

received after the voting has begun. Then he proclaims again, "The pierced ballot for the plaintiff, the solid for the defendant"; and the juror, taking his two ballot balls from the stand, with his hand closed over the stem so as not to show either the pierced or the solid ballot to the litigants, casts the one which is to count into the brazen urn, and the other into the wooden urn.

69. When all the jurors have voted, the attendants take the urn containing the effective votes and discharge them on to a reckoning board having as many cavities as there are ballot balls, so that the effective votes, whether pierced or solid, may be plainly displayed and easily counted. Then the officials assigned to the taking of the votes tell them off on the board, the solid in one place and the pierced in another, and the crier announces the numbers of the votes, the pierced ballots being for the prosecutor and the solid for the defendant. Whichever has the majority is victorious; but if the votes are equal the verdict is for the defendant. Then, if damages have to be awarded, they vote again in the same way, first returning their pay-vouchers and receiving back their staves. Half a gallon of water is allowed to each party for the discussion of the damages. Finally, when all has been completed in accordance with the law, the jurors receive their pay in the order assigned by the lot.

### 17. Aristotle, *Politics* Book 1.1-2 and Books 7 and 8

It is ironic that the author of the *Politics*, who argues that true well-being can be achieved only by the leisured citizens of an autonomous polis, whose autonomy they are well able to preserve by their own efforts in war, should have lived his life as a resident alien in a variety of cities; that after Chaeronea he should have lived, not only in a polis that, like other Greek poleis of the time, was no longer able to maintain its autonomy, but as the protégé of one of the men who, as the events of the next few years made clear, had brought polis-autonomy to an end; and that, despite his years at the Macedonian court, he seems to have made little attempt to understand and analyze the Macedonian phenomenon that was developing before his eyes.

Book 1 translated by Sir Ernest Barker in *The Politics of Aristotle*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press. Books 7 and 8 translated by T. A. Sinclair in Aristotle, *The Politics*, Penguin Classics edition, 1962. © 1962 by the Estate of T. A. Sinclair. Reprinted by permission of Penguin Books Ltd.

### Book 1.1-2

1. Observation shows us, first, that every polis [or state]<sup>1</sup> is a species of association, and, secondly, that all associations are instituted for the purpose of attaining some good—for all men do all their acts with a view to achieving something which is, in their view, a good. We may therefore hold [on the basis of what we actually observe] that all associations aim at some good; and we may also hold that the particular association which is the most sovereign of all, and includes all the rest, will pursue this aim most, and will thus be directed to the most sovereign of all goods. This most sovereign and inclusive association is the polis, as it is called, or the political association.

It is a mistake to believe that the "statesman" [the *politikos*, who handles the affairs of a political association] is the same as the monarch of a kingdom, or the manager of a household, or the master of a number of slaves. Those who hold this view consider that each of these persons differs from the others not with a difference of kind, but [merely with a difference of degree, and] according to the number, or the paucity, of the persons with whom he deals. On this view a man who is concerned with few persons is a master: one who is concerned with more is the manager of a household: one who is concerned with still more is a "statesman," or a monarch. This view abolishes any real difference between a large household and a small polis; and it also reduces the difference between the "statesman" and the monarch to the one fact that the latter has an uncontrolled and sole authority, while the former exercises his authority in conformity with the rules imposed by the art of statesmanship and as one who rules and is ruled in turn. But this is a view which cannot be accepted as correct.

Our point will be made clear if we proceed to consider the matter according to our normal method of analysis. Just as, in all other fields, a compound should be analysed until we reach its simple and uncompounded elements (or, in other words, the smallest atoms of the whole which it constitutes), so we must also consider analytically the elements of which a polis is composed. We shall then gain a better insight into the difference from one another of the persons and associations just mentioned; and we shall also be in a position to discover whether it is possible to attain a systematic view of the general issues involved.

2. If, accordingly, we begin at the beginning, and consider things in the process of their growth, we shall best be able, in this as in other fields,

1. In this translation of *Politics* 1.1-2, explanatory material enclosed in brackets has been added by the translator, Sir Ernest Barker.

to attain scientific conclusions by the method we employ. First of all, there must necessarily be a union or pairing of those who cannot exist without one another. Male and female must unite for the reproduction of the species—not from deliberate intention, but from the natural impulse, which exists in animals generally as it also exists in plants, to leave behind them something of the same nature as themselves. Next, there must necessarily be a union of the naturally ruling element with the element which is naturally ruled, for the preservation of both. The element which is able, by virtue of its intelligence, to exercise forethought is naturally a ruling and master element; the element which is able, by virtue of its bodily power, to do what the other element plans is a ruled element, which is naturally in a state of slavery; and master and slave have accordingly a common interest. The female and the slave are naturally distinguished from one another. Nature makes nothing in a spirit of stint, as smiths do when they make the Delphic knife to serve a number of purposes: she makes each separate thing for a separate end; and she does so because each instrument has the finest finish when it serves a single purpose and not a variety of purposes. Among the barbarians, however, the female and the slave occupy the same position—the reason being that no naturally ruling element exists among them, and conjugal union thus comes to be a union of a female who is a slave with a male who is also a slave. This is why our poets have said,

Meet it is that barbarous peoples should be governed by the Greeks

—the assumption being that barbarian and slave are by nature one and the same.

The first result of these two elementary associations [of male and female, and of master and slave] is the household or family. Hesiod spoke truly in the verse,

First house, and wife, and ox to draw the plough,

for oxen serve the poor in lieu of household slaves. The first form of association naturally instituted for the satisfaction of daily recurrent needs is thus the family; and the members of the family are accordingly termed by Charondas "associates of the breadchest," as they are also termed by Epimenides the Cretan "associates of the manger." The next form of association—which is also the first to be formed from more households than one, and for the satisfaction of something more than daily recurrent needs—is the village. The most natural form of the village appears to be that of a colony or offshoot from a family; and some have thus called the members of the village by the name of "sucklings of the same milk," or, again, of "sons and the sons of sons." This, it may be noted, is the reason why each Greek polis was originally ruled—as the peoples of the barbarian world

still are—by kings. They were formed of persons who were already monarchical governed, for households are always monarchical governed by the eldest of the kin, just as villages, when they are offshoots from the household, are similarly governed in virtue of the kinship between their members. This primitive kinship is what Homer describes:

Each of them ruleth  
Over his children and wives,

a passage which shows that they lived in scattered groups, as indeed men generally did in ancient times. The fact that men generally were governed by kings in ancient times, and that some still continue to be governed in that way, is the reason that leads us all to assert that the gods are also governed by a king. We make the lives of the gods in the likeness of our own—as we also make their shapes.

When we come to the final and perfect association, formed from a number of villages, we have already reached the polis—an association which may be said to have reached the height of full self-sufficiency; or rather we may say that while it grows for the sake of mere life, it exists for the sake of a good life.

Because it is the completion of associations existing by nature, every polis exists by nature, having itself the same quality as the earlier associations from which it grew. It is the end or consummation to which those associations move, and the "nature" of things consists in their end or consummation; for what each thing is when its growth is completed we call the nature of that thing, whether it be a man or a horse or a family. Again the end, or final cause, is the best. Now self-sufficiency is the end, and so the best.

From these considerations it is evident that the polis belongs to the class of things that exist by nature, and that man is by nature an animal intended to live in a polis. He who is without a polis, by reason of his own nature and not of some accident, is either a poor sort of being, or a being higher than man: he is like the man of whom Homer wrote in denunciation:

Clanless and lawless and heartless is he.

The man who is such by nature at once plunges into a passion for war, he is in the position of a solitary advanced piece in a game of draughts.

The reason why man is a being meant for political association, in a higher degree than bees or other gregarious animals can ever associate, is evident. Nature, according to our theory, makes nothing in vain; and man alone of the animals is furnished with the faculty of language. The mere making of sounds serves to indicate pleasure and pain, and is thus a faculty that belongs to animals in general: their nature enables them to attain the

point at which they have perceptions of pleasure and pain, and can signify those perceptions to one another. But language serves to declare what is advantageous and what is the reverse, and it therefore serves to declare what is just and what is unjust. It is the peculiarity of man, in comparison with the rest of the animal world, that he alone possesses a perception of good and evil, of the just and the unjust, and of other similar qualities; and it is association in these things which makes a family and a polis.

We may now proceed to add that the polis is prior in the order of nature to the family and the individual. The reason for this is that the whole is necessarily prior to the part. If the whole body be destroyed, there will not be a foot or a hand, except in that ambiguous sense in which one uses the same word to indicate a different thing, as when one speaks of a "hand" made of stone; for a hand, when destroyed, will be no better than a stone "hand." All things derive their essential character from their function and their capacity; and it follows that if they are no longer fit to discharge their function, we ought not to say that they are still the same things, but only that, by an ambiguity, they still have the same names.

We thus see that the polis exists by nature and that it is prior to the individual. Not being self-sufficient when they are isolated, all individuals are so many parts all equally depending on the whole. The man who is isolated—who is unable to share in the benefits of political association, or has no need to share because he is already self-sufficient—is no part of the polis, and must therefore be either a beast or a god. There is therefore an immanent impulse in all men towards an association of this order. But the man who first *constructed* such an association was none the less the greatest of benefactors. Man, when perfected, is the best of animals; but if he be isolated from law and justice he is the worst of all. Injustice is all the graver when it is armed injustice; and man is furnished from birth with arms which are intended to serve the purposes of moral prudence and virtue, but which may be used in preference for opposite ends. That is why, if he be without virtue, he is a most unholy and savage being, and worse than all others in the indulgence of lust and gluttony. Justice belongs to the polis; for justice, which is the determination of what is just, is an ordering of the political association.

### Book 7

1. If we wish to discuss the Best State really adequately, we must first decide what is the most desirable life; for if we do not know that, the best constitution, which we seek, will also elude us. Those who live in a well-ordered society on the basis of their own resources may be expected, bar-

ring accidents, to be those whose lives proceed best. We must therefore first come to some agreement as to what is the most desirable life for all men, or nearly all, and then decide whether the same kind of life or some other is best for men, both in the mass and taken individually.

I have written a good deal elsewhere, including my outside writings, on the subject of the best life and I propose to make use of these now. Certainly no one will dispute one thing: that there are three ingredients which must all be present to make a happy life—our bodily existence, our intellectual and moral qualities, and all that is external to these. No one would deem happy a man who is entirely without courage or self-control or honesty or intelligence, who is scared of flies buzzing past, who will stop at nothing to gratify his desire for eating or drinking, who will ruin his closest friends for a paltry profit, and whose mind also is either as witless as a child's or as deluded as a lunatic's. But while there is general agreement about these three, there is much difference of opinion about their relative importance, the extent to which each ought to be present and whether there is a point beyond which any of them becomes excessive. Thus people suppose that it is sufficient to have a certain amount of goodness, ability, character, but that there is no limit set in the pursuit of wealth, power, property, reputation, and the like.

Our answer to such people will be twofold. First, it is easy to arrive at a firm conclusion on these matters by simply observing the facts; it is not by means of external goods that men acquire and keep the virtues but the other way round; and to live happily, whether men suppose it to consist in enjoyment or in qualities of character or in both, does in fact accrue more easily to those who are outstandingly well-equipped in character and intellect, and only moderately so in the possession of material goods, more easily, that is, than to those who have more goods than they need but are deficient in the other qualities. Second, the matter can be viewed theoretically as well as empirically and the same general view will be obtained. External goods, being like a collection of tools each useful for some purpose, have a limit; one can have too many of them, and that is of no benefit or even a positive nuisance to their possessors. It is quite otherwise with the goods of the mind; every single one of the mind's good qualities is needed and the more there is of each the more useful it will be. (I apply to these the term "useful" as well as the more usual "admirable.") So, putting it in general terms, we shall say that the best condition of anything in relation to any other condition of a thing is commensurate with the relations between the things themselves. Hence as the mind is superior (both absolutely and relatively to ourselves) both to possessions and to the body, its best condition will necessarily show a proportionate superiority over each