass of slaves and children. From this it is also clear what instruments should be used. Pipes should not be brought into education, nor any other professional instrument, such as the kithara or anything else like it, but only such instruments as will make them good listeners, whether in musical education or in the rest of their education. Besides, the pipe is not expressive of character but rather orgiastic, so it should be

7 Archytas: fourth-century BC philosopher, mathematician and statesman of Tarentum in southern Italy.

used on the kind of occasions where watching produces catharsis rather than learning. Let us add that it also happens to be opposed to education in that playing the pipe prevents the use of speech. That is why earlier generations rightly rejected its use by the young and the free, even though they had used it at first. For having more leisure because of their wealth, and being more high-minded about excellence, and being filled with pride because of their achievements both before and after the Persian Wars, they took up every kind of learning, not discriminating but seeking out everything.[8] That is why they brought pipe-playing among their studies too. At Sparta a chorus-sponsor played the pipe for his chorus himself, and at Athens it became so much the local fashion that nearly the majority of free men took part in it; this is clear from the plaque Thrasippus dedicated when he sponsored the chorus of Ecphantides. Later it was rejected through experience itself, once people were better able to judge what leads to excellence and what does not. So likewise were many of the old instruments, such as the pektis and barbitos, and those that serve the pleasure of those who hear the players, the heptagon, the trigon and 1341b sambuca, and all that require manual dexterity. There is good sense too in the story the ancients tell about the pipes: they say that Athena invented the pipes and then threw them away.[9] It is not a bad account to say that the goddess did this because she was annoyed at how playing disfigured her face. Still, it is more likely that it was because education in pipe-playing does nothing for the mind, while we attribute knowledge and craft to Athena. Since we reject professional education in instruments and in performance (and by professional we mean the kind aimed at competitions; in this the performer takes part not for the sake of his own excellence but for the pleasure of his listeners, and a vulgar pleasure at that; that is why we judge the performance to be not for free people but more like hired labor. And the performers do

8 Pipe: the *aulos*, a reed instrument usually played in pairs, often misleadingly called a flute.

9 Ecphantides was an early comic poet.

in fact become vulgar, since the aim at which they direct their end is base: the spectator, being vulgar himself, tends to change the music, so that he gives a certain character both to the professionals who perform with him in view and to their bodies, through the movements they make),

MODES, RHYTHMS AND CATHARSIS

All modes have uses, including catharsis, but education needs the Dorian and other modes of character.

we must consider something about modes and rhythms, and whether all modes and all rhythms should be used for education or a distinction must be made; and then whether we shall lay down the same distinction for those who labor at music for the sake of education, or some other one. Since we see that music consists of melody-making and rhythms, and we must not overlook what power each of these has for education, or whether one should prefer music that is good in melody or music that is good in rhythm, and since we think that some of today's musicians, and those from philosophy who happen to be experienced in musical education, say much that is good on these matters, we will leave the detailed treatment of each point to those who want to seek it from them; for now let us make distinctions in the manner of a lawgiver, stating only the outlines.

We accept the division of melodies that some in philosophy make, classing some as melodies of character, some as melodies of action and some as ecstatic, and assigning a mode naturally suited to each of these, one mode to each class. And we say that music should be used not for a single benefit but for several (for education and for catharsis—what we mean by catharsis we will state simply for now, and again more clearly in our treatment of poetry—and third, for pastime, for relaxation and rest from strain). [1342a] So it is clear that all the modes should be used, but not all in the same way: for education, the modes most expressive of character, and for listening to others perform, the modes

of action and the ecstatic modes as well.[10] For the emotion that affects some souls strongly exists in all, differing only in degree —pity and fear, for example, and ecstasy too. Some people are prone to be possessed by this agitation, and we see them, under the influence of sacred melodies, when they use melodies that stir the soul to frenzy, settling down as though they had received medical treatment and catharsis. The same must happen to those prone to pity or fear and to emotional people generally, and to others to the extent that each is subject to such emotions; all undergo a kind of catharsis and are relieved with pleasure. Similarly, melodies of action too provide people with harmless delight. That is why those who perform theatrical music in competition should be assigned such modes and such melodies. But since spectators are of two kinds, one free and educated, the other coarse, made up of vulgar craftsmen, hired laborers and the like, contests and spectacles must also be provided for the latter, for their relaxation. Just as their souls are distorted from their natural state, so too there are deviant modes, and melodies that are high-strung and over-colored; and each person takes pleasure in what is naturally akin to him. So performers competing before a spectator of this kind must be allowed to use this kind of music. But for education, as has been said, the melodies of character and the corresponding modes should be used. The Dorian is of this kind, as we said earlier; but we should also accept any other mode that those who share in philosophical study and in musical education approve for us. Socrates in the *Republic* is wrong to keep only the Phrygian along with the Dorian, especially since he rejected [1342b] the pipe among instruments. For the Phrygian has the same power among the modes as the pipe among instruments: both are orgiastic and emotional. All Bacchic frenzy and every agitation of that kind is expressed above all by the pipes among instruments, and among the modes it finds its fitting expression in Phrygian melodies. Poetry shows this: the dithyramb, for example, is

10 Catharsis: literally "purification" or "purging." The promised fuller treatment is not in our text of the *Poetics*.

agreed by all to be Phrygian.[11] Experts in this field cite many examples of this, among others that Philoxenus tried to compose his *Mysians* in the Dorian mode and could not, but was driven by the very nature of the thing back into the Phrygian, the mode appropriate to it. As for the Dorian, everyone agrees that it is the steadiest and has the most courageous character. Further, since we praise the mean between extremes and say it should be pursued, and the Dorian has this nature relative to the other modes, it is clear that Dorian melodies are more fitting for the education of the young.[12]

There are two aims, the possible and the fitting; for each group of people should take up above all what is possible for them and what is fitting for them. These too are determined by age: for example, those worn out by time cannot easily sing the high-strung modes, but nature suggests the relaxed ones to people of that age. That is why some musical experts rightly criticize Socrates on this point too, for rejecting the relaxed modes for education on the ground that they are intoxicating—not in the sense of the effect of drunkenness (for drunkenness rather produces Bacchic frenzy) but because they are weary. So with a view to the age to come, that of older people, one should also take up such modes and such melodies; and further, any mode that suits the age of children because it can combine orderliness with education, as the Lydian seems to do above all the modes. Clearly, then, these three standards should be set for education: the mean, the possible and the fitting.

11 The passage is in Plato's *Republic*, Book 3 (398e–399e).

12 Philoxenus: of Cythera, a leading poet of dithyrambs (choral songs to Dionysus), c. 435–380 BC.