

Aristotle. *Politics*. Translated by Jonathan Barnes. Cambridge, U. K.: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) arrived in Athens from Macedonia in 367. Aristotle's father was Nichomachus, a physician to the royal court of Macedon. Aristotle studied at Plato's Academy for twenty years, until Plato's death in 347. When Plato died, Aristotle returned to Macedonia to become the tutor of Alexander. In 344, Aristotle returned to Athens to found the Lyceum. Aristotle remained in Athens the rest of his life. Aristotle's spouse, Pythias, died in 335. Aristotle lived the rest of his life with his slave, Herpyllis. Aristotle's son by Herpyllis was named Nichomachus. Aristotle died in 322 of a digestive disorder.

Aristotle continues his discussion of the good life, which he commenced in the *Nichomachean Ethics*, turning to consider that constitution of political life which best supports a life in common that is good. [In this epitome, the Greek work *polis* has been rendered "town," since I deem that word most like the concept Aristotle entertained: a community of persons whose number and locale can be taken in at a single glance.]

Book I. 1. Every town is a community aimed at some good. People do what they hope will benefit them. Towns differ in kind from big families. Towns seek what is the good for all, and so constitute the highest good because it embraces all other goods. To understand anything, disassemble it to its simplest components and investigate how those components grow or develop. 2. That men rule women and slaves is natural, but women stand above slaves. From these relationships arise families. Union of families creates villages. Union of several villages creates a town, which is self-sufficient and aims at producing the good life for its citizens. Man alone has language and morality, and so when he associates, man makes towns. Human sociality logically precedes the human member, for the whole always precedes its parts. Those who live outside towns are beasts or gods. Nature makes men social. Those who are not are the worst of creatures, since they distort their powers to do wrongs. Justice orders human society. Towns exist to administer justice. 3. Households form the foundation of towns. Their components are husband and wife, master and slave, father and children. People disagree about the appropriate relations of these components. 4. Administering a household entails acquiring property to provide what is necessary to its members. Slaves are living property, taking such actions as they are commanded for the benefit of the family. 5. Some people are born to be slaves. Women are by nature subject to men, as are slaves to masters. 6. Some slavery is conventional, not natural. Some slaves are men taken in war, and so their masters are only stronger in violence or brutality. Where a slave naturally serves, he and his master are friends. Where a master compels a freeman to slavery, slave and master are enemies. 7. Masters and slaves each require instruction to exercise their proper stations. 8. Most get means to sustain themselves by means of herding or husbanding, stealing, fishing, farming, or hunting. Some acquire means by selling things to others. All animals Nature made for man. War, when it forces submission upon those in need of government, is just by nature. One requires enough property for the good life, but no more. 9. Objects have uses for which they were made, but they may also be bought and sold. The former is their proper use, the latter is no part of natural wealth acquisition. 10. Wealth-getting has proper limits, though in commerce, men behave as though there were no limits to wealth's utility. Such men live, but not well. For some, ever increasing wealth becomes an obsession. So, commerce is to be disdained, since it leads men to make money from men, not from nature. And the worst sort of commerce is usury. 11. One gets wealth, as a practical matter, by knowing live-stock and husbandry. Secondly, commerce, which concerns buying and selling goods, money, or labor, occupies many. Third, mining and harvest of natural resources creates wealth. Some create monopolies to get wealthy. Thales, for example, leased all the olive presses when he foresaw a great harvest, and then rented them to all when there need was great at high prices. Philosophers could be wealthy if they wished. 12. Men rule women as better-qualified equals, but children absolutely, as would a king rule subjects. Fathers rule children by love and respect of the elder of their family. 13. But do slaves, women, and children not share in the excellences that make a free man free? If they share excellences, why should they never rule themselves? Slaves lack deliberation, and women authority, and children maturity. Each should be ruled in a manner that

fulfils the function of each. The family is the foundation of the town; excellent families contribute to excellent towns, and, hence, to a good life for all. Aristotle turns to the ideal form of the town.

Book II. 1. Aristotle aims to address the shape of the town best suited to help its citizens realize their ideal life. He will consider the constitutions of existing towns, but suspects that all existing constitutions are deficient.

Aristotle first criticizes the eccentric communism that **Plato**, his teacher, advocated. 2. First, a community of women is problematical. Second, Plato's scheme is impractical. The principal that everyone should be as united as possible fails to consider how much diversity exists and is necessary. Their differences mean that all should rule in succession, which type of rule will preserve communities. 3. Communism of property will not eradicate the necessity of owning or remove the impulse "mine" from the human soul. People fail to take care of property that is not theirs, and share little interest in the common weal. Some will rely on others to do all the work. Eradicating families will not work. People know their own and prefer the comforts of kin. 4. Plato's scheme would remove the restraints that family imposes upon assault and crime. Plato, oddly, forbids free heterosexual intercourse, but permits liberal homosexual intercourse. This latter is improper. All of Plato's laws about women and children will disrupt communities. Socrates believed friendship the core value and greatest good of towns, since it prevents revolutions. Choosing guardians at birth and spiriting them from their families will prove difficult and unworkable. 5. Should citizens hold property in common? People work differently; those who toil often will complain of those who toil seldom. Property should be private, but the owner should offer it as freely as he can to friends and those in need. Legislators should seek to produce in men that sort of generosity. Liberality as a virtue would vanish in common ownership, since none would possess the means to enact it. Plato's communism makes it appear to thoughtless people that all men magically become mutual friends, and wickedness related to private property will vanish from the earth. It is not so. There can be too much unity. Men differ, and should be joined into a town by means of common education. If communism were good, there would be some evidence of its goodness in human experience. Most of what can be known is known, though it is not always well utilized. Socrates says much of guardians, but little of the life of citizens in his polis. Are they too to be communists? Are their wives and children held in common? If commoners do not live as do guardians, guardians will become the caretakers of a hostile populace. If women are in common, who will care for households? Plato denies his guardians happiness. If they cannot be happy, how can anyone else in the town? Plato's *Republic* proposes many impossibilities. 6. In Plato's later work, *Laws*, he settles other questions, but inadequately. Plato presupposes the constitution of each work to be the same, but it is not. He adjusts some numbers, which prove, upon reflection, to be impossible. A town needs sufficient military force to cow its neighbors, at least from attacking. Plato fails to regulate population, so as population grows, wealth declines, and poverty looms, which is ever the source of revolution and crime. Plato also entertains increase of property, but fails to address the practical problems of this admission. Plato chose a polity that is both democracy and tyranny, the worst of governments. The scheme tends toward oligarchy. 7. Some philosophers agree that property should be held in common, such as **Phaleus of Chalcidon**. But there will be some increase, which Plato limits to five times the original quantum. Towns have experimented with property measures, limiting sale and purchases of land. Such property laws should not only equalize property among citizens, but show concern that no one has too much property in an absolute sense. One needs equal education as much as equalized property. Crime arises from lack of means, but also from lack of honor. Some desire more than life's necessities, and so injure neighbors to get it. All people should meet their needs by owning moderate possessions, having temperate habits, and seeking solace in philosophy. The truly great crimes are committed by men seeking excess, not by men suffering want. One must not forget neighbors. A town should be organized to repel its neighbors militarily. Its wealth should be sufficient to supply members and repel invaders, but not so great as to tempt neighbors to attack, nor so small as to make the town an easy target. Human greed is limitless. One tames it only by being trained to nobler pursuits. Those who cannot be trained must be restrained. Phaleus focuses on land, to the neglect of equalizing all other sorts of property. 8. **Hippodamus of Miletus**, the eccentric, planned what he took to be the best of cities. It comprised ten thousand members, split equally between soldiers, artisans, and farmers. Land

was equally divided between sacred, public, and private uses. There exist three types of lawsuits: insult, injury, and homicide, with a single court of appeal. Aristotle objects that the soldier class will enslave the others, and each class will leak into the others. Hippodamus's judicial scheme is needlessly arbitrary; let judges judge simply. Laws should change when they offer substantial improvement, but not arbitrarily. The main force of law is habit, which takes time to establish itself and is disrupted by change. 9. All laws should tend toward the perfect town, and should conform to the ideal the lawgiver has set before the townsmen. There are always problems hobbling towns in their pursuit of secure leisure, for example, when slaves rebel or women indulge license. In **Sparta**, women indulge themselves about as much as men discipline themselves. Their property laws reduce the number of citizens, while their family policy encourages large numbers of children, which dilutes wealth. Spartan legislators (*ephors*) often fall into bribes, because they are poor men to begin with. Spartan judges hold office for life, but minds grow old as do bodies. Some take bribes; they are unaccountable. Judges should be appointed, not elected. Spartan kings should be chosen for their personal life and ethical behavior. The cost of common meals in Sparta excludes some of the poor, thereby defeating its purpose. The constitution of Sparta cares only for victory in war. The Spartans demand great wars, but are unwilling to pay for them. 10. The constitution of **Crete** resembles the Spartan, as do their institutions, though their common meals are better ordered since they are free to all. Corruption in their government makes of them a functional dynasty. 11. **Carthage** has a constitution somewhat like that of Sparta. Their government is stable and popular. The leaders are chosen for merit and wealth, and the people have a justly limited voice in affairs of government. Men who rule best should rule. All higher classes should have leisure, and avoid shameful behavior. Carthage is an oligarchy. 12. **Solon of Athens** is said to have established Athenian democracy, but it pre-existed him. He let the people choose judges, which destroyed the aristocrats, to the detriment of Athens. Philolaus of Corinth set laws that kept the number of propertied people from expanding. Charondas gave laws against perjury. Draco left laws with severe punishments. Pittacus made drunken crime more punishable than sober crime. Andromachus of Rhegium legislated for the Chalcidians of Thrace. There is nothing noteworthy in his work.

Book III. 1. What is a town? Towns comprise citizens, who administer justice and hold offices. So a town is citizens administering their own life together. 2. Some argue that citizenship is heritable from mother and father, or mother or father. Such definitions fall when considering original citizens or citizens named after revolutions. 3. The concept of a town harbors some ambiguities. One may say that the polis is a partnership among citizens under a constitution. When the constitution changes, the town changes. 4. Are good men and good citizens identical? Members are partners in community. Each has special skills, but all are charged with saving the community. The community lies in its constitution. Since these are of many different sorts, the good citizen must be different from community to community. But a good man is everywhere the same. So, good men are not identical to good citizens. Rulers should be good and wise; citizens need not be wise. Excellent citizens know both how to obey and how to rule. They avoid demeaning labor, so as to maintain the distinction between free and slave. Rulers should excel in practical wisdom. 5. All persons necessary to a town's existence cannot be citizens. Necessary people, those who do the labor of the community, are best not admitted to citizenship. Laborers lack the necessary excellences to be citizens. Some towns deviate from these prescriptions, admitting various persons due to lack of population. 6. Aristotle considers the various types of town constitutions. Man is essentially social, and forms groups for mere pleasure and to achieve common goals of well-being. Such well-being is the prime purpose of member and town life. Men used to trade off control of government, each taking care of the others' interests. Now, some wish permanent office, for their own benefit. These are not true governments, based in common interest and justice, but perverse forms, given to despotism. 7. Governments grant control to the many, the few, or the one. In kingship, one rules. In aristocracy, a few rule. In constitutional government, the many rule. Kingships degenerate into tyranny. Aristocracy degenerates in oligarchy. Constitutional government degenerates into democracy. Each perversion takes as its goal the good of a minority, not the whole. 8. The core issue in governmental characterization is wealth. Where the poor rule, regardless of their number, that is democracy. Where the rich rule, regardless of their number, that is aristocracy. 9. The concepts of justice differ between

democracies and oligarchies. Oligarchs conceive justice as equality among equals. Poor people are not equals. The town exists to create the good life of men within that town, not elsewhere, and not for those unequal to the task. A town is an association of friends, freely untaken, among intermarrying families for the purpose of creating among those friends a good life. Being a town requires more than proximity or interactions. Citizens, in their essence, contribute greatly to the weal of town life. Citizenship exceeds mere living together or nobility of birth or wealth. 10. Redistribution of wealth destroys towns. It is unjust. If only the good rule, then the others stand dishonored, which again leads to poor outcomes. 11. When members share rule, the collective wisdom exceeds that of any individual member, becoming one man with many heads and hands. Democracy endangers the town because common men are more subject to error and dishonesty, but if excluded from government, then they become enemies of the town. Common men should hold office, but never alone. But commoners should not elect judges or hold them to account, except possibly in groups. Thus considered, democracy on the whole may be defensible, provided commoners join deliberative groups and work together. Overall, all rulers of any sort should follow law, and speak only when law fails to address difficult matters. Laws must be adapted to the constitutions in which those laws function. 12. Justice consists in equality for equals. In towns, what matters is not beauty or birth, but good government. So, as wealthy and well-born men bring means and knowledge of freedom to office, the poor may bring heroism and justice with them. 13. The most potent claims to office are education and excellence. Other claims to office hold less or no force. When there arises a plainly pre-eminent man, excelling all others, no laws apply. He cannot be judged by the common standards, since they demean him. He is, really, no longer a part of the town. Ostracism has excluded those who rise above the mettle of their towns, banishing those persons for a time. Failing that, such excellent persons unbalance a town, distorting it. If not banished, such a man should be king for life. 14. Kingships are a true form of government, but they come in a variety. Some act as generals, for life or in heredity. Foreign kings are often mere tyrants, foreigners being more docile than Hellenes. Greeks have tolerated elective tyrants. Some Greek heroes became kings and the people voluntarily submitted to their expansive rule. Finally, a man controls his own household as a king does a town. 15. Is it best to have one man rule in all things? Every king needs laws, but law is passionless, and fails to address the heart of men. Yet, men, especially when alone, sway before their passions and are misled. The many fall into corruption less often than the one. If a group of good men can be found, their aristocratic rule will be better than that of one good man, a king. When rulers begin raiding the public treasury to benefit themselves, then each form of government collapses into its degenerate form: tyranny, oligarchy, or democracy. 16. Many argue that having one ruler among equals violates equity; all should rule in turn, which is a law. The rule of law leaves small matters to be determined by judges. Where men intrude, there desire imperils reason. Laws emerge by custom and by being written down. Should the best man or the best law rule? Laws cannot anticipate all life's permutations. But men can be corrupted. 17. Different peoples need different governments: the excellent need kings, the well-bred need aristocracy, and the warlike crowd needs constitutional government of many. The superior citizen may well be king, even his whole family. 18. When a man or a group becomes good, he or they can shape a town to create excellent life. [The text at this juncture suffers a lacuna, which is often linked to the first sentence of Book VII. The order of the books of the *Politics* is disputed among scholars.]

Book IV. 1. A science pertains to a subject. In government, its science considers the best government, as well as what would be best under existing circumstances. Political writers often neglect practicality in their prescriptions. A good theory of the town should be possible to apply in practice and attainable with some ease. Laws cannot be the same in different types of government. So, the political theorist should know the number and types of constitutions of towns. 2. Tyranny is the worst form of government, then oligarchy, then democracy. 3. Towns contain diverse elements: families, rich and poor, soldiers and workers, people of various ranks, and so forth. There are, therefore, numerous sorts of constitutions that arrange necessary offices, who holds them, and how groups participate in a town. To broadly group constitutions, there are oligarchies and democracies. 4. In democracies, the free men rule. In oligarchies, the rich rule. Every town has many parts: farmers, artisans, traders, laborers, soldiers, the wealthy, the poor, public administrators, and judges. Aristotle distinguishes his from Plato's list in the *Republic*.

Democracies differ in whether the law is supreme, or demagogues may sway the town to their will. 5. Oligarchies are also distinguished by who holds office and under what terms. The two forms of government can also take the flavor of the other in their practical administration, especially after revolutions. 6. Farmers tend to follow laws when they rule, since their labors preclude attending assemblies. Democracies change form as wealth allows more and more members to participate in public deliberations. Oligarchies diverge over the relative wealth and stability of the class of rulers. 7. Aristocracies call the best men to rule. 8. Constitutional governments are a pure form, seldom achieved. In any government, matters depend on citizens obeying good laws. If citizens do not obey, or the laws are not good, poor outcomes ensue. 9. Features of oligarchic and democratic may intermingle, as in the Spartan constitution. 10. Tyrannies take various forms, depending upon how the tyrant takes power. All feature arbitrary rule by one man. 11. What is the best town and form of life for most men? As Aristotle asserted in the *Nichomachean Ethics*, the good life is excellence without obstacles, and excellence is a mean available to all. The same applies to towns and their constitutions. Among people, the middle sort is best. The rich never learn obedience. The poor are too distracted to learn much of anything. The middle class rules best. They make crime and factions less likely. 12. What kind of government suits different sorts of men? Legislators should aim laws at the middle class, for these people mediate the differences of rich and poor, who will never trust one another. The rich are most dangerous; they will destroy a town's constitution with their avarice. 13. Oligarchies make it easy for the poor to fail to attend public business. Democracies make it easy for the poor to participate. Generally, ill-treatment of the poor is commonplace. It occurs wherever the middle class is weak. 14. Every constitution contains provisions about who deliberates public affairs, administration of those affairs, and who judges those affairs. The various forms of democracy differ in each detail from the various forms of oligarchy. 15. What of the number and distribution of offices? Offices are held by persons assigned to deliberate and command. To appoint a person to office, one must know who will make the appointment, from which candidates, and by what means. The answers mix and match, and correspond to the various forms of government. 16. Eight different sorts of law courts and judges exist, one for each different category of concern. Judges are selected in various modes from various parts of the population or the whole.

Book V. 1. What causes revolutions? Oligarchs and democrats differ in their view of the nature of equality, democrats finding equality lies in existing, while oligarchs find property to be essential. When both govern, revolutions grow likely. Each wishes to change things to make them more like their conceptions. Both are wrong. States based on one or the other conception of equality fail. Both conceptions of equality are necessary. Democracies suffer fewer revolutions, in general, and so is the safest form of imperfect constitution, especially where the middle class is large. 2. The poor revolt to be equal; the rich revolt to prove superiority. Men also revolt for money, honor, maldistribution of wealth, and fear, and to dislodge people who behave insolently, with hatred, with avarice, by intrigue, and with neglect. 3. Aristotle explains the revolutionary tendency of insolence and avarice, then superior force and fear. Small changes to a constitution that have an unintended large effect cause revolution, as does intermixing races that do not rapidly acquire a shared spirit. Revolution can also spring when the town's geography is ill-adapted to unity. Generally, revolutions most often occur where there are moral differences among people, or great differences in wealth. 4. Personal disputes among civic leaders can lead to revolution, as these men rally factions to support them. Revolutions also occur when one part of a town wins great power or respect, or when the middle class dwindles, leaving only rich versus poor. The methods of revolting consist in force and fraud. 5. Revolutions in democracies generally are caused by bombastic demagogues, who sometimes become tyrants following upheaval. 6. Oligarchies suffer revolution when the rulers oppress the poor, or when the oligarchs fight among themselves. 7. Aristocratic revolutions occur when rulers tightly limit city honors, or when some suffer great poverty while others roll in wealth, or when constitutional defects work injustices. Governments are stable only when citizens believe that equality according to merit should guide the town, and every man should enjoy his own property. 8. To preserve constitutions, nurture obedience to laws, and treat all men without offense or superiority. When people fear external enemies, they keep the constitution inviolate. Constitutional qualifications for office should be adjusted to economic changes in a town. Honors should be doled out slowly; many men cannot

well-manage prosperity. If a man garners too much honor or money, he should be banished. Foster a prosperous middle class to stifle revolutions of poor against rich or rich against poor. Keep office-holders from making money. Foster rules that raise some poor to wealth. Let no rich man insult the poor. 9. Officeholders must be loyal to the constitution, show administrative ability, and understand justice as it applies in their town. In preserving a town's constitution, insure that loyal members exceed disloyal in power. Imperfect governments may prove good enough, provided that no principles are pushed to extremes. One can find that revolution leaves a town altogether without government. Most, all towns should discipline themselves to educate their young in the wisdom of the town's government. Oligarchies should train their young to live well and ease the toil of the poor. Democracies should train their young to participate and to be devoted to public well-being. For some democrats misconstrue freedom as doing whatever one pleases. True freedom consists in life under a town's constitution. 10. Monarchies suffer the same degradations as do constitutional governments. Aristocrats choose a king from their own to guard against the people. The people choose a tyrant from among available demagogues to protect the people from aristocrats. Tyrants suffer the vices of both oligarchy and democracy. A tyrant seeks only wealth and to destroy the aristocracy. Attacks upon royalty emerge from anger, sexual jealousy, affronts to honor and reputation, broken promises, outrages, contempt, or ambition. Attacks from without and dissension within destroy tyrannies. 11. Monarchies are preserved by limitation on royal power. Tyrannies endure where the tyrant kills superior men and cows the populace with spies, poverty, and taxes. Everywhere the tyrant seeks to humiliate his subjects, generate mistrust between them, and render them incapable of action. Tyrants also preserve themselves by appearing to be good kings. They should pretend to care about the public coffers, behave with dignity, and seem to be great warriors. They should hide their vices, do public works, and pretend religious fastidiousness. They must avoid outrages against the young, and insult no one in such a manner that the humbled person will retaliate without concern for surviving the assault. Generally, the tyrant should deceive his people that he is a king. 12. Tyrannies and oligarchies tend to be short-lived. Aristotle criticizes Plato's treatment of revolution in the Republic for its numerical mumbo-jumbo and its historical inaccuracies and insufficient categorizations.

Book VI. 1. Democracies have various characters, determined by the characteristics of their populations and the combination of their elements. 2. Democracies value liberty, meaning men may live as they please. All rule and are ruled in turn, judging every man the equal of all others. Office holders are paid in democracies, so the poor can serve. Offices are time-limited. The poor rule with the rich, equally. 3. Democrats want power distributed according to a headcount, while oligarchs want power distributed according to wealth. The great problem lies in getting those with power to avoid using it whenever they please. 4. Democracies best serve farmers. In democracy, responsibility causes the right people to rule and the masses to have their due. Pastoral people are also served well by democracy. The weakest form of democracy includes the maximum number of people, both legitimate and illegitimate, making citizens of all. These disorderly supporters constitute a fragile town. 5. Preserving a democracy requires good laws. Trials should be few, and frivolous suits should be punished. Assemblies should be infrequent, and courts sit but few days. The poor should be helped by creating general prosperity, but not given money regularly. They just squander it. 6. Oligarchies form as do constitutional governments. They rely on good order to preserve them, and should admit to citizenship only those of excellent qualifications. 7. Oligarchies are well-suited to military cavalry and forces of heavy infantry. 8. Governmental offices must tend to preserve good order and unity. Every town requires an office to care for the market, buildings and roads, affairs outside the town, collection of taxes, recorder of contracts and documents, effecting punishments, military functions, auditing use of public money, and political deliberations. Religious officials are also needed.

Book VII. 1. The best town helps men lead the best lives their circumstances permit. To be happy, one requires some goods, health, and a good soul. A well-educated and virtuous mind with a moderate amount of goods is most likely to make a man happy. One who cares well cares first for his soul. Happiness is proportional to excellence and wisdom, and the acts that accompany each. 2. The same structures that make a man happy make a town happy. Political persons have

many views, but all seek to maintain power. Many towns have fostered killing and militarism. Aristotle finds this odd. Men want justice for themselves, but are happy to dispense with it in relation to outsiders. Only those born to serve should be enslaved. One can imagine a town that refuses to subject others, as a moral proposition. War is not a legitimate purpose in itself, but only as a means to an end. The proper end of human community is happy participation in the good life.

3. Some seek to withdraw; others seek to participate in political life. Both have good points. Ruling over others, especially despotically, demeans all. But inaction is counterproductive. Happiness entails activity. If one lacks wise and excellent action, his rule is pointless, injuring all. The good man lets all equals share equally. All, both towns and members, should seek active life.

4. What physical means are required for the perfect town? The number of persons necessary is adjusted to the terrain they inhabit. There should be no more persons that can be governed well, for the object of the town is creating the good life for citizens. A town should have no more members than that which makes the town self-sufficient and can be viewed in their entirety in a single glance.

5. The territory of a town must support self-sufficiency and enable the inhabitants to live in self-control and with considerable free time for contemplation. The land should permit easy access to inhabitants, but difficult approach to enemies. One should be able to view the entirety of a town's territory in a single view. The land should have sea and overland accesses to facilitate trade and protection.

6. Most towns need a port, and should have a moderate fleet.

7. What should be the character of the citizens? Northern Europeans are spirited but stupid. Asians are intelligent but submissive. But Greeks are both spirited and intelligent. The Greek towns are well-governed. If united into a single government, the Hellenes could rule the world. Passion leads a person to friendship and love, but also to bitterness and hatred. Useful passion is fierce when aimed at those who do evil. In all matters pertaining to population, territory, and character, we should aim for no more specificity than theory permits.

8. Property is no proper part of a town. The town is a community of equals seeking as good a life as circumstances permit. As men differ, so their attempts to fashion life together differ. All seek to flourish. To flourish, men require food, tools, weapons, money, religion, and deliberation about moral matters. A town is not merely men living together, but their union for the purpose of living well in self-sufficiency.

9. The best towns are governed by its leisured class, not its laborers or artisans or farmers. Warriors are younger citizens, judges and rulers are older citizens. Only citizens should own property. The priesthood should go to citizens who have retired due to old age, whether rulers or warriors.

10. Farmers and soldiers should be distinct classes within any society. Many older traditions have been invented several times, often deriving from the most ancient of all, Egypt. Always, use what exists of culture and improve it. Aristotle opposes communal ownership of land, but encourages common use by agreement. No citizen should lack subsistence. Every town should have common meals open to all, and free to the poor. The cost of religious rites should be borne by the town. The border land, which is vulnerable to intrusions of neighboring towns during war, should be divided among all citizens or farmed by slaves and foreigners.

11. Every town requires four attributes: a) health, which is gotten by good land and pure water; b) strongholds suited to their type of constitution, c) walls supporting citizen valor when they are outnumbered by opponents, and d) careful preparation for war, since enemies never begin assaults when they know a town is prepared.

12. Town walls should be punctuated by guard towers. Create worship on high places, and an exercise agora and a trade agora in the low places below. Aristotle considers other specific arrangements, but thinks he is wasting ink.

13. As to town constitutions, the critical things are choosing the right end and the right means to that end. Good lives require some external possessions, more in poor states, less in good ones. Happiness consists in the good man exercising his excellence. The good town emerges from the knowledge and choices of its excellent citizens. A man acquires excellence by nature, habit, and reason. Legislators and educators affect the greatest degree of change in members.

14. No man is so plainly superior to others that he alone should rule. All must take turns governing. To do otherwise risks revolution. Men are divided, the rational part and everything else. Both parts must be good to create a good man. So too life itself is divided into business and leisure, war and peace, useful and honorable. These divisions are those the legislator must keep in mind, ever driving the town toward the better parts, keeping in mind the vast differences among people and their actions. No legislator should teach war alone. War may be necessary, but peace is better, especially with philosophic leisure.

15. To acquire philosophic leisure, one must acquire many things first. Find courage to resist those who would

enslave you. Leisure depends upon justice and self-control also. Careful reason is the aim toward which human nature strains; education should assist this effort. We train children first to control their bodies and appetites, then reason blossoms to augment the soul. 16. Children emerge from marriages, so who and when people marry matters to the legislator. Men inseminate until seventy; women bear until fifty. Marriage should conform to that pattern. No woman should bear when too young, since many such die. Men should marry at thirty-seven years; women at eighteen. All should marry in the winter months. Parents should work hard, but not in a manner that is boring or repetitive. Pregnant women should exercise and eat well; their minds should be quiet, for babies acquire the nature of the mothers. No deformed children shall be permitted to live. The legislator shall set limits to the number of children a couple may have. Excess children shall be aborted before their sense and life commence. No man should sire children after he is fifty-five. Such will be weak. Avoid adultery, and punish those who transgress. 17. In caring for infants, feed them milk and little wine. Accustom infants to cold to harden them. Indeed, early on, gradually accustom the infant to every manner of discomfort, so the child learns to endure. With toddlers, do not demand study or work, but let them play appropriately. Take care what stories the youths hear, choosing those that prepare them for later life. Let children bawl if they wish. Leave children seldom with slaves. Do not let children say indecent things; these lead to shameful acts. Ban shameful images and speech from the stage. Let no children hear poetry or comedic plays until they can drink strong wine at the public tables. Keep children from vice and hatred. Education has two periods, from seven to puberty, and from puberty to twenty-one years of age. Art and education complete what nature has left deficient.

Book VIII. 1. The first job of the legislator is to educate the young. By this emphasis, the legislator protects the town's constitution. All education should be the same for every child, publicly financed. Citizens belong to their towns, not to themselves. Each is a fragment of the town, and one cannot care for the whole without caring for each of its parts. 2. People differ about what education should teach: morality, intellectual skills, useful things, excellence. Avoid, above all, making education demeaning. All that is not excellent demeans, as does paid employment. 3. Reading, writing, gymnastic exercises, music, and drawing are the basics of education. Some question the role of music. Music teaches liberal nobility, and so should be retained. All action (and education) leads toward philosophic leisure. Leisure is not play, nor is it occupation with skills to make money. Leisure should be consumed with intellectual activity. 4. Potent physical training stunts young children. Education should, rather, focus on noble activities, and then only when grown should strict diets and demanding exercise enter education. Labors of mind and body compete with one another. One cannot simultaneously do justice to both. 5. We train children in music so they will be able to appreciate music when grown. Aristotle considers whether musical training is worthwhile or not. Music brings relaxation, intellectual pleasure, and education. Music represents, in tone and rhythm, emotions that pertain to the noble soul. Music has a moral tinge to a greater degree than other sensations. Since it helps form character, music should be part of childhood education. 6. Children should be taught not only to appreciate music, but also to perform it. This makes them future judges of musical performance. Children need not acquire a professional level of skills in music. Aristotle considers objections to the flute as an instrument. 7. All the musical modes assist in educating the young, but those expressive of character are best. The lower classes need less lofty musical performances. Every person should have two goals: to do what is possible and what is appropriate, always in a manner consistent with the age of the person. Music helps attain these goals. So, all education is based on three ideas: the mean, the possible, and what is suitable.