



Politics

ARISTOTLE

Plain English Translation

MOUSEIA

Σ

Politics



ARISTOTLE

Plain English Translation

Translated by Michael Berardi

MOUSEIA

THIS EDITION

Mouseia's complete machine-assisted Plain English edition, made independently and directly from the same Greek, covering all eight books and every Bekker page and line mark.

TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

Written c. 335–323 BCE · Political philosophy

SOURCE

Original text from the Perseus Digital Library.

GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Greek is the pinned Perseus transcription of W. D. Ross's Oxford text; that transcription's own header notes inconsistencies with the print edition it cites and warns that a different print source may have been used, so readings are given as the transcription has them, apart from three transcription slips corrected and recorded in the source registry. Book divisions, Bekker page and line markers, and the edition's own citation abbreviations (Hom. Od. 9.114) follow that transcription; seven pages carry the end of one book and the start of the next, as the transcription's own book divisions do.

Mouseia · mouseia.org

Edition dated 13 October 2026

Contents



Book I, 1252a–1255b	5	Book IV, 1299a–1301a	117
Book I, 1255b–1258b	13	Book V, 1301a–1304b	123
Book I, 1258b–1260b	21	Book V, 1304b–1308a	131
Book II, 1260b–1264a	26	Book V, 1308a–1311b	139
Book II, 1264a–1267a	34	Book V, 1311b–1315a	147
Book II, 1267a–1270b	42	Book V, 1315a–1316b	155
Book II, 1270b–1274b	50	Book VI, 1316b–1320b	159
Book III, 1274b–1278a	59	Book VI, 1320b–1323a	168
Book III, 1278a–1281b	67	Book VII, 1323a–1326a	174
Book III, 1281b–1285a	76	Book VII, 1326a–1329b	182
Book III, 1285a–1288b	84	Book VII, 1329b–1333a	190
Book IV, 1288b–1291b	92	Book VII, 1333b–1337a	198
Book IV, 1292a–1295a	100	Book VIII, 1337a–1340b	206
Book IV, 1295a–1299a	108	Book VIII, 1340b–1342b	214

Book I, 1252a–1255b



^{1252a1} Every city, as we can see, is some kind of community. Every community is formed for some good, since everyone does everything for what they think is good. Clearly, then, all communities aim at some good. But most of all,⁵ the most authoritative community, which includes all the others, aims at the most authoritative good of all. This is what we call the city, or the political community. People who think that a statesman, a king, a household manager, and a master are the same are wrong. They take the number of people ruled¹⁰ to distinguish these roles, not their kind. Someone who rules a few is a master; someone who rules more is a household manager; someone who rules still more is a statesman or a king. On this view, a large household and a small city are no different. They also distinguish a statesman from a king this way: when someone rules on his own, he is a king. But when¹⁵ he takes turns ruling and being ruled, following the principles of this kind of knowledge, he is a statesman. These claims aren't true. This will become clear if we look into the matter using the method we have laid out. In other subjects, we have to break a composite thing down until we reach its simplest parts. These are the smallest²⁰ parts of the whole. In the same way, looking at the parts that make up a city will help us understand these matters better. We will see how they differ from each other. We will also see whether we can gain any systematic knowledge about each role just mentioned.

If we look at how things develop from the beginning,^{1252a25} we will get the clearest view of these matters, just as we do in other subjects. First, those who can't exist without each other must form pairs. For example, female and male must pair up to reproduce. This isn't a matter of choice. As with other animals and plants, there is a natural desire³⁰ to leave behind another being like oneself. The ruler and the ruled by nature must also pair up, for their survival. Someone who can use thought to plan ahead is a ruler and a master by nature. Someone who can carry out these plans with the body is ruled and is a slave by nature. So the same thing brings advantage to master and slave.

By nature, then,^{1252b1} the female and the slave are distinct. Nature doesn't make anything on the cheap, like the metalworkers' Delphic knife. Instead, it makes one thing for one task. Each tool would do its job best in this way, with not many tasks but one⁵ to serve. Among non-Greek peoples, though, the female and the slave have the same rank. The reason is that they have no ruler by nature. Instead, their community consists of a female slave and a male slave. That is why the poets say, "It is fitting for Greeks to rule non-Greeks," (Eur. IA 1400) as though a non-Greek and a slave were the same by nature. From these¹⁰ two communities, then, the household first emerges. Hesiod was right when he wrote, "First of all, a household, a wife, and an ox for plowing." (Hes. WD 405) For poor people, the ox takes the place of a household servant. So the community formed by nature to meet everyday needs is the household. Charondas calls its members people who share a bread bin; Epimenides¹⁵ of Crete calls them people who share a food trough. The first community formed from several households to meet needs beyond the everyday is a village. By nature, the village seems most of all to be an offshoot of a household. Its members are what some call people nourished on the same milk: children and their children's children. This is why cities were first ruled by kings, and even today²⁰ nations are too. They came together out of groups ruled by kings. Every household is ruled by its oldest member, so its offshoots are too, because they are related. This is also what Homer means when he says, "Each gives laws for his children and wives." (Hom. Od. 9.114) They lived scattered apart, as people did in early times. This

is also why everyone says the gods²⁵ are ruled by a king. Some people still live under kings themselves; others did in early times. Just as people make the gods' appearance like their own, they also make the gods' lives like their own.

The complete community formed from several villages is a city. It has reached, so to speak, full self-sufficiency. It comes into being for the sake of^{1252b30} living, but it exists for the sake of living well. So every city exists by nature, if the first communities do too. The city is their end, and nature is an end. What each thing is when its development is complete is what we call its nature, whether it is a human, a horse, or a household. Also, the purpose and the end are what is best.

^{1253a1}Self-sufficiency is both an end and what is best. From this it is clear that the city is one of the things that exist by nature, and that a human is a political animal by nature. Someone who has no city by nature, not by chance, is either a bad person or more than human. He is like⁵ the person Homer condemns: "Without clan, without law, without a home." (Hom. Il. 9.63) Someone who is like this by nature also wants war. He stands alone, like an isolated piece in a board game. It is clear why a human is a political animal more than any bee or any animal that lives in a herd. Nature, as we say, does nothing without a purpose. Speech,¹⁰ however, belongs to humans alone among animals. Voice is a sign of pain and pleasure, so other animals have it too. Their nature has developed far enough for them to feel pain and pleasure and to signal these to each other. But speech serves to show what brings advantage and¹⁵ what causes harm, and therefore the just and the unjust as well. This is what sets humans apart from other animals: they alone have a sense of good and bad, of the just and the unjust, and of the other things of this kind. Sharing these makes a household and a city. The city also comes before the household and each of us by nature.²⁰ The whole must come before the part. If the whole is destroyed, there will be no foot or hand, except in name, as when we speak of a stone hand. A dead hand will be like that. Everything is defined by its work and its ability. When it no longer has these, we shouldn't call it the same thing, but only something with the same name.²⁵ So it is clear that the city also comes before each individual by nature. For if an individual is not self-sufficient when

separated, he will stand in the same relation to the whole as the other parts do. Someone who can't share in a community, or who needs nothing because he is self-sufficient, is no part of a city. He must be either a beast or a god.

By nature, then, there is a drive in ^{1253a30} everyone toward this kind of community. But the person who first set it up was responsible for the greatest goods. A human, when fully developed, is the best of animals. In the same way, when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all. Injustice is most dangerous when it has weapons. A human is born with weapons for practical wisdom and ³⁵ virtue, but can use them especially for the opposite ends. Without virtue, then, he is the most unholy and savage of beings, and the worst when it comes to sex and food. Justice belongs to the city. For justice gives order to the political community, and justice is the judgment of the just.

^{1253b1} Now that it is clear what parts make up a city, we must first discuss household management. Every city is made up of households. The parts of household management are, in turn, the parts that make up a household. A complete household consists of slaves and free people. For ⁵ we must first study each thing in its smallest parts. The first and smallest parts of a household are master and slave, husband and wife, and father and children. We should examine each of these three relationships: what it is and what it should be like. These are mastery, the marital relationship—a woman and a man have no special name for their ¹⁰ union as a couple—and, third, producing children, which also has no special name of its own. Let these be the three we have mentioned. There is also a part that some people think is household management itself, while others think it is its most important part. We must examine how this stands. I mean what is called money-making. But first, ¹⁵ let's discuss master and slave. We want to see what concerns their necessary use, and whether we can gain a better understanding of them than the views now held. Some people think mastery is a kind of knowledge, and that household management, mastery, statesmanship, and kingship are the same, ²⁰ as we said at the start. Others think being a master is against nature. On their view, one person is a slave and another free by convention, but they are no different by nature. So mastery isn't just either, because it rests on force.

Property is part of the household, and getting property is part of household management. Without necessities, it is impossible^{1253b25} either to live or to live well. Just as each particular craft must have its own tools if its work is to be done, so must the household manager. Some tools are lifeless and others living. For a ship's pilot, for example, the rudder is lifeless, but the lookout at the bow is living. An³⁰ assistant is a kind of tool in the crafts. In the same way, a possession is a tool for living, property is a collection of tools, and a slave is a living possession. Every assistant is like a tool that comes before other tools. Suppose each tool could, when ordered or when it anticipated the order, carry out³⁵ its own work. This is what people say of Daedalus's creations and Hephaestus's tripods, which the poet says enter the gathering of the gods on their own. If weaving shuttles wove on their own like this, and picks played the lyre, master craftsmen wouldn't need^{1254a1} assistants, and masters wouldn't need slaves.

What we usually call tools, then, are tools for making things, while a possession is a tool for acting. Using a shuttle produces something beyond its use. Using clothing or a bed gives only the use itself.^{1254a5} Also, making and acting differ in kind, and both need tools. Their tools must therefore differ in the same way. Life is action, not production. So a slave is an assistant in matters of action. A possession is spoken of in the same way as a part. A part is not¹⁰ just a part of something else; it also belongs entirely to something else. The same is true of a possession. So a master is only the slave's master; he doesn't belong to the slave. But a slave is not just the master's slave; he also belongs entirely to him.

This makes clear the slave's nature and function. Someone who by nature belongs not to himself^{1254a15} but to someone else, while being human, is a slave by nature. A human belongs to someone else if, while being human, he is a possession. A possession is a tool for action that is separate from its owner.

Is anyone like this by nature or not? Is it better and just for anyone to be a slave, or not? Or is all slavery against nature? These are the questions we must next^{1254a20} examine. It isn't hard to see the answer through reasoning and to learn it from what happens. Ruling and being ruled are not only necessary but also bring advantage. Right from birth, some things are set apart to be ruled

and others to rule. There are also many kinds of rulers and²⁵ ruled. Rule is always better when those being ruled are better: rule over a human, for example, is better than rule over a beast. Work done by better beings is better work. Where one rules and another is ruled, there is some work they do. Whenever several parts make up one common whole, whether the parts are connected or³⁰ separate, a ruling element and a ruled element appear in all such cases. This is present in living things as a feature of nature as a whole. Even in things that have no share in life, there is a kind of rule, as in a musical harmony. But these matters may belong to a discussion outside our subject. An animal is made up first of soul³⁵ and body. Of these, one rules by nature and the other is ruled. We should look for what is natural in things that are in their natural condition, rather than in damaged things. So we must look at the human who is in the best condition in both body and soul. In him this is clear.

In people who are bad or^{1254b1} in a bad condition, the body may often seem to rule the soul, because their condition is poor and against nature.

As we say, then, we can first see both a master's rule and political rule in an animal. The soul, in relation to the body,^{1254b5} rules as a master, while the mind rules desire with political rule or a king's rule. In these cases, the body is naturally ruled by the soul, and this brings advantage. The same holds for the part that feels emotions. It is ruled by the mind and the part that has reason. Equal rule, or the reverse arrangement, harms them all.¹⁰ The same applies to humans and other animals. Tame animals have a better nature than wild ones. It is better for all tame animals to be ruled by humans, since this keeps them alive. Also, the male is superior to the female by nature, and the female inferior. One rules and the other is ruled. The¹⁵ same pattern must apply among all humans too. People who are as different from others as soul is from body and a human from a beast are slaves by nature. This is the condition of people whose work is the use of their bodies and for whom this is the best they can offer. It is better for them²⁰ to be ruled in this way, if it is also better for the things already mentioned. A slave by nature is someone who can belong to someone else, and therefore does belong to someone else. He shares in reason enough to recognize it, but not to have it himself. Other animals serve not by recognizing reason but

by their feelings. Their use also differs little:²⁵ both slaves and tame animals give bodily help with life's necessities. Nature also intends to make the bodies of free people and slaves different. Slaves' bodies are strong for necessary work; free people's bodies stand upright and are unsuited to³⁰ work of this kind, but suited to political life. Political life itself is divided between activities in war and in peace. But the opposite often happens too: some have free people's bodies, others their souls. At least this is clear: if people differed³⁵ in body alone as much as statues of the gods do, everyone would say that those who fell short deserved to be their slaves. If this is true of the body, it is much more just to make this distinction in the case of the soul. But it isn't equally easy to see^{1255a1} the beauty of the soul and the beauty of the body.

Clearly, then, some people are free by nature and others are slaves. For the latter, being slaves both brings advantage and is just.

It isn't hard to see that those who make the opposite claims are also right in a way. Being a slave has two meanings,^{1255a5} and so does the word "slave". Someone can also be a slave and serve as a slave under law. This law is a kind of agreement under which people say that what is captured in war belongs to the victors. Many people versed in law challenge this claim to justice, just as they bring an indictment against a speaker for an illegal proposal. They think it is terrible if someone who can use force¹⁰ and is stronger in power will have the person he overpowers as his slave and subject. Some think one way and some the other, even among the wise. The cause of this disagreement, and what makes the arguments overlap, is that virtue, when supplied with resources, is in a way especially able to use force. Also,¹⁵ the victor always has a greater share of some good. So force seems not to be without virtue, and the disagreement seems to concern only the just. For this reason, some think the just is nonsense; others think that this very thing is just: that the stronger should rule. Once these arguments are separated,²⁰ the opposing arguments have nothing strong or convincing in them, when they claim that whoever is better in virtue shouldn't rule and be master. In general, some people hold to what they think is a kind of justice—for law is something just—and say that slavery arising from war is just. But at the same time they deny it. For the cause of a war need not²⁵

be just, and no one would ever say that someone who doesn't deserve to be a slave is a slave. Otherwise, people thought to be of the noblest birth would turn out to be slaves and descended from slaves, if they happened to be captured and sold. So these people aren't willing to call them slaves, but only non-Greeks. Yet when they say this,³⁰ they are looking for nothing other than the slave by nature we spoke of at the start. They must say that some people are slaves everywhere and others nowhere. They take the same approach to noble birth. They think they themselves are noble not only in their own country but everywhere, while non-Greeks are noble only at home.³⁵ This assumes that one kind of noble birth and freedom is unqualified, while another is not. Helen in Theodectes's play says the same: "Born from divine roots on both sides, who would think it right to call me a servant?" But when they say this, they use nothing but virtue and vice to distinguish⁴⁰ slave from free, and people of noble birth from those^{1255b1} of low birth.

Book I, 1255b–1258b



They expect a good person to come from good people, just as a human comes from a human and an animal from animals. Nature often wants to do this, but can't.

That the dispute has some basis,^{1255b5} and that some people are not slaves or free by nature, is clear. It's also clear that in some cases this distinction does exist. For these people, being a slave benefits one and being a master benefits the other, and this is just. One must be ruled and the other must exercise the kind of rule he is naturally suited to exercise, including mastery. Exercising it badly harms both. (For¹⁰ the same thing benefits the part and the whole, and the body and the soul. The slave is a part of the master, something like a living but separate part of his body. So there is a common advantage and friendship between slave and master when nature has assigned them these positions. But when their positions are not of this kind,¹⁵ but come from law and force, the opposite is true.)

This also makes it clear that mastery and political rule aren't the same, and that not all kinds of rule are the same as one another, as some people say. Political rule is over people who are free by nature; mastery is over slaves. Household management is a monarchy, since every household is ruled by one person,^{1255b20} while political rule is rule over free and equal people. A person is called a master, then, not because of his knowledge but because of what he is. The same goes for a slave and a free person. Still, there could be knowledge

belonging to masters and knowledge belonging to slaves. Knowledge for slaves would be the sort a man in Syracuse taught. There someone took a fee²⁵ for teaching slave boys their routine duties. Learning of this kind could also be extended, for example to cooking and other kinds of service like that. Some jobs carry more honor than others, and some are more necessary. As the proverb says, “One slave is better than another; one master is better than another.”³⁰ All such kinds of knowledge belong to slaves. A master’s knowledge consists in using slaves. What makes him a master isn’t acquiring slaves but using them. There’s nothing great or impressive about this knowledge. Whatever a slave must know how to do, the master must³⁵ know how to order. So people who can avoid the trouble themselves assign this office to a steward, and they take part in public life or study philosophy. The art of acquiring slaves is different from both these kinds of knowledge. Its just form, for example, is a kind of warfare or hunting. Let this settle the distinction between slave and master in this⁴⁰ way.

^{1256a1} Let’s now look at property and money-making as a whole, following the method we have set out, since a slave was also a part of property. The first question is whether money-making is the same as household management,⁵ a part of it, or something that serves it. If it serves it, does it do so as shuttle-making serves weaving, or as bronze-working serves statue-making? These don’t serve in the same way: one supplies tools, the other material. By material I mean the underlying stuff from which a finished product is made, such as wool for a weaver¹⁰ and bronze for a statue-maker. Clearly, household management isn’t the same as money-making. One acquires things, the other uses them. What art other than household management will use the things in a household? But whether money-making is a part of it or a different kind of activity is open to dispute.¹⁵ Suppose the money-maker’s job is to consider where wealth and property will come from. Property and wealth have many parts. So the first question is whether farming belongs to household management or is a different kind of activity. The same question applies generally to looking after and acquiring food. There are many kinds of food,²⁰ and so there are many ways of life for both animals and humans. Life is impossible without food, so differ-

ences in food have made animals' ways of life different. Some wild animals live in groups and others live scattered apart, according to which way helps them get food. This is because some²⁵ eat other animals, some eat plants, and some eat everything. Nature has therefore made their ways of life different to make it easy for them to get the food they choose. Since the same things aren't naturally pleasant to every animal, but different things to different animals, even the ways of life of meat-eaters and of plant-eaters differ from one another. The same is true³⁰ of humans. Their ways of life differ a great deal. The least active are nomads. Food from domesticated animals comes to them without work, leaving them at leisure. Since their livestock have to move to find pasture, they too have to follow along, as though they had living farmland³⁵ to farm. Others live by hunting, with different people hunting different things. Some live by robbery, others by fishing—those who live beside lakes, marshes, rivers, or a suitable sea. Others live by hunting birds or wild animals. But most people live from the land and cultivated crops.

^{1256a40} These, then, are roughly all the ways of life whose work draws directly on nature, rather than using exchange and retail trade^{1256b1} to get food:

herding, robbery, fishing, hunting, and farming. Some combine these and live comfortably. They supplement the less adequate way of life at the point where it falls short of being self-sufficient. For example, some combine^{1256b5} herding with robbery, others farming with hunting. The same applies to the others: they live in whatever way their needs force them to adopt. This kind of property seems to be given to all living things by nature itself, both at their very first coming into being and when they are fully grown.¹⁰ At their first coming into being, some animals bring forth enough food along with their young to last until the offspring can get its own. This is true of those that produce larvae or eggs. Those that give birth to live young have food inside themselves for their offspring for a certain time. What is called milk¹⁵ is that substance. So it's similarly clear that we must think that, once they have come into being, plants exist for animals and the other animals for humans. Domesticated animals serve both for use and for food. Of wild animals, if not all, at least most serve for food and other help, so that²⁰ clothing and other tools can be made from them.

If nature makes nothing incomplete or pointless, nature must have made them all for humans. For this reason, warfare too will be a kind of acquiring property by nature, since hunting is part of it. We should use it against wild animals and²⁵ against those humans who are naturally suited to be ruled but refuse. This kind of war is just by nature.

One kind of acquiring property, then, is by nature a part of household management. It concerns things that must either be available or be acquired by household management so that they are available: a store of goods needed for life and useful^{1256b30} to the community of a city or household. True wealth seems to consist of these. The amount of such property that is enough for a good life isn't unlimited, as Solon says in his poem: "No stated limit of wealth is set for humans." (Sol. Fr. 13.71) There is a limit, just as there is in the other arts.³⁵ No art has a tool that is unlimited in either number or size. Wealth is a collection of tools for household management and political activity. So it's clear that there is a way of acquiring property by nature for household managers and political rulers, and why there is.

^{1256b40} But there is another kind of acquiring property, which people especially call money-making, and rightly so. Because of it, there seems to be no^{1257a1} limit to wealth and property.

Many think it is one and the same as the kind we have discussed, because the two are closely related. But it is neither the same as that kind nor far removed from it. One is by nature, while the other is not by nature but through experience^{1257a5} of a certain kind and skill it comes about instead. Let's take this as our starting point for discussing it. You can use each possession in two ways. In both cases you use the thing itself, but differently. One use belongs to it properly; the other doesn't. For example, a shoe can be worn or exchanged. Both¹⁰ are uses of a shoe. Someone who exchanges a shoe for money or food with someone who needs a shoe uses it as a shoe, but not for its proper use. It wasn't made for exchange. The same holds for other pieces of property. There is a way¹⁵ of exchanging all of them. This first began from a natural situation: people had more than enough of some things and less than enough of others. This also shows that retail trade isn't a kind of money-making by nature. People had

to make exchanges only to get enough for themselves. In the first²⁰ community, which is the household, exchange clearly has no function. It has one only when the community is larger. The members of the household shared all the same things. But people living separately shared many different things. They had to share these with one another according to their needs through exchange, as many²⁵ non-Greek peoples still do. They exchange useful things directly for one another, and nothing more. For example, they give and receive wine for grain, and exchange each of the other things of this kind. Such exchange is neither against nature nor any kind of money-making,³⁰ since it served to complete natural self-sufficiency. But the other kind arose from this one, as we would expect. When help came more from abroad, through importing things they lacked and exporting things they had in excess, the use of money was necessarily devised. We can't easily carry everything we naturally³⁵ need. So for exchanges people agreed with one another to give and receive something that was itself useful and easy to handle for the needs of life, such as iron, silver, or anything else of that kind. At first it was defined simply by size and weight. Finally⁴⁰ they also put a stamp on it, to save themselves the trouble of measuring. The stamp was put there as a sign of the amount.

^{1257b1} Once money had been devised from necessary exchange, the other kind of money-making arose: retail trade. At first it was perhaps done simply, but then experience made it more skillful, showing where and how to exchange things to make the greatest⁵ profit. So money-making seems to concern money above all, and its task is to be able to see where a large amount will come from, since it produces wealth and money. In fact, people often define wealth as a large amount of money, because it is the concern of money-making¹⁰ and retail trade. At other times, though, money seems to be nonsense and entirely a matter of convention, with nothing natural about it. If the people who use it change their agreement, it's worth nothing and is useless for any of life's necessities. Someone rich in money will often lack necessary food. Yet it's strange that something should¹⁵ be wealth when a person with plenty of it could starve to death. This is what the story says happened to Midas: because of his greedy wish, everything served to him turned to gold. That's why people look for

something different as wealth and money-making, and they're right to look. There is another kind of money-making, and wealth that is²⁰ by nature. This kind belongs to household management. The other is retail trade, which produces wealth not in every way but through the exchange of goods. This kind seems to concern money, since money is the starting point and endpoint of exchange. The wealth that comes from this kind of money-making has no limit.²⁵ Medicine sets no limit on health, and every art sets no limit on its goal, since it wants to achieve that goal as fully as possible. But the means to the goal aren't unlimited, since the goal is a limit for all of them. In the same way, this kind of money-making has no limit on its goal. That goal is this kind of³⁰ wealth and the acquisition of money. But the money-making that belongs to household management has a limit, since this isn't the task of household management. So in one sense there seems to have to be a limit to all wealth. Yet in practice we see the opposite happening: all money-makers increase their money without limit.³⁵ The cause is the close connection between the two kinds. Their uses overlap because both kinds of money-making use the same thing. They use the same property, but not in the same way. One has a different goal; the other's goal is increase. So some people think this is the task of household management, and they keep on thinking that keeping⁴⁰ their supply of money or increasing it without limit is necessary. The cause of this attitude is their concern with living, but^{1258a1} not with living well.

Since this desire has no limit, they also desire unlimited means of fulfilling it. Even those who aim to live well look for the means to enjoy bodily pleasures. Since this too seems to depend on property,^{1258a5} they spend all their time on money-making, and this is why the other kind of money-making has arisen. Since their enjoyment goes to excess, they look for the art that produces an excess of enjoyment. If they can't supply it through money-making, they try to do it through some other means,¹⁰ using each of their abilities in a way that's not by nature. Courage's job is not to produce money but confidence. Nor is money the job of generalship or medicine: one produces victory, the other health. But these people turn all abilities into ways of making money, as though this were the goal and everything had to contribute to the goal.

As for the kind of money-making that isn't^{1258a15} necessary, we have now discussed what it is and why we need it. We have also discussed the necessary kind. It differs from the other and is by nature a part of household management, concerned with food. It isn't unlimited like the other kind, but has a boundary.

The question we raised at the start is also now clear: whether^{1258a20} money-making belongs to the household manager and political ruler or not, or whether the resources must instead be available beforehand. Political activity doesn't make humans, but takes them from nature and uses them. In the same way, nature must supply food, whether from land, sea, or something else. From these supplies, arranging them as needed²⁵ is the household manager's responsibility. Weaving doesn't produce wool but uses it, and also knows which wool is good and suitable and which is bad and unsuitable. Someone might also ask why money-making is a part of household management but medicine isn't. Yet people must be healthy³⁰ within the household, just as they must be alive or meet any other necessary condition. In one sense looking after health is the household manager's and ruler's job, but in another it isn't: it's the doctor's. Likewise, in one sense looking after money is the household manager's job, but in another it isn't: it belongs to a supporting art. Above all, as we said earlier, this supply must³⁵ be available by nature. Nature's job is to provide food for what it brings into being. For every living thing, the food is what is left over from that out of which it comes into being. So money-making from crops and animals is by nature for everyone. As we said, it has two kinds: retail trade and the kind belonging to household management.⁴⁰ The latter is necessary and praised,

while the^{1258b1} kind based on exchange is rightly criticized, since it isn't by nature but takes from other people. Lending at interest is hated with the best reason, because the property it acquires comes from money itself, rather than from what money was devised for. Money came into being for exchange,⁵ but interest makes the money itself increase. This is also where its name, meaning

offspring, comes from: offspring resemble those that produce them, and interest is money produced from money. So of all kinds of money-making, this is the one most against nature.

We have made enough distinctions for understanding. What^{1258b10} is needed for practical use must now be covered. With all such subjects, studying them is a free person's activity, but practicing them is a matter of necessity. Useful parts of money-making include experience with property: knowing which kinds are most profitable, where, and how. For example, what kind of horses, cattle, or sheep to own, and likewise¹⁵ other animals. We need experience of which are most profitable compared with one another, and which kinds do best in which places, since different kinds thrive in different regions. Next comes knowledge of farming, both on open fields and on planted land, of bee-keeping, and of the other animals, swimming or flying, from²⁰ which some benefit can be gained. These are the first parts of the most proper kind of money-making. The largest part of the exchange kind is commerce. It has three parts: shipowning, transporting goods, and offering them for sale. They differ because some are safer and others bring a greater return.²⁵ The second part is lending at interest, and the third is working for wages. Wage work includes skilled manual trades and the work of unskilled people whose bodies alone are useful. A third kind of money-making lies between this kind and the first. It includes a part of both the natural kind and the exchange kind: everything obtained from the earth³⁰ and from things that grow from the earth that don't bear fruit but are useful, such as logging and all mining. Mining includes many kinds, since there are many kinds of things extracted from the earth. The occupations needing the most skill are those with the least room for chance. The most degrading manual jobs are those in which³⁵ bodies are most damaged. The most slave-like are those that use the body most, and the least noble are those needing the least virtue. We have now spoken about each of these in general terms. Going into detail with precision is useful for practicing them, but spending time on it is tedious.

Book I, 1258b–1260b



Since some people have ^{1258b40} written about these subjects,

for example Charetides of Paros and ^{1259a1} Apollodorus of Lemnos on farming both open fields and planted land, and others on other subjects, anyone interested should study these matters in their writings. The scattered accounts of how some people have succeeded in making money,⁵ we should also collect. For all these are useful to people who value money-making. One example is the story of Thales of Miletus. It involves an insight into money-making. People credit it to him because of his wisdom, but it is actually something of general application. People criticized him for his poverty, saying this showed the uselessness¹⁰ of philosophy. The story goes that he realized from his study of the stars that there would be a large olive crop. While it was still winter, he got together a little money and put down deposits on all the olive presses in Miletus and Chios. He rented them cheaply, since no one was bidding against him. When the season¹⁵ came, many presses were needed all at once and suddenly. He rented them out on whatever terms he wanted and collected a lot of money. He showed that philosophers can easily get rich if they want to, but that this isn't what they care about. Thales is said to have demonstrated his wisdom in this way. But, as²⁰ we said, this is a generally applicable way of making money, if someone can set up a monopoly for himself. This is why some cities also use this means of raising money when they are short of it: they set up a monopoly on goods for sale. In Sicily, someone used money deposited with him to buy up

all the iron from²⁵ the ironworks. Later, when the merchants arrived from the trading centers, he was the only seller. He didn't raise the price very much, but still made a hundred talents on top of his fifty. When Dionysius heard about this, he told the man to take his money away, but no longer to³⁰ stay in Syracuse. The man was finding ways of making money that harmed Dionysius's own interests. Still, this insight and Thales's were the same: both managed to create a monopoly for themselves. Knowing these things is also useful for political rulers. Many cities need money-making and such³⁵ sources of income, just as a household does, and even more. This is why some people in public life concern themselves only with these matters.

Household management had three parts. One was mastery, which we discussed earlier. Another was a father's rule, and the third was a husband's rule. A man rules both his wife and his children as free people,^{1259a40} but he doesn't rule both in the same way.

Instead,^{1259b1} he rules his wife as a political ruler and his children as a king. The male is by nature more fit to lead than the female, unless the situation has somehow developed against nature. And the older and fully developed is more fit to lead than the younger and not fully developed. As for political systems of rule,⁵ in most of them the ruler and the ruled change places, since they aim to be equal in nature and not different at all. Even so, when one rules and another is ruled, they look for a difference in outward appearance, forms of address, and honors. This is like the story Amasis told about the footbath. But the male always, in relation to¹⁰ the female, stands in this way. Rule over children is kingly. The parent rules both through affection and through seniority, which is the form of kingly rule. So Homer rightly addressed Zeus by saying, "Father of humans and gods," (Hom. Il. 1.544) since he is king of them all. By nature,¹⁵ a king must be different from those he rules, but of the same kind. This is the relation of the older to the younger and of the parent to the child.

Clearly, then, household management is more concerned with people than with owning lifeless things, and^{1259b20} with people's virtue than with the excellence of property, which we call wealth. It is also more concerned with free people than with slaves. First, someone might ask about slaves: does a slave have any

virtue beyond the abilities needed as a tool and a servant, something more honorable than these, such as self-control, courage, justice, or²⁵ other qualities of that kind? Or is there nothing beyond bodily services? Either answer presents a problem. If slaves have these virtues, how will they differ from free people? If they don't, that is strange, since they are human and share in reason. Almost the same question arises about a woman and a child:³⁰ do they too have virtues? Must a woman be self-controlled, courageous, and just? Can a child be undisciplined or self-controlled, or not? We need to consider this question generally about those who rule and those who are ruled by nature: is their virtue the same or different? If both must share in goodness and nobility,³⁵ why should one rule and the other be ruled once and for all? They can't differ just by having more or less. Ruling and being ruled differ in kind, while more and less don't. But if one must have virtue and the other needn't, that's surprising. If the ruler isn't self-controlled and just,⁴⁰ how will he rule well? If the ruled person isn't, how will he be ruled^{1260a1} well?

If he is undisciplined and cowardly, he won't do anything he should. Clearly, then, both must share in virtue, but there must be differences in that virtue, just as there are among those ruled by nature. What we have said already points to this in^{1260a5} the soul. In it, one part naturally rules and another is ruled. We say they have different virtues, as with the part that has reason and the part without reason. Clearly, the same holds in other cases too, so there are several kinds of rulers and ruled by nature. A free person, in relation to a slave,¹⁰ rules in one way, a male rules a female in another, and a man rules a child in another. All have the parts of the soul, but they have them differently. A slave has no ability to deliberate at all. A female has it, but it has no authority. A child has it, but it isn't fully developed.¹⁵ So the ruler must have complete intellectual virtue, since the work belongs without qualification to the person directing it, and reason directs it. Each of the others must have as much as falls to them. We must assume that the same necessarily holds for moral virtues: everyone must share in them, but not in the same²⁰ way. Each must have as much as is needed for their own work. So clearly all those we have mentioned

have moral virtue. But a woman's self-control isn't the same as a man's, nor are their courage and justice the same, as Socrates thought. One kind of courage is for ruling, the other for serving. The same holds for the other virtues.

This is even clearer in the details^{1260a25} when we look at them. People who speak in general terms fool themselves when they say that virtue is a good state of the soul, or acting rightly, or something of that sort. Those who list the virtues, as Gorgias does, speak much better than those who define them in that way. So we should take what the poet said about a woman as the model for thinking³⁰ about all these cases: "Silence gives a woman grace." (Soph. Aj. 293) But this no longer applies to a man. Since a child isn't fully developed, clearly the child's³² virtue isn't measured in relation to the child alone, but in relation to the goal and to the person leading the child. The same goes for a slave in relation to a master. We said that a slave is useful for life's necessities. So clearly a slave needs only a little virtue, just enough not to fall short in his work through lack of self-control or cowardice. If what we just said is true, someone might ask whether craftsmen also need virtue, since they often fall short in their work through lack of self-control. Or is there a very great difference here? The⁴⁰ slave shares in the master's life, while the craftsman is more distant. He has a share of virtue just to the extent that he shares in slavery.

For the manual craftsman^{1260b1} has a kind of limited slavery. A slave is one of those who are slaves by nature, but no shoemaker is, nor is any other craftsman. Clearly, then, the master must be responsible for giving the slave this kind of virtue, but not through the master's skill in teaching⁵ the work. So people are wrong when they deny slaves reasoned discussion and say we should only give them orders. Slaves need advice more than children do.

Let these matters be settled in this way. As for husband and wife, children and father, and concerning^{1260b10} each person's virtue and their dealings with one another, we must discuss these in our account of constitutions. What is good and what isn't? How should they pursue the good and avoid the bad? Every household is a part of a city, and these people are parts of a household. We must consider the part's virtue in relation to the whole's¹⁵ virtue. So we must educate both children and women with a view to the constitution, if hav-

ing good children and good women makes any difference to having a good city. It must make a difference. Women make up half of the free people, and from children,²⁰ participants in the constitution develop. So, since we have settled these matters and must discuss the rest elsewhere, let's leave this discussion as finished and make another start. First, let's examine those who have made statements about the best constitution.

Book II, 1260b–1264a



^{1260b27} We have chosen to study the political community and ask which kind is best of all for people who can live as nearly as possible as they wish. So we must also examine other constitutions,³⁰ both those used by cities said to have good laws and any others proposed by people and thought to be sound. This will let us see what is right and useful in them. It will also show that our search for something different isn't simply an attempt to be clever. Rather, because they aren't³⁵ sound as they now exist, we seem to have undertaken this inquiry. We should first start at the natural starting point for this investigation. The citizens must share either everything, nothing, or some things but not others. Sharing nothing is clearly⁴⁰ impossible. A constitution is a kind of community, and people must first share a place. There is one territory for^{1261a1} a single city,

and its citizens share that single city. But should a city that is to be well run share everything that can be shared? Or is it better to share some things but not others? Citizens can have children and wives^{1261a5} and property in common with one another, as in Plato's Republic. There Socrates says that children, wives, and property should be held in common. Is it better, then, to have things as they are now, or according to the law set out in the Republic?

^{1261a10} Having wives shared by everyone presents many other difficulties. And the reason Socrates gives for making this law doesn't seem to follow from his arguments. Also, the goal he says the city should have is impossible as he now states it. He hasn't explained at all how we should qualify it.¹⁵ I mean the

claim that it is best for the whole city to be as completely one as possible. Socrates takes this as his starting assumption. Yet clearly, as a city goes on becoming more and more one, it will no longer even be a city. A city is by nature a collection of people. As it becomes more one, a household from a city, and a person from a household,²⁰ will emerge. We would say that a household is more of a unit than a city, and a single person more than a household. So even if someone could do this, they shouldn't. They would destroy the city.

A city is made up not just of several people but of people different in kind. People who are all alike don't form a city. An alliance is different^{1261a25} from a city. An alliance is useful because of its numbers, even if its members are all the same kind. Its natural purpose is mutual help, just as a greater weight would pull down more. But the people who are to form a single whole must differ in kind. In this respect a city also differs from a nation,³⁰ when its people aren't scattered in villages but live like the Arcadians. This is why equality through give-and-take preserves cities, as we said earlier in the Ethics. Even among free and equal people this is necessary. They can't all rule at once, but must take turns yearly or by some other arrangement or period of time. This happens³⁵ in such a way that everyone gets to rule. It is as if shoemakers and carpenters changed places instead of the same people always being shoemakers and carpenters. Since it is better for things to stay that way, the same applies to the political community: clearly, it is better for the same people always to rule, if possible. But where this isn't possible because in^{1261b1} nature everyone is equal,

it is also just for everyone to share in rule, whether ruling is good or bad. Equals taking turns and giving way imitates the situation where people are unlike outside office. Some rule and others are ruled in turn,^{1261b5} as though they had become different people. In the same way, different rulers hold different offices. These points make it clear that a city isn't by nature one in the way some people say. What is described as the greatest good for cities destroys them. Yet what is good for each thing preserves it.¹⁰ There is another way to see that trying to make the city too much of a unit isn't better. A household is more self-sufficient than one person, and a city more than a household. A city only

really comes into being when the community of many people becomes self-sufficient. So if greater self-sufficiency is more desirable, being less of a unit rather than¹⁵ more of one is also more desirable.

But even if it is best for a community to be as completely one as possible, the argument doesn't seem to prove this by having everyone say "mine" and "not mine" at the same time. Socrates thinks this is a sign that the^{1261b20} city is completely one. But "everyone" has two meanings. If it means each person individually, that might come closer to what Socrates wants to achieve. Each person will call the same boy his son and the same woman his wife. The same goes for property and for each thing that happens. But they won't speak this way,²⁵ the people who share wives and children. All of them will, but not each individually. Likewise, all will call the property theirs, but not each individually. So clearly, saying "everyone" involves a false inference. Because they have two meanings, "all" and "both," as well as "odd" and "even,"³⁰ produce misleading arguments even in discussions. So having everyone say the same thing is good but impossible in one sense, and does nothing to produce agreement in the other. Besides, the proposal has another disadvantage. What is shared by the most people gets the least care. People care most about their own things. About common things they care³⁵ less, or only as much as falls to their share. Among other reasons, they neglect them more because they think someone else is looking after them. In household service, too, many servants sometimes do a worse job than fewer. Each citizen will have a thousand sons. These won't be his individually. Instead, any one of them, to any citizen,^{1262a1} will equally be a son.

So everyone will neglect them equally.

Also, each person will call a citizen who is doing well or badly "mine" in this way, whatever number he happens to be: "mine" or "so-and-so's." He will speak this way about each of the thousand, or however many people the^{1262a5} city has, and even then with doubt. For it is unclear who happened to have a child and whose child survived after birth. Is it really better for each person to say "mine" in this way, with two thousand or ten thousand calling the same person "mine"? Or is it better to use "mine" as people now do in cities? For one, he is a son; for another, a brother:¹⁰ they give these names to the same per-

son. Another calls him a cousin, or uses some other relationship by blood or by connection and marriage, either his own or that of his relatives. Besides these, someone else calls him a member of his brotherhood or tribe. It is better to be someone's own cousin than a son in this way. Still, it isn't even possible to prevent some people from¹⁵ suspecting that others are their brothers, children, fathers, or mothers. The resemblances children have to those who gave birth to them will necessarily give people grounds for believing they are related. Some people who write descriptions of the earth say that this actually happens. Among some²⁰ peoples of inland Libya, they say, wives are shared, but the children born are assigned by their resemblances. There are also some women, and females of other animals, such as horses and cattle, who naturally produce offspring very like their parents. One example is the mare at Pharsalus called Dicaea.

^{1262a25} Also, people setting up this kind of community can't easily guard against problems such as assaults, accidental and deliberate killings, fights, and insults. None of these is religiously permissible when directed against fathers, mothers, and close relatives in the way it is against people more distantly related.³⁰ These things will necessarily happen more often among people who don't know their relatives than among those who do. When they happen among those who do know, the customary acts of atonement are possible. Among those who don't, none is possible. It is also strange to make sons common and ban only sexual intercourse between lovers, without banning love or forms of intimacy³⁵ of other kinds that are most inappropriate of all between father and son or brother and brother. Even love alone is inappropriate. It is strange, too, to ban intercourse for no other reason than the excessive strength of the pleasure it produces, while thinking that one person being a father or son, or the two being brothers,⁴⁰ makes no difference.

Sharing wives and children seems more useful for the farmers^{1262b1} than for the guardians.

There will be less friendship when children and wives are shared. The ruled need to be like this if they are to obey and not start revolutions. Overall, a law of this kind must produce the opposite of what^{1262b5} well-made laws should

produce, and the opposite of the reason Socrates thinks children and wives should be organized this way. We think friendship is the greatest good for cities, since it would leave them least likely to fall into faction. Socrates especially praises the city's being one,¹⁰ which seems to be the work of friendship, as he himself says. We know that Aristophanes says in the speeches about love that lovers, because they love so strongly, want to grow together and become one instead of two. In that case, both or one of them must be destroyed.¹⁵ But in the city, friendship must become watered down through this kind of sharing. A son will be least likely to call someone "my father," or a father "my son." A little sweetness mixed into a great deal of water makes its taste impossible to notice. The same happens to the family connection people have with one another through names²⁰ of this kind. In this sort of constitution a father must care least for people as his sons, or a son for someone as his father, or brothers for one another. Two things above all make people care and love: something's being their own and something's being dear to them. Neither can belong to people living under such a constitution. Furthermore,²⁵ there is great difficulty over how to transfer the children born—some from the farmers and craftsmen to the guardians, and others from the guardians to them. Those who give up and transfer the children must know which children they are giving to whom. Also, the things mentioned earlier, even more often,³⁰ are bound to happen among these people: assaults, love affairs, and killings. Those given to the other citizens will no longer call the guardians brothers, children, fathers, or mothers. Likewise, those among the guardians won't call the other citizens these names, and so won't guard against doing such things because of their³⁵ relationship.

Let this, then, settle our discussion of sharing children and wives.

The next thing to examine is property. How should it be arranged for people who are to live under the best constitution? Common or not common—^{1262b40} which should property be? We could study this separately from the laws about children and wives.

I mean,^{1263a1} should property and its use be shared, even if wives and children are separate, as they now are everywhere? For example, the plots of land might be separate, but their produce brought into a common stock for con-

sumption. Some⁵ nations do this. Or the reverse: the land might be common and farmed jointly, but the produce divided up for private use. Some non-Greek peoples are said to share in this way too. Or both the plots and their produce might be common. If others do the farming, the arrangement would be different and¹⁰ easier. But if the citizens work for themselves, the property arrangements would cause more difficulties. If their shares in both the benefits and the work aren't equal but unequal, those who enjoy or receive much but work little will inevitably face complaints from those who receive less¹⁵ and work more. In general, living together and sharing all human affairs is difficult, especially affairs of this kind. Groups traveling together show this. Most of them fall out over everyday matters and annoy one another over little things. Also, among servants, most of all²⁰ we clash with those we use most for routine services.

So common property has these and other similar difficulties. The present arrangement, improved by good habits and a system of sound laws, would be far better. It would have the good of both arrangements:^{1263a25} I mean the good of common property and the good of private property. Property should be common in one sense, but private overall. When responsibilities are divided, they won't cause complaints against one another. Things will improve more, because each person attends to what is their own. But virtue will make its use³⁰ common, as the saying goes, "Friends' things are shared." This arrangement is already sketched out in some cities, showing that it isn't impossible. Especially in well-run cities, some of it already exists and some could come about. Each person has private property, but makes some of it available to friends and uses other things³⁵ in common. In Lacedaemon, for example, they use one another's slaves as practically their own, as well as horses and dogs. If they need provisions, they also use those in the fields throughout the country. Clearly, then, it is better for property to be private but made common in use. Making people like this is the lawgiver's⁴⁰ particular job. Also, the pleasure of thinking that something is your own makes an indescribably great difference.

Surely it isn't pointless to direct toward^{1263b1} oneself the love each person feels. This is natural. Selfishness is rightly criticized. But this isn't loving yourself. It is loving yourself more than you should, just as with loving money. Practically everyone loves⁵ each of these things. Also, doing favors and helping friends, guests, or companions is very pleasant. This becomes possible when property is private. People who make the city too much of a unit miss out on these things. Besides, they plainly do away with the acts of two virtues. One is self-control in relation to women:¹⁰ it is a noble act to hold back from another man's wife through self-control. The other is generosity in relation to property. No one will be seen to be generous or do any generous act. Generosity's work lies in the use of property.

^{1263b15} This kind of legislation looks attractive and might seem humane. A listener welcomes it gladly, thinking it will bring about an extraordinary friendship of everyone toward everyone. This is especially so when someone blames the evils now found in constitutions on property not being²⁰ shared. I mean lawsuits against one another over contracts, trials for false testimony, and flattery of the rich. None of these comes from a lack of sharing. They come from wickedness. We see people who own and share property in common disagreeing far more than those who hold separately²⁵ their property. But we notice only a few people quarreling over shared property, comparing them with the many who own private property. Also, it is only fair to mention not just the evils people will lose by sharing, but the good things too. This life seems quite impossible.

The cause^{1263b30} of Socrates' error must be seen as his mistaken assumption. Both a household and a city must be one in some way, but not completely. As it goes on becoming one, in one sense it will cease to be a city. In another it will still be a city, but a worse one because it is close to no longer being a city. It would be like turning a³⁵ harmony into a single note, or a rhythm into a single beat. Instead, as we said earlier, a city is a collection of people and must be made into a shared unit through education. It is strange that someone who plans to introduce education, and thinks it will make the city good, should think these

measures will put it right, rather than⁴⁰ habits, philosophy, and laws. In Lacedaemon and Crete, for example, property, through common meals,^{1264a1} was made common by the lawgiver.

Book II, 1264a–1267a



We shouldn't overlook this point either: we must pay attention to the long stretch of time and the many years in which these arrangements, if they were good, couldn't have gone unnoticed. Nearly everything has already been discovered, but some things haven't been brought together, and others aren't used even though people^{1264a5} know about them. This would become especially clear if someone saw such a constitution being set up in practice. They couldn't create the city without dividing and separating its people, some into common meals, others into brotherhoods and tribes. So the only new law will be a ban on farming¹⁰ for the guardians. This is what the Lacedaemonians already try to do.

Still, Socrates hasn't said what form the whole constitution will take for those who share in it, and it isn't easy to say. Yet the great majority of the city consists of the other citizens. Nothing has been settled about them: whether^{1264a15} the farmers too should have common property, or each have their own, and whether their wives and children should be their own or shared. If everything is shared by everyone in the same way, how will they differ from the guardians? What more will they gain by submitting to the guardians' rule? What will make them submit²⁰ to it, unless the guardians devise some trick like the Cretans? They give slaves the same rights in other matters, and only forbid physical training and owning weapons. But if these things are to be arranged as in other cities, what form will the community take? Within one city,²⁵ two

cities must exist, and these opposed to each other. He makes the guardians a kind of garrison, and the farmers, craftsmen, and others the citizens. Complaints, lawsuits, and all the other evils he says cities have will be found among these people too. Yet Socrates says³⁰ that their education will mean they don't need many regulations, such as rules for managing the city, the market, and similar things. But he gives education only to the guardians. Also, he makes the farmers authoritative owners of the property, paying a contribution from it. Yet they are likely to be much more troublesome, with pride³⁵ in full measure, than the enslaved helots and penestae and the other slaves found in some places. But whether these arrangements are equally necessary or not, nothing has yet been settled, nor have the related questions: what these people's constitution and education will be, and what laws they will have. This isn't easy to work out. It matters a great deal what sort of people⁴⁰ they are, when it comes to preserving the guardians' community.

Furthermore,^{1264b1} if he makes wives common but property private, who will manage the household as their husbands manage affairs in the fields? And what if both the farmers' property and their wives are common? It is also strange to use wild animals as a comparison⁵ to argue that women should have the same occupations as men. Animals have no part in household management.

The way Socrates appoints the rulers is also unsafe. He makes the same people rule all the time. This causes faction even among people without standing, and all the more among spirited^{1264b10} and warlike men. Clearly, he has to make the same people rule. The gold from the god isn't mixed into different people's souls at different times, but always into the same people's. He says that at their birth the god mixed gold into some, silver into others, and bronze and iron¹⁵ into those who were to become craftsmen and farmers. Also, though he takes happiness away from the guardians, he says the lawgiver should make the whole city happy. But the whole can't be happy unless most, all, or some of its parts have happiness. Being happy isn't like being²⁰ even in number. A whole can be even without either part being even, but this is impossible with happiness. And

if the guardians aren't happy, who else is? Surely not the craftsmen and the mass of manual workers. So the constitution Socrates has described has these²⁵ difficulties, and others no less serious.

The situation is much the same with the Laws, written later. So it is better to examine the constitution in that work briefly too. In the Republic, Socrates has settled very few matters at all: concerning wives^{1264b30} and children, how their sharing should work, the arrangements for property, and the structure of the constitution. The population is divided into two parts: the farmers and the fighting force. From these comes a third, the part that deliberates and is sovereign in the city. As for the farmers and craftsmen,³⁵ Socrates hasn't settled whether they will share in no office or in some office, or whether they too should own weapons and join in fighting. But he thinks women should join in fighting and have the same education as the guardians. He has filled, with matters outside the subject,⁴⁰ the rest of his discussion, and with education—what kind should be given^{1265a1} to the guardians.

Most of the Laws consists of laws. He has said little about the constitution. Though he wants to make it more widely applicable to cities, he gradually brings it back toward the other constitution. Apart from^{1265a5} the sharing of wives and property, he assigns the same things to both constitutions: the same education, a life free from necessary work, and the same arrangements for common meals. But in this one he says women should have common meals too. The first has a thousand¹⁰ men who own weapons; this one has five thousand.

All Socrates' discussions show originality, cleverness, innovation, and a searching mind. But perhaps it is hard to get everything right. We shouldn't overlook the fact that the population just mentioned will need a territory as large as Babylonia^{1265a15} or some other country of unlimited size. It must feed five thousand people who don't work, and around them another crowd of women and servants many times as large. We should assume conditions that meet our wishes, but nothing impossible. It is said that the lawgiver should make laws with two things in view:²⁰ the territory and its people. It is also good to add the neighboring regions, especially if the city is to live a political life. It must have weapons for war useful not just in its own territory but also outside

it, in²⁵ other regions. But even if someone rejects this kind of life, either for themselves or for the city as a whole, they must still be formidable to their enemies, not just when enemies enter their territory but also after they leave.

We should also consider the amount of property. Might it be better to define it differently, and more clearly? Enough property^{1265a30} must be available, he says, to live with self-control. That is like saying enough to live well. It is too general, since someone can live with self-control but in hardship. A better limit is enough to live with self-control and generosity. Taken separately, generosity will lead to luxury, and self-control to hardship. These alone³⁵ are desirable habits concerning the use of property. For example, you can't use property gently or courageously, but you can use it with self-control and generosity. So these must also be the habits concerned with it. Making property equal without arranging the number of citizens is strange too. Yet he leaves⁴⁰ childbearing unrestricted. He assumes that, however many children are born, childlessness will sufficiently balance things out to the same population,

^{1265b1} because this seems to happen in cities now. But the results in those cities and in cities now can't be exactly alike. Now no one is left without property, since estates are divided among any number of people. Then, since estates are indivisible, the extra children must⁵ have nothing, whether there are fewer or more of them. One might think that childbearing needs limits more than property does, so that people don't have more than a certain number of children. This number should be set with an eye to the chances of some children dying after birth and to¹⁰ other people's childlessness. Leaving it unrestricted, as in most cities, must cause poverty among the citizens. Poverty produces faction and crime. Pheidon of Corinth, one of the earliest lawgivers, thought the number of households and citizens should stay the same,¹⁵ even if everyone originally had land allotments unequal in size. In these Laws, the reverse is true. We must say later what we think would be better in these matters. These Laws also leave out how the rulers will differ from the ruled. He says²⁰ that just as the lengthwise threads are made from different wool than the crosswise threads, the rulers should differ from the ruled. Since he allows total property to grow to as much as five times its original amount, why shouldn't this apply to land up to

some limit too? We should also examine the division of house plots, in case it doesn't²⁵ help household management. He has assigned each person two separate house plots, and it is hard to live in two houses.

The whole system is meant to be neither democracy nor oligarchy, but something between them, which people call polity. It consists of those who serve as heavy-armed soldiers. If he sets up this constitution as the most widely applicable^{1265b30} to cities of all constitutions, perhaps he is right. But if he presents it as the best after the first constitution, he isn't right. Someone might prefer the Lacedaemonian constitution, or another more aristocratic one. Some people say that the best constitution should be a mixture of all constitutions.³⁵ That is why they praise the Lacedaemonian one. Some say it combines oligarchy, monarchy, and democracy. They call the kingship monarchy, the rule of the elders oligarchy, and the rule of the overseers called ephors democratic because the people supply⁴⁰ the ephors. Others say the office of ephor is a tyranny, but the constitution is democratic in its common meals and the rest of its^{1266a1} everyday life.

But in these Laws it is said that the best constitution should combine democracy and tyranny. Someone might not count these as constitutions at all, or might count them as the worst of all. So those who mix more forms are more correct. One made up of^{1266a5} more forms is a better constitution. Besides, this constitution doesn't seem to contain anything monarchical, only oligarchic and democratic elements. It tends more toward oligarchy. This is clear from the way rulers are appointed. Selection by lot from elected candidates is common to both forms. But as for wealthier people,¹⁰ requiring them to attend the assembly, choose rulers, or carry out some other public duty while exempting the others is oligarchic. So is trying to have more rulers from the well-off and to fill the greatest offices from the highest property qualifications. He also makes the choice of the council oligarchic. They choose¹⁵ and everyone must do so. The candidates, though, come from the first property class. Then they choose an equal number from the second. Next they choose from the third, but not everyone in the third or fourth classes was required to do so. Only the first and second classes must choose from the fourth. Then from these candidates,

equally from each property class,²⁰ a number must be appointed, he says. Those from the highest property classes will therefore be more numerous and better, because some of the common people won't choose, since they aren't required to. So this constitution shouldn't be put together from democracy and monarchy. That is clear from these points and those to be made later,²⁵ when our investigation turns to this sort of constitution. Also, choosing rulers by electing from elected candidates is dangerous. If some people choose to combine, even a moderate number, the choice will always follow their wishes. The constitution in the Laws, then, has this³⁰ form.

There are also some other constitutions, some proposed by private individuals, others by philosophers and statesmen. They are all closer than either of these two to established constitutions under which people now take part in public life. Sharing children and^{1266a35} wives is something new that no one else has introduced. Nor has anyone else introduced common meals for women. Instead, they start more with necessities. Some think the most important thing is to arrange property well. They say everyone starts factions over this. So Phaleas of Chalcedon was the first to introduce this proposal:⁴⁰ he says citizens' property should be equal.

This,^{1266b1} he thought, wouldn't be hard to do at once in cities being founded. It would be harder in those already settled. Still, equality could be reached fastest if the rich gave dowries but didn't receive them, while the poor didn't give them but received them⁵ instead. Plato, in writing the Laws, thought property should be allowed to increase up to a point, but no citizen should be allowed to acquire more than five times the smallest holding, as we said earlier. People making laws this way shouldn't overlook something they now do overlook: when regulating property¹⁰ by amount, they should also fix the number of children. If the number of children exceeds what the property can support, the law must break down. Apart from that breakdown, it is bad for many people to become poor after being rich. It is hard to keep such people from starting revolutions. There is¹⁵ some influence on the political community from equal property. Some people long ago clearly recognized this. Solon, for example, made a law about it. Among other peoples too there is a law that

prevents someone from acquiring as much land as they want. Laws also prevent selling property. In Locri, for example, a law²⁰ prohibits selling unless someone can show that a clear misfortune has happened to them. Laws also preserve the old land allotments. The abolition of this rule in Leucas made their constitution too democratic, since people no longer entered offices on the basis of the fixed property qualifications. But equality²⁵ can exist in property, yet it can be too plentiful, leading to luxury, or too scanty, leading to a meager life. Clearly, then, it isn't enough for the lawgiver to make property equal. The middle amount must be the goal. Even if someone set a moderate amount of property for everyone, it would do no good. Desires need to be³⁰ made equal more than property does. This can't happen unless people are properly educated by the laws. But perhaps Phaleas would say that this is exactly what he means. He thinks cities need equality in these two things: property and education. But he must say what the education will be. Having one³⁵ and the same education does no good. It can be one and the same but of a kind that makes people choose to get more than their share of money, honor, or both.

Also, people form factions not just because of inequality in property but because of inequality in honors. Things work oppositely^{1266b40} in each case: the many do so because property is unequal,

^{1267a1} but the people of distinction do so if honors are equal. Hence the line, "The bad and the good have the same honor." (Hom. Il. 9.319) People don't act unjustly only because they lack necessities. He thinks equality of property is a cure for this, so that people won't steal clothing because they are cold or⁵ hungry. But people also do wrong to enjoy themselves and stop feeling desire. If their desire goes beyond necessities, they will do wrong to remedy it. And not only for this reason: they may also desire to enjoy pleasures that involve no pain. What, then, is the cure for these three cases? For the first, a little property¹⁰ and work; for the second, self-control. For the third, if people want to find enjoyment through themselves, they should look for the cure only in philosophy. The other pleasures need other people. People commit the greatest injustices for excess, not for necessities. They don't become tyrants to avoid being cold, for example. This is why¹⁵ the honors are great for killing a tyrant, not a

thief. So Phaleas' kind of constitution only helps against small injustices. Also, he mostly wants to arrange things so that people will take part in public life well among themselves. But they must do so in relation to their neighbors and all outsiders too.²⁰ So the constitution must be organized with military strength in mind, and he has said nothing about this. The same goes for property. There must be enough not just for the city's uses, but also to meet dangers from outside. For this reason, there shouldn't be so much that²⁵ stronger neighbors covet it while the owners can't repel the invaders. Nor should there be so little that they can't sustain a war even against equals and people like themselves. He has settled nothing about this. But we mustn't overlook what amount of property is advantageous. Perhaps the best limit is one that makes it unprofitable³⁰ for stronger neighbors to wage war because of the excess wealth, so that the city is in the same position as if it had less property. For example, when Autophradates was about to besiege Atarneus, Eubulus told him to consider how long it would take to capture the place and calculate the expense over that time. He was willing to take less³⁵ than this amount and leave Atarneus at once. By saying this, he made Autophradates think it over and abandon the siege.

Book II, 1267a–1270b



So equal wealth among citizens does help keep them from forming factions against each other. But its help isn't very great, you might say. For people^{1267a40} of refinement might resent it, thinking they deserve more than equal shares. That's why we often see them attacking the government and forming factions.

What's more,^{1267b1} human wickedness is never satisfied. At first, just a payment of two small coins called obols is enough. But once that has become the established practice, people always want more, until they go on without limit. Desire has no limit by nature, and satisfying it is what most people⁵ live for. So the starting point in these matters isn't so much to equalize wealth. It's to shape people who are decent by nature so they don't want more than their share, and bad people so they can't get it. This happens if they are weaker and aren't treated unjustly. His account of equal wealth isn't right either. For¹⁰ he makes only landed property equal. But wealth also consists of slaves, livestock, money, and large stocks of what are called household goods. So we must either seek equality in all these things, or some moderate arrangement, or leave them all alone. His legislation also seems to make the city small,¹⁵ if all the craftsmen are to be publicly owned and aren't to form part of the city's population. But if those who do public work must be publicly owned, the arrangement must be like the one in Epidamnus, or the one Diophantus once set up in Athens. So, concerning Phaleas's constitution,²⁰ these points should be enough to let us judge whether anything he has said is right or wrong.

Hippodamus of Miletus, the son of Euryphon, invented the division of cities into districts and laid out Piraeus. In other parts of his life too, his wish to stand out made him so unconventional^{1267b25} that some people thought he was overdoing things, with his mass of hair and expensive ornaments. He also wore cheap but warm clothing, not just in winter but in summer too. He wanted to be knowledgeable about nature as a whole. He was the first person who didn't take part in public life to attempt an account of the constitution³⁰ that is best. He designed a city with a population of ten thousand men, divided into three groups. One group consisted of craftsmen, one of farmers, and the third of those who fought in its defense and had arms. He also divided the land into three parts: sacred, public, and private. The land that provided³⁵ for the customary worship of the gods was sacred. The land that supported those who fought in the city's defense was common land, and the farmers' land was private. He also thought there were only three kinds of law. There were, he said, only three things that lawsuits concerned: violent abuse, damage, and killing. He also established a single law court as the⁴⁰ authoritative one. All cases thought to have been wrongly decided were to be referred to it. He made this court consist of certain elderly men^{1268a1} chosen for the task.

He thought decisions in law courts shouldn't be made by casting votes. Instead, each juror should bring a tablet. If he found fully against the defendant, he should write the penalty on it. If he acquitted him fully, he should leave it blank. If he found against him on some points but not others, that distinction^{1268a5} should be specified. He thought the current law was unsatisfactory, because it forced jurors to break their oath by deciding one way or the other. He also made a law that people who discovered something useful to the city should receive an honor. The children of those who died in war were to be supported at public expense, as if this hadn't yet been¹⁰ made law anywhere else. But this law now exists in Athens and in other cities too. All the rulers were to be chosen by the people. He made the people consist of the city's three groups. Those chosen were to oversee public affairs, affairs concerning foreigners, and affairs concerning orphans.

These, then, are most of the proposals, and ^{1268a15} the most important ones, in Hippodamus's arrangement. The first difficulty someone might raise concerns his division of the citizens. The craftsmen, the farmers, and those who have arms all share in the constitution. Yet the farmers have no arms, and the craftsmen have neither land nor arms,²⁰ so they become practically slaves of those who own arms. They can't, then, share in all the public honors. The generals, the guardians of the citizens, and practically all the most authoritative offices must be appointed from those who have arms. But if the others don't share in the constitution, how can they be friendly²⁵ toward it? Those who own arms must also be stronger than both the other groups. That isn't easy unless there are many of them. But if that is the case, why should the others share in the constitution and have authority over the appointment of rulers? Also, what use are the farmers to the city? Craftsmen³⁰ are necessary, since every city needs them. And they can live by their craft, as they do in other cities. If the farmers supplied food to those who own arms, it would make sense for them to be part of the city. As things stand, though, they have private land and will farm it for themselves.³⁵ And what about the common land that is to provide food for those who fight in the city's defense? If they farm it themselves, the fighting group and the farming group won't be separate, as the lawgiver wants them to be. If the farmers of this land are different both from those who farm their private land and from the fighters, they will form a fourth part of the city. They will have no⁴⁰ share in anything, but will stand outside the constitution. On the other hand, if someone makes the same people farm both the private land and the common land, there will be a problem with the amount of produce that ^{1268b1} each farmer must grow for two households.

And why won't they simply get their own food and supply the fighters from the same land and the same plots? All these arrangements are very confused. The law about decisions in court ^{1268b5} isn't right either. It asks for a divided judgment when the claim has been stated without division, and makes the juror into an arbitrator. This is possible in arbitration, even with several arbitrators, because they discuss the decision with one another. But it isn't possible in law courts. In fact, the opposite is what most lawgivers¹⁰ arrange: they keep jurors

from discussing the case with one another. Besides, how can the decision avoid confusion when a juror thinks something is owed, but not as much as the claimant asks? The claimant asks for twenty money-units called minas, but the juror will award ten minas, or one will award more and another less. Another awards five,¹⁵ and another four. Clearly, they will divide the award in this way. Some will award the whole amount, and others nothing. How, then, will the votes be counted? Also, nothing forces a person who simply rejects or accepts the claim to break his oath, if the claim has been stated without division and he judges justly. The person who rejects it doesn't judge that nothing²⁰ is owed, but that the twenty minas aren't owed. It is the person who accepts the claim, without thinking the twenty minas are owed, who breaks his oath.

As for giving an honor to people who discover something useful to the city, it isn't safe to make this a law. It merely sounds attractive. For it brings^{1268b25} malicious accusations and perhaps changes in the constitution. It also leads into another problem and another inquiry. Some people ask whether changing ancestral laws, when another law is better, harms cities or helps them. So it isn't easy to agree quickly with the proposal just mentioned, if it isn't an advantage³⁰ to change laws. Some people may propose abolishing laws or a constitution as a public good. Since we've mentioned the issue, it's better to set out a few further distinctions about it. As we said, it presents a difficulty, and change might seem better. In the other branches of knowledge, at least, change has been beneficial.³⁵ Medicine, for example, has changed from ancestral practices, as have physical training and, in general, all the crafts and skills. So, since political science must be counted as one of these, clearly the same must be true of it too. Someone might say that the facts themselves provide evidence: the ancient laws were far too simple⁴⁰ and barbaric. The Greeks used to carry weapons and buy wives from one another. And any ancient customs that still survive anywhere are completely foolish.

^{1269a1} For example, in Cyme there is a law about killing: if the person prosecuting the killing produces a certain number of witnesses from among his own relatives, the defendant is guilty of the killing. People generally look for what is good, not for what comes from their ancestors. Probably the⁵ first humans

were ordinary and foolish, whether born from the earth or survivors of some disaster, as the earthborn are in fact said to have been. So it's absurd to stick to their decisions. Besides, it isn't better to leave even written laws unchanged. Just as in the other crafts,¹⁰ so in the political arrangement, it's impossible to set everything down precisely in writing. What is written must be general, but actions concern particular cases.

These points make it clear that some laws should sometimes be changed. But if we look at it another way, it would seem to call for great caution. When^{1269a15} the improvement is small, but getting people used to easily doing away with laws is bad, clearly we must leave some mistakes made by lawgivers and rulers alone. A person won't gain as much from making the change as he'll lose by getting used to disobeying the rulers. The comparison with the crafts is also false. For²⁰ changing a craft isn't like changing a law. Law has no power to secure obedience except through habit, and habit develops only over a long time. So easily switching from existing laws to other, new laws weakens the power of law. Also, even if²⁵ laws should be changed, should all of them be changed, and in every constitution, or not? And should anyone at all make the changes, or only certain people? These distinctions matter a great deal. So let's leave this inquiry aside for now. It belongs to another occasion.

Concerning the constitution of Lacedaemon and that of Crete,^{1269a30} and practically all other constitutions too, there are two questions. One is whether any law has been made well or badly in relation to the best arrangement. The other is whether anything conflicts with the basic aim and character of the constitution they have set before themselves. It is agreed that a city that is to conduct its public life well³⁵ must have leisure from necessary work. But it's not easy to work out how it can have this. The serfs in Thessaly have often attacked the Thessalians, and the helots, Sparta's serfs, have done the same to the Spartans. They are always, so to speak, waiting to seize on their masters' misfortunes. But among the Cretans⁴⁰ nothing like this has happened yet. Perhaps the reason is that the neighboring^{1269b1} cities,

even though they fight one another, never ally themselves with the rebels. Doing so wouldn't be an advantage to them, since they too have dependent populations. But all the Spartans' neighbors were their enemies: the Argives, Messenians, and Arcadians.^{1269b5} The Thessalians' subjects also rebelled at first because the Thessalians were still at war with their neighbors, the Achaeans, Perrhaebians, and Magnesians. Even if there were no other difficulty, managing these people seems hard: how should one deal with them? If they are given a free hand, they become abusive and claim equality¹⁰ with their masters. If they live in hardship, they plot against them and hate them. Clearly, then, those whose helots behave this way haven't found the best way to manage them.

Also, the lack of restraint on women harms both the constitution's aim and the city's happiness. Just as^{1269b15} a man and a woman are parts of a household, clearly we should think of a city too as divided nearly in half, into its male and female populations. So in any constitution where arrangements for women are bad, we should think of half the city as having no laws. This is what has happened there. The whole²⁰ city was to be capable of endurance, as the lawgiver wanted. He has clearly achieved this with the men, but has neglected the women. They live without restraint, indulging in every kind of excess and in luxury. So wealth must be highly valued in a constitution like this, especially if the men happen to be ruled by women.²⁵ Most military and warlike peoples are ruled by women, except the Celts and any others who have openly honored sexual relations between males. The first person to tell the story seems to have had good reason to pair Ares with Aphrodite. All men of this kind seem to be gripped by a desire for relations with males³⁰ or with women. So this was the case among the Spartans, and many things were managed by women during the time of their rule. Yet what difference is there between women ruling and rulers being ruled by women? The result is the same. Though useful³⁵ in no everyday activity, boldness has a use, if anywhere, in war. Yet even here the Spartan women did the greatest harm. They showed this during the Theban invasion. They were no use, as in other cities, and they caused more confusion than the enemy. From the start,⁴⁰ then, it seems there was an understandable reason for the Spartan women's^{1270a1} lack of restraint.

The men were away from their own country for long periods on military campaigns. They fought the war against the Argives, and then the war against the Arcadians and Messenians. When they had leisure, they placed themselves in the lawgiver's hands, already prepared^{1270a5} by military life, which contains many elements of virtue. But they say Lycurgus tried to bring the women under the laws and then gave up when they resisted. These, then, are the causes of what happened, and clearly of this mistake too. But we¹⁰ aren't asking who should or shouldn't be forgiven. We're asking what is right and what is wrong. As we said earlier, bad arrangements for women seem not only to make the constitution itself somewhat improper, but also to contribute to the love of money.¹⁵ After the points just made, one might criticize the unequal distribution of property. Some of them have come to own far too much wealth, and others very little. That's why the land has passed into so few hands. This has also been badly arranged by the laws. Buying or²⁰ selling one's existing property was made dishonorable by the lawgiver. He was right to do so. But he allowed anyone who wished to give it away or leave it by will. Yet the result must be the same either way. Also, women own nearly two-fifths of all the land, because there are many heiresses²⁵ and because large dowries are given. It would have been better to set no dowry, or a small or moderate one. As things stand, a man may give an heiress in marriage to anyone he wants. If he dies without making a will, the heir he leaves behind gives her to anyone he wants. So, although the country can support a thousand cavalrymen³⁰ and five hundred more, and thirty thousand heavy infantrymen, their numbers were fewer than a thousand. The facts themselves have made it clear that this arrangement was bad for them. The city couldn't withstand a single blow, but was ruined because it had too few men. They say that under the earlier³⁵ kings they gave others a share in the constitution. So there wasn't a shortage of men then, despite the long wars. They say there were once as many as ten thousand Spartans. Whether this is true or not, it's better to increase the city's number of men by equalizing property. But in conflict⁴⁰ with this reform is the law about having children.

^{1270b1} The lawgiver wants there to be as many Spartans as possible, so he encourages citizens to have as many children as possible. They have a law that a man who has fathered three sons is exempt from guard duty, and one who has fathered four is exempt from all public duties. Yet⁵ it's clear that, if many children are born while the land is divided in this way, many must become poor.

The arrangements for the supervising officials called ephors are bad too. This office has authority over their most important affairs, but its members come from the whole people. So men who are very^{1270b10} poor often get into office, and their poverty made them open to bribery. They have shown this many times before, and recently in the affairs of Andros. Some were corrupted by money and, as far as it lay in their power, ruined the whole city. And because the office is far too powerful and equal to a tyranny, courting¹⁵ them was necessary even for the kings. This further damaged the constitution in this respect too, since an aristocracy turned into a democracy. Still, this office holds the constitution together. The people stay quiet because they share in the highest office. So whether this came about through the lawgiver or by²⁰ chance, it helps the situation. For a constitution to survive, all parts of the city must want it to exist and remain unchanged. The kings feel this way because of their own honor. The noble and good men feel this way because of the council of elders. This office is a reward²⁵ for virtue. The people feel this way because of the ephors' office. Its members are appointed from everyone. But this office should have been filled by choice from everyone, not in the way it is now, which is far too childish. Also, quite ordinary people have authority over important court decisions. So rather than their own judgment,³⁰ the basis of their decisions should be written rules and the laws. The ephors' way of life also conflicts with the city's aim. Their own life is far too relaxed, while the life imposed on the others goes too far in severity. As a result, they can't endure it, but secretly escape the law³⁵ and enjoy bodily pleasures.

Book II, 1270b–1274b



Their arrangements for the office of the elders aren't good either. If the elders are decent men and have had enough education to make them good, someone might say that this office benefits the city. Still, it's questionable whether they should have lifelong authority over important decisions^{1270b40} (for the mind grows old, just as the body does).

^{1271a1} But when their education is such that even the lawgiver himself distrusts them as men who aren't good, it isn't safe. Bribes have clearly been taken, and many public benefits given away to please others, by people who have held this⁵ office. So it would be better if they had to account for their actions. As things stand, they don't. The office of the supervising officials called ephors might seem to hold all the offices to account. But this gives the ephors far too much power, and this isn't how we say officials should give an account. Also, the choice of elders, in its¹⁰ method of judging candidates, is childish. Nor is it right that someone considered worthy of the office should have to apply for it himself. A person worthy of the office should hold it whether he wants to or not. Here the lawgiver clearly does what he does in the rest of the constitution. He makes the citizens eager for honor,¹⁵ and uses this in the choice of elders. Nobody would apply for office unless he wanted honor. Yet, by and large, most of the deliberate wrongs people commit come from the love of honor and the love of money.

As for kingship, whether it's better for cities to have it^{1271a20} or not is a question for another discussion. But it certainly would be better to judge each king by his own life, rather than follow the present practice. It's clear that even the lawgiver himself doesn't think he can make them noble and good. At any rate, he distrusts them as men who aren't good enough. That's why people sent along as fellow ambassadors²⁵ the kings' enemies, and thought that faction between the kings kept the city safe. The person who first established the shared meals called phiditia didn't make good laws about them either. The gathering should have been paid for from public funds instead, as it is in Crete. But among the Spartans everyone must³⁰ contribute, even though some are very poor and can't afford this expense. So the result is the opposite of what the lawgiver intended. He wants the shared meals to be a democratic institution, but with these laws they turn out to be anything but democratic. Taking part³⁵ isn't easy for the very poor. Yet their traditional condition for taking part in the constitution is that anyone who can't pay this contribution is excluded from it. Some others have criticized the law about naval commanders, and they've been right to criticize it. It causes faction. Alongside the kings,⁴⁰ who are generals for life, the naval command has become almost a second kingship. Someone could also criticize the lawgiver's basic aim^{1271b1} in the same way that Plato has criticized it in the Laws.

The whole system of laws is directed at just one part of virtue, military virtue. This is useful for gaining control. So they stayed safe while fighting wars, but began to fall apart once they ruled,^{1271b5} because they didn't know how to use leisure and hadn't practiced any activity more important than warfare. Another mistake is no smaller than this. They think that the good things people fight over are gained through virtue rather than vice, and they're right about that. But they suppose that these things are better than virtue,¹⁰ and that's wrong. The Spartans' public finances are badly arranged too. There's nothing in the city's public treasury, even though they're forced to fight major wars, and they pay their contributions badly. Because most of the land belongs to the Spartans, they don't check each other's¹⁵ contributions. The lawgiver has achieved the opposite of what's advantageous. He has made the city penniless

and its private citizens greedy for money. Let that be enough about the constitution of the Lacedaemonians. These are the things someone would criticize most.

^{1271b20} The Cretan constitution is close to this one. A few of its features are no worse, but most are less carefully worked out. The Spartan constitution seems to have copied the Cretan constitution in most respects, and people say it did. Most older arrangements are less well organized than newer ones. They say²⁵ that when Lycurgus left his guardianship of King Charilaus and went abroad, he spent most of his time in Crete because of their kinship. The people of Lyctus were settlers from Sparta. Those who came to establish the settlement found that this system of laws already existed³⁰ among the people living there then. That's why even now the surrounding inhabitants follow these laws in the same way, on the grounds that Minos first established the system of laws. The island also seems naturally suited and well placed to rule the Greeks. It commands the whole sea, and almost all the Greeks³⁵ are settled around the sea. On one side it's only a short distance from the Peloponnese, and on the other from the part of Asia around Triopium and from Rhodes. That's why Minos gained control of the sea. He conquered some of the islands and settled others. Finally he attacked Sicily and died⁴⁰ there near Camicus.

The Cretan system corresponds to the Spartan one. The helots farm for the Spartans,^{1272a1} and the surrounding inhabitants for the Cretans,

and both have shared meals. In earlier times the Spartans called them not phiditia but andreia, just as the Cretans do. This also makes it clear that they came from Crete. The arrangement of the constitution corresponds too. The^{1272a5} ephors have the same power as the officials in Crete called cosmoi, except that there are five ephors and ten cosmoi. The elders correspond to the elders whom the Cretans call the council. There used to be kingship, but the Cretans abolished it, and the¹⁰ cosmoi lead in war. Everyone takes part in the assembly, but it has no authority except to vote its approval of decisions made by the elders and the cosmoi.

The Cretans' shared meals are better arranged than the Spartans'. In Lacedaemon, each person pays the fixed contribution individually.^{1272a15} If he doesn't, the law prevents him from taking part in the constitution, as we said before. But in Crete the arrangement is more communal. A share of all the produce from public crops and livestock, and of the taxes paid by the surrounding inhabitants, is set aside, partly for the gods and public²⁰ services, and partly for the shared meals. So everyone—women, children, and men—is fed at public expense. The lawgiver has given much thought to keeping food intake low, believing this to be beneficial. He has also arranged for separation from women, so that people won't have too many children, by making males²⁵ their partners in sexual relations. Whether this is bad or not will be a question to examine another time. It's clear, then, that the shared meals are better arranged among the Cretans than among the Spartans. But the arrangements for the cosmoi are even worse than those for the ephors. The bad feature of the ephors' office exists here too³⁰ (for anyone at all can hold it). But what benefits the constitution there doesn't exist here. There, because the choice is made from everyone, the people have a share in the most important office and want the constitution to last. Here they choose the cosmoi not from everyone but from certain families, and the elders³⁵ from those who have been cosmoi. We could make the same points about them as about those appointed in Lacedaemon. Freedom from having to account for their actions and lifelong tenure are greater honors than they deserve. And it's dangerous for them to rule by their own judgment rather than by written laws. The fact that the people stay quiet without taking part⁴⁰ is no sign that the arrangements are good. Unlike the ephors, the cosmoi have no opportunity for profit, since they live far away^{1272b1} on an island, away from those who might corrupt them.

The remedy they use for this fault is strange. It's not constitutional but a matter of personal domination. Often some of the cosmoi's fellow officials or private citizens band together and throw them out. The cosmoi can also^{1272b5} give up their office before their term is over. All these things would be better done by law than at people's will. That isn't a safe standard. Worst of all is the suspension of the cosmoi's office, which powerful men often bring about when

they don't want to face justice. This makes it clear that the system has something¹⁰ of a constitution, but isn't a constitution: it's more a system of personal domination. They regularly split the people and their friends into groups, bring about a state without rulers, create factions, and fight one another. Yet how is this different from such a community temporarily ceasing to be a city, with its political¹⁵ community broken up? A city in this condition is in danger from anyone willing and able to attack it. But, as we've said, its location keeps it safe. Its distance has had the effect of excluding foreigners. That's also why the Cretans' surrounding inhabitants remain in their position, while the helots often revolt. The Cretans have no share in foreign²⁰ rule, and only recently has a foreign war crossed over to the island. It has made the weakness of their laws clear. Let that be enough of our discussion of this constitution.

The Carthaginians also seem to take part in public life well, and^{1272b25} to be outstanding in many respects compared with others. Some of their arrangements are especially close to those of the Spartans. These three constitutions—the Cretan, the Spartan, and, third, the Carthaginian—are somewhat close to one another and differ greatly from the rest. Many of their arrangements³⁰ are good. A sign of a well-organized constitution is that the people willingly stay within its constitutional order, and that no faction worth mentioning has occurred, nor any tyrant arisen. Some things correspond to the Spartan constitution. Their associations' shared meals correspond to the phiditia. The hundred³⁵ and four hold an office like that of the ephors. There is a difference that's no worse. The ephors come from anyone at all, but this office is filled by choosing the best. Their kings and council of elders correspond to the kings and elders there. It's also better that the kings don't come from one fixed family, nor from just any family,⁴⁰ but, if some family stands out, are chosen from its members rather than appointed by age. They have authority over important matters, and if they're worthless,^{1273a1} they do great harm,

and they have already harmed the city of the Lacedaemonians.

Most of the things one might criticize as deviations turn out to be common to all the constitutions we've discussed. Among the departures from the basic principle of aristocracy^{1273a5} and constitutional government, some lean more

toward the people and others toward oligarchy. If the kings and elders all agree, they have the authority to bring some matters before the people and not others. If they don't agree, the people have authority over these matters too. When these officials bring something forward, they don't¹⁰ just let the people hear what the rulers have decided. The people have the authority to decide, and anyone who wants to can speak against the proposals. This doesn't happen in the other constitutions. The boards of five have authority over many important matters and choose their own members. The office of the hundred¹⁵ is also filled by their choice. It is the most important office. And they hold power longer than the others, since they exercise it both after leaving office and before entering it. These are oligarchic features. But unpaid offices not assigned by lot should count as aristocratic. The same holds for any other feature of this kind. So should having all lawsuits judged by the officials²⁰ rather than different cases by different officials, as in Lacedaemon. The Carthaginian system departs from aristocracy toward oligarchy chiefly because of a certain idea that most people share. They think rulers should be chosen not just for being the best but also for their wealth. It's impossible,²⁵ they say, for a poor person to rule well and have leisure. So if choosing by wealth is oligarchic and choosing by virtue aristocratic, this would be a third kind of arrangement, the very one the Carthaginians use in their constitution. They choose with both these things in mind, especially³⁰ for the most important offices, the kings and the generals.

We should consider this departure from aristocracy a mistake by the lawgiver. One of the most necessary things is to see to it from the start that the best people can have leisure and don't have to do anything shameful, not only while holding office but also^{1273a35} as private citizens. Even if we must consider resources as a means to leisure, it's bad for the most important offices, kingship and generalship, to be for sale. This law makes wealth more honored than virtue and makes the whole city love money. Whatever is regarded as valuable by the⁴⁰ sovereign body must also be valued by the other citizens. Where virtue isn't honored above all, the^{1273b1} constitution can't be firmly aristocratic.

It's reasonable to expect people who buy their offices to get used to making a profit from them, when they take office after spending money. It would be strange if a poor but decent man wanted to make a profit, while a worse man who had spent money didn't.^{1273b5} So the people who can rule best should hold office. Even if the lawgiver neglected to provide decent people with resources, it would be better at least to ensure their leisure while they hold office. It also seems bad for the same person to hold several offices, though the Carthaginians think highly of this. One¹⁰ job is done best by one person. The lawgiver must see to it that this happens, and not tell the same person to play the flute and make shoes. So, where the city isn't small, having more people share in the offices is more constitutional and more democratic. As we've said, it's more widely shared, and each task gets done better,¹⁵ with the same tasks done faster too. This is clear in military and naval affairs. In both, ruling and being ruled extend through practically everyone. Although their constitution is oligarchic, they do very well at avoiding the dangers by continually enriching a section of the people, sending them out to²⁰ their cities. This is how they remedy the problem and keep the constitution stable. But this is the work of luck. They should be free of faction because of the lawgiver. As things stand, if some misfortune happens and the majority of the ruled revolt, the laws offer no remedy to restore peace. So this is how things stand with the Lacedaemonian²⁵ constitution, the Cretan one, and the Carthaginian one, which rightly have good reputations.

Some of those who have put forward views on constitutions never took part in any political activity at all, but spent their whole lives as private citizens. If anything about them is worth mentioning, we've discussed^{1273b30} practically all of it. Others have become lawgivers, some for their own cities and some for foreign cities as well, and have themselves taken part in public life. Some of these made only laws, while others also made constitutions, as Lycurgus and Solon did. They established both laws and constitutions.³⁵ We've already discussed the Lacedaemonian constitution. Some people think Solon was an excellent lawgiver. They say he abolished a system of rule far too purely oligarchic, freed

the people from slavery, and established the traditional democracy by mixing the constitution well. The council on the Areopagus,⁴⁰ they say, was oligarchic, the choice of officeholders aristocratic, and the law courts democratic.

But Solon seems^{1274a1} not to have abolished the earlier institutions, the council and the choice of officeholders. Rather, he established the people's power by making the law courts open to everyone. This is why some criticize him. They say he broke up the other institutions by giving the law court authority⁵ over everything, even though its members were assigned by lot. Once it became strong, they courted the people as if they were a tyrant and changed the constitution into the democracy of today. Ephialtes and Pericles cut back the council on the Areopagus, and Pericles introduced pay for service in the law courts. In this way¹⁰ each of the popular leaders carried it further, expanding it into today's democracy. But this seems to have happened not by Solon's intention but more as a result of circumstances. The people grew proud after securing naval supremacy in the Persian Wars. They took on bad popular leaders despite opposition¹⁵ from the decent citizens. Solon seems to have given the people only the most necessary power: to choose officials and hold them to account (without authority even over this, the people would be slaves and enemies). But he assigned all the offices to the notables and the wealthy, from the class whose property yields five hundred measures of produce,²⁰ the ox-team class, and the third class, called the cavalry class. The fourth was the laboring class, whose members had no share in any office.

The Epizephyrian Locrians had Zaleucus as their lawgiver. Charondas of Catana made laws for his fellow citizens and the other Chalcidian cities of Italy^{1274a25} and Sicily. Some people also try to link them together. They say Onomacritus was the first expert in lawgiving, and that he trained in Crete in the art of divination, being a Locrian who was staying there. Thaletas, they say, was his associate; Lycurgus and Zaleucus were pupils of Thaletas, and Zaleucus's pupil³⁰ was Charondas. But they say this without examining the dates carefully enough. Philolaus of Corinth also became a lawgiver for the Thebans. Philolaus came from the Bacchiad family and was the lover of Diocles, who won at Olympia. When Diocles left the city because he hated

the³⁵ passion of his mother Alcyone, Philolaus went to Thebes. Both ended their lives there. Even now people point out their tombs. Each can easily be seen from the other, but one has a view toward Corinthian territory and the other doesn't. The story is that they arranged their burial this way:⁴⁰ Diocles, because of his hatred of that passion, wanted Corinthian territory not to be visible from his burial mound, while Philolaus wanted it^{1274b1} to be visible.

That, then, was why they lived among the Thebans. Philolaus became their lawgiver on several matters, including the bearing of children. They call these laws the adoption laws. This was his particular contribution to their laws,^{1274b5} to preserve the number of land allotments. Charondas has nothing distinctive except the lawsuits for false testimony (he was the first to introduce a formal challenge to testimony). But the precision of his laws is more carefully worked out than even that of today's lawgivers.

Phaleas' distinctive feature is the equalization of property. Plato's are^{1274b10} the sharing of women, children, and property, and the women's shared meals. He also had a law about drunkenness: sober people should supervise drinking parties. His military training taught people to use both hands equally well through practice. One hand shouldn't be useful and the other¹⁵ useless. There are laws by Draco, but he made them for an existing constitution. There's nothing distinctive in them worth mentioning except their harshness, due to the size of the penalties. Pittacus also made laws but not a constitution. His distinctive law is that drunken people, if they²⁰ commit an offense, should pay a heavier penalty than sober people. More people behave violently when drunk than when sober. So he looked not to forgiveness, on the grounds that drunken people should be more readily forgiven, but to advantage. Androdamas of Rhegium also became a lawgiver for the Chalcidians in Thrace. His laws concern homicide²⁵ and heiresses. But nobody could point to anything distinctive about him. Let this, then, be our examination of constitutions, both those in force and those proposed by particular people.

Book III, 1274b–1278a



^{1274b32} For someone studying constitutions—what each is and what it’s like—the first question is almost always about the city: what exactly is a city? People now disagree about this. Some say³⁵ the city carried out an action. Others say it wasn’t the city but the oligarchy or the tyrant. We see that all the work of the statesman and the lawgiver concerns the city. A constitution is a certain arrangement of the people living in a city. The city is a composite thing, like any other whole⁴⁰ made up of many parts. So clearly we must first examine the citizen. A city is a collection of citizens.

^{1275a1} We must therefore consider whom we should call a citizen, and what a citizen is. People often disagree about the citizen too. They don’t all agree that the same person is a citizen. Someone who is a citizen in a democracy is often⁵ not a citizen in an oligarchy. We can set aside people who receive this title in some other way, such as people made citizens by a special grant. A citizen isn’t a citizen just because he lives somewhere. Resident foreigners and slaves also share a place to live. Nor do legal rights make someone a citizen, even rights to be sued and to bring a suit.¹⁰ People covered by agreements between cities have these rights too. In many places resident foreigners don’t even have a full share in these rights. They must appoint a patron, so their share in this kind of community is incomplete. Likewise, children who are still too young¹⁵ to be enrolled, and old people who have been released from service, must be called citizens in a sense, but not without qualification. We must add that the first are

not fully qualified and the second are past their prime, or use some other similar description. The wording doesn't matter; the meaning is clear. We're looking for the citizen without qualification, whose status has no²⁰ such objection that needs correcting. The same sorts of difficulties can be raised and settled about people deprived of civic rights and exiles. A citizen without qualification is best defined by taking part in judgment and office. Some offices have fixed terms, so that in some offices, a second term²⁵ cannot be held by the same person at all. In others, he can do so only after a set interval. Other offices have no fixed term, such as those of the juror and the assembly member. Someone might say that these people aren't even officeholders, and so don't take part in office. Yet it's absurd to deny office to those with the most authority. But this needn't matter. A name³⁰ is what the question is about. There is no common name for a juror and an assembly member, no term for what we should call both. So, to define it, let's call it an office without a fixed term. We count those who take part in this way as citizens.

This, then, is roughly the definition of a citizen that would fit best all those called citizens. But we must^{1275a35} remember this: when the things concerned differ in kind, with one first, another second, and another following, they have nothing in common as such, or very little. We see that constitutions differ from one another in kind, and that some come later and others^{1275b1} earlier.

Faulty constitutions that depart from the right ones must come later than those without faults. What we mean by constitutions that depart from the right ones will become clear later. So the citizen must also differ with each constitution.^{1275b5} That's why the citizen just described is a citizen above all in a democracy. He may be one in other constitutions, but he needn't be. Some have no people acting as a body and no regular assembly, only specially called meetings. Different offices judge different lawsuits. In Lacedaemon, for example, contract cases are judged by¹⁰ different supervising officials called ephors. The elders judge homicide cases, and perhaps some other office judges other cases. Things aren't the same at Carthage either. There certain offices judge all lawsuits. But the definition of the citizen can be corrected. In other constitutions, it isn't the official without a fixed term who acts as assembly member¹⁵

and juror. Instead, it is the official whose office is defined. All or some of these officeholders are assigned the work of deliberating and judging, either on every issue or on certain issues. This makes clear what a citizen is. We call someone who has the right to share in office involving public debate or court judgments a citizen of that²⁰ city. In simple terms, a city is a collection of such people large enough for a self-sufficient life.

For practical purposes, people define a citizen as someone whose parents are both citizens, not just one, such as the father or the mother. Some take this requirement further, going back two, three, or more generations.^{1275b25} When people define citizenship this way, for political purposes and without much thought, some ask how that ancestor in the third or fourth generation can have been a citizen. Gorgias of Leontini, perhaps partly puzzled and partly joking, said that just as mortars are things made by mortar-makers, Larissaeans are people made by their civic officials.³⁰ There are, he said, Larissaeans-makers. But the answer is simple. If they took part in the constitution according to the definition given, they were citizens. Besides, the requirement of having a citizen father or mother can't possibly apply to the first settlers or founders.

But perhaps a greater difficulty concerns those who^{1275b35} became citizens after a change of constitution. Cleisthenes did this at Athens after the tyrants were expelled. He enrolled in the tribes many foreigners and slaves who were resident foreigners. The dispute about these people isn't over who is a citizen, but whether they are citizens justly or unjustly. Yet someone might raise this further question:

^{1276a1}if someone isn't justly a citizen, is he not a citizen at all, as though being unjust and being false meant the same thing? But we see people holding office unjustly, and we say that they hold office, though not justly. A citizen is defined by a certain kind of office. Someone who shares in⁵ this kind of office is a citizen, as we said. So clearly we must say that these people too are citizens.

Whether they are citizens justly or unjustly connects with the dispute mentioned earlier. Some people ask when an action is the city's and when it isn't. For example, when an oligarchy or tyranny becomes^{1276a10} a democracy, some people refuse to settle debts. They say it wasn't the city that borrowed, but the

tyrant. They also refuse many other such obligations, on the grounds that some constitutions rest on force rather than the common advantage. If some democracies are governed in this way too, then the actions¹⁵ of this constitution must be called the city's actions just as much as those of the oligarchy and tyranny. This argument seems connected with the problem of when we should say a city is the same city, and when it is not the same but a different one. At its most superficial, this problem²⁰ is examined in terms of the place and the people. The place and the people can be divided, with some living in one place and others in another.

We should treat this as an easier problem. Since "city" has several meanings, a question of this sort is fairly easy to deal with. Similarly,^{1276a25} when people live in the same place, when should we consider them one city? Certainly not because of their walls. One wall could be built around the Peloponnese. Perhaps Babylon is like this, and any place whose boundaries enclose more of a nation than a city. They say that after Babylon was captured, it was the third³⁰ day before part of the city learned of it.

But it will be useful to examine this problem on another occasion. A statesman must understand a city's size—how large it should be, and whether one nation or several is better. But when the same people live in the same place,^{1276a35} should we call it the same city as long as its inhabitants remain of the same stock, even though some are always dying and others being born? We habitually call rivers and springs the same, although fresh water is always coming in and old water flowing out. Or should we say that the people⁴⁰ are the same for this reason, but the^{1276b1} city is different?

If a city is a community, and a community of citizens under a constitution, then when the constitution becomes different in kind, the city too would seem necessarily no longer the same. We say that a chorus^{1276b5} is different when it performs comedy and when it performs tragedy, even though it often consists of the same people. Likewise, any other community or combination is different if the form of the combination differs. For example, the same notes make a different harmony when arranged in the Dorian way and in the Phrygian way. If this¹⁰ is so, clearly we should look above all to the constitution in deciding

whether a city is the same. It can be given a different name or the same name whether its inhabitants are the same people or completely different people. Whether it is just to settle obligations or not when there is a change to another constitution¹⁵ in the city is a separate question.

The next question after what we've said is whether we should count the virtue of a good man and that of a good citizen as the same or not. If we are to investigate this, we must first get a rough idea of a citizen's virtue.^{1276b20} A sailor is one member of a community, and we say the same of a citizen. Sailors differ in their abilities: one is a rower, another a helmsman, another a lookout at the bow, and another has some other such title. Clearly, the most exact description of each one's²⁵ virtue will be specific to him. But a common description will also fit them all. Keeping the voyage safe is the task of all of them. Each sailor aims at this. Similarly, citizens differ, but keeping the community safe is their task. Their community is the constitution.³⁰ So a citizen's virtue must relate to the constitution. If there are several kinds of constitution, clearly there can't be one virtue, the complete virtue, of a good citizen. But we say that a man is good because of one virtue, the complete virtue.

Clearly, then, someone can be a good citizen without^{1276b35} having the virtue that makes a good man. But we can also approach the same argument another way, by raising questions about the best constitution. If a city can't be made up entirely of good people, each must still do his own task well, and that requires virtue.⁴⁰ Since all the citizens can't be alike,

there cannot^{1277a1} be one and the same virtue of a citizen and a good man. Everyone must have the virtue of a good citizen. That is necessary for the city to be the best. But they can't all have the good man's virtue, unless everyone must be good in⁵ a good city as a citizen. Further, a city is made up of unlike parts. An animal, for a start, consists of soul and body, the soul of reason and desire, a household of man and woman, and property of master and slave. In the same way, a city consists of all these, and also other unlike¹⁰ kinds of people. So all its citizens can't have the same virtue, just as a chorus leader and the person standing beside him don't have the same virtue.

This makes clear why the two virtues aren't simply the same. But will someone have the same virtue as a good citizen and a good man? We say that a ruler^{1277a15} who rules well is good and has good judgment in practical matters. A citizen needn't have practical judgment. Some say that a ruler's education is different from the start. We do see kings' sons educated in riding and warfare. And Euripides says, "Not clever things for me ... but what the city needs," (Eur. Fr. 16)²⁰ as though there were a special education for a ruler. If the virtue of a good ruler and a good man is the same, but someone who is ruled is also a citizen, the virtue of a citizen and a man won't simply be the same. It will, however, be the same for a certain citizen. A ruler's virtue and a citizen's aren't the same. Perhaps this is why Jason said he went hungry when he wasn't a tyrant, because²⁵ he didn't know how to live as a private person.

Still, the ability to rule and be ruled is praised. A citizen's virtue seems to be the ability both to rule well and to be ruled well. If we say that the good man's virtue is the ability to rule, and the citizen's is both, the two abilities won't be equally praiseworthy. Since, then,^{1277a30} both views sometimes seem right, and the ruler and the ruled needn't learn the same things, while the citizen must know both and share in both, we can see the answer from the following. There is rule exercised by a master. We mean rule concerned with necessary tasks. The ruler needn't know how to do these,³⁵ but rather how to use their results. Doing them is actually slavish. By doing them I mean being able to serve by carrying out these menial tasks. We speak of several kinds of slave, since there are several kinds of work. One part of this work belongs to manual laborers. As their name indicates, these are people who live by^{1277b1} their hands.

The craftsman who works with his hands is one of these. That's why in some places craftsmen didn't share in office in earlier times, before the most extreme democracy arose. The tasks of people ruled in this way aren't for a good man or a statesman or a^{1277b5} good citizen to learn, except when he needs to do something for himself. When he serves himself, there is no longer one person who is master and another who is slave.

But there is a kind of rule over people who are alike in stock and free. We call this political rule. The ruler, by being ruled, must^{1277b10} learn it. For example, he learns to command cavalry by serving under a cavalry commander, and to be a general by serving under a general and commanding a regiment and a company. That's why it's rightly said that someone who hasn't been ruled can't rule well. The virtues involved are different, but a good citizen must know how and be able both to be ruled and to¹⁵ rule. This is a citizen's virtue: knowing the rule of free people from both sides. A good man too must have both, even if self-control and justice in a ruler are different in kind. Clearly, the virtue of a good man who is ruled but free, such as his justice, won't have just one form. It will have forms²⁰ according to whether he rules or is ruled, just as self-control and courage differ for a man and a woman. A man would seem cowardly if he had only the courage of a courageous woman. A woman would seem talkative if she were as restrained as a good man. Their household management differs too. The man's²⁵ task is to acquire, the woman's to preserve. Practical wisdom is the only virtue specific to a ruler. All the others seem necessarily shared by the ruled and the rulers. The virtue of someone ruled isn't practical judgment, but true opinion. The person ruled is like a flute-maker, and the ruler³⁰ like the flute-player who uses it. This makes clear whether the virtue of a good man and a good citizen is the same or different, and how it is the same and how it differs.

One problem about the citizen still remains. Is a citizen really someone entitled to share in^{1277b35} office, or should we count craft workers as citizens too? If we must include these people, who have no share in office, then not every citizen can have the virtue described, since this person too is a citizen. But if no such person is a citizen, in what category should each be placed? He isn't a resident foreigner or a foreigner. Or should we say that this argument^{1278a1} leads to nothing absurd?

Slaves and freed slaves don't belong to any of the categories mentioned either. It's true that we shouldn't count everyone without whom a city couldn't exist as a citizen. Even children aren't citizens in the same way as grown men. Rather,^{1278a5} the latter are citizens without qualification and the former with a qualification: they are citizens, but not fully qualified. In ancient

times, in some places, craft workers were slaves or foreigners. That's why most are still like this today. The best city won't make a craft worker a citizen. But if such a person is a citizen, the citizen's virtue we described¹⁰ can't be said to belong to everyone, or even everyone who is free. It belongs to those released from necessary tasks. People who perform such necessary services for one person are slaves; those who perform them for the public are craft workers and hired laborers. A little examination makes their position clear. Once the point itself is understood, it makes what we've said¹⁵ clear. Since there are several constitutions, there must be several kinds of citizen, especially of the citizen who is ruled. So in one constitution craft workers and hired laborers must be citizens, while in some others this is impossible. An example is any constitution called aristocratic, where according to virtue²⁰ and worth honors are given. Someone who lives as a craft worker or hired laborer can't practice the activities of virtue. In oligarchies a hired laborer can't be a citizen, since sharing in office requires high property qualifications. But a craft worker can be one. Many²⁵ craftsmen are rich. At Thebes there was a law that anyone who hadn't stayed out of trade for ten years couldn't share in office. In many constitutions the law also draws in some foreigners. In some democracies a person with a citizen mother is a citizen. Many places take the same approach to children born outside marriage. However,³⁰ they make such people citizens because of a shortage of citizens born to citizen parents. They apply their laws this way because their population is small. Once they have plenty of people, they gradually remove these rights, first from those with a slave father or mother, then from those with only citizen mothers. Finally they make only those with two citizen parents citizens.

Book III, 1278a–1281b



That ^{1278a35} there are several kinds of citizen is clear from this. It is also clear that a citizen is above all someone who shares in public honors, as Homer wrote: “As if I were some dishonored newcomer.” (Hom. Il. 9.648) (Hom. Il. 16.59) Someone with no share in public honors is like a resident foreigner. But in some places this fact is kept hidden in order to deceive the people living together ⁴⁰ in the city.

Whether we should count as different or the same the virtue ^{1278b1} that makes a man good and a citizen good is clear from what we’ve said. In some cities the good man and the good citizen are the same; in others they differ. Even where they are the same, not every citizen is such a man. Only the person active in politics who is, or can be, in charge, alone or with others, of managing ⁵ public affairs is such a man.

Now that we’ve defined these things, we must consider the next question. Should we say that there is one constitution or several? If there are several, what are they, how many are there, and how do they differ? A constitution is a city’s arrangement of its offices, especially ^{1278b10} the office sovereign over all. Everywhere the city’s citizen body is sovereign, and the citizen body is the constitution. I mean, for example, that in democracies the people are sovereign, while in oligarchies, by contrast, the few are. We say that these also have different constitutions. We will use the same argument ¹⁵ for the others. First we must establish why a city is formed, and how many kinds of rule there are over

human beings and their shared life. In our first discussions, where we defined household management and mastery, we also said that a human being is by nature a political animal.²⁰ So even when people don't need one another's help, they still want to live together just as much. Still, the common advantage also brings them together, insofar as each gets a share in living well. This is above all their goal, both for all together and for each separately. But they also come together for life itself and²⁵ maintain the political community for its sake. Perhaps there is some element of the noble even in simply being alive, as long as life's hardships aren't too overwhelming. Clearly, most people endure great suffering because they cling to life, as though it contained a certain well-being and³⁰ a natural sweetness.

It's also easy to distinguish the kinds of rule we speak of. We often define them in our discussions for a wider audience too. In mastery, although the slave by nature and the master by nature really have the same advantage, the master still rules^{1278b35} for his own advantage, and only incidentally for the slave's. Mastery can't survive if the slave dies. Rule over children, a wife, and the whole household, which we call household management, is either for the advantage of the ruled or for an advantage shared by both. In⁴⁰ itself it serves the ruled, as we see with other^{1279a1} skills,

such as medicine and physical training. Incidentally, it may also serve the practitioners themselves. Nothing prevents a trainer from sometimes being one of the people exercising himself, just as the helmsman is always one of the sailors. The trainer^{1279a5} or helmsman aims at the good of the people he directs. When he becomes one of them himself, he shares in the benefit incidentally. The one is a sailor, and the other, though a trainer, becomes one of the people exercising. That's why, when a constitution rests on citizens' equality and¹⁰ similarity, they claim the right to hold political office in turn. Originally, as is natural, they expected to serve in turn, and then to have someone else look after their good, just as they themselves had looked after his advantage when in office. But now, because of the benefits from public funds and from office, they want all the time¹⁵ to hold office, as if being in office kept them continually healthy when they were sickly. In that case too they would probably chase after

offices. Clearly, then, all constitutions that aim at the common advantage are correct according to the just without qualification. Those that aim only at the rulers' own advantage²⁰ are all faulty and departures from the correct constitutions. They exercise a master's rule, while the city is a community of free people.

Now that we've defined these things, the next step is to examine the constitutions: how many there are and what they are. We should first examine the correct ones. Their departures will also become^{1279a25} clear once these are defined. Constitution and citizen body mean the same thing, and the citizen body is what is sovereign in cities. The sovereign must be one person, a few, or the many. When the one, the few, or the many rule for the common advantage, these must be correct³⁰ constitutions. Those that serve the private advantage of the one, the few, or the multitude are departures. Either we must say that those who share in the community aren't citizens, or they must share in its advantage. We usually call a monarchy that looks to the common advantage kingship. Rule by a few,³⁵ but more than one, we call aristocracy, either because the best people rule or because it serves what is best for the city and its members. When the multitude takes part in public life for the common advantage, it is called polity, using the common name for all constitutions. (This is reasonable. One person can stand out⁴⁰ in virtue, or a few can. But it's hard for a larger number^{1279b1} to reach perfection in every virtue,

though they can above all reach it in military virtue. This does arise in a multitude. That's why in this constitution the fighting force is sovereign, and those who possess weapons share in it.) The departures from the forms mentioned^{1279b5} are tyranny from kingship, oligarchy from aristocracy, and democracy from polity. Tyranny is monarchy for the advantage of the monarch. Oligarchy serves the advantage of the wealthy, and democracy the advantage of the poor. As for what benefits the community,¹⁰ none of them serves it.

We must say a little more about what each of these constitutions is. There are some problems here. For someone who examines each field philosophically, rather than looking only to practical action, it is appropriate not to overlook or^{1279b15} leave anything out, but to make clear the truth about each point.

Tyranny, as we said, is monarchy that exercises a master's rule over the political community. Oligarchy is when those who own property are sovereign over the constitution. Democracy is the opposite: those who possess no great amount of property, but are poor, are sovereign.²⁰ The first problem concerns the definition. Suppose the majority were wealthy and sovereign over the city, and democracy is when the multitude is sovereign. Or suppose somewhere the poor were fewer than the wealthy, but stronger and sovereign over the constitution, while, when a small²⁵ number is sovereign, people call it oligarchy. Then the definitions of the constitutions wouldn't seem sound.

But even if someone combines wealth with fewness and poverty with large numbers, and names the constitutions accordingly—oligarchy where the wealthy hold office and are few, democracy^{1279b30} where the poor hold office and are many—there is another problem. What are we to call the constitutions just mentioned, where the wealthy are more numerous or the poor less numerous, but each group is sovereign over its constitution? This is a problem if there is no constitution apart from the ones mentioned. So the³⁵ argument seems to make clear that having few or many sovereign is incidental, the first to oligarchies and the second to democracies. That's because the wealthy are few and the poor many everywhere. So the factors just mentioned don't account for the difference. As for the difference between⁴⁰ democracy and oligarchy, poverty and wealth^{1280a1} are what distinguish them.

Wherever people rule because of wealth, whether they are fewer or more numerous, that constitution must be an oligarchy. Where the poor rule, it must be a democracy. But, as we said, one group happens to be few and the other many. Wealth is possessed^{1280a5} by few people, but all share in freedom. These are the grounds on which both groups dispute control of the constitution.

We must first grasp the limits people set for oligarchy and democracy, and what the just is in oligarchic and democratic terms. Everyone touches on something just, but^{1280a10} they go only so far and don't state the whole of what is just in the full sense. For example, the just is thought to be equality, and it is—but not for everyone, only for equals. Inequality too is thought to be just, and it is—but not for everyone, only for unequals. People leave out this qualifica-

tion, “for whom,” and judge badly. The reason¹⁵ is that they are judging their own case. Most people are poor judges of their own affairs. The just is for certain people, and it is divided in the same way between the things distributed and the people receiving them, as we said earlier in the Ethics. They agree about equality in the things, but disagree about equality in the people. This is mainly²⁰ for the reason just given: they judge their own affairs badly. It is also because both groups state something just up to a point, and think they are stating the just without qualification. One group thinks that if they are unequal in some respect, such as wealth, they are unequal in every respect. The other thinks that if they are equal in some respect, such as freedom, in every respect they are²⁵ equal.

But they don’t state the most important point. If people formed a community and came together for the sake of possessions, their share in the city would match their share in the property. The oligarchic argument would then seem valid. (It wouldn’t be just for someone who contributed one mina to have an equal share of the hundred minas with someone who^{1280a30} provided all the rest, either of the original sum or of what it earned.) But people didn’t come together merely to live, but rather to live well. Otherwise there could be a city of slaves or other animals. In fact there isn’t, because they don’t share in happiness or in a life guided by choice. Nor did people come together for an alliance, so that³⁵ no one would wrong them, or for exchanges and dealings with one another. Otherwise the Tyrrhenians and Carthaginians, and all people who have agreements with one another, would be citizens of a single city. They certainly have treaties about imports, agreements not to wrong one another,⁴⁰ and written terms of alliance. But offices for all concerning^{1280b1} these purposes haven’t been established in common.

Each has separate offices. Neither group is concerned about what sort of people the other should be, or that no one covered by the treaties should be unjust or have any wickedness. They care only that they don’t wrong^{1280b5} one another. But those who care about good government examine political virtue and vice. This makes clear that a city truly deserving the name, and not just called a city for argument’s sake, must concern itself with virtue. Otherwise the

community becomes an alliance, differing only in location from other alliances of faraway¹⁰ allies. The law becomes an agreement and, as Lycophron the professional teacher said, a guarantee of the just to one another, but not something able to make citizens good and just. It's clear that this is so. Even if someone brought the territories together so that the cities of Megara and¹⁵ Corinth touched at their walls, they still wouldn't be one city. Not even if they gave their people the right to marry one another, though this is one of the forms of association specific to cities. Likewise, suppose some people lived separately, but not too far apart to associate, and had laws preventing them from wronging one another in²⁰ their exchanges. One might be a carpenter, another a farmer, another a shoemaker, and another something similar. Suppose they numbered ten thousand, but shared nothing except things like exchange and alliance. Even then they wouldn't yet be a city.

Why exactly is this? It certainly isn't because of a lack of closeness in their^{1280b25} association. Suppose they came together while sharing in this way, but each treated his own household as a city. They helped one another only against wrongdoers, as though they had a defensive alliance. Even so, they wouldn't seem a city to someone looking closely if their dealings were the same together as apart. Clearly, then,³⁰ a city isn't a community of place, formed to keep its members from wronging one another and to allow exchange. These things must be present for a city to exist. But even when all are present, that doesn't yet make a city. A city is a community of households and families in living well, for the sake of a complete and self-sufficient life.³⁵ Still, this won't happen unless they live in one and the same place and marry one another. That's why cities developed ties by marriage, brotherhoods, sacrifices, and shared pastimes. These are the work of friendship. The choice to live together is friendship. So the goal of a city is living well,⁴⁰ and these things serve that goal. Families and villages make a city through a^{1281a1} community of complete and self-sufficient life.

This, we say, is living happily and nobly. So we must hold that the political community exists for noble actions, not just for living together. That's why those who contribute most to^{1281a5} such a community have a greater share in

the city. Their share exceeds that of people equal or superior in freedom and ancestry but inferior in political virtue. It also exceeds that of people who surpass them in wealth but fall below them in virtue. That all those who dispute about constitutions have some part of the just¹⁰ in what they say is clear from what we've said.

But there is a problem about what should be sovereign in the city. Should it be the multitude, the rich, the decent people, the single best person of all, or a tyrant? All these seem to involve difficulties. What if the poor, because they^{1281a15} are more numerous, divide up the property of the rich? Isn't that unjust? "After all, by Zeus, the sovereign body approved it as just." Then what should we call the extreme of injustice? Again, after everything has been taken, if the majority divide up what belongs to the minority, clearly they destroy the city. But virtue doesn't destroy what²⁰ has it, nor does the just destroy a city. So clearly this law too can't be just. Further, all the tyrant's actions would have to be just. He uses force because he is stronger, just as the multitude does against the rich. But is it just for the fewer to rule²⁵ —the rich? Then if they do the same things, plundering and taking away the multitude's property, this is just—and so the other case is just too. Clearly, then, all these things are bad and not just. But should the decent people rule and be sovereign over everything? Then all the others must³⁰ be without honor, since they aren't honored with political offices. We call offices honors, and if the same people always hold office, the others must be without honor. But is it better for the single best person to rule? This is still more oligarchic, since more people are without honor. Perhaps someone might³⁵ say that it's bad for a human being, rather than law, to be sovereign at all, because his soul is subject to passions. But if it is law, and the law is oligarchic or democratic, what difference will that make to the problems raised? The results mentioned earlier will follow just the same.

We can leave the other questions for another discussion.^{1281a40} But the claim that the multitude should be sovereign rather than the few best people might seem to offer a solution. It also presents a problem, but perhaps contains some truth. The many, each of whom is^{1281b1} not a good man,

may nevertheless be better than those few when they come together—not individually but as a whole. It’s like dinners to which everyone contributes being better than those paid for by one person. Since there are many, each can have a share of virtue and good judgment in practical matters.^{1281b5} When they come together, the multitude can become like a single person with many feet, many hands, and many senses, and likewise with character and understanding. That’s also why the many judge works of music and poetry better. Different parts are judged by different people. The whole¹⁰ is judged by everyone together. But good men differ from each individual among the many in this way. Beautiful people are said to differ from those who aren’t beautiful in the same way. So do figures painted with skill from real people. Features scattered separately are brought together into one. Taken separately, this person’s eye may be finer than the painted eye, and¹⁵ someone else’s other feature finer than its painted counterpart.

Whether this difference between the many and the few good people is possible for every people and every multitude is unclear. Perhaps, by Zeus, it’s clear that for some it is impossible. The same argument would apply to wild animals; and indeed, how do^{1281b20} some people differ from wild animals, so to speak? But nothing prevents what we’ve said from being true of some multitude. So these points could resolve the problem raised earlier, and the next one: over what should free people and the multitude of citizens be sovereign? By these we mean people who are neither²⁵ rich nor credited with any virtue. It’s unsafe for them to share in the highest offices. Because of their injustice and lack of judgment, they must do wrong in some cases and make mistakes in others. But giving them no share or participation is dangerous. When there are many poor people without honor,³⁰ the city must be full of enemies. What remains is for them to share in deliberating and judging. That’s why Solon and some other lawgivers assign them the election of officeholders and the review of their conduct, but don’t allow them to hold office individually. For all of them,³⁵ when brought together, have adequate perception, and when mixed with better peo-

ple they benefit cities. In the same way, impure food mixed with pure makes the whole more useful than the small amount of pure food alone. But each person separately is incomplete in his ability to judge.

Book III, 1281b–1285a



This arrangement of the constitution raises a difficulty. The first is that^{1281b40} the person qualified to judge who has treated a patient correctly would seem to be the same person qualified to give treatment and cure the patient of the illness he has. That person is the doctor.

The same applies^{1282a1} to other kinds of practical knowledge and skill. So, just as a doctor must answer for his work before doctors, other skilled workers must answer before people like themselves. There is the doctor who practices, the doctor who directs the work, and, third, the person educated about the skill. There are⁵ people of this third kind in practically every skill. We allow educated people to judge no less than experts. Then choice would seem to work in the same way. Making the right choice is also the job of people who know: choosing a surveyor is the job of people who know surveying, and¹⁰ choosing a ship's pilot is the job of people who know navigation. In some kinds of work and skill, some nonspecialists do have a share in the knowledge, but certainly no greater share than the experts. So, on this argument, the multitude should not be made sovereign over either the choice of officials or the examination of their accounts. But perhaps these points are not all correct.¹⁵ The earlier argument counts against them, if the multitude is not too slavish. Each person will be a worse judge than the experts. But all together will be better or no worse. In some cases, too, the maker is neither the only judge nor the best. This holds wherever people without the skill also understand its products. For example,²⁰

a house is not understood only by its builder. The person who uses it will judge it better, and the person who uses it is the household manager. A pilot judges a rudder better than a carpenter does, and a dinner is judged by the diner, not the cook.

Someone might think this solves the difficulty well enough. But another difficulty follows from it.^{1282a25} It seems strange for inferior people to be sovereign over more important matters than decent people. Examining officials' accounts and choosing officials are matters of the greatest importance. In some constitutions, as we have said, these are assigned to the people. The assembly is sovereign over all such matters. Yet people take part in the assembly,³⁰ serve on the council, and act as jurors with small property qualifications and at any age, while treasurers, generals, and holders of the highest offices have large property qualifications. This difficulty too could be solved in the same way. Perhaps these arrangements are also right. For neither an individual juror, nor a council member, nor an assembly member³⁵ is a ruler. The law court, the council, and the people are. Each of the people just named is a part of these bodies. By a part I mean the council member, assembly member, and juror. So the multitude is rightly sovereign over more important matters. The people, the council, and the law court consist of many people. And the property qualification⁴⁰ of all of them together is greater than that of the people who hold high offices individually or in small groups. Let these points be settled^{1282b1} in this way.

The difficulty mentioned first makes one thing clearer than anything else: correctly established laws should be sovereign. The ruler, whether one person or several, should be sovereign over the matters on which the laws cannot^{1282b5} speak precisely, because it is not easy to lay down general rules about everything. But what correctly established laws should be like is not yet clear. The earlier difficulty still remains. Laws must be bad or good, and just or unjust, at the same time and in the same way as the constitutions.¹⁰ At least this is clear: laws must be established to fit the constitution. If that is so, laws that fit correct constitutions must be just, and laws that fit deviant constitutions must be unjust.

In every science and skill, ^{1282b15} the goal is a good. The greatest good, in the fullest sense, is the goal of the most authoritative of them all, which is political expertise. The political good is the just, and that is the common advantage. Now everyone thinks the just is a kind of equality. Up to a point, people agree with the philosophical arguments in which ²⁰ ethical questions have been settled. They say that the just is something assigned to certain people, and that equals should have equal shares. But we must not overlook what equality and inequality apply to. This raises a difficulty and calls for political philosophy. Someone might say that offices should be distributed unequally according to superiority in any good quality, ²⁵ if people do not differ in any other way but are alike in everything else. People who differ, he might say, have different claims to what is just and what fits their worth. But if this is true, people who are superior in complexion, height, or any other good quality will have a larger share of political rights. ³⁰ Or is the mistake here obvious? It is clear in the other sciences and abilities. Among flute players with equal skill, those of better birth should not get a larger share of the flutes. They will not play any better. The better instruments should go to the person who is better at the job. If ³⁵ what we mean is not yet clear, it will become clear as we take it further. Suppose someone is better at flute playing but much worse in birth or beauty. Each of those may be a greater good than flute playing. I mean good birth and beauty. Even if, ⁴⁰ proportionately, their superiority over flute playing is greater than his superiority as a flute player, he should still be given the better ^{1283a1} flutes.

For being richer or better born would have to improve the performance. Neither does.

Also, on this argument, every good would be comparable with every other good. For if a certain amount of size counts for more, then ^{1283a5} size in general could compete with wealth and freedom too. So if one person stands out more in size than another does in virtue, and virtue in general is far superior to size, everything would be comparable. For if this much size is better than that much virtue, clearly some amount is equal to it. But this is impossible. ¹⁰ So it is reasonable that, in political matters too, people do not claim offices on the basis of every inequality. If some are slow and others fast, that is no reason for some to

have more and others less. The difference between them gets its reward in athletic contests. Instead, the things from which a city is made¹⁵ must be the basis of the claims. That is why people of good birth, free people, and rich people reasonably claim honor. The citizens must be free and must contribute properly. A city could not consist entirely of people without resources, any more than it could consist of slaves. But if these qualities are needed, clearly²⁰ justice and political virtue are needed too. A city cannot be run without these either. The difference is that without the first qualities a city cannot exist, while without the latter it cannot be run well.

So, as far as the city's existence goes, all or at least some of these qualities would seem to support valid claims. But for a good life,^{1283a25} education and virtue would have the strongest claim, as we said earlier. People equal in only one respect should not have equal shares in everything, and people unequal in one respect should not have unequal shares in everything. So all constitutions of these kinds must be deviations. We have already said³⁰ that everyone has some justice on their side in these disputes, but not everyone is right without qualification. The rich make their claim because they have a larger share of the land, and the land is common property. Also, they are generally more trustworthy in contracts. Free people and people of good birth make their claim as closely related groups. Fuller citizenship³⁵ belongs to people of better birth than to people of low birth, and good birth is honored in each people's own country. Also, people from better families are likely to be better, since good birth is the virtue of a family. In the same way, we will say that virtue too has a just claim. We say that justice is a virtue of social life, and it must be followed by⁴⁰ all the other virtues. But the greater number also has a claim against the smaller number. They are stronger, richer, and better, if the larger group is taken together and compared with the smaller.

So,^{1283b1} if all these groups were in one city—I mean, for example, good people, rich people, people of good birth, and also some other body of citizens—would there be a dispute about who should rule, or not? In each of the constitutions we have mentioned, there is no dispute⁵ about the decision on who should rule. They differ from one another in who is sovereign: one is governed

by rich people, another by good men, and each of the others differs in the same way. Still, let us consider how to decide when these groups all exist at the same time. If the¹⁰ people with virtue are very few in number, how should we draw the distinction? Should we judge how few they are in relation to their task—whether they can manage the city—or ask whether there are enough of them to make a city by themselves? There is a difficulty for everyone who disputes political honors. For it might seem¹⁵ that those who claim the right to rule because of wealth have no just argument. The same goes for those who claim it because of birth. For if, in turn, one person is richer than everyone else, then clearly, on the same principle of justice, that one person must rule them all. The same goes for someone whose birth is superior to that of those claiming the right to rule²⁰ because they are free. Perhaps the same result will follow in aristocracies on the basis of virtue. If one man is better than the other good men in the citizen body, he must be sovereign on the same principle of justice. Suppose the multitude should be sovereign because it is stronger than²⁵ the few. Then if one person, or several who are fewer than the multitude, are stronger than the rest, they should be sovereign instead. All this seems to show that none of these standards is correct as a basis for claiming that they should rule and the others should be ruled by them,³⁰ every one of them. For the multitudes could make a fairly just argument against those who claim to be sovereign over the citizen body on the basis of virtue, and equally against those who claim it on the basis of wealth. Nothing prevents the multitude from sometimes being better and richer than the few, not individually but³⁵ all together. So this also gives a way to answer the difficulty that some people investigate and raise. Some ask whether a lawgiver who wants to establish the most correct laws should legislate for the advantage of the better people or of the greater number, when the situation just described occurs.⁴⁰ What is right must be understood as equal treatment. Equal treatment is right when it serves the advantage of the whole city and the common advantage of the citizens. Someone who shares in ruling and being ruled^{1284a1} is a citizen in general,

but the citizen differs with each constitution. Under the best constitution, a citizen is someone able and willing to be ruled and to rule for a life in accordance with virtue.

Suppose one person has far superior virtue, or several people do, though not ^{1284a5} enough to make up a city. Suppose all the others' virtue and political ability cannot be compared with theirs, if there are several. If there is only one, the comparison is with that one person's virtue and ability. Such people should no longer be treated as part of the city. They will be wronged if they are judged worthy of equal shares, when they are so unequal in ¹⁰ virtue and political ability. Such a person would naturally be like a god among human beings. So it is clear that legislation must concern people equal in birth and ability. There is no law for people like these: they are themselves a law. It would be ridiculous for anyone to legislate ¹⁵ for them. They might say what Antisthenes said the lions said when the hares made speeches and demanded that everyone have an equal share. This is also why democratic cities establish ostracism, or temporary banishment. They seem to pursue equality more than anything else, ²⁰ so they ostracized people thought to have superior power because of wealth, many friends, or some other political strength, and removed them from the city for set periods. The story says that the Argonauts left Heracles behind for a similar reason. The Argo would not carry him ²⁵ with the other sailors because he far surpassed them. So we should not think that people who criticize tyranny and Periander's advice to Thrasybulus are simply right in their criticism. They say Periander said nothing to the messenger sent to ask his advice, but cut off the ³⁰ ears of grain that stood out and made the field level. The messenger did not understand why he did this, but reported what happened. Thrasybulus then understood that he must eliminate the men who stood out. This does not benefit only tyrants, and tyrants are not the only ones who do it. ³⁵ The same applies to oligarchies and democracies. In a way, ostracism has the same effect as cutting down those who stand out and sending them into exile. Those who hold power also do the same to cities and nations. The Athenians, for example, did it to the people of Samos, ⁴⁰ Chios, and Lesbos. As soon as they had firm control of their empire, they humbled them, contrary to the treaties.

The Persian^{1284b1} king often cut down the Medes, Babylonians, and others who were proud because they had once held power.

The problem applies generally to all constitutions, including the correct ones. Deviant constitutions^{1284b5} do this with an eye to their own advantage, but the same applies to those that look to the common good. This is clear in other skills and sciences too. A painter would not let a figure have a foot out of proportion, even if¹⁰ it were exceptionally beautiful. Nor would a shipbuilder allow an oversized stern or any other part of a ship. Nor would a chorus trainer let someone sing with the chorus whose voice was louder and more beautiful than the whole chorus. So, for this reason, nothing prevents monarchs from agreeing with cities, provided their own rule is beneficial¹⁵ to the cities when they act in this way. So the argument for ostracism has some political justice on its side when it concerns acknowledged kinds of superiority. It is better, then, for the lawgiver to organize the constitution from the start so that it does not need this kind of treatment. The next-best course, if the situation arises, is to try with some such²⁰ remedy to put things right. But that is not what happened in the cities. They did not look to the advantage of their own constitution. Instead, they used ostracism for factional purposes. In deviant constitutions it is clear that ostracism serves their particular advantage and is just in that particular sense. Perhaps it is also clear that it is not in every sense²⁵ just. But in the best constitution it raises a serious difficulty. This does not concern superiority in other goods, like strength, wealth, or having many friends. Rather, if someone is exceptionally virtuous, what should be done? Surely people would not say that such a person should be expelled and removed.³⁰ But neither should they rule over him. That would be much like claiming to rule over Zeus by dividing up the offices. So the only course left, which seems natural, is for everyone to obey such a person willingly. People like this should therefore be kings in their cities for life.

^{1284b35} After these arguments, it may be a good idea to move on and examine kingship. We say it is one of the correct constitutions. We must examine whether rule by a king benefits a city and territory that are to be run well.

Would some other constitution be better,⁴⁰ or would kingship benefit some cities but not others? First we must distinguish whether there is just one kind of it or several^{1285a1} different kinds.

It is easy to see that it includes several kinds, and that the way rule is exercised is not the same in all of them. Kingship in the Spartan constitution seems the clearest example of kingship under law. But it is not sovereign over everything.^{1285a5} When the king leaves the country, he leads in matters of war. Matters concerning the gods are also assigned to the kings. So this kingship is like a permanent generalship with full command. The king has no authority to put someone to death, except in certain circumstances, as among the ancients on¹⁰ military expeditions, under the law of force. Homer makes this clear. Agamemnon put up with insults in the assemblies, but once they had marched out he had authority even to kill. At any rate, he says, “Whoever I find away from battle ... he will not be safe from the dogs and birds; for death is in my hands.” (Hom. Il. 2.391)

Book III, 1285a–1288b



So this is one^{1285a15} kind of kingship: generalship for life. Some offices of this kind are hereditary, and others are filled by choice. Alongside this is another kind of monarchy, found in the kingships of some non-Greek peoples. All these have power much like tyrannies, but they are lawful and hereditary. Because²⁰ non-Greek peoples are by nature more slavish in character than Greeks, and the peoples of Asia more so than those of Europe, they accept a master's rule without resentment. So these kingships are like tyrannies in this respect, but secure because they are hereditary and lawful. Their guard is also a king's guard,²⁵ not a tyrant's, for the same reason. Citizens guard kings with their weapons, while foreign troops guard tyrants. Kings rule by law over willing subjects, while tyrants rule over unwilling subjects. So the first have a guard supplied by the citizens, and the second have a guard against the citizens.

These, then, are two kinds^{1285a30} of monarchy. Another is the kind that existed among the ancient Greeks, whose rulers they call *aisymnetes*. Put simply, this is an elective tyranny. It differs from the non-Greek kind not in being unlawful, but only in not being hereditary. Some held this office for life, others for set³⁵ periods or tasks. For example, the people of Mytilene once chose Pittacus to deal with the exiles led by Antimenides and the poet Alcaeus. Alcaeus makes it clear in one of his drinking songs that they chose Pittacus as tyrant. He criticizes them: "Lowborn Pittacus, over their spiritless,^{1285b1} ill-fated city, they made tyrant, all together loudly praising him."

These forms of rule are and were like tyrannies because they involve mastery, but like kingships because the rulers are chosen and the subjects willing. A fourth kind of kingly monarchy is found in the heroic^{1285b5} period. These kingships were willingly accepted, hereditary, and lawful. The first kings became benefactors of the multitude through skills or war, or by bringing people together or providing land. So they became kings over willing subjects, and those who succeeded them inherited the office. They had authority to lead in war¹⁰ and to conduct sacrifices that did not belong to priests. They also judged lawsuits. Some did this without swearing an oath, others under oath. The oath consisted in raising the scepter. So in ancient times they ruled continuously over affairs in the city, within the country, and beyond its borders. Later,¹⁵ the kings gave up some powers, and the masses took others away. In the other cities, only the sacrifices were left to the kings. Where there was still something worth calling kingship, they had only the command of military operations beyond the borders.

^{1285b20} These, then, are the kinds of kingship, four in number. One is that of the heroic period. It was accepted willingly, but concerned certain set matters. The king was both general and judge, and had authority over matters concerning the gods. The second is the non-Greek kind. This is hereditary rule involving mastery,²⁵ under law. The third is what they call rule by an aisymnetes. This is elective tyranny. The fourth is the Spartan kind. Put simply, this is permanent hereditary generalship. These kinds differ from one another in this way. A fifth kind of kingship exists when, over everything,³⁰ one person is sovereign, as each nation and each city is over its common affairs. It is organized along the lines of household management. Just as household management is a kind of kingship over a household, absolute kingship is household management of a city and of one or more nations.

So there are, roughly speaking, two kinds of kingship for us to examine: this one^{1285b35} and the Spartan one. Most of the others lie between them. They have authority over fewer things than absolute kingship, but more than Spartan kingship. So the inquiry is roughly about two questions. One is whether it benefits cities to have a permanent general, either by heredity or by taking turns,

^{1286a1} or whether it does not. The other is whether it benefits them for one person to be sovereign over everything, or whether it does not. Examining generalship of this kind is more a matter of laws than of a constitution, since it can exist in every constitution.⁵ So let us leave the first question aside. The remaining kind of kingship is a form of constitution, so we must study it and go through the difficulties it involves. The starting point of the inquiry is this: is it better to be ruled by the best man or by the best laws?

People who ^{1286a10} think it is better to be ruled by a king believe that laws speak only in general terms, and do not give directions for particular situations as they arise. So in any skill, following written rules is foolish. In Egypt, doctors are allowed to change the treatment after four days. If they do so earlier, it is at their own risk. Clearly, then,¹⁵ a constitution based on written rules and laws is not the best, for the same reason. Still, rulers too must have that general principle to guide them. What has no emotional element at all is better than what has it by nature. Law does not have it, but every human mind must²⁰ have it. Yet someone might say that, to make up for this, the ruler will deliberate better about individual cases. So it is clear that he must be a lawgiver, and that there must be established laws. But they must not be authoritative where they miss the mark, though they must be authoritative in other matters. Where law cannot judge either²⁵ at all or well, should the one best person rule, or should everyone? Even now people meet to hear lawsuits, deliberate, and make decisions, and all these decisions concern individual cases. Any one of them, considered alone, may be worse. But the city consists of many people. Just as a meal to which everyone contributes³⁰ is better than a single meal supplied by one person, so the masses judge many matters better than any one person.

Also, a large quantity is less easily corrupted. Just as a greater amount of water is harder to spoil, so the multitude is harder to corrupt than the few. When one person is overcome by anger or some other emotion of that kind, his judgment must be spoiled.^{1286a35} But in the other case it is difficult for everyone to become angry and go wrong at once. Let the multitude be free people who do nothing against the law except in matters where the law must fall short. If

this is not easy to achieve in a large group, still, suppose there are several good men who are also good citizens. Is one person harder to corrupt as⁴⁰ ruler, or are several good people,^{1286b1} all of them good?

Surely it is clear that the larger number is. But they will form factions, while the one person will not. The answer to this may be that they are good in character, just like that one person. If rule by several men, all good, should be^{1286b5} called aristocracy, and rule by one kingship, cities should prefer aristocracy to kingship. This holds whether the ruling body has an armed force or not, provided several similar people can be found. Perhaps this is also why people were ruled by kings in earlier times: it was rare to find men far superior in virtue, especially when they were then¹⁰ living in small cities. Also, they made men kings because of benefits they had provided, and providing benefits is the work of good men. But when there came to be many people alike in virtue, they no longer put up with kingship. They sought something shared and established a constitution. When they became worse and made money from public resources,¹⁵ it is reasonable to suppose that oligarchies arose from something like this. For they made wealth the basis of honor. From these they first changed to tyrannies, and from tyrannies to democracy. By constantly concentrating power in fewer hands because of shameful greed, they made the multitude stronger, until it attacked and democracies arose.²⁰ Since the cities have also grown larger, perhaps it is no longer even easy for any constitution other than democracy to arise.

Suppose someone holds that kingship is best for cities. What will happen with the king's children? Should his family also rule as kings? But if they turn out to be just any sort of people,^{1286b25} that is harmful. Yet, it may be said, although he has the authority, he will not hand it over to his children. But it is not easy to believe that. It is difficult and demands greater virtue than human nature allows. There is also a difficulty about his armed force. Should the person who is to be king have a force around him with which he can³⁰ compel those unwilling to obey? Otherwise, how can he manage his rule? Even if his authority is under law, and he does nothing against the law merely because he wants to, he must still have a force with which to protect the laws. Perhaps it is

not difficult³⁵ to settle the question for a king of this kind. He should have a force, but it should be strong enough to overcome any single person or several together, yet weaker than the multitude. This is how the ancients supplied guards when they appointed someone over the city whom they called an *aisymnetes* or a tyrant. And when Dionysius asked for guards, someone advised⁴⁰ the people of Syracuse to give him that number of guards.

^{1287a1}The argument has now reached the king who does everything as he wants, and we must examine him. For the so-called king under law is not, as we said, a form of constitution. In every constitution there can be⁵ a generalship for life, for example in democracy and aristocracy. Many people make one person sovereign over the administration. An office of this kind exists at Epidamnus, and at Opus too, though with somewhat less power. As for what is called absolute kingship, the king rules everything as¹⁰ he wishes. Some people think that one person's sovereignty over all the citizens goes against nature where the city consists of similar people. People who are alike by nature must have the same claim to what is just and the same worth by nature. So if unequal people have equal food or¹⁵ clothing, and this harms their bodies, the same holds for honors. Likewise, it is harmful for equals to have unequal shares. That is why it is no more just for anyone to rule than to be ruled, and the same goes for taking turns. But this is already law, since an orderly arrangement is law. So it is more desirable for law to rule than for any one of the citizens²⁰ to do so. By the same argument, even if it is better for certain people to rule, they should be appointed guardians of the laws and servants of the laws. There must be some offices, but these people say it is not just for this to mean one person, when everyone is alike. Moreover, whatever the law seems unable to determine, a human being²⁵ would also be unable to know. But the law gives rulers the training they need, then leaves the remaining matters to them to judge and manage with the fairest judgment. It also allows them to correct anything that experience shows to be better than the established rules. So someone who calls for law to rule seems to call for god and reason³⁰ alone to rule. Someone who calls for a human being to rule adds a wild animal too. Desire is like that, and anger twists rulers, even the best men. That is why law is reason without

appetite. The example drawn from skills seems false: that treatment by written rules is bad, and that it is better to use³⁵ people who have the skills. They do not act against reason out of friendship. Instead, they earn their pay by curing the sick. But people in political offices often act out of spite or favoritism. In fact, when people suspect doctors of having been won over by their enemies to destroy them⁴⁰ for profit, they would then prefer treatment according to written rules.

Moreover, people call in help for themselves: ^{1287b1} doctors, when ill, call in other doctors, and athletic trainers, when training, bring in other trainers. They cannot judge truly because they are judging their own affairs and are under the influence of emotion. So it is clear that people who seek the just seek what is impartial. For law is what is⁵ impartial. Also, laws based on customs are more authoritative, and concern more authoritative matters, than written laws. So even if a human ruler is more reliable than written laws, he is not more reliable than laws based on custom.

Besides, it is not easy for one person to oversee many things. So he will need to appoint several rulers under him. ^{1287b10} What difference does it make whether this arrangement exists right from the start or the one person sets it up in this way? We made this point earlier too. If a man's goodness gives him a right to rule because he is better, two good men are better still than one. That is what is meant by "Two going together" (Hom. Il. 10.224) and by Agamemnon's prayer,¹⁵ "If only I had ten such advisers." (Hom. Il. 2.372) Even now officials, like the juror, have authority to judge certain matters that the law cannot determine. Where the law can determine them, no one disputes that it would rule and judge best. But some matters can be covered by laws, while²⁰ others cannot. These are what make people raise difficulties and ask whether it is better for the best law to rule or for the best man. Matters that people deliberate about cannot be legislated for. So they do not dispute that a human being must judge such matters. They dispute that it should be only²⁵ one person rather than many.

For each ruler, trained by the law, judges well. It might seem strange if one person could see better, judging with two eyes and two ears and acting with two feet and hands, than many people with many. Even now monarchs provide many eyes^{1287b30} for themselves, and ears, hands, and feet. They make people friendly to their rule and to themselves their fellow rulers. If these people are not friends, they will not act according to the monarch's wishes. But if they are friends of both him and his rule, a friend is an equal and a similar person. So if he thinks these people should rule, he thinks equals and similar people should rule³⁵ equally. These, roughly, are the arguments made by those who challenge kingship.

But perhaps these arguments apply in this way to some people, and not to others. Some people are by nature suited to mastery, others to kingship, and others to political rule. Different arrangements are just and beneficial for different people. But no one is suited to tyranny under^{1287b40} nature's order, or to any of the other constitutions that are deviations. These come about contrary to nature.

From what we have said,^{1288a1} it is clear that among similar and equal people it is neither beneficial nor just for one person to be sovereign over everyone. This holds whether there are no laws and he acts as law himself, or there are laws. It holds whether he is good and rules good people, or is not good and rules people who are not good. It holds even if in virtue he is⁵ better, except in a certain way. We must say what that way is. We have already said something about it earlier.

First we must define what makes a people suited to kingship, aristocracy, or polity, lawful government by the many. A people suited to kingship is one that naturally produces a family superior in virtue for political leadership. A people suited to aristocracy^{1288a10} is one that naturally produces a body able to be ruled as free people by those whose virtue equips them to lead in political rule. A people suited to polity is one in which a body capable of war naturally develops, able to be ruled and to rule under a law that assigns, according to worth,¹⁵ offices to the well-off. Suppose a whole family, or even one individual among the others, becomes outstanding in virtue. Their virtue surpasses that of all the

others. Then it is just for that family to be royal and sovereign over everything, or for that individual to be king. As we said earlier,²⁰ this follows not only from the principle of justice usually put forward by those who establish constitutions, whether aristocratic, oligarchic, or democratic. All base their claims on superiority, but not on the same superiority. It also follows from what was said before. Killing or²⁵ exiling such a person or voting to banish him is not fitting. Nor is expecting him to be ruled in turn. A part is not naturally superior to the whole, but that is what has happened with someone whose superiority is so great. So the only course left is to obey such a person and let him be sovereign, not in turn but without qualification.³⁰ Let this settle our account of kingship: what different kinds it has, whether it benefits cities or not, which cities it benefits, and how.

We say that there are three correct constitutions. Of these, the best must be the one managed by the best people. This is a constitution in which^{1288a35} either one individual, a whole family, or a body of people surpasses everyone in virtue, some able to be ruled and others to rule for the most desirable life. In our first arguments, we showed that the virtue of a man and that of a citizen of the best city must be the same. So it is clear that in the same way⁴⁰ and by the same means a man becomes good and someone could organize a city ruled by an aristocracy or a king.

So^{1288b1} the education and habits that make a good man will be roughly the same as those that make a person fit for political rule and kingship. Now that these things have been settled, we must try to discuss the best constitution: how it naturally comes about and how it can be established.⁵ So anyone who intends to carry out a suitable inquiry into it must do so.

Book IV, 1288b–1291b



^{1288b10} In every art and science that doesn't deal with just one part of a subject but covers a whole field, a single science studies what suits each kind of thing. Physical training, for example, studies which exercise benefits which body, and which exercise is best (for a body with the best natural condition and resources, the best exercise¹⁵ must be the right one). It also studies which single exercise suits most people alike (this too is the work of physical training). And if someone doesn't want the condition or knowledge needed for athletic competition, the trainer and the expert in physical training still have the job of preparing him for that lesser ability. We see the same thing²⁰ in medicine, shipbuilding, clothing, and every other art. So clearly the same science must study the best constitution: what it is, and what form would best meet our wishes if no outside obstacle stood in the way. It must also study which constitution suits which people (for many²⁵ may find it impossible to achieve the best. So a good law-giver and a genuine statesman must know both the best constitution without qualification and the best under given conditions). Third, it must study a constitution based on an assumption (for it must be able to study a given constitution: how it could first come into being, and, once established,³⁰ how it could last the longest. I mean, for example, a city that happens to have neither the best constitution, because it lacks even the necessary resources, nor the best one possible with what it has, but some worse one). Besides all these, the constitution best suited to all cities³⁵ must be known. Most people who pronounce on

constitutions, even if they speak well on other matters, miss what is useful. We must study not just the best constitution but also the possible one, and likewise the one that is easier to achieve and more widely suited to all cities. As things stand, the most perfect constitution, which needs abundant⁴⁰ resources, is the only kind some seek. Others propose something more generally applicable, but reject existing constitutions. The Spartan constitution^{1289a1} or some other one is what they praise.

We should propose an arrangement that people can easily be persuaded to accept and can share in, starting from their present conditions. For correcting a constitution is no smaller task than building one from the start, just as relearning^{1289a5} is no smaller task than learning from the start. So, besides the things mentioned, a statesman must also be able to help existing constitutions, as we said earlier. This is impossible if he doesn't know how many kinds of constitution there are. Some now think there is just one democracy and one oligarchy. But that isn't¹⁰ true. So we must know the differences among constitutions, how many there are, and how many ways they can be combined. After this, the same practical wisdom must also identify the best laws and those that suit each constitution. Laws must be made to fit constitutions, and everyone does make them that way, not constitutions¹⁵ to fit laws. A constitution is a city's arrangement of its offices: how they are distributed, what is sovereign in the constitution, and what the aim of each community is. Laws are distinct from the provisions that define the constitution. They are the rules by which rulers must rule and guard against those who²⁰ break them. So clearly, even for making laws, we must understand the differences between constitutions and the definition of each. The same laws can't benefit all oligarchies or all democracies, if several kinds, not just one democracy and one oligarchy alone,²⁵ really exist.

In our first investigation of constitutions, we distinguished three correct constitutions: kingship, aristocracy, and polity, lawful government by the many. We also distinguished three deviations from these: tyranny from kingship, oligarchy from aristocracy, and democracy^{1289a30} from polity. We have already discussed aristocracy and kingship (for studying the best constitution is the same as discussing the forms bearing these names. Each aims to be established on the

basis of virtue, with the necessary resources). Also, how aristocracy and kingship differ from each other, and when³⁵ kingship should be accepted, were explained earlier. What remains is to discuss polity, the form called by the name shared by all constitutions, and the other constitutions: oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny. We can also see which wrong form is worst and which ranks second. Necessarily,⁴⁰ the worst departure is from the constitution that ranks first and is most divine. Kingship must either have the name alone without actually^{1289b1} being kingship,

or rest on the great superiority of the man who is king. So tyranny, being worst, must be farthest from a constitution. Oligarchy comes second (for aristocracy is very far removed from this constitution), and the most moderate is^{1289b5} democracy. One of the earlier thinkers has already given this verdict, but not with the same point in view as us. He judged that, when all the constitutions are decent—for example, a good oligarchy and the others—democracy is worst, but when they are bad, it is best. We say that these constitutions are altogether mistaken,¹⁰ and that it isn't right to call one oligarchy better than another, but rather less bad. Still, let's leave that sort of judgment aside for now. First we must distinguish how many varieties of constitution there are, if democracy and oligarchy each have several kinds. Next, which is the most widely applicable and¹⁵ which is the most desirable after the best constitution? And if there happens to be another constitution that is aristocratic and well organized but doesn't suit most cities, what is it? Then, among the other constitutions, which is desirable for which people? (Perhaps democracy is more necessary than oligarchy for some, and oligarchy more than democracy for others.)²⁰ After that, we must ask how someone who wants these constitutions should establish them. I mean each kind of democracy and, in turn, each kind of oligarchy. Finally, once we have discussed all these as briefly as we can, we must try to examine what destroys and what preserves constitutions,²⁵ both in general and for each one separately, and what causes most naturally bring these things about.

There are several constitutions because every city has several parts. First, we see that all cities are made up of households. Next, among this^{1289b30} population, some must be well-off, some poor, and some in the middle. Among both the well-off and the poor, some have heavy arms and some are unarmed. We see that some of the people are farmers, some work in trade, and some are manual workers. The notables also differ in wealth and in the size³⁵ of their property: for example, in their ability to keep horses (for this isn't easy without wealth. That is why, in ancient times, cities whose strength lay in cavalry had oligarchies. In wars with neighboring cities they fought on horseback. The Eretrians and Chalcidians did this, as did the Magnesians settled beside⁴⁰ the Maeander, and many other Asian peoples). Besides differences in wealth, there are differences in birth and^{1290a1} virtue,

and any other such distinction mentioned as a part of a city in our discussion of aristocracy. For there we distinguished how many necessary parts every city has. Sometimes all these parts share in the constitution, sometimes^{1290a5} fewer, and sometimes more. So clearly there must be several constitutions differing in kind from one another, since these parts themselves differ in kind. A constitution is the arrangement of offices. Everyone distributes these either according to the power of those taking part or according to some equality they¹⁰ share. I mean, for example, an equality among the poor, among the well-off, or common to both. So there must be as many constitutions as there are arrangements based on the superior position and the differences of the city's parts.

People generally think there are two constitutions. Just as winds are said to be either north or south winds, and^{1290a15} the others deviations from these, so there are said to be two constitutions: democracy and oligarchy. They class aristocracy as a kind of oligarchy, since it is a sort of rule by a few, and the constitution called polity as democracy. This is like classing the west wind with the north wind, and the east wind with the south wind. It is the same²⁰ with patterns of musical notes, called modes, according to some people. There too they set out two kinds, Dorian and Phrygian, and call the other arrangements either Dorian or Phrygian. This, then, is the usual way people understand constitu-

tions. But the division we made is truer and better: there are two²⁵ or one that are well organized, and the others are deviations—some from the well-balanced musical mode, others from the best constitution. The tighter and more master-like constitutions are oligarchic, while the looser and softer ones are democratic.

^{1290a30} We shouldn't define democracy simply as a constitution where the majority is sovereign, as some people now tend to do (for in oligarchies too, and everywhere, the larger part is sovereign). Nor should we define oligarchy as a constitution where a few are sovereign. Suppose there were thirteen hundred people in all, and a thousand of them were rich,³⁵ and didn't let the three hundred share in office, though they were poor free people and like them in other respects. No one would say that these people lived under a democracy. Likewise, if a few poor people were stronger than the larger number of well-off people, no one would call this an oligarchy either, if the others, who were⁴⁰ rich, had no share in public honors.

So it is better to say that^{1290b1} there is democracy when the free are sovereign, and oligarchy when the rich are. But it happens that the former are many and the latter few, since many people are free and few are rich. If offices were distributed by height, as⁵ some say happens in Ethiopia, or by beauty, there would still be an oligarchy. For the number of beautiful people and tall people alike is small. Yet these features alone aren't enough to define these constitutions. Since both the people and the oligarchy have several parts, we must make a further distinction. If¹⁰ a few free people rule a larger number who aren't free, that isn't democracy. This happens in Apollonia on the Ionian Sea and in Thera. In each city the men of outstanding noble birth who first settled the colonies held public honors. They were few among many. Nor is it democracy if the rich rule because they¹⁵ outnumber the others, as in Colophon long ago (for there most people owned large properties before the war against the Lydians). Rather, there is democracy when the free and poor, who are the majority, are sovereign in government, and oligarchy when the rich and better-born,²⁰ who are few, are sovereign.

We have now said that there are several constitutions, and why. Let's say why there are more than those we have mentioned, what they are, and why they exist, starting from the point we made earlier. For we agree that every city has not one part but several.^{1290b25} Suppose we wanted to identify the kinds of animal. First we would set out the parts every animal must have (for example, some sense organs, parts for processing and receiving food, such as the mouth and stomach, and also the parts each animal uses to move). Suppose these were the only parts, but there were³⁰ differences among them. I mean, for example, several kinds of mouth, stomach, sense organs, and parts used for movement. The number of combinations would necessarily produce several kinds of animal. For the same animal can't have several different types of mouth, or of ears either. So when³⁵ all the possible combinations of these are identified, they will produce kinds of animal. There will be as many kinds of animal as there are combinations of the necessary parts. The same applies to the constitutions we have mentioned. For cities too consist of many parts, not one, as we have often said. One⁴⁰ is the group concerned with food, those called farmers,

^{1291a1} and a second is the group called manual workers (these work in the crafts without which a city can't be inhabited. Some of these crafts must exist out of necessity, others for luxury or living well). A third is the trading group (by the trading group I mean⁵ those who spend their time selling and buying, in wholesale and retail trade). A fourth is the hired laborers, and a fifth the group that fights to defend the city. This is as necessary as any of the others if people are not to become slaves to attackers. For surely it is impossible for a community that is by nature enslaved to deserve the name of city.¹⁰ A city is self-sufficient, and what is enslaved isn't self-sufficient. That is why the account of this in the Republic is clever but inadequate. Socrates says that a city consists of four groups that are most necessary: a weaver, a farmer, a shoemaker, and a builder. Then he adds more, because these aren't self-sufficient:¹⁵ a smith, people who look after the necessary livestock, and also a wholesale and a retail trader. All these make up the first city, as though every city were established for necessities rather than for the noble, and needed shoemakers as much as farmers. As for the fighting force,²⁰ he doesn't give it a place until the territory

expands, encroaches on that of its neighbors, and brings them to war. Yet even among the four partners, or however many there are, someone must distribute and decide what is just. So suppose we count the soul as part of an animal²⁵ more truly than the body. Likewise, we should count these groups as parts of cities more truly than those serving necessary uses. They are the military group, those administering justice in the law courts, and those who deliberate. Deliberation calls for political understanding. Whether these functions belong to separate people or to the same people makes no difference³⁰ to the argument. For the same people often serve as heavily armed soldiers and work as farmers. So if both these groups and those others are to be considered parts of the city, clearly the heavily armed soldiers are a necessary part of it.

A seventh part is the group that serves the city with its property, whom we call the well-off. An eighth is the group that performs public services^{1291a35} and serves in offices, if a city can't exist without rulers. So there must be people able to rule and to provide this service for the city either continually or in turn. The remaining groups are those we happened to define just now: the group that deliberates and the one that judges⁴⁰ what is just between people in dispute. If cities must have these functions, and have them carried out well and justly,

^{1291b1} there must also be some people who share in the virtue of statesmen. Many people think the same individuals can have the other abilities: for example, that the same people can defend the city, farm, practice crafts, and also deliberate⁵ and judge. Everyone also claims to have virtue, and thinks they can hold most offices. But the same people can't be poor and rich. That is why these seem to be the city's main parts: the well-off and the poor. Also, because the former are usually few and the latter¹⁰ many, these seem to be opposing parts among the city's groups. So constitutions are established according to which of these has the upper hand, and there seem to be two constitutions: democracy and oligarchy.

That there are several constitutions, and what^{1291b15} causes this, have already been explained. Let's now explain that democracy and oligarchy also have several kinds. This is clear from what we have said as well. For there are several kinds both of the people and of those called the notables, the prominent

citizens. For example, one kind of the people is farmers, another is those working in crafts, another is the trading group concerned with²⁰ buying and selling, and another is the group connected with the sea. Of this last group, some serve in the navy, some engage in money-making, some carry passengers, and some fish. In many places each group is large. Examples are fishermen in Tarentum and Byzantium, warship crews in Athens, traders in Aegina and Chios, and passenger carriers²⁵ in Tenedos. Besides these are manual laborers, those with so little property that they can't have leisure, those who are free but don't have two citizen parents, and any other such kind of population. The notables are distinguished by wealth, noble birth, virtue, education, and the things spoken of under the same³⁰ kinds of distinction.

The first democracy is the one most clearly based on equality. The law of this kind of democracy defines equality as neither the poor nor the well-off having any advantage, and neither being sovereign over the other, but both being alike. For if freedom is found most of all in democracy,^{1291b35} as some people suppose, and equality too, this would be most true when everyone shares in the constitution as equally as possible. Since the people are the majority, and what the majority decides is authoritative, this must be a democracy. So this is one kind of democracy: for offices, a property qualification⁴⁰ is required, but it is low. Anyone who acquires the required property must be allowed to take part, and anyone who loses it must not take part.

Book IV, 1292a–1295a



^{1292a1} Another kind of democracy lets all citizens whose status is beyond challenge take part, but the law rules. Another kind lets everyone share in office, provided only that he is a citizen, but the law rules. In another kind of democracy the other features⁵ are the same, but the majority is sovereign, not the law. This happens when decrees are authoritative rather than the law. Popular leaders who win the people's favor bring this about. For in democracies governed by law, no such popular leader arises. Instead, the best citizens take the leading positions.¹⁰ But where the laws aren't authoritative, such popular leaders arise. For the people become a monarch, a single ruler made up of many. The many are sovereign not as individuals but all together. When Homer says that rule by many is not good, which kind he means—this kind, or the kind where several rulers each rule individually—¹⁵ is unclear. In any case, people of this sort, being a monarch, seek to rule as one because they aren't ruled by law. They become master-like, so flatterers are held in honor. Such a people corresponds to tyranny among monarchies. For their character is the same. Both act as masters over the better people, and decrees²⁰ are like a tyrant's commands. The popular leader and the flatterer are the same and play corresponding roles. Each has the greatest influence with his own side: flatterers with tyrants and popular leaders with peoples of this sort. These men cause decrees, rather than laws, to be authoritative²⁵ by bringing everything before the people. They become powerful because the people are sovereign over everything, while they control

the people's opinion, since the majority listens to them. Also, those who bring charges against officeholders say the people must judge. The people gladly accept the invitation. So they undermine³⁰ all offices. It would seem reasonable for someone to criticize this sort of democracy as not being a constitution. For where laws don't rule, there is no constitution. The law must rule over everything, and the offices must rule in particular cases. This is what we must consider a constitution. So if democracy is³⁵ one of the constitutions, clearly an arrangement of this sort, where everything is managed by decrees, isn't even a democracy in the proper sense. For no decree can be a universal rule. Let this, then, be our distinction between the kinds of democracy.

One kind of oligarchy rests on property qualifications:^{1292a40} these determine officeholding and are high enough to exclude the poor, who are the majority. But anyone who acquires the required property can share in the constitution.

Another^{1292b1} is when offices depend on high property qualifications and the officeholders themselves choose people to fill vacancies (if they choose from everyone who meets these qualifications, this seems more aristocratic; if from certain designated people, oligarchic). Another kind of oligarchy is⁵ when a son takes his father's place. A fourth is when this feature is present and the rulers, not the law, rule. Among oligarchies this corresponds to tyranny among monarchies, and to the last democracy we described among democracies. They call¹⁰ this kind of oligarchy the rule of powerful families.

These, then, are the kinds of oligarchy and democracy. We must not overlook the fact that in many places the constitution laid down by law isn't democratic, but custom and people's way of life make public life democratic. Likewise,^{1292b15} in other places the constitution laid down by law is more democratic, but people's way of life and customs make government more oligarchic. This happens especially after changes in constitutions. People don't change everything at once, but at first are satisfied to gain small advantages from one another.²⁰ So the earlier laws remain, but those who changed the constitution are in control.

The things we have said themselves make it clear that there are this many kinds of democracy and oligarchy. For either all the parts of the people we mentioned must share in the constitution,^{1292b25} or some must and others must not. When the farmers and those with moderate property are sovereign in the constitution, they conduct public life according to laws (for they can make a living by working, but can't have leisure. So they put the law in charge and attend only the necessary assemblies). The others are allowed to take part when³⁰ they acquire the property qualification set by the laws. So everyone who acquires it is allowed to take part. For, in general, not allowing everyone to take part is oligarchic, but having leisure is impossible without income. These reasons explain this one kind of democracy. Another kind results from the³⁵ next distinction. Everyone whose birth is beyond challenge can be allowed to take part, but in fact only those able to have leisure do so. That is why the laws rule in this kind of democracy: there is no income. A third kind allows all who are free to share in the constitution, but they don't actually⁴⁰ take part for the reason just mentioned. So the law must rule in this kind too.

A fourth kind of democracy is^{1293a1} the latest to have arisen in cities. Because cities have become much larger than they were at first, and plentiful revenue is available, everyone shares in the constitution because the majority is stronger. They also share and⁵ take part in public life because even the poor can have leisure, since they receive pay. This sort of population has the most leisure. For attending to their private affairs doesn't hold them back at all, but it does hold back the rich. So the rich often don't attend the assembly or serve as jurors. That is why the mass of the poor¹⁰ is sovereign in the constitution, not the laws.

The kinds of democracy, then, are this many and of this sort for these necessary reasons. The kinds of oligarchy are as follows. When a larger number of people have property, but in smaller amounts and not very much, this is the first kind of oligarchy. They allow participation^{1293a15} to anyone who acquires the required property. Since many belong to the citizen body, the law must be sovereign, not the people themselves. They are farther from monarchy. They have neither enough property to neglect it and have leisure, nor so little that

they need support from the city.²⁰ So they must want the law to rule for them, rather than rule themselves. But if the property owners are fewer than in the previous case and have more property, the second kind of oligarchy arises. Since they are stronger, they claim a greater advantage. That is why they themselves choose, from the others, those who enter the citizen body.²⁵ But because they aren't yet strong enough to rule without law, they make a law of this sort. If their position grows stronger because they are fewer and have larger properties, the third stage of oligarchy arises. They keep offices in their own hands, under a law that directs that those who die be succeeded by their³⁰ sons. When they become far stronger in property and in their many personal connections, this kind of rule by powerful families is close to monarchy. The individual rulers themselves become sovereign, not the law. This is the fourth kind of oligarchy, corresponding to the last kind of democracy.

^{1293a35} Besides democracy and oligarchy there are two more constitutions. Everyone recognizes one of them, and it has been described as one of the four kinds of constitution (they list four: monarchy, oligarchy, democracy, and, as the fourth, what is called aristocracy). The fifth is the one called by⁴⁰ the name common to them all (for they call it polity, a mixture of rule by the few and rule by the people). But because it doesn't occur often, those who try to count the kinds of constitution overlook it, and use only the four^{1293b1} (as Plato does) in their accounts of constitutions.

It is right to call the constitution we discussed in our earlier arguments aristocracy. Only a constitution made up of those best in virtue without qualification, not men good only under some assumption, is rightly entitled^{1293b5} to the name aristocracy. Only in it is the same person both a good man and a good citizen without qualification. Those in the other constitutions are good relative to their own constitution. Still, there are some constitutions called aristocracies that differ both from oligarchies and from what is called polity.¹⁰ For where people choose officeholders not just by wealth but also by merit, that constitution differs from both and is called aristocratic. Even in cities that don't make virtue a public concern, there are still some people who have a good reputation and are thought to be decent. So where a constitution takes account of¹⁵

wealth, virtue, and the people, as in Carthage, it is aristocratic. So are constitutions that take account of just two, like the Spartan constitution, which takes account of virtue and the people. It is a mixture of these two: democracy and virtue. So, besides the first aristocracy, the best constitution, these are two kinds of aristocracy,²⁰ and a third consists of those forms of what is called polity that lean more toward oligarchy.

It remains for us to discuss what is called polity and also tyranny. We have put them in this order, even though neither polity nor the aristocracies just mentioned are deviations, because^{1293b25} in truth all have missed the most correct constitution. Also, they are counted alongside these, and the deviations from them are those we mentioned at the start. It is reasonable to discuss tyranny last, because it is least of all a constitution, while our³⁰ investigation concerns constitutions. We have now said why they are arranged this way. We must now explain polity. Its character is clearer since we have defined what concerns oligarchy and democracy. For, to put it simply, polity is a mixture of oligarchy and democracy. People usually³⁵ call those that lean toward democracy polities, and those that lean more toward oligarchy aristocracies, because education and noble birth are more often found among the better-off. The well-off also seem to possess the things for which wrongdoers do wrong. That is why “noble and good” and “notables”⁴⁰ are what people call them. Since aristocracy aims to give the advantage to the best citizens, people also say that oligarchies are made up more of the noble and good.

^{1294a1} It seems impossible for a city to have good law and order if it is ruled not by the best but by the bad. Likewise, it seems impossible for a city to be ruled by the best if it doesn’t have good law and order. But having well-made laws that aren’t obeyed isn’t good law and order. So one aspect of good law and order⁵ must be understood as obeying the laws in force. The other is having well-made laws that people keep (for people can also obey badly made laws). This second aspect is possible in two ways: they may obey the best laws possible for them, or the best without qualification.

Aristocracy seems above all to consist in ^{1294a10} public honors being distributed according to virtue (for virtue is the defining feature of aristocracy, wealth of oligarchy, and freedom of democracy). But the authority of whatever the majority decides is found in all of them. In oligarchy, aristocracy, and democracies alike, whatever the larger part of those sharing in the constitution decides is authoritative.¹⁵ In most cities, then, the name polity is given to this kind of constitution. For the mixture aims only at combining the well-off and the poor, wealth and freedom (for among most people the well-off seem to occupy the place of the noble and good). Three things claim equal standing²⁰ in the constitution: freedom, wealth, and virtue. The fourth, called noble birth, comes from two of these. Noble birth is long-established wealth and virtue. Clearly, then, we should call the mixture of the two groups, the well-off and the poor, polity. The mixture of the three is, more than any of the others, an aristocracy, apart from the²⁵ true and first aristocracy. We have now said that there are other kinds of constitution besides monarchy, democracy, and oligarchy, and what they are. We have also said how the aristocracies differ from one another and how polities differ from aristocracy. It is clear that these aren't far apart.

^{1294a30} Following what we have said, let's explain how the constitution called polity arises alongside democracy and oligarchy, and how it should be established. At the same time, this will make clear the features that define democracy and oligarchy. We must grasp the distinction between them, then take something from each³⁵ as though joining matching pieces, and combine them. There are three ways to make this combination and mixture. One is to take both of the things that each side makes law, for example concerning jury service (for in oligarchies they fine the well-off if they don't serve as jurors, but give the poor no pay. In democracies,⁴⁰ they give the poor pay but don't fine the well-off. Combining both these arrangements makes something shared and intermediate. That is also why it is ^{1294b1} a feature of polity: it is a mixture of both).

This, then, is one way to combine them. Another is to take the middle between what each side lays down. For example, one side allows attendance at the assembly with no property qualification or an extremely small one, while

the other requires a high property qualification. What they share^{1294b5} is neither of these, but a property qualification midway between the two. A third way takes some provisions from the oligarchic law and others from the democratic law. I mean, for example, that choosing officeholders by lot is thought democratic, and choosing them by election oligarchic. It is also democratic to require no¹⁰ property qualification, and oligarchic to require one. So it is aristocratic and characteristic of polity to take one feature from each: from oligarchy, choosing officeholders by election, and from democracy, having no property qualification.

This, then, is the way to make the mixture. For democracy and oligarchy to be well mixed,^{1294b15} the test is whether the same constitution can be called both democracy and oligarchy. For clearly people describe it this way because it is well mixed. This is also true of what lies in the middle, since each extreme appears in it. This is what happens with the Spartan constitution. Many people²⁰ try to describe it as a democracy because its arrangement has many democratic features. First, for example, is the way children are brought up (for the children of the rich are brought up like those of the poor, and educated in a way that the children of the poor could also afford). The same applies in the next²⁵ stage of life, and in the same way when they become men (for in this respect there is no visible difference between rich and poor). Everyone has the same food at shared meals, and the rich wear clothes that any poor person could also provide. Also, there are two highest offices. One³⁰ is elected by the people, and the other is open to them. They elect the elders and can serve as ephors, the officials who oversee the city. Other people see it as rule by a few, since many of its features fit oligarchy. Every office is filled by election, never by lot. Only a few can sentence people to death or exile. Many other features are like this too. In³⁵ a well-mixed constitution it should seem to be both forms and neither. It should be preserved through itself, not from outside. Preserving itself doesn't mean that more people outside it want it preserved. Even a bad constitution could have that support. It means that no part of the city would want any other constitution⁴⁰ at all. We have now said how polity should be established, and likewise the constitutions called aristocracies.

^{1295a1} We still need to discuss tyranny. There isn't much to say about it. But we count it as a kind of constitution, so it must have a place in our study. We defined kingship in our earlier arguments,⁵ where we examined kingship in the fullest sense: whether it is harmful or beneficial to cities, what sort of king should be appointed, from what source, and how. While examining kingship, we distinguished two kinds of tyranny because their powers overlap somewhat¹⁰ with kingship. Both forms of rule are based on law. Some non-Greek peoples choose monarchs with absolute authority. In ancient times some monarchs of this sort arose among the Greeks too. They called them *aisymnetes*, elected rulers with absolute power. These two forms have some¹⁵ differences from each other. They were kingly because they were based on law and because one man ruled over willing subjects, but tyrannical because he ruled as a master and according to his own judgment. A third kind of tyranny is the one that most clearly seems to be tyranny, corresponding to absolute kingship. A monarchy must be this kind of tyranny²⁰ when it rules without accountability over all those who are its ruler's equals or better, for its own advantage rather than that of the ruled. That is why it is against their will: no free person willingly puts up with such rule. These, then, are the kinds of tyranny, and this is their number, for the reasons stated.

Book IV, 1295a–1299a



^{1295a25} What is the best constitution and the best life for most cities and most people? We must judge neither by virtue beyond what ordinary people have, nor by an education that needs natural gifts and resources supplied by good luck, nor by a constitution that meets our highest wishes. Instead, we must look for a life that³⁰ most people can share and a constitution that most cities can adopt. The so-called aristocracies we have just discussed are either beyond the reach of most cities or close to what is called polity, a mixture of rule by the few and rule by the people. (So we must discuss both as one.) Our judgment about³⁵ all these matters comes from the same basic principles. Suppose the Ethics rightly says that a happy life is a life of virtue without obstacles, and that virtue is a middle point between extremes. Then the best life must be the middle life, at the middle point that each person can reach. These same standards must apply⁴⁰ to a city's virtue and vice and to its constitution. For a constitution^{1295b1} is a city's way of life.

Every city has three parts: the very rich, the very poor, and, third, those in the middle between them. Since everyone agrees that moderation and the middle point are best, it is clear that, among^{1295b5} the good things fortune brings, a moderate amount of property is best of all. It makes following reason easiest. Someone who is exceptionally handsome, strong, wellborn, or rich finds it hard to follow reason. So does someone at the opposite extreme: exceptionally poor, weak, or dishonored. The first group tends to become arrogant and wicked on

a large scale,¹⁰ the second, criminals and petty wrongdoers in the extreme. Some injustices come from arrogance, others from criminal wrongdoing. Also, people in the middle are least likely to avoid office or chase after it. Both these things harm cities. In addition, those who have far more than others of fortune's gifts—strength, wealth, friends,¹⁵ and other things of that kind—neither want to be ruled nor know how. This starts at home when they are children. Their luxurious upbringing means that even at school they are not used to being ruled. Those who lack these things to an extreme degree are far too submissive. So the latter do not know how to rule, but only how to be ruled²⁰ as slaves. The former do not know how to be ruled at all, but only how to rule as masters. The result is a city of slaves and masters, not of free people, with one group full of envy and the other full of contempt. Nothing is further from friendship and political community. Community rests on friendship. Even on a journey they do not want²⁵ their enemies as companions. A city aims to consist, as far as possible, of people who are equal and alike. This is most true of the middle class. So a city made up of the people who, we say, naturally form a city must have the best constitution. These citizens are also the safest in cities. They do not³⁰ desire other people's property, as the poor do. Nor do others desire theirs, as the poor desire the property of the rich. Since they neither plot against others nor face plots themselves, they live without danger. That is why Phocylides expressed his wish well: "Many things are best for those in the middle; I want to be in the middle in my city."

It is clear,^{1295b35} then, that the best political community is the one based on the middle class. Cities can be well governed when their middle class is large and stronger, ideally, than both other groups combined, or, failing that, than either one. When it joins one side, it tips the balance and prevents the opposite extremes from developing. So it is good fortune⁴⁰ of the highest kind for those in public life to have moderate and sufficient property.

^{1296a1} Where some own an enormous amount and others nothing, either extreme democracy or unmixed oligarchy develops, or tyranny comes from either extreme. Tyranny does arise from the most headstrong democracy and from oligarchy, but⁵ much less often from middle constitutions and those

close to them. We will explain the reason later, in the discussion of constitutional changes. It is clear that the middle constitution is best. It alone is free from faction. Where the middle class is large, faction and division among citizens are least common. Large cities are also less prone to faction¹⁰ for the same reason: their middle class is large. In small cities it is easy to divide everyone into two groups, leaving no one in the middle, and almost everyone is either poor or rich. Democracies are also safer and last longer than oligarchies because of the middle class. (Its members are more numerous¹⁵ and have a greater share in offices in democracies than in oligarchies.) When the poor greatly outnumber the others without this middle group, things go badly and the constitutions soon collapse. We should also take as evidence the fact that the best lawmakers were middle-class citizens. Solon was one of these,²⁰ as his poetry shows, and so were Lycurgus, who was not a king, Charondas, and almost all the others.

These points also make it clear why most constitutions are either democratic or oligarchic. The middle class in them is often small. So whichever side gets the upper hand,^{1296a25} whether the property owners or the people, moves away from the middle and draws the constitution toward itself. The result is either democracy or oligarchy. Furthermore, the people and the rich form factions and fight one another. Whichever side manages to defeat its opponents does not establish³⁰ a shared or equal constitution. Instead, it takes control of the constitution as the prize of victory. One side sets up a democracy, the other an oligarchy. Also, the powers that gained leadership of Greece each looked to their own constitution. Democracies in the cities were what one side³⁵ established; the other set up oligarchies. They considered their own advantage, not that of the cities. For these reasons, a middle constitution either never comes about or does so rarely and in few places. Only one man among those who formerly held leadership was persuaded that this⁴⁰ arrangement should be introduced. By now, among people in the cities, a habit^{1296b1} has arisen: they do not even want equality,

but they seek either to rule or to put up with being dominated. These points make clear which constitution is best and why. As for the other constitutions, we say that several democracies and several oligarchies^{1296b5} exist. Once

the best has been defined, it is not hard to see which should rank first, which second, and so on in order from better to worse. The one closest to the best must always be better, and the one further from the middle worse, unless we judge by particular circumstances. What I mean¹⁰ by particular circumstances is this: often, even though one constitution is more desirable, nothing prevents a different constitution from being more advantageous for some people.

After what we have said, the next step is to examine which constitution benefits which people, and what kind suits what kind of people. First we must establish^{1296b15} one general principle for them all. The part of the city that wants the constitution to stay must be stronger than the part that does not. Every city consists of both quality and quantity. By quality I mean freedom, wealth, education, and good birth; by quantity, superiority in numbers. Quality may²⁰ belong to one of the parts that make up the city, and quantity to another. For example, people without good birth may outnumber the well-born, or the poor may outnumber the rich. But their numerical superiority may not match their inferiority in quality. So these things must be compared with each other. Where,²⁵ then, the number of the poor exceeds the proportion just described, democracy naturally exists. Each type of democracy depends on which part of the people is strongest. For example, if the farmers are the most numerous, it is the first type of democracy; if artisans and wage earners are,³⁰ it is the last. The same applies to the other types between these. Where the rich and the notables, the prominent citizens, have a greater superiority in quality than their inferiority in numbers, oligarchy naturally exists. Similarly, each type of oligarchy depends on the superiority of the oligarchic group.

It is necessary^{1296b35} for the lawmaker always to include the middle class in the constitution. If he makes oligarchic laws, he must aim at the middle class; if democratic laws, he must use the laws to bring them in. Where the middle class outnumbers either both extremes together or even just one of them, there can be⁴⁰ a lasting constitution.

There is no fear that^{1297a1} the rich will ever join with the poor against the middle class. Neither side will ever want to be slaves to the other. If they seek a constitution that is more widely shared, they will find none other than this. They would not agree to rule in turn, because of their distrust⁵ of each other. Everywhere, the arbitrator is the person most trusted, and the person in the middle is an arbitrator. The better mixed a constitution is, the longer it lasts. Many who want to make aristocratic constitutions go wrong, not only by giving more to the rich, but also by¹⁰ deceiving the people. In time, real evil must come from false good. The greed of the rich destroys the constitution more than the greed of the people does.

The tricks used in constitutions to give a plausible pretext^{1297a15} are aimed against the people and are five in number. They concern the assembly, offices, law courts, weapons, and physical training. In the case of the assembly, everyone is allowed to attend, but the rich are fined if they do not. Either they alone are fined, or their fine is much larger. In the case of offices,²⁰ those who meet the property qualification are not allowed to swear an oath declining office, but the poor are. In the law courts, the rich are fined if they do not serve as jurors, while the poor are exempt. Or the rich have a large fine and the poor a small one, as in Charondas's laws. In some places, everyone who registers is allowed²⁵ to attend the assembly and serve as a juror. But if they register and then neither attend nor serve, they face large fines. The aim is to make them avoid registering because of the fine, and then, because they are not registered, neither serve as jurors nor attend the assembly. The same approach to owning weapons³⁰ and taking physical training is used in making laws. The poor are allowed not to own weapons, but the rich are fined if they do not. If the poor do not train, there is no fine, but the rich are fined. The aim is that one group participates because of the fine, while the other does not because it has nothing to fear. These,³⁵ then, are oligarchic tricks in lawmaking. Democracies use counter-tricks against them. They provide pay for the poor who attend the assembly and serve as jurors, but impose no fine on the rich. So clearly, anyone who

wants to mix the two fairly must combine their practices,⁴⁰ providing pay for one group and a fine for the other. In this way everyone would share, while otherwise the constitution belongs^{1297b1} to just one of the two groups.

The constitution must include only those who own weapons. We cannot set an absolute figure for the property qualification and say that it must be this much. Instead, we must consider the highest figure that still allows^{1297b5} those who share in the constitution to outnumber those who do not, and set that figure. The poor are willing to stay quiet even without a share in offices, provided no one mistreats them or takes any of their property. But this is not easy. The people who share¹⁰ in the citizen body are not always considerate. Also, in wartime the poor are usually reluctant to fight if they receive no support and have no resources. But if someone supplies support, they are willing to fight.

In some places the constitution includes not only those currently serving as heavy-armed foot soldiers but also those who have served. Among the Malians the constitution^{1297b15} was made up of these, but they chose officeholders from those on active service. The first constitution among the Greeks after the kingships also consisted of those who fought. At first it consisted of cavalry. (For military strength and superiority lay in the cavalry. Without organized formations, nothing useful can be done²⁰ with heavy-armed foot soldiers, and the people of early times had no experience or formations of this kind. So strength lay in the cavalry.) As cities grew and their armed infantry became stronger, more people shared in the constitution. That is why the constitutions we now call polities used to be called²⁵ democracies. The early constitutions were, understandably, oligarchic and kingly. Because the population was small, the middle class was not large. Since they were few in number and poorly organized, they put up with being ruled. Why there are several constitutions, and why³⁰ there are others besides those usually named, have now been explained. (Democracy is not one single type, and the same is true of the others.) We have also explained what their differences are and why these occur. In addition, we have said which constitution is best, generally speaking, and which of the other constitutions suits which people.

^{1297b35} Let us now discuss the next points, both generally and separately for each constitution, taking the appropriate starting point. All constitutions have three parts. A good lawmaker must consider what is advantageous for each constitution in each of these parts. If they are well arranged, the constitution must be well arranged. Constitutions⁴⁰ differ from one another because each of these parts differs. Of these three, one is the body that deliberates^{1298a1} on common affairs,

the second concerns offices: which there must be, what they must control, and how the choice of their holders should take place. The third is the body that judges. The deliberative body is sovereign in matters of war and peace, alliances^{1298a5} and their ending, laws, death, exile, confiscation, and the choice of officeholders and the review of their conduct. Either all these decisions must be assigned to all citizens, or all to some of them—for example, to one office or several, or different decisions to different offices—or some to everyone and some to a limited group.

For^{1298a10} everyone to decide everything is democratic. The people seek this kind of equality. But there are several ways for everyone to participate. One is for them to do so in turns, not all together, as in the constitution of Telecles of Miletus. (In other constitutions too, boards of officeholders meet to deliberate.¹⁵ Everyone holds office in turn, drawn from the tribes and the very smallest divisions. The cycle continues until it has gone through everyone.) They meet together only to make laws, to discuss the constitution, and to hear announcements from the rulers. Another way is for²⁰ everyone to meet together, but only to choose officeholders, make laws, consider war and peace, and review officials' conduct. The other matters are deliberated on by the offices assigned to each, whose holders are chosen from everyone by choice or lot. Another way is for²⁵ the citizens to meet for the choice of officeholders and the review of their conduct, and to deliberate on war and alliances. The offices manage the other matters, with their holders chosen by choice wherever possible. Such offices are those that must be held by people with expert knowledge. A fourth way is for everyone to meet and deliberate on everything,³⁰ while the offices decide nothing but only examine matters beforehand. This is how the

last type of democracy is now managed, the one we say corresponds to oligarchy controlled by a ruling clique and to tyrannical monarchy. All these ways are democratic. For only some people to decide everything is oligarchic.³⁵ This too has several variations. Suppose officeholders are chosen on moderate property qualifications, so that their number is fairly large because the qualification is moderate. They do not change matters where the law forbids it, but follow the law. Anyone who acquires the required property can participate. Such an oligarchy has the character of a polity⁴⁰ because of its moderation. When in deliberation not everyone^{1298b1} shares, but only a selected group,

and they rule according to law as in the previous case, the arrangement is oligarchic. When those who control deliberation also choose themselves, when a son takes his father's place, and when they have authority over the laws, this arrangement must^{1298b5} be oligarchic. When particular people decide particular matters—for example, everyone decides war, peace, and reviews of officials, while rulers decide the rest, and these rulers are chosen by choice, not lot—the constitution is an aristocracy. Some may be chosen by election and others by lot. The lot may be drawn from everyone or from a selected group. Or those chosen by election¹⁰ and those chosen by lot may act together. Some of these arrangements belong to an aristocratic constitution, others to polity itself.

This is how the deliberative body is divided according to the constitutions, and each constitution manages it in line with the division described. For the democracy now regarded as the fullest democracy—I mean^{1298b15} the one in which the people are sovereign even over the laws—it is advantageous, for better deliberation, to do what oligarchies do with law courts. (They impose a fine on those they want to serve as jurors, to make them serve, while democracies pay the poor.) The same should be done with assemblies.²⁰ (Everyone will deliberate better if they deliberate together: the people with the notables, and the notables with the masses.) It is also advantageous for those who deliberate to be chosen by choice or by lot in equal numbers from the different groups. If supporters of democracy greatly outnumber supporters of polity, it is also advantageous either not to²⁵ give pay to everyone, but only to a number proportionate to the notables, or to exclude the excess by lot. In oligarchies it helps

to add some members from the masses. Another option is to establish officials like the preliminary councilors and guardians of the laws found in some constitutions. They should conduct business³⁰ on matters these officials have considered beforehand. (In this way the people will share in deliberation without being able to overturn any part of the constitution.) Further, the people should either vote for the same measures or for nothing contrary to those put forward. Or everyone should have a share in giving advice, while the rulers make the decisions. They should also do the opposite³⁵ of what happens in polities. The masses must have authority when they vote to reject a measure, but not when they vote to approve it. Instead, it must go back to the rulers. A polity reverses this arrangement. Rejection by the few settles the matter, but their approval⁴⁰ doesn't. Instead, the matter goes back to the larger body^{1299a1} every time.

Book IV, 1299a–1301a



Let this, then, be our account of the deliberative body, which is sovereign in the constitution.

The next subject to divide up is offices. This part of the constitution also has many differences: ^{1299a5} how many offices there are, what they control, and how long each lasts. Some make offices last six months, others less, others a year, and others longer. We must also ask whether offices should be permanent or long-lasting, or neither, with the same people holding them repeatedly, or ¹⁰ whether the same person should hold office not twice but only once. Then there is the appointment of officeholders: from whom they should be drawn, by whom, and how. In all these matters, we must be able to distinguish how many arrangements are possible, and then match the suitable ones to the constitutions they benefit. It is not ¹⁵ easy even to define which positions should be called offices. The political community needs many supervisors. So we must not count everyone chosen by choice or lot as a ruler. Take priests first: their role should be counted as something different from political offices. Also, sponsors of choruses, heralds, and ambassadors are chosen by choice. ²⁰ Some supervisory duties are political. They concern either all citizens in some activity, as a general supervises those on military service, or a particular group, as a supervisor of women or children does. Others concern household management: grain measurers, for example, are often chosen by choice. Others are duties of service, for which cities with enough resources appoint slaves. ²⁵ Generally speaking, we

should call offices above all those positions assigned the power to deliberate on certain matters, judge, and issue orders, especially this last. Giving orders is most characteristic of rule. But these distinctions make practically no difference in use. (No legal decision has yet arisen from disputes about³⁰ the name.) They do, however, offer a separate subject for theoretical study.

Which offices, and how many, are necessary for a city to exist? Which are not necessary but are useful for a good constitution? These are questions we might find more difficult, both for every constitution and especially for small cities. In^{1299a35} large cities, one office can and should be assigned to one task. (Many people can enter the offices because the citizens are numerous. So they can hold some offices again after a long interval and others only once. Each task also gets better attention when the person responsible handles one matter^{1299b1} rather than many.)

In small cities, many offices must be combined in the hands of a few people. The small population makes it hard for many people to hold office: who will succeed them in turn? Yet small cities sometimes need^{1299b5} the same offices and laws as large ones. The difference is that large cities need the same services often, while small ones need them only at long intervals. So nothing prevents several duties from being assigned together, since they will not interfere with each other. Because of the small population, the offices must be made like¹⁰ combined spit-and-lamp stands. If, then, we can say how many offices every city must have, and how many are not necessary but should exist, someone who knows this can more easily see which offices it makes sense to combine into one. We should also be clear about which matters need¹⁵ several local offices and which need one office with authority everywhere. For example, should good order be the responsibility of a market supervisor in the marketplace, and of different officials elsewhere, or of the same one everywhere? Should duties be divided by subject or by the people concerned? I mean, for example, should one official supervise good order, or should there be one for children²⁰ and another for women? We must also ask whether the kinds of offices differ in each constitution, or not at all. For example, in democracy, oligarchy, aristocracy, and monarchy, do the same offices have authority, but with their holders drawn not from

equal or similar people, but from different groups in different constitutions? In ²⁵ aristocracies, educated people might hold them. In oligarchies the holders might be rich, and in democracies free. Or are the offices themselves different in some constitutions? The same offices may help some cities, while others need different ones. (In some places an office should have extensive ³⁰ powers; elsewhere those powers should be limited.)

Still, some offices are distinctive, such as that of preliminary councilors. This is not democratic, while a council is democratic. There must be some body responsible for considering matters beforehand for the people, so that the people can attend to their work. But if this body has few members, it is oligarchic. The ^{1299b35} preliminary councilors must be few in number, so this is oligarchic. Where both these offices exist, the preliminary councilors are set over the council members. A council member is democratic, a preliminary councilor oligarchic. The council's power is also abolished in democracies of the kind in ^{1300a1} which the people themselves meet and conduct all business.

This usually happens when there is enough money to pay those who attend the assembly. Because they have leisure, they gather often and decide everything themselves. A supervisor of children and a supervisor of women, ^{1300a5} and any other ruler responsible for supervision of this kind, is aristocratic, not democratic. (How could anyone stop the wives of the poor from going out?) Nor is it oligarchic. (The wives of oligarchic rulers live in luxury.)

Let that be enough on these matters for now. As for the appointment of officeholders, ^{1300a10} we must try to examine it from the beginning. The differences come under three headings. Combining these must give us all the possible arrangements. The first of the three is who appoints the officeholders; the second, from whom; the last, in what way. For each of these three headings, three variations ¹⁵ exist. Either all citizens make the appointments or only some; and the appointees are drawn either from everyone or from a defined group. (For example, the group may be defined by property qualification, family, virtue, or something else of that kind. In Megara it consists of those who returned together from exile and fought together against the people.) Appointments are

made either by choice or by lot. These can also be combined,²⁰ meaning that some appointments are made by a few and others by everyone, some from everyone and others from a few, and some by choice and others by lot.

Each of these distinctions will have four arrangements. Everyone may appoint from everyone by election, or everyone may appoint from everyone by lot. The candidates may come from everyone, or from groups in rotation,^{1300a25} such as tribes, districts, and brotherhoods, until the cycle covers all citizens. Or the candidates may always come from everyone. Or some appointments may follow one method and others the other method. Again, if only some people make the appointments, they appoint either from everyone by choice, from everyone by lot, from a limited group by choice, or from a limited group by lot. Or some appointments are made one way and others another, meaning³⁰ some from everyone by choice and others by lot, and some from a limited group by choice and others by lot. So there are twelve arrangements, apart from the two combined forms. Three of these forms of appointment are democratic: everyone appointing from everyone by choice, by lot, or by both, with some offices filled by lot and others by choice. Not everyone may make appointments at the same time,³⁵ but appointees may come from everyone or from a limited group, by lot, election, or both. Or some may come from everyone and others from a limited group, using both methods. By both I mean some by lot and others by election. This belongs to polity, a mixture of rule by the few and rule by the people. When a limited group appoints from everyone by choice, lot, or both, with some offices filled by lot and others by choice,⁴⁰ it is oligarchic. Drawing from both groups is more oligarchic still. Drawing some from everyone and others from a limited group belongs to polity in an aristocratic form,

^{1300b1} or filling some offices by choice and others by lot. It is oligarchic when a limited group appoints from a limited group by election. The same holds for appointments by lot, though this does not happen, and for appointments using both methods. Some people appointing from everyone, and everyone appointing from a limited group by choice, are⁵ aristocratic. These, then, are the number of arrangements concerning offices, and this is how they are divided among the constitutions. Which arrangements benefit which people, and how

appointments should be made, will become clear along with the powers of offices and what those offices are. By the power of an office I mean, for example, authority¹⁰ over revenue or over defense. A general's power, for example, is a different kind from the power of an official who controls contracts in the marketplace.

Of the three parts, the judicial one remains to be discussed. We must also consider its arrangements on the same basis. The^{1300b15} law courts differ under three headings: who serves in them, what they deal with, and how their members are appointed. By who serves, I mean whether members come from everyone or from a limited group. By what they deal with, I mean how many kinds of law courts there are. By how, I mean whether appointment is by lot or choice. First, then, let us distinguish how many kinds of law courts there are. There are eight. One reviews officials' conduct;²⁰ another deals with anyone who wrongs the community; another with matters affecting the constitution. A fourth deals with disputes about penalties involving both rulers and private people. A fifth deals with substantial private transactions. Besides these there are the homicide court and the court for foreigners. (The kinds of homicide court, whether²⁵ they have the same jurors or different ones, deal with deliberate killings, unintentional killings, and killings that are admitted but whose justice is disputed. A fourth deals with charges brought against people exiled for homicide, concerning their return. One example is the court said to exist at Phreatto in Athens. Such cases occur³⁰ only rarely throughout all time, even in large cities. Of the courts for foreigners, one deals with foreigners against foreigners, the other with foreigners against local citizens.) Besides all these, there is a court for small transactions involving one drachma, five drachmas, or a little more. These too need a decision, but they do not³⁵ fall to a large body of jurors.

Let us leave aside these courts, as well as the homicide courts and the courts for foreigners. Let us discuss the political courts. If these are not well organized, divisions and constitutional upheavals arise. One option is for everyone to judge all the cases we have distinguished, with jurors appointed by elec-

tion^{1300b40} or lot. Another is for everyone to judge all cases, some courts appointed by lot and others by election. Or courts dealing with the same matters may have some jurors appointed by lot and others^{1301a1} by election.

These arrangements number four. There are just as many others drawn from a limited group. Again, jurors judging all matters may come from a limited group by election. Or they may come from a limited group for all matters by lot. Or some courts may be appointed by lot and others by election. Or certain courts^{1301a5} dealing with the same matters may include jurors appointed both by lot and by election. These arrangements, as stated, correspond to those already described. There are also combinations of the same arrangements. I mean, for example, that some courts are drawn from everyone, others from a limited group, and others from both. (For example, some jurors in the same court may be drawn from everyone and others from a limited group.) They may be appointed¹⁰ by lot, choice, or both. We have now said how many arrangements law courts can have. Of these, the first are democratic:¹² those drawn from everyone to judge everything. The second are oligarchic: those drawn from a limited group to judge everything. The third are aristocratic and belong to polity: those in which some courts are drawn from everyone and others¹⁵ from a limited group.

Book V, 1301a–1304b



^{1301a19} As for the other subjects we set out to cover, almost²⁰ all have now been discussed. We must examine the causes of constitutional changes: how many there are and what kinds, what destroys each constitution, and which constitutions most often change into which others. We must also examine what preserves constitutions, both in general and individually, and what means are most likely to preserve each one,²⁵ as the next step after what we have already said.

We must first take as our starting point that many constitutions have developed because everyone agrees about the just and about proportional equality, but gets them wrong, as we said earlier. Democracy arose from the belief that people who are equal in any one respect are equal in every respect^{1301a30} (because everyone is equally free, they think they are equal in every respect). Oligarchy arose from the assumption that people who are unequal in one respect are completely unequal (because they are unequal in wealth, they assume they are unequal in every respect). Then those who consider themselves equal claim an equal share in everything. Those who consider themselves unequal³⁵ try to get a larger share, since a larger share is unequal. So all these constitutions contain something just, but taken as a whole they are mistaken. For this reason, when either group doesn't share in the constitution as its own assumptions lead it to expect, it starts a faction. Some people would have the strongest justification of all for starting a faction,⁴⁰ but they do this least of all: those who stand out in virtue.

^{1301b1} Only they can most reasonably be considered unequal in every respect. Some people who are superior in birth also think this inequality entitles them to more than equal shares. People whose ancestors had virtue and wealth are considered wellborn.

Starting points ^{1301b5} and sources of factions are roughly these. They are the grounds on which people form them. Changes therefore happen in two ways. Sometimes they attack the constitution to replace the existing one with another. For example, they turn democracy into oligarchy or oligarchy into democracy, or turn these into polity, a mixed constitution, or aristocracy,¹⁰ or the latter into the former. Sometimes they don't attack the existing constitution. They choose to keep the same arrangement but want to run it themselves, whether it is an oligarchy or a monarchy. There are also changes of degree. An oligarchy may be made more oligarchic¹⁵ or less so, and a democracy more democratic or less so. The same applies to the other constitutions: they may be tightened or relaxed. People may also try to change some part of a constitution, such as creating or abolishing an office. For example, some say that at Lacedaemon Lysander²⁰ tried to abolish kingship, and King Pausanias tried to abolish the office of the ephors, the Spartan overseers. At Epidamnus, too, the constitution changed in one part. They created a council to replace the tribal chiefs. But the rulers who belong to the citizen body must still go to the popular assembly whenever²⁵ an office is put to a vote; the single ruler was also an oligarchic feature of this constitution. Everywhere inequality causes faction, unless unequal people receive proportionate shares (permanent kingship is unequal if it exists among equals). In general, people start factions because they seek equality. There are two kinds of equality. One is³⁰ numerical, the other is based on worth. By numerical equality I mean sameness and equality in number or size; by equality based on worth I mean equality of proportion. For example, three exceeds two, and two exceeds one, by the same number. But four exceeds two, and two exceeds one, in the same proportion. Two is the same fraction of four as³⁵ one is of two: both are halves. People agree that what is based on worth is just without qualification, but they disagree, as we said earlier. One group thinks that if people are equal in one respect, they are equal in all respects. The

other thinks that if they are unequal in one respect, they deserve unequal shares in everything. This is also why two main forms arise:⁴⁰ the constitutions of democracy and oligarchy. Good birth and virtue^{1302a1} are found in few people,

but these other qualities are found in more. Nowhere are there a hundred people who are wellborn and good, but in many places there are a hundred wealthy people. It is a mistake to organize everything entirely by either kind of equality. The results make this clear: none^{1302a5} of these constitutions lasts. The reason is that a mistake at the very first starting point must lead to some bad result in the end. So numerical equality must be used in some matters, and equality based on worth in others.

Still, democracy is more secure and less open to faction than oligarchy. In^{1302a10} oligarchies two kinds of faction arise: one among the oligarchs themselves, and another against the people. In democracies there is only faction against the oligarchy. No faction worth mentioning arises within the people against themselves. Also, a constitution based on the middle class is closer to democracy than to rule by the few.¹⁵ It is the most secure of constitutions of this kind.

Since we are examining what causes factions and constitutional changes, we must first grasp their starting points and causes in general. There are, roughly speaking, three, and we must distinguish each of them on its own in outline^{1302a20} first. We must identify the state of mind in which people form factions, what they form them for, and, third, what starts political disturbances and factions between people. The main general cause of the state of mind that leads people toward change must be taken to be the one we have already described. Those²⁵ seeking equality form factions when they believe their share is smaller than that of others who are their equals. Others want unequal shares and superiority. They form factions when they believe they are unequal yet receive no larger share, but an equal or smaller one. These aims can be just or unjust. People who have less³⁰ start factions to become equal, and those who are equal do so to become greater. We have now described the state of mind in which people start factions. The things they fight over are gain and honor, and their opposites. People also start factions in cities to avoid dishonor and loss,

either for themselves or for their friends. The causes and starting points³⁵ of these movements, which put people into the state of mind we described and turn them toward these aims, are in one way seven in number, but in another way more. Two are the same as those already mentioned, but work differently. Gain and honor also turn people against one another, not because they want to get them⁴⁰ for themselves, as we said before,

but because other people^{1302b1} are seen getting a larger share of them, some justly, others unjustly. Other causes are abusive behavior, fear, superiority, contempt, and growth out of proportion. There are also causes of another kind: election scheming, carelessness, small changes,⁵ and differences between people. The force of abusive behavior and gain, and how they act as causes, is fairly clear. When people in office behave abusively and take more than their share, people start factions both against one another and against the constitutions that give them this power. They take extra shares sometimes from¹⁰ private property, sometimes from public property.—Honor is also clear, both in its force and in how it causes faction. People start factions because they themselves are dishonored and because they see others honored. This happens unjustly when people are honored or dishonored against their worth, and justly when it matches their worth.¹⁵ —Superiority causes faction when someone, whether one person or several, has more power than suits the city and the power of its citizen body. Such situations usually produce monarchy or the rule of a powerful group. This is why some places practice ostracism, for example Argos and Athens. Yet it is better to make sure from the start that there won't be people²⁰ with such great superiority than to let them arise and find a cure later.—Fear leads both people who have done wrong and people who are about to suffer wrong to start factions. The first fear punishment; the second want to act before they are wronged. For example, the notables at Rhodes banded together against the people because of the lawsuits being brought against them.²⁵ —Contempt also makes people start factions and launch attacks. In oligarchies this happens when those excluded from the constitution are more numerous (they think they are stronger). In democracies the wealthy come to despise the disorder and lack of government. For example, at Thebes, after the battle at

Oenophyta,³⁰ bad government destroyed the democracy. The democracy at Megara was also destroyed when disorder and lack of government led to defeat. The same happened at Syracuse before Gelon's tyranny, and to the people's rule at Rhodes before the uprising.

Constitutions also change because of growth out of proportion. Compare a body:^{1302b35} it consists of parts. They must grow in proportion to keep their proper balance. Otherwise the body is ruined, as when its foot is four cubits long and the rest of its body two spans. Sometimes it might even take the form of another animal. This could happen if, not only in size but also in kind,⁴⁰ it grew out of proportion. In the same way, a city consists^{1303a1} of parts.

One of them often grows unnoticed, such as the number of poor people in democracies and polities. Sometimes this also happens by chance. At Tarentum, for example, many notables were defeated and killed by the^{1303a5} Iapygians shortly after the Persian Wars, and the polity became a democracy. At Argos, after those on the seventh were killed by Cleomenes the Spartan, they were forced to admit some of the surrounding inhabitants. At Athens, military disasters on land reduced the number of notables, because they were on the citizen roll¹⁰ for military service during the Spartan War. This also happens in democracies, but less often. When wealthy people become more numerous or their fortunes grow, democracies change into oligarchies and the rule of powerful groups.—Constitutions also change without faction through election scheming, as¹⁵ at Heraea (they replaced elected offices with offices assigned by lot because people were electing those who schemed for votes). They also change through carelessness, when people allow those unfriendly to the constitution to enter the offices with sovereign power. At Oreus, for example, the oligarchy was overthrown when Heracleodorus became one of the rulers. From an oligarchy he²⁰ created a polity and a democracy.—Another cause is small changes. By this I mean that a great change in the laws often goes unnoticed when people overlook a small one. At Ambracia, for example, the property qualification was small, and in the end people held office with none, on the grounds that a small amount was close to, or no different from,²⁵ nothing.

Differences in origin also cause faction until people come to think alike. A city cannot be formed from just any crowd, nor can it be formed in just any amount of time. This is why most cities that have admitted fellow settlers or later settlers have experienced faction. For example, Achaeans settled Sybaris together with Troezenians. Then the more numerous group,^{1303a30} the Achaeans, expelled the Troezenians. This brought the curse upon the people of Sybaris. At Thurii the Sybarites fought with those who settled with them (they claimed a larger share because the land was theirs, and were expelled). At Byzantium the later settlers were discovered plotting and were driven out after a fight. As for the people of Antissa, those from Chios³⁵ whom they admitted as exiles they then drove out after a fight. The people of Zancle admitted Samians but were themselves driven out. The people of Apollonia on the Black Sea brought in later settlers and experienced faction.

At Syracuse, too, after the tyrannies, the foreigners^{1303b1} and mercenaries were made citizens. This led to factions and fighting. The people of Amphipolis admitted settlers from Chalcis, and most of the original inhabitants were driven out by them. In oligarchies the many form factions because they think they are wronged because⁵ they don't receive equal shares, though they are equal, as we said earlier. In democracies the notables do so because they receive equal shares though they are not equal. Sometimes cities also experience faction because of their geography, when the land isn't naturally suited to being a single city. For example, at Clazomenae the people at Chytrum were opposed to those¹⁰ on the island, and the people of Colophon to those of Notium. At Athens, too, people are not alike: those who live in Piraeus are more democratic than those in the town. In war, crossings over ditches, even very small ones, break up battle formations. In the same way, every difference seems to create division.¹⁵ The greatest division is perhaps between virtue and badness, then between wealth and poverty. After that one difference is greater than another, and the one we mentioned is among them.

Factions arise not over small things but from small things. People fight over great things. Even small differences have the greatest force when among those with sovereign power^{1303b20} they arise, as happened at Syracuse in early times.

The constitution changed because two young men who held office quarreled over a love affair. While one was away, the other won over his boyfriend. In return, the first man was angry. The other's wife²⁵ he persuaded to come to him. They then brought the members of the citizen body onto their sides and split them all into factions. So we must guard against such things when they begin, and settle the factions of leaders and powerful people. The mistake happens at the beginning, and the beginning is said to be half of everything,³⁰ so even a small mistake there corresponds in scale to mistakes in the other parts. In general, factions among the notables draw the whole city into their consequences. This happened at Hestiaea after the Persian Wars, when two brothers disagreed over the division of their father's property. The poorer one,³⁵ claiming that the other hadn't disclosed the property or the treasure their father had found, brought the democrats onto his side. The other, who had a large fortune, brought in the wealthy. At Delphi a dispute arising from a marriage became the starting point for all the factions that came^{1304a1} later.

When the groom came for the bride, he took some incident as a bad omen and went away without her. Her family felt insulted, planted some of the sacred property on him while he was sacrificing, and then killed him as a temple robber. At Mytilene, too, over heiresses^{1304a5} a faction arose and started many troubles, including the war against Athens in which Paches captured their city. Timophanes, a wealthy man, left two daughters. Dexander was rejected and failed to obtain them for his sons. He started the faction and stirred up the Athenians,¹⁰ whose city's representative he was. Among the Phocians, too, a faction over an heiress involving Mnaseas, Mnason's father, and Euthykrates, Onomarchus's father, became the starting point of the Sacred War for the Phocians. At Epidamnus the constitution also changed because of marriage matters. Someone had arranged a betrothal¹⁵ for his daughter. The young man's father became a ruler and fined him. Feeling mistreated, he brought in those outside the constitution.

Constitutions also change into oligarchy, democracy, or polity because some office or part of the city gains a good reputation or grows in power.^{1304a20} For example, the council on the Areopagus gained a good reputation during

the Persian Wars and was thought to have tightened the constitution. On the other hand, the naval masses, who brought about the victory at Salamis and, through it, leadership based on naval power, made the democracy stronger.²⁵ At Argos the notables won a good reputation in the battle against the Lacedaemonians at Mantinea and tried to overthrow the people's rule. At Syracuse the people brought about victory in the war against the Athenians and changed the polity into a democracy. At Chalcis, Phoxus³⁰ the tyrant was killed by the people together with the notables. The people immediately took control of the constitution. At Ambracia, similarly, the people joined those who attacked Periander the tyrant in driving him out, and transferred the constitution to themselves. In general, we mustn't overlook this: those who have helped create power,³⁵ whether private individuals, officials, tribes, or any part or group whatever, stir up faction. Either people who envy the honors they receive start the faction, or they themselves refuse to remain on equal terms because of their superiority. Constitutions also become unstable when the parts of the city thought to be opposed are equal^{1304b1} to each other,

such as the rich and the people, and there is no middle class or only a very small one. If either side is far stronger, the other won't risk a fight with an obviously stronger opponent. This is also why people who stand out in virtue do not start a faction,^{1304b5} so to speak. They are few against many. In general, then, these are the starting points and causes of factions and changes in all constitutions. People change constitutions sometimes by force, sometimes by deception. They use force either right from the start or by imposing it later.¹⁰ Deception is also of two kinds. Sometimes they deceive people at first and change the constitution with their consent, but later hold it by force against their will. Under the Four Hundred, for example, they deceived the people by claiming that the king would provide money for the war against the Lacedaemonians. After this lie,¹⁵ they tried to keep control of the constitution. At other times they persuade people at the start and later persuade them again, and rule over them with their consent. Generally, then, changes in all constitutions arise from the causes we have described.

Book V, 1304b–1308a



Taking each kind of constitution separately and sorting the effects of these causes,^{1304b20} we must examine the results. Democracies mainly change because of the unrestrained behavior of popular leaders, the demagogues. Sometimes they bring false charges against property owners individually and so make them unite (a shared fear brings together even the bitterest enemies). Sometimes they turn the crowd against them as a group. This happens²⁵ in many cases, as we can see. At Cos, for example, the democracy changed when bad demagogues appeared (the notables banded together). The same happened at Rhodes. The demagogues arranged public pay and prevented repayment of the money owed to the commanders who outfitted warships. Because of the impending³⁰ law-suits against them, those commanders were forced to band together and overthrow the people's rule. At Heraclea, too, the people's rule was overthrown soon after the colony was founded because of the demagogues. The notables were wronged by them and driven into exile. Then the exiles gathered, returned, and overthrew the people's rule. Similarly,³⁵ the democracy at Megara was overthrown. The demagogues expelled many of the notables to get money by confiscation, until they had created a large number of exiles. These returned, defeated the people in battle, and established the oligarchy.

The same also happened at^{1305a1} Cyme, under the democracy that Thrasymachus overthrew. If we look at the other cases, too, we can see that changes usually follow this pattern. Sometimes demagogues wrong the notables

to win favor, and so make them unite: either their property⁵ is redistributed or their income is used up through public services. At other times they slander them so that they can confiscate the possessions of the rich.

In early times, when the same person was both a demagogue and a general, democracies changed into tyrannies. Almost all the early tyrants came from the demagogues.^{1305a10} This happened then but not now because the demagogues then came from those who served as generals (people weren't yet skilled at speaking). The art of public speaking has now developed. Capable speakers become demagogues. But they lack military experience, so they don't try to establish tyranny, except for a few minor cases¹⁵ of this kind. Tyrannies also arose more often before than now because some people were entrusted with powerful offices. At Miletus, for example, tyranny arose from the presidency (the president had authority over many important matters). Also, cities were not large then. The countryside was home to the²⁰ people, busy with their work. So when the people's leaders had military abilities, they tried to establish tyranny. They all did this after winning the people's trust. What won that trust was their hostility toward the rich. For example, at Athens Pisistratus formed a faction against the men of the plain. At Megara Theagenes²⁵ slaughtered the livestock of the wealthy when he found them grazing by the river. Dionysius accused Daphnaeus and the rich and was thought fit for tyranny. His hostility won him trust as a supporter of the people. Democracies also change from their traditional form into the newest one. Where appointments are made by election³⁰ to offices without property qualifications and the people make the choice, ambitious office-seekers act as popular leaders. They give the people supreme authority even over the laws. To prevent this, or make it less common, let the tribes choose the rulers instead of the whole people. As for democracies,³⁵ nearly all their changes happen for these reasons.

Oligarchies mainly change in two very clear ways. One is when they wrong the crowd. Anyone can become an effective leader against them, especially when^{1305a40} the leader happens to come from the oligarchy itself, as Lygdamis did at Naxos. He later became tyrant of the^{1305b1} Naxians.

Factions that start with outsiders also take different forms. Sometimes the wealthy themselves, but not those holding office, overthrow the constitution, when very few people hold the positions of honor. This happened at Massalia,^{1305b5} Istrus, Heraclea, and other cities. Those excluded from office stirred up unrest until first the older brothers were admitted, and later the younger ones too. In some places a father and son cannot hold office together; in others one older and one younger¹⁰ brother cannot hold office together. At Massalia the oligarchy became more like a polity, a mixed constitution. At Istrus it ended in democracy. At Heraclea it expanded from a smaller number to six hundred. At Cnidos, too, the oligarchy changed when the notables themselves formed factions against one another. Few could participate, and, as we said, if a father participated,¹⁵ his son couldn't; if there were several brothers, only the oldest could. The people seized the opportunity while they were divided. They took a leader from the notables, attacked, and won, since a divided group is weak. At Erythrae, too, in early times under the oligarchy of the Basilidae, although²⁰ those in the constitution managed affairs well, the people resented being ruled by a few and changed the constitution.

Oligarchies are also disturbed from within when people compete with one another by acting as demagogues. This happens in two ways. One is among the few themselves—a demagogue can arise^{1305b25} even when they are very few. At Athens, for example, among the Thirty, Charicles and his group gained power by acting as demagogues toward the Thirty, and Phrynichus and his group did the same among the Four Hundred. The other is when members of the oligarchy act as demagogues toward the masses. At Larissa, for example, the guardians of the citizens, because they were elected by³⁰ the masses, acted as demagogues toward them. This also happens in oligarchies where the offices aren't filled by the same people from whom the rulers are drawn. Instead, offices go to people with high property qualifications or members of clubs, but the heavily armed soldiers or the people elect them. This happened at Abydos. It also happens where the law courts aren't drawn from the citizen body. By acting as demagogues³⁵ over court decisions, they change the constitution, as happened at Heraclea on the Black Sea. Another case is when some people try

to restrict the oligarchy to fewer people. Those who want equality are forced to bring in the people as allies. Oligarchies also change when their members⁴⁰ spend their own fortunes on unrestrained living. Such people, too, look for a revolution. They either try to establish tyranny themselves or^{1306a1} set someone else up as tyrant

(as Hipparinus did with Dionysius at Syracuse. At Amphipolis a man named Cleotimus brought in settlers from Chalcis, and after they arrived he set them in faction against the wealthy. At Aegina the man who carried out the dealings^{1306a5} with Chares tried to change the constitution for a reason of this kind). Sometimes, then, they try to bring about a change; at other times they steal public funds. This leads to faction against one another, involving either these people or those who fight against their theft, as happened at Apollonia on the Black Sea. But an oligarchy that agrees within itself¹⁰ isn't easily destroyed from within. The constitution at Pharsalus is evidence of this. There a few people rule over many because they treat one another well.

Oligarchies are also overthrown when they create another oligarchy inside the existing one. This happens when the whole citizen body is small,^{1306a15} and not all the few share in the highest offices. It happened once at Elis. The constitution was controlled by a few, but only a very small number became elders. There were ninety, their offices were for life, and their selection favored a powerful group, like the selection of elders at Lacedaemon. Changes²⁰ in oligarchies happen in both war and peace. In war, distrust of the people forces them to use hired soldiers (the man they entrust with command often becomes a tyrant, as Timophanes did at Corinth. If there are several commanders, they secure rule by a powerful group for themselves.²⁵ Sometimes fear of this leads the oligarchs to give the crowd a share in the constitution, because they are forced to use the people). In peace, distrust of one another leads them to entrust their protection to soldiers and a ruler who stands between the two sides. He sometimes becomes sovereign over both. This happened at Larissa³⁰ under the rule of the Aleuadae led by Simus, and at Abydos under the clubs, one of which was Iphiades' club.

Factions also arise when members of the oligarchy push one another aside and form factions over marriages or lawsuits. Examples arising from marriage are the ones mentioned^{1306a35} earlier (Diagoras also overthrew the oligarchy of the cavalry at Eretria after being wronged over a marriage). Factions at Heraclea and Thebes arose from a court decision. The punishment for adultery was just. But it was imposed in a way that caused faction: at Heraclea it was imposed on Eurytion,^{1306b1} and at Thebes on Archias.

(Their enemies insisted that they be fastened in a punishment frame in the marketplace). Many oligarchies have also been overthrown because they behaved too much like masters, and some of those within the constitution became dissatisfied,^{1306b5} as happened to the oligarchies at Cnidos and Chios. Accidents also cause changes in the constitution called polity. They cause changes in oligarchies too, where people need a property qualification to sit on the council, serve on juries, or hold the other offices. Often the property qualification originally set to suit¹⁰ the circumstances was meant to let only a few participate in oligarchy, and the middle class in polity. But peace or some other good fortune brings prosperity. The same property comes to be worth many times the qualification, so that everyone shares in everything. Sometimes by stages¹⁵ the change develops little by little and goes unnoticed, but sometimes it happens more quickly. These, then, are the kinds of causes that lead oligarchies to change and form factions. In general, democracies and oligarchies sometimes change into others of the same kind, not their opposites. For example, they can change²⁰ from democracies and oligarchies governed by law into ones with sovereign power, and from these into the former.

In aristocracies some factions arise because few people share in positions of honor. As we said, this also disturbs oligarchies, since the description of aristocracy too as oligarchy^{1306b25} is true in a way. In both, the rulers are few, though not for the same reason. Indeed, this is why aristocracy is also thought to be oligarchy. This is most bound to happen when there is a group who proudly believe they are equals in virtue. At Lacedaemon, for example, there were the so-called Partheniae³⁰ (they came from the equals). When their plot was discovered, they were sent out to found Tarentum. It also happens when important

people, inferior to no one in virtue, are dishonored by people in higher positions of honor, as Lysander was by the kings. Or a courageous man may have no share in positions of honor, like Cinadon,³⁵ who organized the attack against the Spartans under Agesilaus. Another cause is when some are very poor and others wealthy (this happens especially in wars. It also happened at Lacedaemon during the Messenian War. This is clear from Tyrtaeus's poem called^{1307a1} Good Order:

some people, hard pressed by the war, demanded that the land be redistributed). Another cause is when someone is powerful and able to become still more powerful, and wants to rule alone. This seems to have been the case at Lacedaemon with Pausanias, who commanded during the Persian^{1307a5} War, and at Carthage with Hanno.

Polities and aristocracies are mainly destroyed by a departure from the just within the constitution itself. The starting point is a bad mixture: in a polity, of democracy and oligarchy; in an aristocracy, of these and virtue,^{1307a10} but especially of the two. By the two I mean democracy and oligarchy. Polities and most so-called aristocracies try to mix these. Aristocracies differ from the constitutions called polities in this respect, and this is why some of them are less lasting and others more so.¹⁵ People call those that lean more toward oligarchy aristocracies, and those that lean toward the crowd polities. This is why the latter are more secure than the former. The greater number is stronger, and people are more content when they have equal shares. But the wealthy, if the constitution gives them a superior position,²⁰ try to behave abusively and get more than their share. In general, whichever way the constitution leans, it changes in that direction as each side expands its own power. For example, a polity changes into democracy and an aristocracy into oligarchy. Or they change in the opposite directions. An aristocracy changes into democracy because people feel wronged and pull it toward²⁵ the opposite. These are the poorer people. Polities change into oligarchy. Only equality based on worth, and having what belongs to oneself, are lasting. What we have described happened at Thurii. Since offices required a higher property qualification, it changed to a lower one and to more offices. But all the land³⁰ was acquired by the notables against the law (the con-

stitution leaned more toward oligarchy, so they could take more than their share). The people, trained in the war, became stronger than the garrison troops, until those who held too much land gave it up.

Also, the oligarchic character of all aristocratic constitutions^{1307a35} means that the notables take more than their share. At Lacedaemon, for example, property ends up in the hands of a few. The notables have more freedom to do whatever they want and to form marriage ties with whomever they want. This is why the city of the Locrians was destroyed by the marriage connection with Dionysius. This would not have happened in a democracy, or⁴⁰ in a well-mixed aristocracy.

Especially likely to go unnoticed are^{1307b1} aristocracies as they change. They break down little by little. We said earlier, about all constitutions in general, that small things also cause changes. Once people let something connected with the constitution slip, they then⁵ change another, slightly bigger thing more easily, until they have changed the whole arrangement. This also happened in the constitution of Thurii. A law required five years between terms as general. Some younger men became skilled in war and gained a good reputation with the mass of garrison troops. They despised those in¹⁰ charge and thought they could easily take control. They first tried to abolish this law, so that the same men could serve as generals continuously, seeing that the people would eagerly vote for them. The officials responsible for this, called the councilors, initially set out to oppose it,¹⁵ but were persuaded to agree. They assumed that after changing this law the men would leave the rest of the constitution alone. Later, when other things were changed, they wanted to prevent it, but could no longer do anything. The whole structure of the constitution changed into rule by the powerful men who had attempted the revolution.

All constitutions^{1307b20} are sometimes destroyed from within, sometimes from outside, when an opposite constitution is either nearby or far away but powerful. This happened with the Athenians and Lacedaemonians. The Athenians overthrew oligarchies everywhere, and the Spartans overthrew democracies. As for the sources of changes²⁵ in constitutions and factions, we have now said nearly all we need to.

Next we must discuss how constitutions are preserved, both in general and individually. First, it is clear that if we know what destroys constitutions, we also know what preserves them. Opposite things produce opposite results, and destruction is^{1307b30} the opposite of preservation. In well-mixed constitutions, then, we must make sure above all that people don't break the law, and be especially watchful over small things. Lawbreaking slips in unnoticed, just as small expenses repeated often consume a fortune. The spending goes unnoticed³⁵ because it doesn't happen all at once. The mind is misled by these expenses, as by the deceptive argument that if each thing is small, all of them are small too. This is true in one sense but not in another. The whole, the total, isn't small; it is made up of small things.

This, then, is one precaution that, to begin with,^{1307b40} we must take. Next, we mustn't trust deceptive tricks^{1308a1} devised against the crowd,

because the facts expose them (we explained earlier what we mean by constitutional tricks). We must also notice that some aristocracies and even oligarchies survive not because security^{1308a5} belongs to their constitutions, but because those who hold office treat both those outside the constitution and those in the citizen body well. They don't wrong those excluded. They admit their leading men into the constitution. They don't wrong those who seek honor by dishonoring them, or the many¹⁰ by depriving them of gain. Within their own group, among those who participate, they treat one another democratically. The equality that democrats seek for the crowd is not only just among equals but also an advantage. So if the citizen body is fairly large, many democratic laws are useful,¹⁵ such as six-month terms of office, so that all the equals can share in them. The equals already form something like a people (this is why demagogues often arise among them too, as we said earlier). Also, oligarchies and aristocracies are then less likely to fall under the rule of powerful groups. It isn't as easy to do harm²⁰ when holding office for a short time as for a long one. This is why tyrannies arise in oligarchies and democracies. Either the most powerful men try to establish tyranny: the demagogues in one, the powerful oligarchs in the other. Or those holding the highest offices try to do so when their terms are long.

Book V, 1308a–1311b



Constitutions survive^{1308a25} not only because the things that destroy them are far away, but sometimes because they're close. Fear makes people keep a firmer grip on their constitution. So those who care for the constitution should create fears. This will make people guard it and not abandon, as they would a night watch,³⁰ their watch over the constitution. They must also make distant dangers seem close. They must also try to use the laws to keep the rivalries and factions of the notables in check. They must protect those outside the rivalry before they're drawn into it too. Recognizing an evil as it begins isn't the work of just anyone, but requires political³⁵ judgment. There is also the change from oligarchy and polity, a mixed constitution, caused by property qualifications. This happens when the qualifications stay the same but money becomes more plentiful. To deal with it, it helps to compare the total assessed value of wealth with its earlier amount. In some⁴⁰ cities assessments are made every year. The comparison should be done each year;

^{1308b1} in larger cities, every three or five years. If the total is a multiple or a fraction of what it was when the constitution's assessments were set, a law should require the property qualifications to be raised or lowered. If the total has grown, the qualifications should rise⁵ in the same proportion. If it has fallen, they should be lowered and the assessment made smaller. If this isn't done

in oligarchies and polities, one kind of shift produces an oligarchy in some cases and a ruling clique in others. The opposite shift turns a polity into a democracy, and an oligarchy into¹⁰ a polity or popular government.

One rule applies to popular government, oligarchy, monarchy, and every constitution: don't increase anyone's power too far beyond its proper proportion. Instead, try to give small honors over a long period rather than great ones quickly. (People become corrupted, and not everyone can bear^{1308b15} good fortune.) Failing that, at least don't take away all at once honors that were given all at once. Take them away gradually. Above all, try to regulate things through the laws so that no one becomes far more powerful than others through friends or money. Failing that, arrange for these people to spend their time abroad.²⁰ People's private lives also lead them to seek revolution. So there should be an office to watch ways of life that don't fit the constitution. In a democracy, watch those who don't fit democracy; in an oligarchy, those who don't fit oligarchy. The same applies in each other constitution. Prosperity within the city²⁵ should be watched in any particular section for the same reasons. The remedy is always to give public business and offices to opposing sections. (By opposing sections I mean the decent people and the multitude, and the poor and the wealthy.) Try either to mix the poor with those who are³⁰ wealthy, or to enlarge the middle class. (This ends factions caused by inequality.) The most important thing in every constitution is to arrange the laws and the rest of the administration so that offices can't be used for profit.

This needs special attention in oligarchic constitutions. The many aren't so angry at being kept out^{1308b35} of office. In fact, they're happy if they're allowed time for their own affairs. But if they think the rulers are stealing public funds, then both things upset them: having no share in the honors and having no share in the profits. There is just one way for democracy and aristocracy to exist together:⁴⁰ by setting things up like this.

For then both the^{1309a1} notables and the multitude could have what they want. Allowing everyone to hold office is democratic. Having the notables in office is aristocratic. This will happen when offices offer no profit. The poor⁵ won't want office if they make nothing from it. They'll prefer to attend to their

own affairs. The wealthy will be able to hold office because they don't need anything from public funds. So the poor will become wealthy by spending their time at work, while the notables won't be ruled by just anyone.¹⁰ To keep public funds from being stolen, the money should be handed over with all the citizens present. Copies of the accounts should be deposited with the brotherhoods, companies, and tribes. To encourage service without profit, honors should be set by law for those who earn a good name. In democracies, the¹⁵ wealthy should be spared. Not only should their property not be redistributed, but neither should its produce. In some constitutions this happens without people noticing. It's also better to stop them, even when they want to, from performing costly but useless public services, such as funding choruses, torch races, and other things of that kind.²⁰ In an oligarchy, take great care of the poor. Give them the offices that provide income. If a wealthy person treats them abusively, the penalties should be greater than if he did the same to someone of his own class. Inheritances should pass by family connection, not by gift, and no more than one inheritance²⁵ should pass to the same person. This would make properties more equal and bring more of the poor into wealth. In both democracy and oligarchy, it also helps to give those with less of a share in the constitution equality or precedence in other matters: the wealthy in popular government and, in oligarchy,³⁰ the poor. The exception is offices that control the constitution. These should be entrusted only, or mainly, to members of the governing body.

Those who are going to hold the sovereign offices need three things. First, they must be loyal to what is established:^{1309a35} the constitution. Next, they must have the greatest possible ability to do the office's work. Third, they need the virtue and justice that fit the constitution in each case. (If the just isn't the same under all constitutions, there must also be differences in justice.) But there's a difficulty when these qualities aren't⁴⁰ all found in the same person: how should the choice be made?

^{1309b1} Suppose one person is skilled as a general but bad and not loyal to the constitution, while another is just and loyal. How should we make the choice? It seems we must look at two things: which quality people generally have more

of, and which they have less of. So in choosing a general,⁵ look more to experience than to virtue. (People have less of a general's skill and more decency.) In choosing a guardian or treasurer, do the opposite. (These posts need more virtue than most people have, while the knowledge is common to everyone.)

Someone might ask: if a person has ability and loyalty to the constitution,^{1309b10} why is virtue needed? The other two will bring about what is to our advantage. Isn't it because people with those two qualities can lack self-control? They can fail to act in their own interests, even though they know and love themselves. So nothing prevents some from behaving the same way toward the public. In short, all the things we describe in the laws as being to the advantage¹⁵ of constitutions preserve them. And the greatest element is the one often mentioned: take care that the body of people who want the constitution is stronger than the body who don't. Besides all this, we mustn't overlook something that deviant constitutions now overlook: the middle course.²⁰ Many apparently democratic measures destroy democracies, and many apparently oligarchic ones destroy oligarchies. People who think this is the only virtue pull things to an extreme. They don't realize that a nose can depart from the most beautiful straight shape toward a hooked or snub shape and²⁵ still be beautiful and pleasant to look at. But if someone pushes it still further to an extreme, it will first lose the proper proportion of that part. In the end, excess and deficiency in these opposite features will make it no longer even look like a nose. The same holds for³⁰ the other parts of the body. This also happens with the other constitutions. An oligarchy or a democracy can work well enough even though it has departed from the best arrangement. But if someone pushes either further, he will first make the constitution worse and finally leave no constitution at all.³⁵ So the lawgiver and the statesman must know which democratic measures preserve democracy and which destroy it, and likewise which oligarchic measures preserve or destroy oligarchy. Neither can exist or last without both the wealthy and the multitude. But when⁴⁰ property becomes equal, this must be a different constitution.

^{1310a1} So when they destroy these groups through extreme laws, they destroy their constitutions.

Mistakes are made both in democracies and in oligarchies. In democracies, the popular leaders make them where the multitude is sovereign over the laws. Two opposing sides^{1310a5} they constantly create within the city by fighting the wealthy. Instead, they should always appear to speak for the wealthy. In oligarchies, the oligarchs should speak for the people. And oligarchs should swear the opposite oaths to those they swear now. In some places they now swear: "I will be hostile to the people and plan¹⁰ whatever harm I can." They should think and publicly profess the opposite, declaring in their oaths: "I won't wrong the people."

Of all the things mentioned, the most important for keeping constitutions in place is education suited to the constitution. Everyone neglects it now. There is no benefit in^{1310a15} even the most helpful laws, approved by all who take part in public life, if people aren't trained and educated in the constitution: democratically if the laws are democratic, oligarchically if they're oligarchic. For if an individual can lack self-control, a city can too. Education²⁰ suited to the constitution doesn't mean doing what pleases the oligarchs or those who want democracy. It means doing what will let the former govern as oligarchs and the latter live under democratic government. As things stand in oligarchies, the rulers' sons live in luxury, while the sons of the poor are trained and used to hard work,²⁵ so they have both more desire and more ability to make revolutionary changes. In the democracies thought to be most democratic, the arrangement is the opposite of what is to their advantage. This is because they define freedom badly. Two things are thought to define democracy: the majority being sovereign and³⁰ freedom. The just is thought to mean equality, and equality means that whatever the multitude decides is sovereign. Freedom and equality mean doing whatever you want. So in democracies of this kind everyone lives as he wants, "for whatever he longs for," as Euripides says. This is bad. We shouldn't³⁵ think of living in line with the constitution as slavery, but as safety. These, then, are broadly the causes through which constitutions change and are destroyed, and the means through which they're preserved and endure.

It remains to discuss monarchy too: what causes^{1310a40} its destruction and what naturally preserves it.

Almost the same^{1310b1} as what we described for constitutions is what happens to kingships and tyrannies. Kingship follows the pattern of aristocracy. Tyranny combines the most extreme oligarchy with democracy.⁵ This is why it is also the most harmful to the ruled. It combines two bad forms and has the deviations and faults of both constitutions. From the very beginning, the two kinds of monarchy arise from opposite sources. Help against the people¹⁰ came through kingship to the decent people. A king is appointed from among the decent people for outstanding virtue, deeds arising from virtue, or outstanding family background of that kind. A tyrant comes from the people and the multitude to oppose the notables, so that the people aren't wronged by them. Events make this clear. Nearly¹⁵ all tyrants, we might say, have come from popular leaders who won trust by attacking the notables. Some tyrannies were set up in this way after the cities had already grown. Earlier ones arose from kings who departed from ancestral customs. Rule more like that of a master²⁰ was what they wanted. Others arose from men elected to the sovereign offices. (In early times, the people appointed civic officials and sacred envoys for long terms.) Others arose from oligarchies that chose one person to control the greatest offices. In all these ways it was easy to achieve tyranny,²⁵ if they only wanted to, because they already had power: some from royal rule, others from the honor of office. For example, Pheidon at Argos and others became tyrants from existing kingships. Those in Ionia and Phalaris did so from offices. Panaetius at Leontini, Cypselus at Corinth,³⁰ Pisistratus at Athens, Dionysius at Syracuse, and others likewise did so from popular leadership. As we said, kingship follows the pattern of aristocracy. It rests on merit: personal virtue, family background, services rendered, or these together with power. All³⁵ who had benefited cities or peoples, or had the ability to do so, received this honor. Some kept them from being enslaved in war, like Codrus. Others freed them, like Cyrus. Others founded a settlement or acquired territory, like the kings of Lacedaemon, Macedonia, and⁴⁰ the Molossians. The king wants to be a guardian,

so that^{1311a1} property owners suffer no injustice and the people suffer no abuse. Tyranny, as we've said many times, has no concern for anything public except for the sake of its own benefit. The tyrant's aim is pleasure,⁵ the king's is

the noble. So among the advantages they seek, money is more characteristic of tyranny, and honor of kingship. A king's guard consists of citizens; a tyrant's, of foreigners.

It's clear that tyranny has the evils of both democracy and oligarchy. From oligarchy it takes ^{1311a10} wealth as its goal. (This is the only way its guard and its luxury can be maintained.) It also takes complete distrust of the multitude. (That's why tyrants take away their weapons.) Mistreating the masses, driving them out of the urban center, and scattering them into separate settlements are common to both ¹⁵ oligarchy and tyranny. From democracy it takes hostility to the notables: secretly or openly destroying them and sending them into exile as rivals and obstacles to rule. Plots arise from these people, since some want to rule themselves and others don't want ²⁰ to be slaves. This explains Periander's advice to Thrasybulus: cutting off the ears of grain that stood above the rest, meaning that the outstanding citizens should always be killed. So, as we have more or less said, we must take the starting points of changes in constitutions and monarchies to be the same. ²⁵ Many of the ruled attack monarchies because of injustice, fear, or contempt. Among forms of injustice, abusive treatment is the main cause, though sometimes it is the loss of their own property.

The aims are also the same in tyrannies and kingships as in the other constitutions. ^{1311a30} Monarchs possess great wealth and honor, which everyone desires. Some attacks target the rulers' persons, others their rule. Those caused by abusive treatment target the person. Abuse has many forms, and each causes anger. Among those who are angry, ³⁵ most attack for revenge, not for a position of superiority. For example, the attack on the sons of Pisistratus came from the public insult to Harmodius's sister and the affront to Harmodius. (Harmodius acted because of his sister, and Aristogeiton because of Harmodius.) There was also a plot against Periander, ⁴⁰ the tyrant at Ambracia, because, while drinking with ^{1311b1} his young lover, he asked him whether he was pregnant by him yet.

Pausanias's attack on Philip came because Philip allowed Attalus and his associates to abuse him. Derdas's attack on Amyntas the Small came because Amyntas boasted about his youthful favors. There was also the ^{1311b5} eunuch's

attack on Evagoras of Cyprus. He killed Evagoras because Evagoras's son had taken his wife from him. He considered this an outrage. Many attacks have also happened because some monarchs sexually disgraced people. Crataeus's attack on Archelaus was one. He always resented their sexual relationship, so enough¹⁰ would have been even a smaller pretext—or because Archelaus gave him neither daughter, though he had promised one to him. Instead, when pressed by war with Sirrhas and Arrhabaeus, he gave the older daughter to the king of Elimeia, and the younger to his son Amyntas. He thought this would make Amyntas least likely to quarrel¹⁵ with his son by Cleopatra. But the starting point of Crataeus's alienation was his resentment at providing sexual favors. Hellanocrates of Larissa joined in the attack for the same reason. Archelaus enjoyed his youthful favors but didn't restore him to his home as promised. An intent to humiliate, not sexual desire,²⁰ was, he thought, the reason for their relationship. Python and Heraclides of Aenus killed Cotys to avenge their father. Adamas rebelled against Cotys because Cotys had castrated him as a boy, which he considered an outrage.

Book V, 1311b–1315a



Many people have also been angered by the physical abuse of being beaten. Some have killed,^{1311b25} and others have attempted to kill, even officeholders and members of royal ruling families, because they felt outraged. At Mytilene, for example, the Penthilids went around beating people with clubs. Megacles attacked them with his friends and killed them. Later, Smerdis, after being beaten,³⁰ was dragged away from his wife and killed Penthilus. Decamnichus also became the leader of the attack on Archelaus. He was the first to stir up the attackers. The cause of his anger was that Archelaus handed him over to the poet Euripides to be whipped. Euripides was angry because Decamnichus had said something about his bad breath. Many others too³⁵ have been killed or plotted against for reasons like these. Fear likewise causes attacks. This was one of the causes in constitutions, and it is also one in monarchies. For example, Artapanes attacked Xerxes because he feared being accused over Darius. He had hanged Darius without Xerxes's orders, but thought⁴⁰ Xerxes would forgive him, being forgetful because he was dining. Other attacks come from^{1312a1} contempt,

as when someone saw Sardanapalus carding wool with the women. (If the storytellers tell the truth about this; and if it wasn't true of him, it could still be true of someone else.) Dion also attacked the younger Dionysius because he^{1312a5} despised him. He saw that the citizens felt the same way and that Dionysius was always drunk. Some friends also attack out of contempt. Being

trusted makes them think they can escape notice. Those who think they can seize power also attack, in a sense, out of contempt.¹⁰ Because they believe they are capable and their power makes them dismiss the danger, they readily attempt it. This happens with generals serving monarchs. For example, Cyrus attacked Astyages, despising both his way of life and his power, because his forces had become inactive and he himself lived in luxury. Seuthes the Thracian likewise attacked Amadocus while serving as his general.¹⁵ Some attack for more than one of these reasons: from both contempt and a desire for gain, for example, as Mithridates attacked Ariobarzanes. Those most likely to attempt it for this reason are bold by nature and hold military rank under monarchs. Courage backed by power is boldness. Because of²⁰ both, they make their attacks expecting to win easily.

For those who attack from ambition, the cause is of a different kind from those mentioned before. Some attack tyrants because they see the great profits and honors available to them. But this isn't how each person who attacks from ambition^{1312a25} chooses to run the risk. The first group acts for the reason just mentioned. The second attacks monarchs as they would undertake any extraordinary action that would make them famous and known to others. They don't want to acquire³⁰ monarchy, but a reputation. However, very few are moved by this cause. They must be prepared to care nothing for survival if they can't bring their undertaking to completion. They must follow Dion's thinking, but few can easily develop it.³⁵ He marched against Dionysius with a few men, saying that his attitude was this: however far he could advance, taking that much part in the undertaking would be enough for him. For example, if he happened to die as soon as he had set foot even a little way into the country, that death would satisfy him.

A tyranny is destroyed, in one case,^{1312a40} in this way: like each other constitution, from outside,

^{1312b1}if an opposing constitution is stronger. (It will clearly want to destroy it because their aims are opposed. And everyone does what they want when they can.) These are the opposing constitutions: popular government is opposed to tyranny in Hesiod's sense,⁵ "as potter to potter." (For the most

extreme democracy is also a tyranny.) Kingship and aristocracy are opposed because their constitutions are opposite to tyranny. (That's why the Lacedaemonians destroyed the most tyrannies, and the Syracusans did so during the period when their public life was well ordered.) Another way is from within, when those who share¹⁰ in it form factions. This happened with the tyranny of Gelon and his associates, and now with that of Dionysius and his associates. In Gelon's case, Thrasybulus, Hieron's brother, played the popular leader with Gelon's son and urged him toward pleasures so that he himself could rule. The family united to stop the overthrow of the whole tyranny and get rid of Thrasybulus instead. But those¹⁵ who joined them, seeing their opportunity, drove all of them out. In Dionysius's case, Dion, his relative by marriage, marched against him and won the people to his side. He drove Dionysius out but was himself killed. Hatred and contempt are the two main causes of attacks on tyrannies. One of these is always present²⁰ for tyrants: hatred. But contempt causes many of their overthrows. Here is evidence: most who acquired power also kept it, while almost all who inherited it lose it at once, so to speak. Living for enjoyment makes them easy to despise, and²⁵ gives attackers many opportunities. Anger should also be treated as a part of hatred. In a sense it causes the same actions. It is often even more effective than hatred. People attack with greater force because the emotion doesn't use reasoning. (People are especially likely³⁰ to follow their anger after abusive treatment. This was the cause of the overthrow of the tyranny of Pisistratus's sons and many others.) But hatred is more effective overall. Anger comes with pain, so reasoning isn't easy, while hostility is free from pain.

To state the main points, all the causes we have mentioned^{1312b35} for the unmixed and most extreme oligarchy and the most extreme democracy must also be taken as causes for tyranny. For these too are tyrannies divided among several people. Kingship is least likely to be destroyed from outside, and so it lasts a long time. Most of its destruction from within⁴⁰ comes about. Two causes destroy it:

the first is ^{1313a1} faction among those who hold royal power. The second is an attempt to rule more like tyrants. Kings claim authority over more things, even against the law. Kingships no longer arise today. Any monarchies that do arise are tyrannies⁵ rather than kingships, because kingship is rule over willing subjects but has authority over greater matters. There are many people who are alike, and no one stands out enough to match the scale and dignity of the office. For this reason people don't willingly submit. If someone rules through deception or force,¹⁰ this is considered tyranny from the start. In hereditary kingships, besides the causes already mentioned, we must include the fact that many kings become easy to despise. Another cause is that they behave abusively despite possessing not a tyrant's power but a king's honor. Overthrow then becomes easy. If the people no longer want him,¹⁵ he will cease to be king at once, whereas a tyrant remains even if they don't want him. Monarchies, then, are destroyed for these and other similar reasons.

Clearly, in general terms, they are preserved by the opposite causes. To be specific, kingships are preserved by making them ^{1313a20} more moderate. The fewer things kings have authority over, the longer the whole rule must last. They become less like masters and more like equals in their character, and the ruled resent them less. This is why kingship among the Molossians lasted a long time.²⁵ Kingship among the Lacedaemonians lasted because the rule was divided in two from the start. Theopompus also moderated it in other ways and established the office of the ephors alongside it. By taking away some of its power, he lengthened the kingship's duration. So in a sense he made it not smaller but³⁰ greater. They say this was also his reply to his wife. She asked whether he wasn't ashamed to hand down a smaller kingship to his sons than he had received from his father. He said, "Certainly not. I'm handing down one that will last longer."

Tyrannies are preserved in two completely opposite ways. ^{1313a35} One is the traditional way, by which most tyrants manage their rule. They say Periander of Corinth established most of these practices. Many similar ones can also be drawn from Persian rule. They include the measures discussed long ago for pre-

serving, as far as possible,⁴⁰ a tyranny: cut down those who stand out and kill those with proud spirits. Allow no shared meals, clubs, education, or anything else of that kind.

Instead, everything^{1313b1} that usually produces two things, self-confidence and trust, must be guarded against. Allow no places for leisure or other gatherings for spending leisure together. Do everything possible to make⁵ everyone strangers to one another. (Getting to know one another creates more mutual trust.) Residents must always be visible and spend their time at the palace gates. (Then what they're doing is least likely to escape notice, and their constant slavery will train them to think little of themselves.) There are also all the other practices of Persian origin¹⁰ and the foreign practices of this tyrannical kind. (They all have the same effect.) The tyrant must try to keep anything any of the ruled says or does from escaping notice. There should be spies, like the women called "informers" at Syracuse, and the "listeners" Hieron sent out wherever there was a meeting or gathering.¹⁵ (People speak less freely because they fear such people, and if they do speak freely, they're less likely to escape notice.) People should be slandered to one another and set against one another: friends against friends, the people against the notables, and the rich against one another. Making the ruled poor is also a tyrannical practice. Then no guard²⁰ can be maintained, and people are busy earning their daily living and have no time to plot. Examples are the pyramids in Egypt, the offerings of the Cypselids, the construction of the temple of Olympian Zeus by the sons of Pisistratus, and the works of Polycrates on Samos. (All these²⁵ have the same effect: keeping the ruled busy and poor.) There is also the imposition of taxes, as at Syracuse. (Under Dionysius, people ended up paying in their whole property over five years.) A tyrant also makes war, to keep people busy and make them constantly need a leader. And³⁰ while kingship is preserved through friends, it is characteristic of tyranny to distrust friends most of all. Everyone wants to attack, but friends are especially able to do so.

Everything that happens in the most extreme democracy is also characteristic of tyranny: women's power in the homes, so that they can report on^{1313b35} their husbands, and freedom from restraint for slaves, for the same reason.

Neither slaves nor women plot against tyrants. When they prosper, they must be well disposed toward both tyrannies and democracies. For the people too want to be a monarch. That's also why flatterers are honored by both. Among⁴⁰ the people, it's the popular leader. (The popular leader is the people's flatterer.) Among tyrants, it's those who deal with them submissively,^{1314a1} which is the work of flattery.

For this reason too, tyranny likes bad people. Tyrants enjoy being flattered, and no one with a free spirit would do that. Decent people offer affection or at least don't flatter. Bad people are also useful for bad tasks:^{1314a5} "one nail drives out another," as the proverb says. It's also characteristic of tyranny to dislike anyone dignified or free. (The tyrant claims that he alone should be like that. Anyone who shows dignity in return and behaves freely takes away the superiority and mastery of tyranny. So tyrants hate them as people who would overthrow their¹⁰ rule.) It's also characteristic of tyranny to prefer foreigners to citizens as companions at meals and during the day. Citizens are seen as enemies, while foreigners make no claim on power—these and similar practices are tyrannical and preserve the rule, but they lack nothing in wickedness. All these things can, broadly speaking, be grouped under¹⁵ three headings. Tyranny aims at three things. First, it makes the ruled think little of themselves. (Someone who thinks little of himself wouldn't plot against anyone.) Second, it makes them distrust one another. (A tyranny isn't overthrown until some people trust one another. That's why tyrants fight decent people as harmful²⁰ to their rule. Decent people don't think they should be ruled like slaves. They are also trustworthy to one another and to others. They don't inform against one another or others.) Third, it makes them unable to act. (No one attempts the impossible, so no one attempts to overthrow a tyranny without²⁵ the power to do so.) These, then, are the three goals to which tyrants' plans lead. All tyrannical measures can be traced back to these principles: some prevent people from trusting one another, others keep them powerless, and others make them think little of themselves.

This^{1314a30} then, is one way tyrannies are preserved. The other approach is almost the opposite of what we have described. We can learn it from the way kingships are destroyed. One way to destroy kingship is to make its rule more tyrannical. For tyranny, the way³⁵ to preserve it is to make it more like kingship. Only one thing must be kept: the power to rule not only over willing subjects but over unwilling ones too. Giving this up means giving up being a tyrant. This must remain as the basic condition. For the rest, the tyrant should do some things and appear to do others,⁴⁰ playing the king's part well. First, he should appear to^{1314b1} care for public affairs,

not spending on gifts that anger the multitude. They get angry when tyrants take money from people who work and struggle to scrape by, then give lavishly to courtesans, foreigners, and performers. As for an account,^{1314b5} he should also give one of what he receives and spends, as some tyrants have already done. (By managing things in this way, he would seem to be a household manager rather than a tyrant. He needn't fear that he will ever run short of money, since he controls the city. In fact, for tyrants who travel away from their own country,¹⁰ this is more to their advantage than leaving behind a pile of money. The guards would be less likely to attack the government. For tyrants abroad, the guards are more dangerous than the citizens. The guards go abroad with them, while the citizens stay behind.) Next, the levies and public services¹⁵ should appear to be collected for the sake of administration and to meet needs that may arise in times of war. In general, he should act as guardian and treasurer of public funds, not of his own. He should appear dignified rather than harsh, and be the sort of person whose visitors feel no fear²⁰ but respect instead. But this isn't easy to achieve if he's easy to despise. So even if he doesn't attend to the other virtues, he must attend to military virtue and create that reputation for himself. Moreover, not only must he appear to abuse none of the ruled, neither young men nor²⁵ young women, but neither must anyone around him. The women of his household must likewise treat other women this way. Many tyrannies have been lost through women's abusive behavior too. As for bodily pleasures, he should do the opposite of what some tyrants now do. (They don't just indulge from³⁰ early morning and continuously for many

days. They also want others to see them doing it, so people will admire them as happy and blessed.) Ideally, he should be moderate in such things. Failing that, he should at least avoid being seen by others. (The one easy to attack or despise³⁵ is not the sober man but the drunk; not the wakeful man but the sleeping one.) He should do the opposite of almost everything mentioned earlier. (He should equip and beautify the city as its steward, not as its tyrant.) He should also always appear especially serious about his duties to the gods. (People are less⁴⁰ afraid of being treated unlawfully by such rulers

^{1315a1} if they think the ruler is religious and cares about the gods. They also plot less against him, thinking he has the gods as allies.) But he should show this without foolishness. He should honor people who are good at something in such a way⁵ that they don't think they could ever be honored more by citizens governing themselves. He should award these honors himself, but impose punishments through other rulers and law courts. A safeguard common to every monarchy is not to make any one person great, but, if necessary, several. (They will watch one another.)¹⁰ If it is necessary to make someone great, at least don't choose someone bold in character. (That sort of character is most ready to attack in every undertaking.) If he decides to reduce someone's power, he should do this gradually, not take away all his authority at once. He should also keep away from every kind of abuse,¹⁵ and especially two: bodily punishment and sexual abuse of the young. He must be particularly careful of this with those who love honor. Those who love money resent disrespect for their money. Those who love honor resent dishonor, as do decent²⁰ people. So he should either not do such things, or make punishments appear fatherly and not contemptuous, and sexual relationships with the young appear based on desire, not on power. In general, he should make up for apparent dishonors with greater honors. Among those who attempt²⁵ to kill him, the most dangerous and those who need the most guarding against are those who don't choose to preserve their own lives after the killing. So he must be especially wary of people who think they themselves or those they care about have been abused. People who attack out of anger have no concern for themselves,³⁰ as Heraclitus also said: "It's hard to fight anger, because it buys at the price of life."

Book V, 1315a–1316b



Since cities are made up of two groups, poor people and wealthy people, the main thing is to make both believe that his rule keeps them safe, and that neither group is^{1315a35} wronged by the other. Whichever group is stronger, he should make it especially loyal to his rule. If he achieves this, the tyrant won't need to free slaves or take away weapons. Adding either group to his own forces is enough to make him stronger than⁴⁰ those who attack him. There is no need to discuss each of these measures separately. The aim is clear:

he must seem to the ruled not like a tyrant,^{1315b1} but like a household manager and a king; not someone who takes what belongs to others, but someone who looks after it. He must aim for moderation in his way of life, not excess. He must also be friendly with the notables and win over the people. As a result,⁵ these measures must make his rule nobler and more desirable. He rules better people, not people who have been humiliated. He does not remain hated and feared. His rule must also last longer. Besides, his own character will either be well disposed toward virtue or at least halfway good,¹⁰ and not bad, but only halfway bad.

Yet oligarchy and tyranny are the shortest-lived of all constitutions. The longest-lasting tyranny was the one at Sicyon, that of Orthagoras and his descendants. It lasted a hundred years. The reason was^{1315b15} that they treated the ruled with moderation and obeyed the laws in many matters. Cleisthenes was also a capable soldier, so he was not easily despised. For the most part, they

won over the people by looking after them. Cleisthenes, for instance, is said to have crowned the judge who denied him victory. Some say that²⁰ the seated statue in the marketplace is a likeness of the man who made this judgment. They also say that Pisistratus once submitted to trial when summoned before the Areopagus. Second came the tyranny of the Cypselids at Corinth. This lasted seventy-three years and six months. Cypselus was tyrant for²⁵ thirty years, Periander for forty-four, and Psammetichus, the son of Gordius, for three. The reasons for its survival were the same. Cypselus won over the people and went without a bodyguard throughout his rule. Periander was tyrannical, but a capable soldier. Third came³⁰ the tyranny of the Pisistratids at Athens. It was not continuous, since Pisistratus went into exile twice during his tyranny. So out of thirty-three years he was tyrant for seventeen. His sons ruled for eighteen, making thirty-five years in all. Among the remaining tyrannies was that of Hieron and Gelon at³⁵ Syracuse. This too lasted only a few years: eighteen in all. Gelon was tyrant for seven years and died in the eighth. Hieron ruled for ten, and Thrasybulus was driven out in the eleventh month. All of the many other tyrannies have been very short-lived.

^{1315b40} As for constitutions and monarchies, and what destroys them or preserves them, almost^{1316a1} everything has now been discussed.

In the Republic, Socrates discusses changes of constitution, but his account is not good. He does not explain the particular change that affects the best and first constitution. He says the cause is that^{1316a5} nothing stays as it is, but changes within a certain cycle. These changes begin when the base ratio of four to three, joined with five, produces two harmonies. He means when the number of this geometrical figure becomes a cube, on the supposition that nature sometimes produces inferior people who are beyond the reach of education. On this point¹⁰ he may not be wrong. There may be some people who cannot be educated and become good men. But why would this change be peculiar to what he calls the best constitution, rather than to all the others and everything that comes into being? And through the action of time, which he says¹⁵ changes everything, do things that did not begin together also change together? For example, if something came into being the day before the turning point,

does it change at the same time? Besides, why does this constitution change into the Spartan one? All constitutions change into their opposites more often than into²⁰ a closely related form. The same objection applies to the other changes. He says the Spartan constitution changes into oligarchy, oligarchy into democracy, and democracy into tyranny. Yet they also change in the reverse direction: for example, from democracy into oligarchy, and more often than into monarchy.

^{1316a25} Besides, he does not say whether tyranny will change or not, or, if it does, why and into what constitution. The reason is that he could not easily say. It is undetermined, though on his account it ought to change into the first and best constitution. That would make the sequence continuous and circular. But tyranny also changes³⁰ into tyranny, as at Sicyon, from Myron's tyranny into that of Cleisthenes. It also changes into oligarchy, as Antileon's did at Chalcis; into democracy, as that of Gelon's family did at Syracuse; and into aristocracy, as Charilaus's did at Lacedaemon, and as happened at Carthage. A change into tyranny³⁵ also takes place from oligarchy. This happened to almost all the old oligarchies in Sicily. At Leontini the change was into the tyranny of Panaetius. At Gela it was into that of Cleander, and at Rhegium into that of Anaxilaus. The same happened in many other cities. It is also strange to think that a change into oligarchy is due to⁴⁰ the love of money and money-making among those^{1316b1} in office.

Instead, people with much greater wealth think it unjust for those who own nothing to have an equal share in the city with property owners. In many oligarchies, money-making is not allowed. There are laws^{1316b5} against it. But in democratic Carthage they make money and have not yet changed their constitution.

It is also strange to say that an oligarchic city is two cities, one of the rich and one of the poor. Why is this more true of it than of Sparta or any other city? In those cities too, not everyone owns the same amount or is equally^{1316b10} good. Even without anyone becoming poorer than before, an oligarchy still changes into democracy if the poor become more numerous. A democracy changes into oligarchy if the wealthy group is stronger than the masses, and the

latter are careless while the former pay attention. There are many causes¹⁵ of changes, but he names only one: people become poor by wasting their money and being ruined by interest payments. This assumes that all or most of them were rich to begin with. That is false. When some of the leaders lose their wealth, they bring about change. When others do, nothing serious²⁰ happens. Even then, they are no more likely to change into democracy than into another constitution. Besides, if they are denied honors, wronged, or insulted, they form factions and change constitutions, even if they have not used up their wealth, because they are allowed to do whatever they want. Excessive freedom²⁵ is the cause of this, he says. There are several forms of oligarchy and democracy, but Socrates discusses their changes as though there were only one of each.

Book VI, 1316b–1320b



^{1316b31} Deliberative bodies with supreme authority within a constitution, offices, and law courts: their kinds and number, their fit with each constitution; also, constitutional destruction and preservation,³⁵ how they happen and why—all this was discussed before. Since there are several kinds of democracy, and likewise of the other constitutions, we should also examine anything left to discuss about them. We should set out the appropriate and advantageous way of organizing each. We should also⁴⁰ examine combinations of all the previously mentioned^{1317a1} arrangements;

combining these makes constitutions overlap, so that some aristocracies are oligarchic and some polities, constitutions combining democracy and oligarchy, more democratic. I mean combinations that need examining but have not yet been examined. For example,^{1317a5} the deliberative body and the choice of officeholders might be organized on oligarchic lines, but the law courts on aristocratic lines. Or the courts and the deliberative body might be oligarchic, but the choice of officeholders aristocratic. Or in some other way not all the parts of the constitution might be put together¹⁰ in a way appropriate to it.

We have already said which democracy suits which city, which oligarchy suits which population, and which of the other constitutions is advantageous for which people. Still, we need to make clear not only which of these constitutions is best for cities, but also^{1317a15} how to set up these and the others. Let's go through this briefly. First let's discuss democracy. This will also make clear

the opposite constitution, which some call oligarchy. For this inquiry we must take all the democratic features and all the features thought²⁰ to go with democracies. The kinds of democracy result from combinations of these. That is why there is more than one democracy, and why they differ. There are two reasons why democracies take several forms. The first, mentioned earlier, is that the people differ. Some populations are²⁵ farmers, others craftspeople and hired workers. When the first group is added to the second, and the third in turn to both, the difference is not just that democracy becomes better or worse. It is also no longer the same democracy. The second reason is the one we are now discussing. The features that³⁰ go with democracies and are thought appropriate to this constitution produce different democracies when combined. One will have fewer of these features, another more, and another all of them. Knowing each feature is useful both for setting up whichever democracy someone happens to want³⁵ and for correcting it. People who establish constitutions try to gather all the features appropriate to their basic principle. But they make a mistake by doing this, as we said earlier in discussing the destruction and preservation of constitutions. Now let's discuss their principles, their habits, and their aims.

^{1317a40} The basic principle of a democratic constitution is freedom. This is what people usually say, claiming that only in this constitution^{1317b1} do people have a share in freedom;

they say that every democracy aims at this. One part of freedom is to be ruled and to rule in turn. For democratic justice means equality based on number, not on worth. If this^{1317b5} is the just, the masses must be sovereign. Whatever the majority decides must be final and must be the just. They say that each citizen should have an equal share. As a result, in democracies the poor have more authority than the wealthy. There are more of them, and what¹⁰ the majority decides is authoritative. This is one sign of freedom, which all supporters of democracy set up as a defining feature of the constitution. Another is to live as one wants. They say this is the effect of freedom, since the slave's con-

dition is to live not as he wants. This is democracy's second defining feature. From it comes¹⁵ the desire not to be ruled, preferably by anyone, or, failing that, only in turn. In this way it contributes to freedom based on equality.

With these assumptions and this basic principle, the following arrangements are democratic. Everyone chooses officeholders from everyone. Everyone rules^{1317b20} each person, and each person in turn rules everyone. Offices are filled by lot, either all of them or those that do not need experience and skill. Offices require no property qualification, or the smallest possible one. No one holds the same office twice, or only rarely, or in only a few offices apart from military ones. Terms are short for²⁵ all offices, or as many as possible. Everyone serves as a juror, drawn from everyone, and judges all matters, or most of them and the greatest and most important ones. These include reviews of officeholders' conduct, constitutional matters, and private dealings. The assembly is sovereign in everything or in the most important matters. No office³⁰ is sovereign in anything, or only in as few matters as possible; or the council is sovereign in the most important matters. Of the offices, the council is the most democratic where there is not enough money to pay everyone. Where there is, they take away the power of this office too. When the people have enough pay, they bring all decisions before themselves, as was said earlier in the inquiry preceding³⁵ this one. Next, preferably everyone should be paid: the assembly, the law courts, and the officeholders. If that is not possible, the officeholders, the law courts, the council, and the sovereign meetings of the assembly should be paid, or those officeholders who must eat together. Also, since oligarchy is defined by birth, wealth, and education,⁴⁰ their opposites are thought democratic: low birth, poverty, and manual work. Another feature is that no office is held for life.

^{1318a1} If an office of this kind survives from an earlier change, at least its power should be taken away, and its holders should be selected by lot instead of by choice. These, then, are the features common to democracies. From what people agree is democratic justice⁵ (everyone having an equal share based on number) comes the form thought most fully democratic: rule by the people. Equality means that the poor should have no more rule than the wealthy, and

should not be the only sovereign group. Everyone should have an equal share based on number. In this way, people would think that the constitution had both equality¹⁰ and freedom.

The next question is how they will have an equal share. Should the property qualifications of the five hundred be divided among a thousand, so that the thousand have the same power as the five hundred? Or should equality in this respect be arranged differently: divide them^{1318a15} in this way, then take equal numbers from the five hundred and the thousand and make these people sovereign over the choice of officeholders and the law courts? Is this constitution the most just by democratic standards of justice, or is the one based on numbers more just? Supporters of democracy say that whatever the majority decides is just.²⁰ Supporters of oligarchy say the same about the decision of the greater wealth, since they say that the amount of wealth should decide. Both involve inequality and injustice. If what the few decide is authoritative, that is tyranny. For if one person has more than the other wealthy people, oligarchic justice makes it just for him alone to rule. If,²⁵ on the other hand, the numerical majority decides, they will act unjustly by confiscating the property of the rich, who are fewer, as we said earlier.

So we must examine what equality both groups will accept, starting from the definitions of the just that both use. They say that whatever the majority of citizens decides must be authoritative.^{1318a30} Let this stand, but not without qualification. Since the city consists of two groups, the rich and the poor, let whatever both groups, or their majorities, decide be authoritative. If they make opposite decisions, let the decision follow the majority whose total property qualification is greater. For example, suppose one group has ten members and the other twenty. Suppose one decision is favored, among the rich, by³⁵ six people, while the opposite is favored by fifteen of the poorer people. Four of the rich have joined the poor, and five of the poor have joined the rich. Whichever side has the greater total property qualification, counting both groups on each side together, should be authoritative. If they turn out equal, this is a problem shared by all constitutions, just as⁴⁰ now when the assembly or law court is evenly divided.

Either^{1318b1} we must decide by lot or do something else of that kind. But however hard it may be to discover the truth about equality and the just, it is still easier to find it than to persuade people who can take more than their share. Equality and⁵ what is just are always sought by the weaker. Those who have the upper hand do not care at all.

There are four democracies, and the first in order is the best, as we said in the earlier discussions. It is also the oldest of them all. I call it the first according to the way we might divide the people into groups. The farming people^{1318b10} are the best. So it is possible to make a democracy where the masses live by farming or raising livestock. Because they have little property, they have no leisure and cannot often attend the assembly. Since they have the necessities of life, they spend their time at work and do not want what belongs to others. They find it more pleasant¹⁵ to work than to take part in public life and hold office, where offices do not offer large profits. Most people want profit more than honor. There is evidence for this: they put up with the old tyrannies and still put up with oligarchies, provided no one stops them from working or²⁰ takes anything from them. Some of them soon get rich, and the others are not in need. Besides, being sovereign over the choice of officeholders and the review of their conduct makes up for what they lack, if they have any desire for honor. In some democracies, even if the people have no part in the choice of officeholders, but certain people chosen from everyone take turns doing this,²⁵ as at Mantinea, the masses are satisfied if they are sovereign over deliberation. We should regard this too as a form of democracy, like the one that once existed at Mantinea. So in the democracy described earlier, it is useful and usual for everyone to choose officeholders, review their conduct, and³⁰ serve as jurors. The greatest offices are held by people chosen on the basis of property qualifications. Greater offices require greater qualifications. Alternatively, no office need have a property qualification, but capable people should hold office. People who take part in public life in this way must do so well. The offices will always be in the hands of the best people, with the people's consent and without their resenting³⁵ the decent people. This arrangement must also satisfy the decent people and the notables. They will not be ruled by others who are worse than

themselves, and they will rule justly because others are sovereign over the review of their conduct. It is advantageous to have a check hanging over them, and not to be free to do anything they decide. Freedom⁴⁰ to do whatever one wants cannot keep in check the bad that is in^{1319a1} every human being.

So the result must be what is most beneficial in constitutions: decent people rule without making mistakes, while the masses lose nothing.

It is clear, then, that this is the best democracy,^{1319a5} and why: because the people are of a certain kind. To make the people farmers, some laws established long ago in many places are certainly useful. One forbids anyone to own more land than a certain amount, either anywhere or within a certain distance of the town¹⁰ and city. In many cities there was an old law that even forbade selling the original allotments. The law said to be that of Oxylyus has a similar effect: it forbids lending against a certain part of each person's land. Today we should also make corrections by using the law of the people of Aphytis,¹⁵ since it is useful for what we are discussing. Although there are many of them and they own little land, they all farm. They do not assess whole properties, but divide them into portions small enough that even the poor can exceed the required property qualifications.

After the farming population,^{1319a20} the best people are those who herd animals and live from livestock. This has many similarities to farming. These people are especially well trained in the habits needed for military action. Their bodies are fit for it, and they can live outdoors. Almost all the other populations²⁵ that make up the remaining democracies are much worse than these. Their way of life is bad. None of the work done by the population of craftspeople, marketplace workers, and hired laborers involves virtue. Besides, since practically all people of this kind spend their time around the marketplace and the town,³⁰ they can easily attend the assembly. Farmers, on the other hand, are scattered across the countryside. They neither come together nor feel the same need for this gathering. Where the territory is laid out so that the countryside is far from the city, it is also easy to make a good democracy³⁵ and constitution. The masses have to settle in the fields. So even if there are masses of marketplace workers, democracies should not hold assemblies without the country popula-

tion. We have now said how to set up the best and first democracy. It is also clear⁴⁰ how to set up the others. We must depart from this in successive steps,^{1319b1} singling out a worse population at each step.

The last form, because everyone shares in it, is not one that every city can bear. Nor can it easily last unless its laws and habits are well organized. As for nearly all the things that destroy this^{1319b5} and the other constitutions, we have already discussed them. To establish this democracy and make the people strong, its leaders usually bring in as many people as possible. They make citizens not only of legitimate children, but also of illegitimate children and of anyone with either¹⁰ parent a citizen, whether the father or the mother. All this is more suited to a people of this kind. This is how popular leaders usually set it up. But they should add people only until the masses outnumber the notables and the middle class, and go no further. If they go too far,¹⁵ they make the constitution more disorderly and provoke the notables to find democracy still harder to put up with. This was the cause of faction at Cyrene. People overlook a little evil, but when it grows large, it is more noticeable. Also,²⁰ measures like those Cleisthenes used at Athens when he wanted to expand democracy, and those used by the founders of democracy at Cyrene, are useful for this kind of democracy. They should create more tribes and kinship groups, different from the old ones. They should combine the rites of private shrines into a few²⁵ common ones. They should devise every means of mixing everyone together as much as possible and breaking up their old associations. All the measures used by tyrants also seem democratic. I mean, for example, the lack of control over slaves, which can be advantageous up to a point, and over women and³⁰ children, and overlooking people's living however they want. There will be much support for a constitution of this kind. Most people find it more pleasant to live without discipline than with self-control.

The greatest task of the lawgiver and those who want to organize a constitution of this kind is not to establish it,^{1319b35} nor is that their only task. Rather, they must ensure that it survives. It is not hard for people to live under any sort of constitution for one, two, or three days. So they should use our earlier exami-

nation of what preserves and destroys constitutions to try to secure it. They should guard against what destroys it⁴⁰ and establish laws, both unwritten and written,

^{1320a1}that include as fully as possible what preserves constitutions. They should not think democratic or oligarchic measures are those that make the city as democratic or oligarchic as possible. They are the ones that make it remain so for the longest time. Today's popular leaders,⁵ to please the people, confiscate a great deal of property through the law courts. So those who care about the constitution should oppose this. They should make a law that none of the property taken by court judgment becomes public property or goes into the public treasury, but that it belongs to the gods. Wrongdoers will be just as careful,¹⁰ since they will face the same penalties. But the masses will be less likely to convict defendants when they stand to gain nothing. Also, public prosecutions should always be kept as few as possible. Heavy penalties should deter people from bringing charges without grounds. They usually prosecute the notables, not supporters of democracy. Yet¹⁵ in this constitution too, all citizens should preferably be well disposed toward it. If not, at least they should not regard those who are sovereign as enemies.

The most extreme democracies have large populations, and it is hard to get people to attend the assembly without pay. Where there is no revenue, this is hostile to the notables,^{1320a20} since the pay must come from a special tax, confiscation, and corrupt law courts. These things have already overthrown many democracies. So where there is no revenue, there should be few meetings of the assembly. Law courts should have many jurors but sit on few days. This helps keep²⁵ the rich from fearing the expense, even if the wealthy receive no juror's pay and the poor do. It also makes trials much better. The wealthy are unwilling to be away from their own affairs for many days, but they are willing for a short time. Where there is revenue, they should not do what³⁰ the popular leaders do now. They distribute the surplus, but as soon as people receive it, they need the same help again. Helping the poor this way is like a jar with holes in it. Someone who truly supports democracy must see to it that the masses are not too poor. This is what makes democracy bad.³⁵ So they must find a way to

make prosperity last. Since this is also advantageous for the wealthy, they should collect the income from public revenues and distribute it to the poor in lump sums. Ideally, if possible, they should collect enough for each to buy a small plot of land. Otherwise, it should be enough to provide starting funds for trade and ^{1320b1} farming,

Book VI, 1320b–1323a



and if this can't be done for everyone, distribute it to the tribes or some other group in turn. Meanwhile, the rich should pay for attendance at the necessary meetings, and be excused from useless public services. In something like this way, the Carthaginians^{1320b5} conduct their public life and have won the people's friendship. They are always sending some of the people out to the neighboring communities and making them well-off. Decent and sensible notables should also divide the poor among themselves, give them resources, and turn them toward work. It is also good to copy the practices of the Tarentines.¹⁰ They make their property available for the poor to use, and so win the goodwill of the population. They have also divided all their offices into two kinds, some filled by choice and others by lot. Those filled by lot let the people have a share in them. Those filled by choice make public life better. This can also be done by¹⁵ dividing the same office, so that some holders are appointed by lot and others by choice. We have now explained how democracies should be set up.

From this it is also fairly clear how oligarchies should be set up. Each oligarchy must be put together from the opposite elements,^{1320b20} matching it to the opposite democracy. Start with the best-balanced and first kind of oligarchy. This is the one close to what is called polity, a constitution combining democracy and oligarchy. In it the property qualifications must be divided, with some lower and some higher. The lower ones should give access to the necessary offices,²⁵ and the higher ones to the more authoritative offices. Anyone who

acquires the required property should be allowed a share in the constitution. The property qualification should admit enough of the people to make those who take part stronger than those who don't. New members must always be drawn from the better part of the people. In the same way, the next³⁰ kind of oligarchy should be set up by tightening these requirements a little. But the oligarchy opposite the last kind of democracy, the one most dominated by powerful families and most like a tyranny, needs more protection the worse it is. Healthy bodies and ships that are in good sailing condition³⁵ can stand more mistakes by their sailors without being destroyed by them. But sick bodies, and ships that are coming apart and have poor sailors, can't stand even small mistakes. In the same way, the worst constitutions need the most^{1321a1} protection.

In general, democracies are kept safe by their large population, since this counterbalances justice based on merit. Clearly, an oligarchy must get its safety from the opposite source, good order.

^{1321a5} There are four main parts of the population: farmers, craftsmen, traders, and laborers. There are also four kinds of forces useful in war: cavalry, or mounted soldiers; heavy infantry, or heavily armed foot soldiers; light infantry, or lightly armed foot soldiers; and the navy. Where the land is suitable for horses, conditions naturally favor setting up a strong oligarchy.¹⁰ The inhabitants' safety depends on this force, and keeping horses is something people with large fortunes can do. Where the land suits heavy infantry, conditions favor the next kind of oligarchy, since heavy infantry belongs more to the well-off than to the poor. Light infantry and naval forces, however, are entirely democratic. As things are now,¹⁵ where there are large numbers of these people, the oligarchs often fight at a disadvantage when the two sides split. The remedy must be taken from generals experienced in war. They combine cavalry and heavy infantry with a suitable force of light infantry. This is how, in civil conflicts, the people defeat²⁰ the well-off. As light infantry, they can easily fight cavalry and heavy infantry.

To build up this force from the common people, then, is to build it up against themselves. Instead, the age groups should be divided into older and younger men. While their own sons are still young, they must have them taught-

τ^{1321a25} light and unarmored military exercises. Once they have passed beyond childhood, they should be trained competitors in these activities. The population should enter the citizen body as we said before, by acquiring the required property. Or they should enter as at Thebes, after keeping away from manual trades for a certain time. Another way is the one used³⁰ at Massalia: judging who deserves membership, both among those in the citizen body and those outside it. Also, the most authoritative offices, which those who share in the constitution must hold, should carry costly public duties. Then the people will willingly stay out of them and accept the rulers, seeing that they pay a high price for³⁵ office. On taking office, they should make splendid sacrifices and build some public work. The people will share in the feasts and see the city decorated with offerings and buildings. This will make them glad to see the constitution stay in place. The notables, too, will have⁴⁰ memorials of their spending. But those who run oligarchies now don't do this. They do the opposite. They look for profits no less than honor. So it is fair to say^{1321b1} that these are small democracies.

Let this, then, settle how democracies and oligarchies should be established.

The next step after what we have said is to make clear distinctions^{1321b5} about offices: how many there should be, what they should be, and what they should deal with, as we said earlier too. Without the necessary offices a city can't exist. Without the offices that provide good order and proper arrangements, it can't be run well. Also, smaller cities must have fewer offices, and larger ones¹⁰ more, as we said before. We must therefore understand which offices it makes sense to combine and which to keep separate. The first necessary responsibility is the marketplace. There must be an office to supervise its contracts and good order. It is virtually necessary¹⁵ for every city to buy some things and sell others to meet one another's necessary needs. This is the most direct way to achieve self-sufficiency, for which people seem to have joined together under one constitution. The next responsibility, closely connected with this one, concerns public and private property in the town. Its job is to ensure²⁰ good order, preserve and repair buildings that are falling down and roads, keep boundaries between properties free of disputes, and handle other

similar matters. Most people call this office town supervision. It has several branches, and²⁵ in more populated cities different people are appointed to different tasks, such as building walls, looking after fountains, and guarding harbors. Another necessary office is similar to this. It deals with the same things, but in the countryside and the districts outside the town. Its rulers are called³⁰ rural supervisors by some, and forest wardens by others. These, then, are three responsibilities for these matters. Another office receives the public revenues, keeps them safe, and allocates them to each department. These officials are called receivers and treasurers. Another office must keep a record of private contracts³⁵ and judgments from the law courts. The same officials must also receive written claims and bring cases before the courts. In some places this office too is divided among several officials. Elsewhere one office is responsible for all these things. They are called sacred recorders, supervisors, recorders, and other⁴⁰ similar names.

Next comes an office that is about the most necessary and difficult of all. It deals with enforcing penalties against those convicted, collecting the sums posted^{1322a1} in the public records, and keeping prisoners in custody.

It is difficult because it causes so much hostility. Where there is no large profit to be made, people won't accept the office, or, if they do, won't carry out their duties according to the laws.^{1322a5} But it is necessary. There is no use in having trials about what is just if the judgments aren't carried out. If people can't live together without judgments, neither can they live together without enforcing them. So it is better not to have a single office for this, but different officials for different law courts. As for posted debts¹⁰ in public records, their collection should likewise be divided if possible. Also, other offices should enforce some penalties. Newly appointed officials should enforce those imposed by the officials of the previous year. For current officials, one office should impose the penalty and another enforce it. For example, town supervisors should enforce penalties imposed by market supervisors, and others those imposed by town supervisors.¹⁵ The less hostility there is toward those enforcing penalties, the more likely enforcement is to succeed. When the same people both impose and enforce penalties, they face double the hostility. If the same

people handle everything, they become everyone's enemies. In many places the office that keeps prisoners is separate from the one that²⁰ enforces penalties, as with the officials called the Eleven at Athens. So it is better to separate this office too, and to look for a clever arrangement for it as well. It is no less necessary than the office we mentioned. But decent people especially avoid it, and it isn't safe to put bad people in charge. They themselves²⁵ need guarding more than they can guard others. So there shouldn't be one office assigned to the prisoners, or the same office doing the job continuously. Instead, where young men are organized into cadet groups or guards, these and the offices should take turns, with different people providing supervision.

These^{1322a30} offices, then, should be put first as the most necessary. Next come those that are no less necessary but have higher standing, since they need great experience and trustworthiness. These include the offices concerned with protecting the city and those assigned to military needs. There must be,³⁵ in peace and war alike, people responsible for guarding the gates and walls and for inspecting and organizing the citizens. Some places have several offices for all these tasks, and others fewer. In small cities, for example, one office handles them all. They use the titles general and war commander for^{1322b1} these officials.

Also, if there are cavalry, light infantry, archers, or a navy, an office is sometimes set up for each of these. These are called naval commands, cavalry commands, and infantry commands. Under them are more specialized commands of warships with three banks of oars, companies,^{1322b5} and tribal units, and whatever subdivisions these have. All of this is one kind of responsibility: military affairs.

This is how matters stand with that office. Since some offices, if not all, handle large amounts of public money, there must be another office to take and audit their accounts,^{1322b10} without handling anything else itself. Some call these officials examiners of accounts, others accountants, others inspectors, and others public advocates. Besides all these offices there is the one with the greatest authority over everything. It often has both the final decision and the introduction of proposals, or presides over the population where power lies with

the¹⁵ people. The office that brings together the sovereign body must have authority over the constitution. In some places its members are called preliminary councilors, because they deliberate in advance. Where there is a large population, it is more often called a council. These are roughly the political offices. Another kind of responsibility concerns the gods. Priests and those who look after²⁰ the temples have this responsibility. They preserve existing buildings, restore those that are falling down, and care for the other things set apart for the gods. In some places, such as small cities, this is a single responsibility. Elsewhere it is divided among many offices separate from the priesthood, such as officials who conduct sacrifices,²⁵ temple wardens, and treasurers of sacred funds. Next to this is the office assigned to all the common sacrifices that the law doesn't give to the priests. These officials have their honor from the common hearth. Some call them rulers, others kings, and others presidents.

The^{1322b30} necessary responsibilities, then, to put them briefly together, concern religion, military affairs, revenues and spending, the marketplace, the town, harbors, and the countryside. They also concern the law courts, records of transactions,³⁵ enforcing penalties, custody, taking accounts, inspecting and auditing rulers, and finally deliberating about public affairs. Cities with more leisure and greater prosperity that also care about good order have special offices for supervising women, guarding the laws, supervising children,^{1323a1} and managing gymnasiums.

Besides these, they have offices for overseeing athletic contests, contests in honor of Dionysus, and any other public spectacles of this sort that take place. Some of these offices are clearly not democratic, such as those that supervise women and children.^{1323a5} The poor have to use their wives and children like attendants because they have no slaves. There are three offices by means of which some people select the authoritative offices: guardians of the laws, preliminary councilors, and a council. Guardians of the laws are aristocratic, preliminary councilors oligarchic, and a council democratic. As for the¹⁰ offices, this is a rough account of pretty much all of them.

Book VII, 1323a–1326a



^{1323a14} Anyone planning a study of the best constitution in the ¹⁵ proper way must first settle which life is most worth choosing. If this is unclear, the best constitution must also be unclear. Those who take part in public life in the best way their circumstances allow should do best, unless something unexpected happens. So we must first ²⁰ agree on which life is most worth choosing for practically everyone. After that, we must ask whether it is the same life for a community and for an individual, or a different one. Much has been said about the best life in our discussions for a general audience, and we can treat that as sufficient and use it here too. In fact, no one would dispute one division: ²⁵ there are three kinds of goods, those outside us, those of the body, and those of the soul, and people who are blessed must have all of these. No one would call someone blessed who had no trace of courage, self-control, justice, or practical wisdom. Nor would anyone call him blessed if he feared passing ³⁰ flies. Nor would he count as blessed if he held back from none of the worst excesses when he wanted to eat or drink, or ruined his dearest friends for a quarter of an obol, a small coin. Nor would anyone call him blessed if his thinking was as foolish and mistaken as a child's or a madman's. Almost everyone would agree with these statements. ³⁵ But they disagree about how much of each good is needed and which should count for more. They think any amount of virtue, however small, is enough. But they seek unlimited amounts of wealth, money, power,

reputation, and all such things. We will tell them that it is easy to find proof of this in ⁴⁰ facts. We can see that people don't acquire and preserve the virtues through external goods, but external goods through the virtues.

^{1323b1} Human happiness may consist in enjoyment, virtue, or both. We can also see who is happier: people whose character and thinking are highly developed but who have a moderate amount of external goods, rather than people ⁵ with more external goods than they can use but poor character and thinking. The same point is also easy to see by reasoning. External goods have a limit, like a tool, since everything useful is useful for something. Too much of them must either cause harm or do no good to ¹⁰ their owners. But the more someone has of each good of the soul, the more useful it must be—if we should call these goods useful as well as noble. In general, we will clearly say that the best conditions of different things have relative importance ¹⁵ matching that of the things whose conditions they are. So if the soul is more valuable than property and the body, both in itself and for us, the best condition of each must stand in the same proportion. Also, property and the body are naturally worth choosing for the soul's sake. Everyone must ²⁰ choose them for that reason if they think sensibly, not choose the soul for their sake.

Let us agree, then, that each person's share of happiness is as great as his share of virtue and practical wisdom and of action guided by them. We can use the god as a witness. He is happy and blessed, not because of any ^{1323b25} external goods, but because of himself and the nature he has. For the same reasons, good fortune must be different from happiness. Chance and fortune cause the goods outside the soul, but no one is just or self-controlled by chance or because of chance. The next ³⁰ point follows from this and needs the same arguments: the best city is also happy and does well. People who don't do noble things can't do well. No noble deed, whether by a person or a city, is possible without virtue and practical wisdom. A city's courage, justice, and practical wisdom ³⁵ have the same force and form as the qualities that make each person who shares in them just, wise in practice, and self-controlled. Let this be enough of an introduction to our discussion. We can't avoid touching on these subjects, but we

can't go through every relevant argument either. Another course of study deals with⁴⁰ these matters. For now, let us assume this much: the best life, both for each individual and for cities as communities,

is a life of virtue with enough resources^{1324a1} to take part in virtuous actions. If anyone disputes this and isn't persuaded by what we have said, we must examine those objections later and leave them aside in our present inquiry.

^{1324a5}It remains to say whether happiness is the same for each individual person and for a city, or not the same. This too is clear. Everyone would agree that it is the same. Those who think an individual's good life consists in wealth also consider the whole city, if it is rich,¹⁰ blessed. Those who value the life of a tyrant most would also call the city that rules the most people the happiest. And anyone who approves of an individual because of virtue will say that the better city is happier. But there are now two questions that need examining. One is which is more worth choosing:¹⁵ a life of taking part in public life and sharing in a city, or a life apart from it, free of the political community. The other is which constitution and arrangement of a city we should call best, whether sharing in a city is worth choosing for everyone or for most people but not for some. Since political²⁰ thought and study deal with this second question, not with what each individual should choose, and since this is the inquiry we have now chosen, the first question is a side issue. The second is the task of this inquiry. The best constitution must be the arrangement under which anyone could do best and live²⁵ a blessed life: this is clear. But even those who agree that a life of virtue is most worth choosing disagree. Should we choose political activity, or rather a life free of all outside involvement? The latter is a life of reflective thinking, which some say is the only philosophical life. These are roughly the³⁰ two lives that people most ambitious for virtue seem to choose, both in earlier times and now. I mean the political life and the philosophical life. It matters a great deal which view is true. Anyone who thinks sensibly must arrange his life around the better goal, and this holds for³⁵ each individual and for the constitution as a whole. Some think that ruling others as a master involves one of the greatest kinds of injustice. Ruling them politically,

they think, isn't unjust, but hinders one's own well-being. Others hold the opposite view. They think only⁴⁰ an active, political life is fit for a man. For each virtue, private individuals have no more scope for action^{1324b1} than those who handle public affairs and take part in public life.

That is what some people think. Others say that only a constitution based on mastery and tyranny is happy. For some peoples, the goal of both the constitution and the laws is to exercise mastery^{1324b5} over their neighbors. So although most legal arrangements among most peoples are, broadly speaking, put together at random, wherever the laws look toward one goal, they all aim at domination. At Lacedaemon and Crete, for example, both education and most of the laws are directed toward war. Also, among¹⁰ all peoples able to get the upper hand, this kind of power is honored—for example, among the Scythians, Persians, Thracians, and Celts. Some even have laws that encourage this virtue. At Carthage, for example, they say a man gets a decoration of rings corresponding to the number of¹⁵ campaigns he has served in. Macedonia once required a man to wear a horse's halter around his waist if he had never killed an enemy. A Scythian who had never killed an enemy could not drink from the cup passed around at a certain festival. Among the Iberians, a warlike people, the number of stakes²⁰ planted around a man's grave matches the number of enemies he has killed. Many other peoples have other customs like these, some laid down in laws and others in established practice.

Still, anyone willing to examine the matter might find it very strange if a statesman's job is to work out how to rule^{1324b25} and exercise mastery over his neighbors, whether they want it or not. How could something that isn't even lawful belong to statesmanship or lawmaking? Ruling not only justly but also unjustly isn't lawful, and it is possible to dominate others unjustly. We don't see this in the other fields of knowledge either. It isn't³⁰ a doctor's job to persuade or force his patients, or a ship captain's to persuade or force his sailors. But most people seem to think mastery is statesmanship. They aren't ashamed to do to others what they each say is neither just nor to their own advantage.³⁵ For themselves, among their own people, they seek just rule. But where others are concerned, they don't care about justice. Yet it would be strange if some

were not by nature fit for mastery and others not fit for it. So if this is how things stand, we shouldn't try to exercise mastery over everyone, but only over those fit for it. Likewise, we shouldn't hunt for a feast or sacrifice⁴⁰ human beings, but animals fit to be hunted for this purpose. What is fit to be hunted is a wild animal that can be eaten. Moreover, there could also be^{1325a1} a happy city on its own,

provided, of course, that it takes part in public life well. A city could exist somewhere on its own and use good laws. Its constitution wouldn't be organized for war or for defeating enemies.^{1325a5} Let us suppose it has none of these things. Clearly, then, we should regard all preparations for war as noble, but not as the highest goal of all. Instead, they serve that goal. A good lawmaker must consider a city, a race of human beings, and every other community. How can a good life¹⁰ and the happiness possible for them be enjoyed? Some of the laws laid down will, however, differ. If there are neighbors, it is also the lawmaker's job to see which practices to use toward which neighbors, or how to adopt the measures appropriate to each. But later we can give proper¹⁵ consideration to the question of the goal toward which the best constitution should aim.

We must now answer both groups who agree that the life of virtue is most worth choosing but disagree about how to live it. Some reject political offices, thinking that a free person's^{1325a20} life is different from a political life and is the most worth choosing of all. Others think the political life is best. A person who does nothing, they say, can't do well, and doing well and happiness are the same. We must tell them that both groups are right in some things and wrong in others. The first group is right that a free person's life is better than a master's.²⁵ This is true. There is nothing dignified about using a slave as a slave. Giving orders about necessary tasks has no share in the noble. But it is wrong to think that all rule is mastery. Rule over free people differs from rule over slaves no less than someone free by nature differs from someone³⁰ a slave by nature. We made adequate distinctions about these matters in our opening discussions.

But it isn't true that inactivity deserves more praise than activity. Happiness is an activity, and the actions of just and self-controlled people achieve many noble results.

Now that we have made these distinctions, someone might suppose^{1325a35} that being sovereign over everyone is best. This would put him in charge of the most numerous and noblest actions. So anyone able to rule shouldn't give way to his neighbor but should instead take rule away from him. A father should take no account of his children, nor children of their father, nor, in general, a friend of any friend. Nor should they⁴⁰ worry about these things. What is best is most worth choosing, and doing well is best. Perhaps they speak truly,

if^{1325b1} the most desirable thing there is will belong to those who rob others and use force. But perhaps it can't belong to them, and their assumption is false. A person's actions can no longer be noble unless he is as superior to others as a man is to a woman, a father to⁵ his children, or a master to slaves. So someone who breaks this rule could never later achieve anything so great as the loss of virtue he has already suffered. For people who are alike, the noble and the just consist in taking turns. That is equal and alike treatment. Unequal treatment of equals and unlike treatment of those who are alike go against nature. Nothing¹⁰ that goes against nature is noble. So if someone is superior to the best people in virtue and in the ability to act, it is noble to follow him and just to obey him. But he must have not only virtue but also the power that will let him act. If these points are right and happiness¹⁵ should be understood as doing well, then the active life would be best both for every city as a community and for each individual. But an active life doesn't have to involve other people, as some think. Nor are practical thoughts limited to those aimed at the results of action. Much more practical are²⁰ the forms of contemplation and thinking that are complete in themselves and pursued for their own sake. Doing well is a goal, so it too is a kind of action. Even with external actions, we say that those who direct them through their thinking are most truly acting. Nor must cities established on their own, which have²⁵ chosen to live this way, be inactive. Activity can take place among their parts. The parts of a city have many dealings with one another. The same holds for any individual person.

Otherwise the god and the whole universe would hardly be in a good condition, since they have no external activities³⁰ beyond their own proper activities. Clearly, then, the best life must be the same for each individual person and for cities and human beings as communities.

These points have introduced the subject, and we have already studied the other constitutions.^{1325b35} So we must begin the rest by stating the conditions we assume for the city we want to establish according to our wishes. The best constitution can't come into being without suitable resources. So we must assume many things in advance, as if we were expressing wishes. But none of them should be impossible. I mean,⁴⁰ for example, the number of citizens and the territory. Other craftsmen, such as a weaver or a shipbuilder,

need^{1326a1} materials suited to their work. The better these are prepared, the finer the product of their skill must be. In the same way, a statesman and a law-maker must have their own materials⁵ in a suitable condition.

The first resources for political work concern the population: how many people there should be and what their natural character should be. The same applies to the territory: how large it should be and what it should be like. Most people think a happy city should be great. Even if this is^{1326a10} true, they don't understand what makes a city great or small. They judge greatness by the number of inhabitants. But we should look at its capacity rather than its population. A city too has a task, so we should consider the city most able to carry it out the greatest. For example,¹⁵ someone might say Hippocrates is greater, not as a human being but as a doctor, than a person who stands out for his bodily size. But even if we should judge by population, we shouldn't do so by just any population. Cities may necessarily contain large numbers of slaves,²⁰ resident foreigners, and visitors. We should count those who are parts of the city, the proper parts that make it up. A large number of these is a sign of a great city. But a city that sends out large numbers of craftsmen and few heavily armed foot soldiers can't be great. For a great²⁵ city is not the same thing as a highly populated city.

The facts also make this clear: it is difficult, perhaps impossible, for an excessively populated city to be well governed by laws. At any rate, none of the cities thought to conduct public life well has an unrestricted population. Reasoning also makes this clear. For ^{1326a30} law is a kind of order, and good government by law must be good order. But an excessively large number can't share in order. That would require the divine power that also holds this whole universe together. So the finest city must be one that combines greatness with the defining limit just described.³⁵ The noble usually involves number and size. But a city's size also has a measure, as everything else does—animals, plants, and tools. None of these will have its proper capacity if it is too small or excessively large. In one case it will lose its nature altogether, and in another⁴⁰ it will be in a poor condition. For example, a boat a handspan long won't be a boat at all, nor will one two stades, or racecourse lengths, long.

Book VII, 1326a–1329b



But once it reaches a certain size, it will sometimes^{1326b1} sail badly because it is too small, and sometimes because it is too large. The same applies to a city. One with far too few people is not self-sufficient, while a city must be self-sufficient. One with far too many people is self-sufficient in necessities, like a nation, but⁵ not a city. It is not easy for it to have a constitution. Who could be general of such an enormous population? Who could be its herald without Stentor's voice? So the smallest possible city must have enough people to make it self-sufficient for living well as a political community. A city¹⁰ with a larger population than this can be larger, but, as we said, its size cannot be unlimited. It is easy to see what the upper limit is by looking at its tasks. A city's activities involve both rulers and the ruled. A ruler's job is to give orders and make judgments. To judge¹⁵ what is just and to assign offices according to worth, the citizens must know one another's character. Where this does not happen, the assignment of offices and the administration of justice are bound to go badly. Guesswork is not just in either case, and it occurs²⁰ clearly when the population is far too large. Also, foreigners and resident aliens can easily gain a share in the constitution. With so many people, it is not hard to escape notice. So the best limit for a city is clearly this: the largest population that is self-sufficient for life and can still be readily surveyed. Let us²⁵ settle the question of a city's size in this way.

Much the same applies to its territory. As for its character, clearly everyone would praise the territory that is most self-sufficient. Such territory must produce everything: having everything and needing nothing^{1326b30} is self-sufficiency. Its extent and size should allow its residents to live with leisure, generously and with moderation. We must examine later, in more detail, whether this limit is right or wrong. That will be when property and the plentiful supply of material resources are generally³⁵ discussed, along with how we should approach their use. There are many disputes about this question. Some people pull life toward one extreme, others toward the other: some toward stinginess, others toward luxury. It is not hard to say what the shape of the territory should be. On some points we must⁴⁰ also listen to people with military experience. It should be hard for enemies to enter and easy for its own people to leave.

^{1327a1} Also, just as we said the population should be easy to survey, so should the territory. Here, being easy to survey means that help can easily reach any part of it. If we can choose the city's location as we wish, then in relation to the sea⁵ it should be well situated, and in relation to the territory too. One requirement is the one already mentioned: it must be a common base for sending help to every part of the territory. The other concerns the transport of harvested crops, timber, and any other products the territory happens to have. Its position should make these¹⁰ easy to transport.

There is much dispute about access to the sea, and whether it helps or harms cities with good laws. Some say that receiving visitors brought up under other laws harms^{1327a15} good government, and so does a large population. Using the sea to send and receive goods, they say, brings in crowds of merchants, and this works against taking part in public life well. Clearly, if these problems do not arise, it is better for both security and the supply of necessities for²⁰ the city and its territory to have access to the sea. To bear wars more easily, people who are to survive must be able to receive help by both routes, by land and by sea. To harm their attackers, too, if they cannot do so by both routes, by one route they will have²⁵ a better chance if they have access to both. They also need to import things they do not have at home and export their surplus products. A city should trade for its own needs, not those of others. Cities that

make themselves a marketplace for everyone have revenue³⁰ as their motive. But a city that should not share in this kind of greed should not have this kind of trading center either. Even now, we see many territories and cities with ports and harbors conveniently placed in relation to the city. They are neither part of the same urban area nor too far away,³⁵ but are kept under control by walls and other defenses of that kind. Clearly, then, if contact with them brings any benefit, the city will have that benefit. If it brings any harm, it is easy to guard against it through laws that state and specify who should not, and who should, mix⁴⁰ with one another.

As for naval power, clearly it is best to have it up to a certain size.

(A city must not^{1327b1} only be formidable and able to help itself, but also some of its neighbors, by sea as well as by land). But we must judge the number and size of these forces by the city's way of life. If⁵ it is to lead other cities and take an active part in their affairs, it must have naval power proportionate to these activities. Cities need not have the large population that comes with a mass of naval workers. These people need not be any part of the city. The marines¹⁰ are free men drawn from the infantry. They have authority and control the ship's operations. If there are plenty of people living in the surrounding area and farming the land, there must also be plenty of sailors. Even now we see this in some places, such as the city of the Heracleots. They fill many¹⁵ warships with three banks of oars, although their city is more moderate in size than others.

Let this settle the questions of cities' territory, harbors, access to the sea, and naval power. We have already said what limit there should be on the citizen population. As for what kind of people^{1327b20} they should be by nature, let us now speak.

We can get a fairly good idea of this by looking at the Greek cities with good reputations and at the whole inhabited world, as it is divided among nations. The nations in cold regions, and those around Europe, are full of spirit. In intelligence^{1327b25} and skill they are lacking. So they generally remain free, but lack political organization and cannot rule their neighbors. Those around Asia are intelligent and skillful, but lack spirit. So they remain ruled by others and

enslaved. The Greek people, just as they occupy a middle position³⁰ geographically, share in both qualities. They have both spirit and intelligence. So they remain free, have the best political organization, and could rule everyone if they had a single constitution. The same differences exist among the Greek nations themselves. Some have³⁵ a one-sided nature, while others have a good mixture of these two abilities. Clearly, then, those whom the lawgiver can readily guide toward virtue must be both intelligent and spirited by nature. Some say that guardians should love⁴⁰ the people they know and be fierce toward strangers. But spirit is what makes us love: it is the soul's^{1328a1} capacity for loving.

Here is evidence. When it thinks it has been treated with contempt, spirit rises more strongly against familiar people and friends than against strangers. So Archilochus, when accusing his friends, fittingly addresses his spirit:^{1328a5} "It is your friends who are choking you."

Everyone's capacity to rule and to be free also comes from this power. Spirit seeks to rule and will not be defeated. But it is wrong to say that people should be harsh toward strangers. They should not be like that toward anyone. People with greatness of soul are not^{1328a10} naturally fierce, except toward people who do wrong. They feel this even more strongly toward familiar people, as we said before, if they think they have been wronged. And this makes sense. When they think someone owes them a kindness, they suffer both harm and the loss of that kindness,¹⁵ they believe. That is why it has been said, "Brothers' wars are bitter," (Eur. Fr. 965) and "Those who have loved beyond measure also beyond measure hate." (Anon. fr. 78 (Nauck))

We have now roughly determined how many people should take part in public life and what their natural character should be, and also how large the territory should be and what its character should be. For^{1328a20} we must not seek the same precision in arguments as in things we observe through our senses.

In other things formed by nature, not everything without which the whole could not exist is a part of the whole structure. So clearly we should not count everything a city needs as a part of the city,^{1328a25} or of any other community that forms a single kind. The partners must have one thing that is common and

the same for them all, whether they share it equally or unequally. It might be food, an area of land, or something else of that kind. But when one thing exists for the sake of another, and the other is its purpose, they have nothing³⁰ in common except that one produces and the other receives. I mean, for example, the relation of any tool or craft worker to the work produced. A house has nothing in common with its builder. The builder's craft exists for the sake of the house. So cities need property, but property is not a part of the³⁵ city. Many parts of property are living things. A city is a community of people who are alike, formed for the best life possible. Happiness is the best thing, and it is an activity and a complete use of virtue. But some people can share in it, while others can share only a little or⁴⁰ not at all. Clearly, this causes the different kinds of city and the variety of constitutions.

By different ways and through^{1328b1} different means, each group pursues this and so makes its ways of life and constitutions different. We must also examine how many things there are without which a city could not exist. What we call parts of a city would be among these too, since they must be present. So we must list⁵ the tasks. They will make the matter clear. First, there must be food. Next, there must be crafts, since life needs many tools. Third, there must be arms. The members of the community must have arms themselves to maintain rule over those who disobey. They also need arms against wrongdoing by outsiders¹⁰ who attempt it. There must also be a supply of money to meet their own needs and the needs of war. Fifth, and first in importance, there must be care for the gods, which is called priestly service. Sixth in number, and most necessary of all, there must be judgment about matters of advantage and about what is just in people's¹⁵ relations with one another. These, then, are the tasks that practically every city needs. A city is not just any collection of people. As we say, it is one that is self-sufficient for life. If any of these things is missing, this community cannot be fully self-sufficient. So, around the kinds of work²⁰ just mentioned, a city must be organized. There must therefore be a body of farmers to provide food, craft workers, a fighting force, wealthy people, priests, and judges of what is necessary and advantageous.

With these points settled, we still need to ask whether everyone^{1328b25} should share in all these tasks. It is possible for all the same people to be farmers, craft workers, deliberators, and judges. Or should we assign different people to each of the tasks mentioned? Or must some be separate and others shared? The answer is not the same in every constitution. As we said,³⁰ everyone can share in everything, or not everyone in everything, but certain people in certain things. These differences also make constitutions different. In democracies everyone shares in everything; in oligarchies the opposite is true. We are examining the best constitution, and this³⁵ is the one under which a city would be happiest. We said earlier that happiness cannot exist without virtue. This makes clear what follows for the city with the best constitution. Its men are just without qualification, not merely under a certain assumption. Neither manual work nor trading should be a way of life⁴⁰ for its citizens. That kind of life is low and works against virtue. Nor should farmers be among those who are going to^{1329a1} be citizens

(for leisure is needed both to develop virtue and to carry out political activities).

The fighting force and the body that deliberates about matters of advantage and judges what is just are present in the city and seem to be its parts^{1329a5} most of all. Should these too be separate, or should both tasks be assigned to the same people? This too is clear: in one way to the same people, and in another to different people. Each task calls for a different prime of life, and one needs practical wisdom while the other needs strength. In that respect they belong to different people. But it is impossible¹⁰ for people with the power to use force and stop others to put up with being ruled forever. In that respect they belong to the same people. Those who control the arms also control whether the constitution survives or not. The only course left, then, is to assign participation in this constitution to the same people in both roles, but not at the same time. By nature,¹⁵ strength belongs to younger people and practical wisdom to older people. So it seems both advantageous and just to assign the two roles this way, since this division follows worth. Property must also belong to these people. Citizens must be well supplied with resources, and these are the citizens. The²⁰

manual workers have no share in the city, nor does any other group that does not produce virtue. This is clear from our starting point. Happiness must go together with virtue. We should call a city happy by looking not at some part of it, but at all its citizens. Clearly,²⁵ then, property must belong to these people, if the farmers must be slaves or non-Greek residents of the surrounding area. Of the groups we listed, the priests remain. Their place is clear too. Neither a farmer nor a manual worker should be made a priest, since it is fitting for the citizens³⁰ to honor the gods. The citizen body has been divided into two parts, the armed force and the deliberative body. It is fitting for those worn out by age to give service to the gods and find rest in serving them. So the priestly offices should be assigned to these people.

As for the things without which^{1329a35} a city cannot be formed, and what its parts are, we have now stated them. Cities must have farmers, craft workers, and the whole body of hired laborers. But the parts of the city are the armed force and the deliberative body. Each of these groups is kept separate, some permanently and others in turn.

^{1329a40}Students of constitutions seem to have known this long ago, not just now or recently: there should be separate groups^{1329b1} within the city, with the fighting group distinct from the farming group.

This is still the arrangement in Egypt and Crete even now. In Egypt, they say, Sesostris made laws establishing it, and Minos did so^{1329b5} in Crete. The system of common messes, meals eaten together, also seems to be ancient. In Crete it began in the reign of Minos, and in Italy much earlier. The learned people who live there say that a certain Italus became king of Oenotria. From him their name¹⁰ was changed from Oenotrians to Italians. This stretch of the European coast also took the name Italy: the part lying between the Scylletic and Lametic gulfs. These gulfs are half a day's journey apart. They say this Italus turned the nomadic¹⁵ Oenotrians into farmers, gave them other laws, and first established common messes. That is why some of his descendants still use common messes and some of his laws even now. The side toward Tyrrhenia was inhabited by the Opicans, called both formerly and now²⁰ Ausonians. The side toward Iapygia and the Ionian Sea, in the area called Syrtis, was inhabited

by the Chonians. The Chonians too were Oenotrians by descent. The system of common messes first came from here. The division of the citizen population into separate groups came from Egypt. This was because the reign that was much earlier than²⁵ Minos's was that of Sesostris. We should suppose that most other things too have been discovered many times over the long course of time, or rather infinitely many times. Need itself is likely to teach people what is necessary. Once these things exist, it is reasonable that things contributing to refinement and plenty should develop.³⁰ So we should think the same applies to constitutions. Egypt is evidence that all these things are ancient. The Egyptians are considered the oldest people, and they have always had laws and a political order. So we should make proper use of what has been discovered, and, for what has been overlooked,³⁵ try to look for it.

Book VII, 1329b–1333a



We said earlier that the territory should belong to those who have arms and share in the constitution, that the farmers should be different people, and how large the territory should be and what its character should be. First we must discuss its^{1329b40} division and the farmers: who they should be and what kind of people they should be. For we say that there should not be common^{1330a1} property, as some have said,

but it should be shared in use through friendship. Nor should any citizen lack food. Everyone agrees that common messes, or shared meals, are useful in well-organized cities. Why they seem useful^{1330a5} to us too, we will explain later. All the citizens must share in them. But it is not easy for poor people both to contribute the required amount from their own resources and to manage the rest of their household. Also, expenses for worship are shared by the whole city. So into two parts¹⁰ the territory must be divided: one held in common and the other owned by individuals. Each of these should be divided into two again. Of the common land, one part should support the service of the gods, and the other the cost of the common messes. Of the privately owned land, one part should be near the borders,¹⁵ and the other near the city. Each person should be assigned two plots, so that everyone shares in both areas. This is both equal and just, and brings more agreement about wars with neighboring cities. Where this is not the arrangement, where neighboring people are concerned, some care little about²⁰ hostility. Others care too much, even at the expense of

the noble. So in some places the law bars those who live near the borders from taking part in deliberation about wars with these neighbors. Their private interests, it is thought, would prevent them from deliberating well. The territory must therefore be divided this way for the already stated²⁵ reasons. As for those who will farm it, the best choice, if we can have what we wish, is slaves who are neither all of the same people nor spirited. That way they would be useful for the work and could safely be trusted not to attempt a revolution. The second choice is non-Greek residents of the surrounding area with a similar nature.³⁰ Those working on private estates should belong privately to the estate owners, while those on common land should belong to the community. We will explain later how slaves should be treated, and why it is better to offer freedom as a reward to all slaves.

The city should be accessible from the mainland^{1330a35} and equally, as far as possible, from the sea and all its territory. We said this earlier. In choosing the city's own site, we should hope for a sloping location and keep four considerations in view. The first, and necessary one, is health. Cities that slope toward the east and toward the winds⁴⁰ that blow from the east are healthier. Those facing north come second, since their winters are milder.

Of the remaining considerations,^{1330b1} the site should be well suited to political and military activities. For military purposes, it should be easy for its own people to leave, but hard for enemies to approach or surround. Ideally it should have plenty of water and springs⁵ of its own. Otherwise, a solution has been found: build many large reservoirs for rainwater, so that the supply never runs out when war cuts people off from the territory. We must care for the residents' health. This depends on the site's being well placed in such a setting and facing¹⁰ in such a direction, and secondly on using healthy water. This too needs serious attention. The things we use most and most often for our bodies make the greatest contribution to health. Water and air have this kind of influence. So¹⁵ well-run cities must separate water used for food and drink from water used for other purposes, unless all the water is alike or there are plenty of healthy springs.

As for fortified sites, what is advantageous is not the same for every constitution. A fortified high point, for example, suits rule by a few or by one ruler.^{1330b20} Level ground suits democracy. Neither suits rule by the best, which is better served by several strong positions. The arrangement of private houses is thought more pleasant and more convenient for other activities if it has straight streets, following the newer plan of Hippodamus. But for military²⁵ security the opposite is better: the old arrangement. That is hard for foreign troops to enter and for attackers to find their way through. So the city should combine both plans. This is possible if the layout follows what some farmers call clusters of vines. The³⁰ whole city should not have straight streets, but only certain sections and districts. That way it will be well suited to both security and good order.

As for walls, those who say that cities claiming virtue should not have them are thinking in a very outdated way. They do so even though they see cities that took pride in this being proved wrong in practice.^{1330b35} Against opponents who are similar and not much more numerous, it is not noble to try to stay safe behind strong walls. But attackers may have an advantage too great for the human virtue of a small group to overcome. If the city is to survive,⁴⁰ and not suffer harm or degrading treatment, the strongest protection walls can give must be regarded as the best military defense,

^{1331a1} especially now that projectiles and siege machines have been developed to such precision. Demanding that cities have no surrounding walls is like wanting their territory to be easy to invade and removing the⁵ mountainous areas. It is also like refusing to put walls around private houses, on the grounds that their residents would become cowards. Nor should we overlook this: people who have put walls around their city can use it either way, as a city with walls or as one without¹⁰ them. People who have no walls cannot do this. If that is so, we must not only put walls around a city but also take care that they give it a fitting appearance and serve military needs, both the others and those recently discovered. Just as attackers¹⁵ take care to find ways of gaining an

advantage, so defenders have discovered some means already and must search for and study others. Attackers do not even begin an attack against those who are well prepared.

The body of citizens must, for the common messes,^{1331a20} be divided into groups, and the walls must have guard posts and towers at suitable intervals. Clearly this suggests placing some of the common messes in these guard posts. These things could be arranged in this way. But the buildings set aside for the gods²⁵ and the principal common messes of the ruling offices should share a suitable site. This excludes temples that the law sets apart, or that some other oracle, coming from the Pythian god, sets apart. Such a site should be prominent enough to display the excellence of its position, and, in relation to the neighboring³⁰ parts of the city, be more strongly defended. Below it there should be a public square of the kind customary in Thessaly, which they call the free square. This must be kept clear of all goods for sale. No manual worker, farmer, or anyone else of that kind should enter³⁵ unless summoned by the rulers. The place would be attractive if the older men's exercise grounds were also located there. This arrangement too should be divided by age. Some rulers should spend time with the younger men, while the older men should spend time with⁴⁰ the rulers. Being in the rulers' sight is the strongest way to inspire real respect and, in free people,^{1331b1} fear.

The market for goods must be different from this square and separate from it. Its site should be convenient for bringing together all the goods sent from the sea and from the territory.

Since the city's leaders are divided into priests^{1331b5} and rulers, the priests' common messes should also be located near the sacred buildings. Some offices handle contracts, the filing of lawsuits, summonses, and other administration of this kind. They also handle market regulation and what is called¹⁰ city management. These offices should be established near a market and a public meeting place. The area around the market for necessities is such a place. We assign the upper square to leisure, and this one to necessary activities. The arrangement in the countryside should follow the one described too. There, the¹⁵ rulers whom some call forest wardens and others countryside wardens must

also have guard posts and common messes for their work of protection. Temples should also be spread throughout the territory, some for gods and some for heroes. But spending time now on precise descriptions of these matters is pointless. Such things aren't²⁰ hard to imagine. Doing them is harder. Describing them is a matter of wishing; making them happen is a matter of luck. So let us set aside further discussion of such things for now.

As for the constitution itself, we must say what people, and what kinds of people, ^{1331b25} should make up a city that is to be happy and well governed. Doing well depends on two things for everyone. One is to set the right aim and end for our actions. The other is to find the actions that lead to that end. These two can³⁰ conflict or agree. Sometimes the aim is well chosen, but people fail to reach it through their actions. Sometimes they succeed in all the steps toward the end, but have chosen a bad end. Sometimes they fail in both respects. Medicine is an example. Sometimes people neither³⁵ judge correctly what a healthy body should be like nor find the means of producing the condition they have set as their goal. In crafts and sciences, we must master both of these: the end and the actions that lead to it. Living well and happiness are sought⁴⁰ by everyone. That is clear. But some have the opportunity and others do not, because of some circumstance of luck or nature

(for living well needs some provision^{1332a1} of resources, less for those in a better condition and more for those in a worse one). Others have the opportunity but look for happiness in the wrong way from the start. Our task is to see what the best constitution is. This⁵ is the one under which a city would be governed best. It would be governed best under the constitution that gives it the greatest chance of happiness. So clearly we must know what happiness is.

We say that it is an activity and a complete use of virtue. We have defined it this way in the Ethics, if those arguments are of any value. This use^{1332a10} is not merely under certain conditions, but without qualification. By conditional I mean necessary acts; by unqualified I mean acting well. Take just actions, for example. Just acts of revenge and punishment come from virtue, but they are necessary, and are noble only as necessary acts. It would be preferable for no such things to be needed by¹⁵ either a person or a city. But actions directed

toward honors and prosperity are the noblest without qualification. The former remove some evil; actions of the latter kind do the opposite. They establish and produce good things. A good man would also make noble use of poverty, illness, and²⁰ other bad turns of luck. But happiness lies in their opposites. In our arguments on ethics we have also defined the good man as someone for whom things that are good without qualification are good because of his virtue. Clearly, his uses of these things must also be good and noble²⁵ without qualification. That is why people think external goods cause happiness. It is as if they credited the lyre rather than skill for brilliant and beautiful lyre playing.

From what has been said, then, some things must be there already, and the lawgiver must provide others. So we hope^{1332a30} that the city's formation will turn out well in matters controlled by luck. We assume luck does control them. But making the city good is not a matter of luck. It is a matter of knowledge and deliberate choice. A city is good because the citizens who share in its constitution are good. In our city, all the citizens³⁵ share in the constitution. So we must examine how a man becomes good. Even if all the citizens could be good as a group without each one being good individually, making each one good is preferable. When each is good, all are good as well. People become good and virtuous through three things. These three⁴⁰ are nature, habit, and reason. First, a person must be born, for example, a human being and not some other animal. Then the body and soul must also have a certain character. But with some qualities it is no use to^{1332b1} be born;

because habits change them. Some qualities can go either way by nature, and habits turn them toward the worse or the better. Other animals live mainly by nature, though some are guided a little by habits too. Human beings^{1332b5} also live by reason, since they alone have reason. So these things must agree with one another. People often act against their habits and nature because of reason, if they are persuaded that some other course is better. We have already determined what the natural character of those whom the lawgiver can readily guide should be.¹⁰ The remaining work belongs to education. People learn some things by becoming used to them and others by hearing them.

Every political community is made up of rulers and the ruled. So we must examine whether the rulers and the ruled should be different people or the same people throughout^{1332b15} life. Clearly education will also have to follow this division. Suppose one group differed from the other as much as we think gods and heroes differ from human beings. They would first have a great advantage in body, then in²⁰ soul. The rulers' superiority would be beyond dispute and obvious to the ruled. Then clearly it would be better for the same people always to rule and the same people always to be ruled. But this is not easy to find. Kings do not differ, as Scylax says they do among the Indians, so greatly²⁵ from the ruled. So clearly, for many reasons, everyone must share equally in ruling and being ruled in turn. Equality means the same treatment for people who are alike. And it is hard for a constitution to last when it is established against the just. For the ruled have allies in revolution:³⁰ all those throughout the territory who want it. And it is impossible for the citizen body to be numerous enough to overpower all of them. Still, there is no question that the rulers must differ from the ruled. How this will happen and how they will share in rule must be considered by³⁵ the lawgiver. We have spoken about this earlier. Nature has provided the division by making some members of the same kind younger and others older. It is fitting for the younger to be ruled and the older to rule. No one resents being ruled because of age or thinks himself better than his rulers, especially⁴⁰ when he will receive this contribution in return once he reaches the proper age.

So in one sense we should say that the same people rule and are ruled, and in another that they are different people.

So their^{1333a1} education must also be the same in one sense, but different in another. People say that anyone who is to rule well must first be ruled. (As we said in our earlier arguments, one kind of rule is for the ruler's benefit, and another for the benefit of the ruled.⁵ We say that the first is a master's rule and the second is rule over free people. Some commanded tasks involve the same work but differ in the person for whose sake it is done. That is why many tasks that seem to be servants' work are noble for young free people to perform too. What is noble or not noble depends less on¹⁰ the actions themselves than on

their end and for whose sake they are done.) We say that a citizen's and a ruler's virtue is the same as that of the best man. The same person must be ruled first and rule later. So the lawgiver should work on how good men¹⁵ are developed, through what practices, and what the end of the best life is.

The soul is divided into two parts. One has reason in itself. The other does not have reason in itself, but can listen to reason. We say that their virtues are what make a man good in some sense. In which of these^{1333a20} the end lies more fully is easy to say for those who divide the soul as we do. The worse always exists for the sake of the better. This is equally clear in things made by craft and things produced by nature. The part with reason is better. It too is divided in two, in the way we usually divide it:²⁵ one kind of reason concerns action, and the other contemplation. Clearly, then, this part must be divided in the same way. We shall say that its activities have a corresponding relation. The activities of the part that is better by nature must be preferable for people able to carry out all the activities, or those of both parts. For each person, what is most preferable is always³⁰ the highest thing he can achieve. The whole of life is also divided into work and leisure, and war and peace. Some actions aim at necessary and useful things, others at noble things. Our choice between these must follow the same pattern as our choice between the parts of the soul and the activities³⁵ of those parts. War is for the sake of peace. Work is for the sake of leisure. Necessary and useful things are for the sake of noble things. So the statesman must make laws with all these in view, both the parts of the soul and their activities, but more especially the better ones and the ends. The⁴⁰ same applies to ways of life and choices of action. People must be able to work and to wage war,

Book VII, 1333b–1337a



^{1333b1}but more importantly to live in peace and have leisure. They must also do what is necessary and useful, but still more what is noble. So education must aim at these goals, both for children and for people of other ages who need⁵ education.

The Greeks who are now thought to have the best constitutions, and the lawmakers who established those constitutions, clearly haven't organized their constitutions around the best goal. Nor have they directed their laws and education toward all the virtues. Instead, they have crudely leaned^{1333b10} toward the virtues that seem useful and more likely to bring gains. Some later writers have expressed the same view. In praising the constitution of Lacedaemon, they admire the lawmaker's aim: he made all his laws for conquest and war. These views¹⁵ are easy to refute by argument, and events have now refuted them too. Most people envy mastery over many others because it brings a large supply of the goods of fortune. In the same way, Thibron clearly admires the Laconians' lawmaker, as does every other²⁰ writer on their constitution, because their training for danger enabled them to rule many people. Yet it's clear that, now the Laconians no longer rule, they aren't happy, and their lawmaker wasn't good. It's ridiculous if they have kept his laws, with nothing preventing them²⁵ from using those laws, but have lost the ability to live well. They also misunderstand the kind of rule a lawmaker should be seen to honor. Rule over free people is nobler and involves more virtue than ruling as a master. Nor should we

consider a city happy³⁰ and praise its lawmaker because he trained it to conquer and rule its neighbors. This does great harm. Clearly, any citizen who can do this must also try to pursue it, so that he can rule his own city. This is just what the Laconians accuse King Pausanias of doing, despite³⁵ the great honor he held.

None of these arguments or laws is fit for a city, useful, or true. The same things are best for individuals and for the community, and the lawmaker must instill them in people's souls. Training for war shouldn't aim at enslaving^{1333b40} those who don't deserve slavery. Its first aim should be to keep people from being enslaved by others. Its next aim should be to seek leadership for the^{1334a1} benefit of the ruled,

not mastery over everyone. Its third aim should be mastery over those who deserve slavery. The lawmaker should above all take care to arrange both military laws and the rest of his laws for leisure^{1334a5} and peace. Events confirm this argument. Most cities of this kind survive while at war, but perish once they have won an empire. In peace they lose their temper, like iron. The lawmaker is to blame because he hasn't educated them to be able to use leisure.

^{1334a10} People clearly have the same goal as a community and as individuals. The same standard must apply to the best man and the best constitution. So clearly they must have the virtues needed for leisure. For the goal,¹⁵ as we've often said, is this: peace is the goal of war, and leisure is the goal of work. The virtues useful for leisure and the way we spend it include both those exercised in leisure and those exercised at work. Many necessities must be available for leisure to be possible. So a city must be self-controlled,²⁰ brave, and able to endure hardship. As the proverb says, slaves have no leisure. Those who can't face danger bravely are slaves to their attackers. So courage and endurance are needed for work, philosophy for leisure, and self-control and justice for both,²⁵ especially when people are at peace and have leisure. War forces people to be just and self-controlled. But enjoying good fortune and leisure in peace is more likely to make them arrogant. So people who seem to be doing best need a great deal of justice and self-control,³⁰ if they enjoy everything that people call a blessing. This would apply to anyone living in the Islands of the Blessed, if

there are such people, as the poets say. They will need philosophy, self-control, and justice most of all, the more leisure they have amid an abundance of these goods. Clearly, then, a city that is to be happy³⁵ and good must share in these virtues. It's shameful not to be able to use good things. It's even more shameful not to be able to use them in leisure, but to seem good while working and fighting, and slavish while at peace and at leisure.⁴⁰ So we must not practice virtue as the city of Lacedaemon does.

They differ from others not^{1334b1} by judging different things to be the greatest goods, but by obtaining those goods more through a particular virtue. Since these goods and the enjoyment of them are greater than those of the virtues [...]. [...] And that it is for its own sake is clear⁵ from this. We must now consider how it will come about, and through what means.

We have already distinguished the need for nature, habit, and reason. We have already defined what people's nature should be like. It remains to consider whether education should start with reason or with habits. These must^{1334b10} be in the best possible agreement. Reason can miss the best starting point, and habits can lead people astray in the same way. First, this much is clear: as in other cases, development starts from a beginning, and an end starts from a beginning that is itself another end.¹⁵ For us, reason and understanding are nature's goal. So we must arrange both development and training in habits with these in view. Next, just as soul and body are two, we see two parts in the soul: the part without reason and the part with reason. Their states are also two in number,²⁰ desire and understanding. Just as the body develops before the soul, the part without reason develops before the part with reason. This too is clear. Spirit, wish, and appetite are present in children as soon as they're born. Reasoning and understanding, as they grow²⁵ older, develop naturally. So care of the body must come before care of the soul, and care of desire must come next. But care of desire must be for the sake of understanding, and care of the body for the sake of the soul.

If the lawmaker must take care from the beginning that^{1334b30} those brought up have the best possible bodies, he must first attend to marriage: when, and in what condition, people should enter married life together. His

laws for this partnership must consider the couple themselves and their life spans. They should reach the end of their reproductive years³⁵ at the same time. Their powers shouldn't be out of step, with the man still able to have children and the woman unable, or the woman able and the man unable. This causes conflict and disagreement between them. Next, he must consider the children's succession. Children must not be too far behind in⁴⁰ age compared with their fathers. Otherwise the children's gratitude is no use to their elderly parents, nor, from the^{1335a1} fathers, is help any use to their children.

Nor should they be too close in age. This brings many difficulties. Children in that position have less respect for their parents, as if they were the same age, and closeness in age leads to complaints about household management. Also, to return to the point that brought us^{1335a5} here, the bodies of the children born must be what the lawmaker wants.

Almost all these results follow from taking care of one thing. The limit of childbearing is, generally speaking, seventy years at the latest for men and fifty^{1335a10} for women. So the age at which marriage begins must allow it to end at these times. Marriage between young people is bad for having children. In all animals, the offspring of the young are underdeveloped, more often female, and small in size. The same thing must therefore happen¹⁵ with human beings. Here's the evidence: in cities where young men and young women commonly marry, the children are underdeveloped and small in body. Also, young women suffer more in childbirth, and more of them die. Some say this was the reason for the oracle given²⁰ to the people of Troezen: many women were dying because they married too young. They say it wasn't about gathering crops. Having women marry when they're older also helps self-control. Women who have sex when young seem more likely to lack restraint. Men's bodies too²⁵ seem to have their growth harmed if they have sex while their semen is still developing. This too has a definite period, beyond which it no longer increases, or only a little. So it's suitable for women to marry at about eighteen, and for men at thirty-seven or a little earlier.³⁰ At those ages the marriage will take place when their bodies are at their peak, and their ages will reach the end of child-

bearing together at the right time. Also, if children are born immediately, as one can reasonably expect, the children will be starting their prime as their parents' time of life is already ending,³⁵ at about seventy years.

We have now said when people should marry. As for the season, they should follow what most people do. Even now people have correctly decided to begin married life in winter. The couple themselves must also consider, with a view to having children, what^{1335a40} doctors and students of nature say. Doctors give adequate advice about the right bodily conditions,

^{1335b1}and students of nature advise about winds, favoring north winds over south winds. We should discuss more carefully, in our treatment of the care of children, what bodily condition in the parents would most benefit their children.⁵ For now, an outline is enough. The condition of athletes is no use for a citizen's fitness, or for health and having children. Nor is a pampered condition, or one worn down by too much work. The condition between these is best. The body should be trained, but not with violent exertion, or for just one¹⁰ activity, as an athlete's body is. It should be trained for the activities of free people. This should apply equally to men and women.

Pregnant women too must care for their bodies. They must not be inactive or eat too little. The lawmaker can easily bring this about by ordering them each^{1335b15} day to make a journey to worship the gods whose appointed honor concerns childbirth. Their minds, however, unlike their bodies, should be kept more at rest. The unborn clearly draw nourishment from the woman carrying them, as plants do from the earth. As for exposing and²⁰ raising newborn children, let there be a law that no child with a disability is raised. Where established customs forbid exposing any newborn because there are too many children, a limit must be set to the number of children people have. If a couple conceives beyond this limit, before sensation and life develop²⁵ an abortion must be induced. Sensation and life will determine what is religiously permitted and what isn't. We have set the starting age for men and women to marry. Let us also set how long they should perform their public duty of having children. For older parents'³⁰ offspring, like those of younger parents, are underdeveloped in both body and mind, while the offspring of the aged are weak. So

the limit should be the mind's prime. For most people this comes at the time mentioned by some poets who measure age in periods of seven years, around fifty³⁵ years. So four or five years after this age, a person must stop producing children for the community. After that, they should be seen to have sex for health or some other similar reason. As for relations with another woman or another man, let it be regarded as simply not noble⁴⁰ to be found having such relations in any circumstances or in any way, while one is and is called a spouse.

During the period of having children,^{1336a1} if anyone is found doing such a thing, let the penalty be loss of honor suited to the offense.

Once children are born, we must recognize that food makes a great difference to their bodily strength, depending on what kind^{1336a5} it is. Looking at other animals and at peoples who take care to develop a condition suited to war, we see that a diet rich in milk is most suitable for their bodies, and one with less wine avoids disease. As much movement as is possible at that age is also useful.¹⁰ To keep their limbs from becoming crooked because they're soft, some peoples still use mechanical devices that keep such children's bodies straight. It's also useful to get them used to cold from early childhood. For health and military¹⁵ action, this is especially helpful. So many non-Greek peoples have a custom of dipping newborns into a cold river, or, like the Celts, putting only a light covering on them. For everything that people can get used to, it's better to start from the beginning, but to accustom them gradually.²⁰ Children's bodily condition, because of its warmth, is naturally suited to training in enduring cold.

Care at the first stage of life should be of this kind, or something similar. At the next stage, up to five years old, it's not yet right to introduce any learning^{1336a25} or compulsory work, so that these don't interfere with growth. Children should have enough movement to keep their bodies from being inactive. This should be provided through other activities and through play. Their games should not be unfit for free people, exhausting, or slack.³⁰ The rulers called supervisors of children should take care over what stories and tales children of this age hear. All such things must prepare the way for their later activities. So most of their games should be imitations of what they will later do seri-

ously. As for the straining³⁵ of children and their crying, those who forbid these by law are wrong. They help growth, since they are a kind of exercise for the body. Holding the breath gives strength to people exerting themselves, and this happens with children too when they strain.

A check must be made:^{1336a40} the supervisors of children must watch how they spend their time, in general and especially to ensure that they're with slaves as little as possible. For at this age,

^{1336b1} and up to seven years old, they must be brought up at home. So it's reasonable to expect them, even at this age, to pick up attitudes unfit for free people from what they hear and see. In general, foul language, like any other such thing, must be⁵ banished from the city by the lawmaker. Casually saying anything shameful leads directly toward doing it. Above all he must keep it away from the young, so they neither say nor hear anything like it. If anyone is found saying or doing something forbidden, a free person not yet entitled to recline¹⁰ at the common messes, the shared meals, should be punished with loss of honor and blows. Anyone above that age should suffer humiliations unfit for a free person, because of his slavish behavior. Since we banish speaking of these things, clearly we must also ban looking at indecent pictures or accounts. The¹⁵ rulers must ensure that no statue or picture imitates such acts, except at the shrines of certain gods to whom the law assigns even mockery. The law allows those old enough to honor these gods on behalf of themselves, their children, and their wives to do so.²⁰ Younger people must not be allowed to watch lampooning verse or comedy until they're old enough to share in reclining at meals and getting drunk. By then their education will make them entirely immune to the harm these things cause.

For now we have discussed this in passing.^{1336b25} Later we must examine it more closely and define it more fully. We must first consider whether or not it should be done, and how it should be done. For the present we have mentioned it as necessary. Perhaps Theodorus the tragic actor was right to say something of this kind. He never allowed anyone to come on stage before him, not even³⁰ a minor actor, because audiences become attached to what they hear first. The same thing happens in our contacts with people and with things. We always

like the first ones more. So we must keep everything bad unfamiliar to the young, especially anything³⁵ that involves wickedness or ill will. After they have passed the age of five, in the two years up to seven they should watch the lessons they will have to learn themselves. Education must be divided into two age groups: from seven to puberty, and then from⁴⁰ puberty to twenty-one. Those who divide ages into periods of seven years are generally not^{1337a1} wrong,

but we must follow nature's divisions. Every skill and every kind of education aims to fill in what nature leaves lacking. So first we must consider whether to make some organized provision for children. Next, whether a public approach is better^{1337a5} for their care, or a private one, as it is now in most cities. Third, what this care should be like.

Book VIII, 1337a–1340b



^{1337a11} No one would dispute that the lawmaker must give the greatest attention to educating the young. When cities don't do this, their constitutions suffer. Education must fit each constitution. For the character¹⁵ proper to each constitution usually both preserves it and establishes it in the first place: democratic character establishes democracy, and character favoring rule by a few establishes oligarchy. A better character always produces a better constitution. Also, every ability and skill requires some preliminary education²⁰ and training in habits for its particular activities. Clearly, then, this is also true of actions that express virtue. Since the whole city has one goal, clearly everyone must have one and the same education. Its care must be public, not private, as it is now,²⁵ when each person looks after his own children privately and teaches them whatever private course of study he chooses. Training for common concerns must also be common. At the same time, we shouldn't think that any citizen belongs to himself. All belong to the city, since each is a part of it. Care³⁰ for each part must naturally look toward care for the whole. On this point one could praise the Lacedaemonians. They take the greatest care over children, and do so publicly.

Clearly, then, laws must be made about education, and it must be public. But what education should be and how^{1337a35} it should be given must also be clear to us. At present people disagree about its tasks. They don't all think the young should learn the same things, either for virtue or for the best life. Nor is

it clear whether education should be directed more toward understanding or toward the soul's character. From the current⁴⁰ education comes confusion about the question. It's not at all clear whether we should practice things useful for life, things leading to virtue, or studies beyond ordinary needs. All these have supporters^{1337b1} of some kind.

There is no agreement about what leads to virtue either. People don't all honor the same virtue to begin with, so naturally they also disagree about training for it. That the necessary useful things must be taught^{1337b5} is clear. But not all useful things should be taught, since we distinguish work fit for free people from work unfit for them. People should take part only in those useful activities that don't make them mere laborers. We must regard as a laborer's work, skill, or study anything that, for the exercise and¹⁰ practice of virtue, makes a free person's body, soul, or understanding unfit. That's why we call skills that put the body in a worse condition laborers' skills, and also work done for wages. They leave the mind no leisure and lower its outlook.¹⁵ Even among the studies fit for free people, learning some to a certain extent isn't unfit for a free person. But devoting oneself too intensely to mastering them is open to the harms we've mentioned. The purpose for which someone acts or learns also makes a great difference. Doing something for oneself, for friends, or for virtue isn't unfit for a free person.²⁰ But doing that same thing for others would often seem to be the work of a hired hand or a slave.

The subjects now established in education, as we said before, have an uncertain position between these alternatives. There are roughly four subjects usually taught:

reading and writing, physical training, music, and,^{1337b25} as a fourth, drawing, which some people add. Reading and writing and drawing are taught because they're useful in life and have many uses. Physical training is taught because it contributes to courage. Music, however, raises a question. Most people now take part in it for pleasure. But those who first included it in education³⁰ did so because nature itself seeks not only to work rightly but also to be able to use leisure well, as we've often said. This is the single starting point for everything. Let's discuss it again. Both work and leisure are needed, but leisure

is more desirable than work and is its goal. So we must ask³⁵ what we should do during leisure. Surely not play, since then play would have to be our goal in life. That's impossible. Instead, play should be used during work. Someone who works hard needs rest, and play is for the sake of rest. Work involves⁴⁰ effort and strain. So we must introduce play at the right times, as if we were giving medicine. This kind of movement in the soul brings relaxation,^{1338a1} and its pleasure brings rest.

Leisure itself seems to contain pleasure, happiness, and a blessed life. This belongs not to those who are working but to those with leisure. Someone who works does so for some^{1338a5} goal that hasn't yet been reached. But happiness is a goal, and everyone thinks it comes with pleasure, not pain. Yet they don't all identify the same pleasure. Each judges according to himself and his own condition. The best person chooses the best pleasure, the one coming from the noblest things. So clearly¹⁰ we must also learn some things and be educated for the way we spend our leisure. These forms of education and study must be for their own sake, while those directed toward work are necessary and for the sake of other things. That's why people in the past included music in education, not as something necessary¹⁵ —for it has nothing of that kind—nor as something useful. Reading and writing, for example, are useful for money-making, household management, learning, and many public activities. Drawing too seems useful for judging the work of craftsmen better. Nor is music, like physical training, directed toward²⁰ health and strength: we don't see either of these coming from music. So its purpose must be the way we spend our leisure, and this is clearly why they introduce it. They assign it a place in what they consider a free person's way of spending time. That's why Homer wrote this:²⁵ “But he alone should be called to the rich feast,” and after first mentioning some others, “who call a singer,” he says, “to delight them all.” Elsewhere Odysseus says that this is the best way to spend time, when people are enjoying themselves and “the guests throughout the hall listen to the singer, sitting in rows.” (Hom. Od. 9.5)

^{1338a30} Clearly, then, there is a kind of education that sons should receive not because it's useful or necessary, but because it's fit for free people and noble. Whether there's one such kind or more, what they are, and how they work must be discussed later. For now we have made this much ³⁵ progress: the established subjects of education give us some evidence from the people of the past. Music makes this clear. Also, children should learn some useful things not just because they're useful. Reading and writing, for example, should be learned also because they make many ⁴⁰ other kinds of learning possible. Similarly, drawing shouldn't be learned so that people avoid mistakes in their private purchases and can't be cheated when ^{1338b1} buying and selling household goods,

but rather because it makes them able to observe bodily beauty. Looking everywhere for what is useful is entirely unfitting for people with greatness of soul and for free people. Clearly, through habits before reason ^{1338b5} children must be educated. The body must be educated before the mind. So we must put children in the hands of experts in physical training and instructors in exercise. The former develop a particular bodily condition, and the latter teach the activities.

At present, among cities thought to take the greatest care ^{1338b10} of children, some develop an athlete's condition, damaging the form and growth of their bodies. The Laconians haven't made this mistake, but their demanding exercises make children savage, as if this were the best way to develop courage. Yet, as we've often said, care shouldn't ¹⁵ aim at just one virtue, and especially not at this one alone. Even if it does aim at courage, they don't achieve it. Neither among other animals nor among human peoples do we see courage going with the most savage. Rather, it goes with gentler, lionlike characters. Many ²⁰ peoples readily kill and eat human beings, such as the Achaeans and Heniochi around the Black Sea and other peoples inland. Some are like these, and others still worse. They are raiders, but they have no share in courage. We know that the Laconians themselves, ²⁵ as long as they alone devoted themselves to strenuous training, surpassed others. But now they fall behind others both in athletic contests and in war. Their superiority didn't come from training their young in this way, but only from training when their opponents didn't. So the noble,

not the savage,³⁰ should take the leading role. Neither a wolf nor any other wild animal would face any noble danger. A good man would be more likely to do so. Those who turn children loose too much in these pursuits, leaving them uneducated in necessary things, in fact make mere laborers of them. They make them useful for just one task³⁵ of public life, and even in that task worse than others, as the argument shows. We must judge by what happens now, not by past achievements. They now have rivals in education; before, they didn't.

There is agreement, then, that physical training should be used, and about how to use it^{1338b40} (until puberty, lighter exercises should be introduced. Forced feeding and compulsory exertion should be kept away, so that nothing hinders growth.

The evidence is not^{1339a1} slight: these exercises can cause such harm. Among Olympic winners, one would find only two or three who won both as boys and as men. This is because compulsory exercises exhaust the strength of those who train while young. But when, after⁵ puberty, three years have been spent on other studies, it's suitable to fill the next stage of life with strenuous exercises and forced feeding. We shouldn't make the mind and body work hard at the same time. Each kind of effort naturally has the opposite effect on the other: effort in the¹⁰ body hinders the mind, and mental effort hinders the body).

We have already raised some questions about music in our discussion. It's good to take them up again now and carry them further, to give a kind of starting note to the arguments one might make in reaching a judgment about it. It isn't easy to determine what^{1339a15} power music has, or why we should take part in it. Is it for play and rest, as with sleep and getting drunk? These aren't serious things in themselves, but they're pleasant and "give rest from care," as Euripides says. That's why people put music alongside them and²⁰ use all these things alike: sleep, drunkenness, and music. They include dancing too. Or should we think that music contributes to virtue? Just as physical training develops a certain condition in the body, music might develop a certain character, training people to take pleasure²⁵ in the right things. Or does it contribute to the way we spend our time and to practical wisdom? This must be included as the third possibility. Clearly, the young shouldn't be educated for the sake of play. They

aren't playing while learning, since learning is painful. Nor is it suitable to give children³⁰ and people of that age the mature use of leisure. Nothing incomplete should have the final goal assigned to it. But perhaps children's serious study might be thought to serve their play when they've become grown, fully developed men. If that's so, why should they learn music themselves, instead of, like the kings of Persia and³⁵ Media, sharing its pleasure and learning through others who perform it? Those who have made this their work and skill must produce better results than those who spend only enough time on it to learn. If people must work at these things themselves, they should also prepare for themselves the things involved in⁴⁰ cooking dishes. But that's absurd. The same difficulty arises if music can improve character. Why must people learn it themselves,

rather than^{1339b1} listen to others and learn to enjoy and judge it rightly, like the Laconians? Although they don't learn it, they can still, they say, judge rightly which tunes are good and which aren't. The same argument applies if music should be used for a good life⁵ and a free person's way of spending time. Why should people learn it themselves instead of enjoying others' performances? We can consider what we believe about the gods. In the poets, Zeus doesn't himself sing or play the lyre. In fact, we call people who do these things mere laborers, and regard performing as unfitting¹⁰ for a man unless he's drunk or playing.

But perhaps we should examine these matters later. The first question is whether music should be included in education or not, and which of the three things we've discussed it can provide: education, play, or a way to spend our time. It's reasonably assigned to all of them, and^{1339b15} clearly has a share in them. Play is for the sake of rest, and rest must be pleasant, since it's a kind of cure for the pain that hard work causes. Everyone agrees that the way we spend our time must involve not only the noble but also pleasure, since happiness consists of both.²⁰ We all say that music is among the most pleasant things, both instrumental music alone and music with singing. Musaeus too says that "singing is most pleasant for mortals." So people reasonably bring music into their gatherings and the way they spend their time, because it can give delight.

From this too one might conclude that learning²⁵ music is necessary for younger people. Harmless pleasures are suitable not only for the final goal but also for rest. People rarely reach the final goal, but they often rest and use play, not just to prepare for more work but also³⁰ for pleasure. So it would be useful to rest in the pleasures that music provides.

People have come to make play their goal. Perhaps the goal too contains some pleasure, though not just any pleasure. In seeking that pleasure, people take this one to be it, because, compared with the goal of our actions,^{1339b35} it bears some resemblance. The goal isn't chosen for the sake of anything in the future. These pleasures too aren't for the sake of anything in the future, but for things in the past, such as effort and pain. For seeking happiness through these pleasures, one could reasonably suppose this to be⁴⁰ the reason. But people seem to take part in music not for this reason alone, but also because it's useful for resting. Still, we must ask whether perhaps^{1340a1} this is only incidental,

and music's nature is more valuable than the use we've described. We shouldn't just share in the common pleasure it gives, which everyone perceives. Music has a natural pleasure, so people of every age^{1340a5} and every character enjoy using it. We must also see whether it contributes in any way to character and the soul. This would be clear if it made us have characters of a certain kind. That it does so is clear from many other things, and especially from Olympus's¹⁰ tunes. Everyone agrees that these make souls inspired, and inspiration is an emotional state of the soul's character. Also, everyone who listens to imitations comes to share the feelings they represent, even apart from the rhythms and tunes themselves.

Since music is among pleasant things,^{1340a15} and virtue concerns taking pleasure, loving, and hating rightly, clearly nothing needs to be learned and made a habit more than judging rightly and taking pleasure in good characters and noble actions. Rhythms and tunes contain likenesses very close to the real natures of anger²⁰ and gentleness, courage and self-control, all their opposites, and the other qualities of character. The facts show this: our souls change when we listen to such things. Getting used to feeling pain and pleasure in likenesses comes close to having, toward reality, the same²⁵ response. For example, if

someone enjoys looking at an image of a person for no other reason than the form itself, he must also enjoy looking at the person whose image he is viewing. Among things perceived by the senses, the other kinds contain no likeness of character: for example, things³⁰ we touch and taste. Visible things contain a little. There are forms of this kind, but only to a small extent, and not everyone shares this perception. Besides, these aren't likenesses of character. The forms and colors that appear are rather signs of character, and these signs appear³⁵ in emotional states. Still, since looking at these too makes some difference, the young shouldn't look at the works of Pauson, but at those of Polygnotus and of any other painter or sculptor who expresses character. But tunes themselves contain imitations of character. (This is clear:⁴⁰ the musical modes, or arrangements of notes, differ in their very nature. Those who listen to them are affected differently and don't respond in the same way to each. Some make them more mournful^{1340b1} and more restrained,

Book VIII, 1340b–1342b



for example, with what is called the Mixolydian mode. With other modes their minds become softer, as with the relaxed modes. Another especially gives them a balanced and steady state of mind. The Dorian seems to be the only mode that does this. They become ecstatic,^{1340b5} however, with the Phrygian. Those who have studied this kind of education explain these things well. They take the evidence for their arguments from the facts themselves). The same holds for rhythms. Some have a more settled character, others a more active one. Of the active rhythms, some have coarser¹⁰ movements, others movements more suited to free people. These facts make it clear that music can give the soul's character a particular quality. If it can do this, then clearly young people should be introduced to music and educated in it. It suits the nature of people at this age to learn¹⁵ music. Because they are young, they won't willingly put up with anything that gives them no pleasure, and music is naturally pleasant. We also seem to have a certain kinship with modes and rhythms. This is why many wise thinkers say either that the soul is a harmony or that it has harmony.

^{1340b20} We must now discuss the question raised earlier: should the young learn by singing and playing instruments themselves, or not? Clearly, taking part in the actual performance makes a great difference to the kind of people they become. It is impossible, or at least difficult, for those who haven't taken part²⁵ in the performance to become good judges. Besides, children need something to occupy them. We should consider Archytas's rattle a good invention.

People give it to small children so that using it will keep them from breaking things around the house. The young can't keep still. This rattle suits³⁰ infants, while education is a rattle for older children. These points make it clear that music should be taught in a way that includes performing it. It isn't hard to distinguish what suits each age and what doesn't, or to answer those who say that studying music³⁵ is a menial activity. First, since people must take part in performing to learn to judge, they should perform when young, but stop performing when they grow older. Their learning in youth should enable them to judge what is noble and enjoy it in the right way.⁴⁰ As for the criticism some people make that music turns people into menial workers, it isn't hard to answer. We need to consider how much performing is appropriate for people whose virtue^{1341a1} is being developed for civic life,

and which melodies and rhythms they should perform. We also need to consider which instruments they should learn to play. This, too, is likely to make a difference. These points provide the answer to the criticism. There is nothing to prevent certain forms^{1341a5} of music from having the effect described. So it is clear that learning music must neither get in the way of people's later activities nor make their bodies those of menial workers, unfit for military and civic training, whether for use now or for use later.

This could be achieved^{1341a10} in learning if students didn't work at the skills needed for professional competitions, or at the dazzling and elaborate feats that have now entered competitions and passed from competitions into education. Even with less elaborate performances, they should go only far enough to be able to enjoy noble melodies and rhythms,¹⁵ not just what is common to all music. Some other animals, and also masses of slaves and children, enjoy only that common element. These points also make it clear which instruments should be used. We shouldn't introduce pipes into education, or any other professional instrument, such as the concert lyre or anything else of that kind. We should use²⁰ only instruments that will make the students good listeners, whether in musical education or in other education. Besides, the pipe isn't an instrument for building character; it is more an instrument of frenzy. So it should be used on occasions when attending a performance can bring purifica-

tion rather than learning. We should add that another feature counts against it in²⁵ education: playing the pipe prevents the player from speaking. This is why earlier generations were right to reject its use by the young and by free people, even though they had used it at first. Their prosperity gave them more leisure and made them more ambitious about virtue. Both earlier³⁰ and after the Persian Wars, their achievements filled them with pride. They took up every kind of learning, making no distinctions but seeking them all out. This is why they included pipe playing in their studies. In Lacedaemon, a chorus sponsor even played the pipe for the chorus himself. And in Athens it became so widespread that roughly the³⁵ majority of free people took part in it. The painting Thrasippus dedicated after sponsoring a chorus for Ecphantides makes this clear. Later, experience led people to reject pipe playing, as they became better able to judge what contributed to virtue and what didn't. They also rejected many old instruments,⁴⁰ such as pectis harps and barbitos lyres, and instruments aimed at giving pleasure to those who heard the players: seven-sided and triangular harps and^{1341b1} sambucas,

and all instruments that require skilled manual technique. The ancient story about pipes also makes sense. They say that Athena invented pipes and then threw them away. It isn't wrong to say that the goddess did this because^{1341b5} she disliked how they distorted her face. But the more likely reason is that learning to play the pipe does nothing for the mind, and we attribute knowledge and skill to Athena. We reject professional training in instruments and performance.¹⁰ (By professional training we mean training for competitions. Here the performer works not for his own virtue but for his listeners' pleasure, and a coarse pleasure at that. So we judge the activity unfit for free people and more like hired labor. It does turn performers into menial workers. It is a bad¹⁵ goal they set themselves. The audience is coarse and tends to change the music. So it shapes the character of the professionals who practice to please it. Through their movements, it also shapes their bodies.)

So we must now examine modes and rhythms.^{1341b20} Should all modes and all rhythms be used in education, or should we distinguish between them? Then, for those who work at music as part of their education, should we make

the same distinction, or do we need a third, different one? We see that music consists of melody and rhythm. We must understand²⁵ how each affects education, and whether we should prefer music with good melody or music with good rhythm. We think that some present-day musicians, and those philosophers who have experience of musical education, say many sound things about these matters. So we will leave³⁰ anyone who wants a detailed account of each point to seek it from them. For now, let's distinguish the kinds as a lawgiver would, giving only their general outlines.

We accept the division of melodies made by some philosophers. They classify some as shaping character, some as prompting action, and some as producing ecstatic excitement.^{1341b35} They also assign to each of these classes the modes whose nature suits it, a different mode for each class. We say that music should be used not for just one benefit, but for several. It serves education and purification. We use the word purification here without elaborating, but in our discussion of⁴⁰ poetry we will explain it more clearly. Third, music serves the spending of leisure, relaxation, and rest from strain.

^{1342a1} So clearly we should use all the modes, but not all in the same way. For education we should use those that do most to shape character. For listening to others perform, we should also use those that prompt action or produce ecstatic excitement. An⁵ emotion that affects some souls strongly is present in all souls, though to a greater or lesser degree. Pity and fear are examples, and so is ecstatic excitement. Some people are possessed by this excitement. We see from sacred melodies that when these people hear frenzied¹⁰ melodies that stir the soul, they settle down as though they had received treatment and purification. The same must happen to people who are prone to pity or fear, or to emotion generally, and to everyone else to the extent that each shares in such feelings. Everyone must experience some purification and feel relief¹⁵ with pleasure. In the same way, melodies that prompt action give people harmless enjoyment. So competitors who perform music in the theater should use modes and melodies of this kind. Audiences are of two kinds: one is free and educated, the other²⁰ coarse, made up of manual workers, hired laborers and others like them. We must provide competitions and performances for these people too, to let them

rest. Just as their souls have been twisted away from their natural state, there are also distorted modes and melodies that are tense and unnaturally colored.²⁵ What gives each group pleasure is what naturally suits it. So performers should be allowed to use music of this sort for audiences of this kind. For education, however, as we have said, we should use melodies that shape character and the corresponding modes. One such mode³⁰ is the Dorian, as we said earlier. We should also accept any other mode recommended by people who combine philosophical study with musical education. But Socrates in the Republic is wrong to keep only the Phrygian mode alongside the Dorian, especially after rejecting^{1342b1} the pipe among instruments.

The Phrygian has the same effect among modes as the pipe has among instruments. Both produce frenzy and strong emotion. Poetry shows this. All frenzy in the worship of Bacchus and all excitement of that sort^{1342b5} find their main instrument in pipes. Among modes, Phrygian melodies give these things their proper expression. Poetry shows this: The dithyramb, for example, is generally agreed to be Phrygian. Experts in this field give many examples. Among others, they say that Philoxenus tried, in¹⁰ the Dorian mode, to compose his dithyramb, The Mysians, but couldn't. The nature of the composition itself drove him back into the Phrygian, the mode that suited it. Everyone agrees that the Dorian is the steadiest mode and has the most courageous character. Besides, we praise the middle between extremes¹⁵ and say we should pursue it. Since the Dorian has this character compared with the other modes, it is clear that Dorian melodies are more suitable for teaching the young.

There are two aims: what is possible and what is suitable. Each person should use what is possible and what suits them.^{1342b20} These things also depend on age. For example, people weakened by age find it hard to sing the tense modes. Nature suggests the relaxed modes for people of that age. So some musical experts are also right to criticize Socrates on this point. He rejected the relaxed modes²⁵ for amusement, treating them as intoxicating. This wasn't because they have the effect of drunkenness. Drunkenness produces religious frenzy instead. It was because they are enfeebled. So, with a view to the later stage of life, old age, we should also study modes and melodies of this sort.

Further,³⁰ we should study any mode that suits childhood because it can provide both orderly behavior and education. The Lydian seems to do this more than any other mode. Clearly, then, we should set these three standards for education: the middle, the possible and the suitable.