

**Chapter 1 : Richard Kraut: Department of Philosophy - Northwestern University**

*Aristotle (b. - d. BCE), was a Greek philosopher, logician, and scientist. Along with his teacher Plato, Aristotle is generally regarded as one of the most influential ancient thinkers in a number of philosophical fields, including political theory.*

May 22, Richard Kraut ed. Edited by Richard Kraut, it has sixteen chapters, all written by researchers who are currently working either on Aristotelian ethics or on topics of Ancient ethics closely related to it, and who have all recently published important contributions to the subjects they are analysing in this edition. The chapters cover almost all important points of the Nicomachean Ethics, giving the reader quite a good idea of its contents and achievements. The other chapters in the order in which they appear in the volume are: NE has a complex structure and one can always complain that some points are missed. One can regret, for instance, that this guide considers only greatness of soul since other particular virtues are worth investigating, especially courage, both for its central role in ancient morality and for the problem of the different kinds of courage that Aristotle discusses. Nonetheless since greatness of soul is treated in one chapter and justice in another, the volume covers the particular virtues fairly well. Some other points, though, seem to require scrutiny even in a volume that does not pretend to be exhaustive. And not only ethics: Admittedly this problem is more compelling in the Eudemian Ethics, so that it is not so surprising that it is not specifically treated in a guide focusing on the Nicomachean Ethics rather than Aristotelian ethics in general. Not two decades ago war still raged on the question of whether Aristotle committed a fallacy in the very beginning of NE I 2 a , when, allegedly, he tried to derive only one end for everything from the fact that everything tends to an end. Geach later identified the same fallacy in other thinkers. Gavin Lawrence makes just two brief remarks about the alleged fallacy, the second one, "it turns out to be virtually non-controversial that there is such a good" p. Price makes a still briefer allusion to the issues when he refers to "the end of ends of action" p. This stormy debate was closely connected to the problem, first framed by Hardie, of determining whether eudaimonia was an inclusive or a dominant end. The present volume has only a few references to this passage: Lawrence, however, treats the issue at some length pp. Such a reading is compatible with a focal structure within human excellences, where one excellence practical wisdom with its accompanying practical virtues is for the sake of another contemplation. This reading does not rule out the possibility of a certain kind of comprehensivist thesis, according to which the act of contemplation has to be chosen, so that, in addition to realizing the excellence of contemplating, we have also to assess the question whether in contemplating we are thereby acting well, and for this latter assessment practical wisdom is required. This discussion puts one back into the middle of another, already ancient, battle between the contemplative life and the practical life. This third controversy lurks behind all of the papers, though it has surely lost much of the fierce antagonism with which even recently it used to be expressed. That discussion divided commentators into two opposed camps: It seems now that it has lost some of its urgency, perhaps because all possible readings had become so entrenched that the whole discussion threatened to become barren. The sixteen chapters, each written by a different author, cannot be reviewed as a whole. Accordingly, I will focus on just one topic that is in some sense implicit in all ethical enquiry. This is the problem of method in ethics. In his essay on this topic, the editor, Richard Kraut, strongly argues for a dialectical method. According to him, the endoxic method "is a general method, not one to be used solely for investigating ethical topics. In any case, I will focus solely on its place in ethics, leaving aside the question of whether it can be expanded to other scientific disciplines. Their dialectical character does not diminish the strength of ethical proofs. As Kraut argues, Aristotle sees no reason for a lower standard of justification in ethics. On the contrary, all Aristotle asks us is to conceive of ethical proof as using a different standard of justification: Otherwise stated, ethics must content itself at least in part with generalizations always open to exceptions. That sounds quite reasonable, for there are many hints of dialectics operating throughout NE. Taking it for granted that problems of accuracy primarily apply to "for the most part" generalizations and not also or primarily to cases much more difficult to deal with, such as "this is what has to be done in those particular circumstances" , one could still ask how ethics will distinguish itself from natural

sciences. For natural sciences work also with truths that hold only for the most part, and that are framed in generalizations always open to exceptions. One possible reply is that this is not really an objection, for those who hold that ethics, as well as other disciplines, are dialectical, look towards bridging the gap between ethics and natural sciences. But some doubts remain. Kraut himself tries to get around one of them. Is not such a method too conservative? For if ethical proof relies on reputable opinions, hence on opinions already held, how can there be any novelty in ethics? For if someone has a position to defend, why does he need to include his own position among all those others opinions in order to provide a proof for it? By including his own opinion among all others, our student of ethics will surely manifest his willingness to consider any idea of another person, even if it appears to him to have no plausibility. Kraut writes that Aristotelian arguments and premises "should be seen as part of the material to which the method is applied" p. But this method is the Aristotelian method. So Aristotle has thesis a, but in order to prove it, he himself proposes to put it among b, c, d, and n and then try to get a back. This is very generous, but it seems otiose as a justification of a: Dialectics as a method in ethics seems in fact to put the philosopher in a neutral position: That is what most probably happens with akrasia in Book VII. It derives rather from the attitude of preserving all the opinions involved or, at least, most and the most authoritative of them. Perhaps this position is too conservative. But the question is: I cannot here pursue this question further. Let me just stress one point. The most important declaration in favor of dialectics as the method in ethics is found in the opening lines of the enquiry on akrasia. Kraut quotes this passage VII 1 b in the very beginning of his discussion. On the one hand, the Eudemian Ethics consistently puts forward dialectics as a method for ethical proof -- and if Book VII is primarily an Eudemian book, it is just reiterating this point with all its clarity and strength. On the other hand, when we look for remarks on method in the books that certainly belong to NE, outside the common books, what one finds is a consideration of ethical exactness, in contrast to both mathematical accuracy and oratory persuasion. Despite these contrasts, ethical exactness is surely aimed at truth -- practical truth, to be sure, but truth nonetheless. Whatever truth it is, one learns from NE X 8 that "truth in practical matters is judged on the basis of the facts and of life" a, quoted by Kraut, p. Fact is a translation for ergon, and ergon cannot be so easily assimilated to endoxon. Questions of accuracy can be made compatible with questions treatable by the dialectical method, but they are surely not the same, and the fact that the vocabulary in which the first kind of questions is expressed is totally absent from the Eudemian Ethics suggests that the the two kinds of question are more probably in contrast than in harmony. So something seems to change when one passes from EE to NE, or vice versa. Perhaps the method of ethics is not something Aristotle defined once and for all, thus allowing us to navigate between the two treatises without any problem. Perhaps, on the contrary, the method of ethics is a problem whose formulation and, possibly, solution sheds some light on the relationship between the two treatises, whether one takes dialectics as the final answer so that EE becomes the more mature or more interesting text, or one suspects that Aristotle eventually had reasons to deny that an ethical view is more strongly proved the more opinions that it saves so that NE, excluding the common books, asks us to reopen the question, even if only in a tentative way. Whatever the answer to this last question, this guide presents a very important contribution to a better understanding of the aims and arguments of the Nicomachean Ethics, through its clear and thoughtful analysis of a number of important questions.

**Chapter 2 : Professor Malcolm Schofield – Faculty of Classics**

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References and Further Reading 1. However, like the other ancient philosophers, it was not the stereotypical ivory tower existence. It is noteworthy that although Aristotle praises the politically active life, he spent most of his own life in Athens, where he was not a citizen and would not have been allowed to participate directly in politics although of course anyone who wrote as extensively and well about politics as Aristotle did was likely to be politically influential. As a scholar, Aristotle had a wide range of interests. He wrote about meteorology, biology, physics, poetry, logic, rhetoric, and politics and ethics, among other subjects. His writings on many of these interests remained definitive for almost two millennia. They remained, and remain, so valuable in part because of the comprehensiveness of his efforts. For example, in order to understand political phenomena, he had his students collect information on the political organization and history of different cities. The question of how these writings should be unified into a consistent whole if that is even possible is an open one and beyond the scope of this article. This is because Aristotle believed that ethics and politics were closely linked, and that in fact the ethical and virtuous life is only available to someone who participates in politics, while moral education is the main purpose of the political community. As he says in *Nicomachean Ethics* at b30, "The end [or goal] of politics is the best of ends; and the main concern of politics is to engender a certain character in the citizens and to make them good and disposed to perform noble actions. We are likely to regard politics and politicians as aiming at ignoble, selfish ends, such as wealth and power, rather than the "best end", and many people regard the idea that politics is or should be primarily concerned with creating a particular moral character in citizens as a dangerous intrusion on individual freedom, in large part because we do not agree about what the "best end" is. In fact, what people in Western societies generally ask from politics and the government is that they keep each of us safe from other people through the provision of police and military forces so that each of us can choose and pursue our own ends, whatever they may be. This has been the case in Western political philosophy at least since John Locke. Development of individual character is left up to the individual, with help from family, religion, and other non-governmental institutions. The reader is also cautioned against immediately concluding from this that Aristotle was wrong and we are right. The reference above to "*Nicomachean Ethics* at b30" makes use of what is called Bekker pagination. This entry will make use of the Bekker pagination system, and will also follow tradition and refer to *Nicomachean Ethics* as simply *Ethics*. There is also a *Eudemian Ethics* which is almost certainly by Aristotle and which shares three of the ten books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and a work on ethics titled *Magna Moralia* which has been attributed to him but which most scholars now believe is not his work. The translation is that of Martin Ostwald; see the bibliography for full information. Some of the reasons for this should be mentioned from the outset. Aristotle did write for general audiences on these subjects, probably in dialogue form, but only a few fragments of those writings remain. This is also one reason why many students have difficulty reading his work: Many topics in the texts are discussed less fully than we would like, and many things are ambiguous which we wish were more straightforward. But if Aristotle was lecturing from these writings, he could have taken care of these problems on the fly as he lectured, since presumably he knew what he meant, or he could have responded to requests for clarification or elaboration from his students. Secondly, most people who read Aristotle are not reading him in the original Attic Greek but are instead reading translations. This leads to further disagreement, because different authors translate Aristotle differently, and the way in which a particular word is translated can be very significant for the text as a whole. There is no way to definitively settle the question of what Aristotle "really meant to say" in using a particular word or phrase. Third, the Aristotelian texts we have are not the originals, but copies, and every time a text gets copied errors creep in words, sentences, or paragraphs can get left out, words can be changed into new words, and so forth. It may be clear from the context that a word has been changed, but then again it may not, and there is always hesitation in changing the text as we have it. This, too, complicates our understanding of Aristotle. These controversies

cannot be discussed here, but should be mentioned. For more detail consult the works listed in the "Suggestions for further reading" below. Carnes Lord and others have argued based on a variety of textual evidence that books 7 and 8 were intended by Aristotle to follow book 3. Rearranging the text in this way would have the effect of joining the early discussion of the origins of political life and the city, and the nature of political justice, with the discussion of the ideal city and the education appropriate for it, while leaving together books which are primarily concerned with existing varieties of regimes and how they are preserved and destroyed and moving them to the conclusion of the book. It is possible that Aristotle never finished writing it; more likely there is material missing as a result of damage to the scrolls on which it was written. The extent and content of any missing material is a matter of scholarly debate. Fortunately, the beginning student of Aristotle will not need to concern themselves much with these problems. It is, however, important to get a quality translation of the text, which provides an introduction, footnotes, a glossary, and a bibliography, so that the reader is aware of places where, for example, there seems to be something missing from the text, or a word can have more than one meaning, or there are other textual issues. These will not always be the cheapest or most widely available translations, but it is important to get one of them, from a library if need be. Several suggested editions are listed at the end of this article. Put simply, these kinds of knowledge are distinguished by their aims: The productive and practical sciences, in contrast, address our daily needs as human beings, and have to do with things that can and do change. Productive knowledge means, roughly, know-how; the knowledge of how to make a table or a house or a pair of shoes or how to write a tragedy would be examples of this kind of knowledge. This entry is concerned with practical knowledge, which is the knowledge of how to live and act. According to Aristotle, it is the possession and use of practical knowledge that makes it possible to live a good life. Ethics and politics, which are the practical sciences, deal with human beings as moral agents. Ethics is primarily about the actions of human beings as individuals, and politics is about the actions of human beings in communities, although it is important to remember that for Aristotle the two are closely linked and each influences the other. The fact that ethics and politics are kinds of practical knowledge has several important consequences. First, it means that Aristotle believes that mere abstract knowledge of ethics and politics is worthless. Practical knowledge is only useful if we act on it; we must act appropriately if we are to be moral. Aristotle believes that women and slaves or at least those who are slaves by nature can never benefit from the study of politics, and also should not be allowed to participate in politics, about which more will be said later. But there is also a limitation on political study based on age, as a result of the connection between politics and experience: Aristotle adds that young men will usually act on the basis of their emotions, rather than according to reason, and since acting on practical knowledge requires the use of reason, young men are unequipped to study politics for this reason too. So the study of politics will only be useful to those who have the experience and the mental discipline to benefit from it, and for Aristotle this would have been a relatively small percentage of the population of a city. Even in Athens, the most democratic city in Greece, no more than 15 percent of the population was ever allowed the benefits of citizenship, including political participation. Athenian citizenship was limited to adult males who were not slaves and who had one parent who was an Athenian citizen sometimes citizenship was further restricted to require both parents to be Athenian citizens. Aristotle does not think this percentage should be increased - if anything, it should be decreased. Third, Aristotle distinguishes between practical and theoretical knowledge in terms of the level of precision that can be attained when studying them. Political and moral knowledge does not have the same degree of precision or certainty as mathematics. Therefore, in a discussion of such subjects, which has to start with a basis of this kind, we must be satisfied to indicate the truth with a rough and general sketch: However, the principles of geometry are fixed and unchanging. The definition of a point, or a line, or a plane, can be given precisely, and once this definition is known, it is fixed and unchanging for everyone. However, the definition of something like justice can only be known generally; there is no fixed and unchanging definition that will always be correct. This means that unlike philosophers such as Hobbes and Kant, Aristotle does not and in fact cannot give us a fixed set of rules to be followed when ethical and political decisions must be made. Instead he tries to make his students the kind of men who, when confronted with any particular ethical or political decision, will know the correct thing to do, will understand

why it is the correct choice, and will choose to do it for that reason. Such a man will know the general rules to be followed, but will also know when and why to deviate from those rules. I will use "man" and "men" when referring to citizens so that the reader keeps in mind that Aristotle, and the Greeks generally, excluded women from political participation. In fact it is not until the mid-nineteenth century that organized attempts to gain the right to vote for women really get underway, and even today in the 21st century there are still many countries which deny women the right to vote or participate in political life. A discussion of this concept and its importance will help the reader make sense of what follows. According to Aristotle, everything has a purpose or final end. If we want to understand what something is, it must be understood in terms of that end, which we can discover through careful study. If you wanted to describe a knife, you would talk about its size, and its shape, and what it is made out of, among other things. But Aristotle believes that you would also, as part of your description, have to say that it is made to cut things. This is true not only of things made by humans, but of plants and animals as well. Suppose you were to describe an animal, like a thoroughbred foal. You would talk about its size, say it has four legs and hair, and a tail. Eventually you would say that it is meant to run fast. If nothing thwarts that purpose, the young horse will indeed become a fast runner. What is it that human beings are meant by nature to become in the way that knives are meant to cut, acorns are meant to become oak trees, and thoroughbred ponies are meant to become race horses? According to Aristotle, we are meant to become happy. After all, people find happiness in many different ways. However, Aristotle says that living happily requires living a life of virtue. Someone who is not living a life that is virtuous, or morally good, is also not living a happy life, no matter what they might think. They are like a knife that will not cut, an oak tree that is diseased and stunted, or a racehorse that cannot run. In fact they are worse, since they have chosen the life they lead in a way that a knife or an acorn or a horse cannot. Someone who does live according to virtue, who chooses to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, is living a life that flourishes; to borrow a phrase, they are being all that they can be by using all of their human capacities to their fullest. Human beings alone have the ability to speak, and Aristotle says that we have been given that ability by nature so that we can speak and reason with each other to discover what is right and wrong, what is good and bad, and what is just and unjust. Note that human beings discover these things rather than creating them. We do not get to decide what is right and wrong, but we do get to decide whether we will do what is right or what is wrong, and this is the most important decision we make in life. So too is the happy life: And this is an ongoing decision. It is not made once and for all, but must be made over and over again as we live our lives. Aristotle believes that it is not easy to be virtuous, and he knows that becoming virtuous can only happen under the right conditions. The community brings about virtue through education and through laws which prescribe certain actions and prohibit others. And here we see the link between ethics and politics in a different light: Lawgivers make the citizens good by inculcating [good] habits in them, and this is the aim of every lawgiver; if he does not succeed in doing that, his legislation is a failure. It is in this that a good constitution differs from a bad one. The translation we will use is that of Carnes Lord, which can be found in the list of suggested readings.

**Chapter 3 : Plato : Malcolm Schofield :**

*Two Day conference on Aristotle's* [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com)(s):Pierre DestrÃ©Associate Research Professor, Department of Philosophy, FNRS/University of LouvainTerence IrwinFaculty of Philosophy, Radcliffe Humanities, Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Oxford UniversityMariska LeunissenAssociate Professor, Department of Philosophy, UNC Chapel HillThornton C. LockwoodAssociate Professor of.

Its analyses range over the nature of the household, criticisms of previous thinkers and legislators, the underlying structure of different forms of political organization, varieties of different governments, the causes of political dissolution or revolution, and the nature of the best or ideal political organization. Scholars who work on classical history, ancient philosophy, and political theory have examined the work both for the evidence it provides about the 4th-century Mediterranean world and for the perennial insights it suggests about human nature and political organization. Balot has the virtue of placing the *Politics* within the broader context of classical political thought. Rowe and Schofield contains individual articles on major topics written by leading scholars. Miller is the best online resource for guidance to basic scholarly debates and thematic overviews; Clayton provides more of an online paraphrase; Bragg is instructive for the beginner and enjoyable for the expert. Lord and Taylor are chapter-length introductions which refrain from scholarly debates; Roberts is a book-length introduction of similar orientation. In *Greek political thought*. By Ryan Balot, â€” First aired 6 November Reviews major ideas of the work in a popular fashion. In *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by James Fieser and Bradley Dowden. Includes brief bibliography but minimal discussion of scholarship. In *History of political philosophy*. Edited by Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey, â€” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Clear and concise overview of the major themes by a major Aristotle scholar; includes glossary and bibliography. *Routledge philosophy guidebook to Aristotle and the Politics*. London and New York: Rowe, Christopher, and Malcolm Schofield, eds. *The Cambridge history of Greek and Roman political thought*. In *The Cambridge companion to Aristotle*. Edited by Jonathan Barnes, â€”

**Chapter 4 : The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics (ebook) by Richard Kraut |**

*Malcom Schofield Professor Emeritus of Ancient Philosophy, University of Cambridge The conference is sponsored in part by the Towards Citizenship Fund and the McCoy Family Center for Ethics in Society.*

These ideas were transmitted beyond the confines of the classical polis as the Greek city-states came under the suzerainty of larger kingdoms after an initial Macedonian conquest at the end of the fourth century B. C; those kingdoms in turn were eventually conquered and significantly assimilated by the Roman republic, later transmuted into an empire. Philosophers writing in Latin engaged self-consciously with the earlier and continuing traditions of writing about philosophy in Greek. Neither the transformation of the republic into an empire in the first-century BCE, nor the eventual abdication of the last pretenders to the Roman imperial throne in the Western part of the empire in CE, prevented continued engagement with this Greek and Roman heritage of political philosophy among late antique and later medieval scholars and their successors writing in Latin, Arabic and Hebrew. At the same time, because the Greeks also invented other genres widely recognized today—among them, history, tragedy, comedy, and rhetoric—no understanding of their thought about politics can restrict itself to the genre of political philosophy alone. While that argument is contentious, it rests on an important broader point. This article therefore begins by surveying political practices and the reflective accounts to which they gave rise in the classical Greek period of the independent polis. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. It continues to Hellenistic Greek thinkers before considering the main currents and roles of political philosophy in the Roman republic. See the entry on medieval political philosophy. The city was the domain of potential collaboration in leading the good life, though it was by the same token the domain of potential contestation should that pursuit come to be understood as pitting some against others. Political theorizing began in arguments about what politics was good for, who could participate in politics, and why, arguments which were tools in civic battles for ideological and material control as well as attempts to provide logical or architectonic frameworks for those battles. Such conflicts were addressed by the idea of justice, which was fundamental to the city as it emerged from the archaic age, sometimes reflected in Homer, into the classical period. Justice was conceived by poets, lawgivers, and philosophers alike as the structure of civic bonds which were beneficial to all rich and poor, powerful and weak alike rather than an exploitation of some by others. So understood, justice defined the basis of equal citizenship and was said to be the requirement for human regimes to be acceptable to the gods. The ideal was that, with justice as a foundation, political life would enable its participants to flourish and to achieve the overarching human end of happiness *eudaimonia*, expressing a civic form of virtue and pursuing happiness and success through the competitive forums of the city. This became the major political faultline of the Greek fifth century BCE. The exclusion of women from active citizenship in Athens was more consciously felt, giving rise to fantasies of female-dominated politics in Aristophanic comedy *Lysistrata*, *Assemblywomen* and to tortured reflection in many tragedies consider the titles of *Medea*; *Phaedra*; *Trojan Women*. Among equals, however defined, the space of the political was the space of participation in speech and decision concerning public affairs and actions. That invention of the political what Meier calls *The Greek Discovery of Politics* was the hallmark of the classical Greek world. Citizens, whether the few usually the rich or the many including the poorer and perhaps the poorest free adult men, deliberated together as to how to conduct public affairs, sharing either by custom, by election, or by lot—the latter seen in Athens as the most democratic, though it was never the sole mechanism used in any Greek democracy—in the offices for carrying them out. Rhetoric played an important role especially, though not only, in democracies, where discursive norms shaped by the poor majority were hegemonic in public even over the rich Ober At the same time, politics was shaped by the legacy of archaic poetry and its heroic ethos and by the religious cults which included, alongside pan-Hellenic and familial rites, important practices distinct to each city-state. This was a polytheistic, rather than monotheistic, setting, in which religion was at least in large part a function of civic identity. It was a world innocent of modern bureaucracy and of the modern move to intellectual abstraction in defining the state: This broadest sense was initially most evident to the Athenians when they looked at the peculiar customs of Sparta, but Plato taught them to recognize that

democratic Athens was as distinctive a regime Schofield Most of the wise men sophoi and students of nature physikoi who appeared in this milieu thought within the same broad terms as the poets and orators. Justice was widely, if not universally, treated as a fundamental constituent of cosmic order. Some of the physikoi influenced political life, notably the Pythagoreans in southern Italy. Others held themselves aloof from political action while still identifying commonalities between nature and politics. Most of the sophists argued the latter, though they did so along a spectrum of interpretation for which our evidence rests heavily on Plato, who portrays Socrates arguing with a considerable number of sophists: This nomos-phis debate raised a fundamental challenge to the ordering intellectual assumptions of the polis, even though the sophists advertised themselves as teaching skills for success within it, a number of them being employed as diplomats by cities eager to exploit their rhetorical abilities. If Greek political thinkers presupposed justice, in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE many of them also increasingly problematized it. Should philosophers act politically and if so, should they engage in ordinary politics in existing regimes, or work to establish new ones, or should they abstain from politics in order to live a life of pure contemplation? There was likewise a question as to whether philosophers should think politically: Philosophy might have to address the political but its highest calling soared above it. While one influential approach to the history of political thought takes its bearings from what a thinker was trying to do in and by what he or she said or wrote, it is important to recognize that the founders of ancient political philosophy were in part trying to define a new space of doing as philosophizing, independent of ordinary political action. This is not to say that they did not also have ordinary political intentions, but rather to stress that the invention of political philosophy was also intended as a mode of reflection upon the value of ordinary political life. Socrates and Plato According to Cicero, Socrates "BCE was the first to bring philosophy down from heaven, locating it in cities and even in homes Tusc. A humbly born man who refused the lucrative mantle of the sophistic role as a professional teacher, yet attracted many of the most ambitious and aristocratic youth of Athens to accompany him in his questioning of them and their elders as to the nature of the virtues they claimed to possess or understand, he left no philosophical writings. See the entry on Socrates. As depicted by Plato, the search for such definitions led invariably to a concern with knowledge of how best to live, as not only one of the conventional virtues in the form of wisdom but also as underpinning, even constituting, them all. That elevation of knowledge in turn led Socrates to militate against the practices of rhetoric and judgment which animated the political institutions of Athens—the law-courts, Assembly and Council. The notion of political knowledge limited to one or a few experts, as opposed to the embedded and networked knowledge produced and exercised by the whole demos of Athens in their judgments and deliberations, struck at the central premises of Athenian democracy and those of Greek politics more generally in oligarchies, wealth rather than knowledge was the relevant criterion for rule; in tyrannies, sheer power. The relation between politics and knowledge, the meaning of justice as a virtue, the value of the military courage which all Greek cities prized in their citizens, all seem to have been central topics of Socratic conversation. The Political Philosophy of Citizenship That engagement with political philosophy was dramatically intensified when Socrates was, at the age of seventy, arraigned, tried, and sentenced to death by an Athenian court. Brought in the usual Athenian way by a group of his fellow citizens who took it upon themselves to prosecute him for the sake of the city, the charges against him were three-fold: Each of these had a political dimension, given the civic control of central religious cults mentioned earlier, and the broad political importance of educating the young to take their place in the civic order. Socrates had played his part as an ordinary citizen, allowing his name to go forward for selection by lot to serve on the Council, and serving in the army when required. He went so far as to claim that as a civic benefactor, he deserved not death but the lifetime free meals commonly awarded to an Olympic champion 36ea. Socrates here depicts himself as a new kind of citizen, conceptualizing the public good in a new way and so serving it best through unprecedented actions in contrast to the conventionally defined paths of political contest and success Villa The first two recalled political incidents: The third is a hypothetical remark. Particularly in Anglophone twentieth-century scholarship, these remarks have engendered a view of Socrates as endorsing civil disobedience in certain circumstances, and so have framed the question of civil disobedience and the grounds for political obligation as arising in Plato. A significant debate on these matters took shape in the United States

in the s and s at the time of widespread civil disobedience relating to civil rights and the Vietnam War: That debate has had to confront the fact that Socrates did not actually disobey his own death sentence with which his trial concluded: Before that moment, Plato imagines Socrates being visited in prison by his friend Crito in a dialogue which bears his name , and urged to escape for the sake of his friends and family, a practice which was tolerated in Athens so long as the escapee fled into exile. He begins his examination of them by recalling principles to which he and Crito had in the past agreed, including the principle that it is better to suffer injustice than to commit it Cri. On any reading, it is important to bear in mind that Socrates is choosing to obey a jury verdict that has commanded him to suffer what is arguably an injustice but not to commit one. The contract is unequal: The meaning of this clause and its relevance to civil disobedience is again much debated Kraut remains a landmark. In the Republic, by contrast, a dialogue in which Socrates is also the main character and first-person narrator but in which the views he advances go beyond the tight-knit pattern of debates in the dialogues discussed in section 3. See the entry on Plato. The Republic is, with the Laws, an order of magnitude longer than any other Platonic dialogue. Readers today are likely to think of the Republic as the home par excellence of political philosophy. But that view has also been challenged by scholars who see it as primarily an ethical dialogue, driven by the question of why the individual should be just Annas This section argues that the ethical and political concerns, and purposes, of the dialogue are inextricably intertwined. Near the beginning of the dialogue, a challenge is launched by the character Thrasymachus, mentioned above, asserting that all actual cities define justice in the interest of the rulers. He takes this to mean that the ethical virtue of justice which their subjects are enjoined to cultivateâ€”traditionally seen as the necessary bond among citizens and the justification for political ruleâ€”is in fact a distorted sham. See the entry on Callicles and Thrasymachus. Socrates then launches a speculation as to the origins of cities: However, this origin already gives rise to a proto-ethical dimension, first insofar as the members of the primitive city each do their own work the structure of what will emerge as the virtue of justice , which is fleshed out when political rulers are established who are able to use their wisdom to help their subjects maintain a psychological balance in their souls that approximates, if it does not fully embody, the virtues of moderation and justice and so enables them to enjoy a unified rather than a divided soul. The question of why the individual should be just, figured at the outset by the contrast with the putatively happy tyrant, is resolved eventually by demonstrating that the tyrant is at once maximally unjust and maximally unhappy. That resolution rests on the division of the soul into three parts by which the Republic places moral psychology at the heart of political philosophy. In the soul and city respectively, the rational part or class should rule; the spirited part or class should act to support the rule of that rational part; and the appetitive part of the soul and producing class in the city should accept being governed by it. Both soul and city are therefore in need of, and capable of exhibiting, four virtues ea. Two of these pertain to individual parts: Two however are defined by relations between the parts: A just soul will indeed reliably issue in traditionally just actions, such as refraining from theft, murder, and sacrilege contra Sachs , who argues that Plato has simply abandoned the usual domain of justice. To be an effective agent at all, one must be just, moderate, courageous and wise. The just person enjoys psychic health, which is advantageous no matter how he is treated fairly or unfairly by gods and men; correspondingly, the just society enjoys civic unity, which is advantageous in being the fundamental way to avoid the assumed supreme evil of civil war. In contrast, all other cities are characterized as riven by civil war between the rich and the poor; none of them counts as a single, unified city at all see Rep. In particular, Book V of the Republic suggests that a sufficiently unified regime can be achieved only by depriving its guardian-rulers of private property and of private families, instead making them live in austere communal conditions in which they are financially supported by their money-making subjects and allowed to procreate only when and with whom will best serve the city. Aristotle and Cicero would deplore what they construed as this abolition of private property, and even those following and radicalizing Plato on property advocating the abolition of property for all the citizens, rather than only deprivation of it for the rulers, as would the sixteenth-century More , were generally opposed to if not scandalized by the suggestion of procreative communism. The Republic initiates a further tradition in political philosophy by laying out a template for the integration of ethics and political philosophy into a comprehensive account of epistemology and metaphysics. In the Republic, the knowledge required for rule is

not specialized, but comprehensive: The rulers are philosophers who take turns over their lifetime in exercising collective political authority. To that extent the Republic presents a paradox: The discussion is interrupted but ultimately enriched by a story or myth in which politics is shown to be a matter of humans ruling other humans in place of living under divine guidance. That human expertise of statecraft is ultimately distinguished from its closest rivals—strikingly, the arts of rhetoric, generalship, and judging—by its knowledge of the correct timing *kairos* for the exercise and cessation of these other arts Lane The statesman is wholly defined by the possession of that knowledge of when it is best to exercise the other arts and its exercise in binding the different groups of citizens together, a knowledge which depends on a broader philosophical grasp but which is peculiarly political. Here, political philosophy operates not just to assimilate politics to a broader metaphysical horizon but also to identify its specificity. Here politics still aims at virtue, and at the virtue of all the citizens, but those citizens all play a part in holding civic offices; the ordinary activities of politics are shared, in what is described as a mixture of monarchy and democracy. Another influential aspect of the Laws is its concern with the nature of law itself as a topic proper to political philosophy. Some scholars have found that to be a distinctively democratic and liberal account of law Bobonich ; see also the entry on Plato on utopia. That arguably goes too far in a proceduralist direction, given that the value of law remains its embodiment of reason or understanding *nous* , so that while adding persuasive preludes is a better way to exercise the coercive force of law, no agreement on the basis of persuasion could justify laws which departed from the standard of *nous*. Nevertheless the emphasis on all citizens as eligible, and so presumptively capable, to hold offices, differs significantly from the Republic, where the only offices mentioned seem to be monopolized by the philosopher-rulers and the auxiliary guardians who assist them. The Statesman however reserves a special extraordinary role a higher office, or perhaps not an office as such for the statesman whenever he is present in the city. Has Plato in the Laws given up on his earlier idealism which rested on the possibility of the philosopher-king, or on the idea of the perfectly knowledgeable statesman?

Chapter 5 : Plato - Malcolm Schofield - Oxford University Press

*Aristotle on the Imagination. Malcolm Schofield. In Martha Craven Nussbaum & Amélie Rorty (eds.), Essays on Aristotle's de Anima.*

Passages in Aristotle are cited as follows: Politics is abbreviated as Pol. Most translations include the Bekker page number with column letter in the margin followed by every fifth line number. Oxford University Press, Princeton University Press, University of Chicago Press, , revised edition. Harvard University Press, University of North Carolina Press, Saunders, Politics Iâ€™II Also of interest is the Constitution of Athens, an account of the history and workings of the Athenian democracy. Although it was formerly ascribed to Aristotle, it is now thought by most scholars to have been written by one of his pupils, perhaps at his direction toward the end of his life. A reliable translation with introduction and notes is by P. Ethics and Politics , London: Cambridge University Press, Keyt, David, and Fred D. Kraut, Richard, and Steven Skultety eds. Critical Essays, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, Lockwood, Thornton, and Thanassis Samaras eds. A Critical Guide, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, University of California Press, Methuen, ; reprinted, New York: Frank, Jill, A Democracy of Distinction: Aristotle and the Work of Politics, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Keyt, David, Nature and Justice: Nichols, Mary, Citizens and Statesmen: University of Chicago Press, , pp. Susemihl, Franz, and R. Hicks, The Politics of Aristotle, London: Veogelin, Eric, Order and History Volume 3: Louisiana State University Press, Studies of Particular Topics 1. Fundamentals of the History of His Development, Oxford: Cambridge University Press, , pp. Oxford University Press, , pp. Rowman and Littlefield, , pp. Aristotelian Political Philosophy Volume 1 , Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, , pp. Critical Essays, Lanham MD: Reprinted in David Keyt, Nature and Justice: Rowe and Malcolm Schofield eds. SUNY Press, , pp. Pennsylvania State University Press, Reason or Rationalization, Chicago: Hintikka eds Discovering Reality: Political Economy Ambler, Wayne H. Foundational Thinkers and Business Ethics, Chicago: Oxford University Press, pp. Cambridge University Press, , â€™ In David Keyt, Nature and Justice: Fondation Hardt, , pp. Brooks and James Bernard Murphy eds. Essays Presented to G. Akademie Verlag, , pp. University of California Press, , pp. Vander Waert, Paul A. Education Burnyeat, Myles F. Cornell University Press, Law Brooks, Richard O. Hamburger, Max, Morals and Law: Yale University Press, Living Well and Living Together, Chicago: Chicago University Press, State University of New York Press, University of Notre Dame Press, , â€™ Bruce Douglas, Gerald M. Mara, and Henry S. Richardson eds Liberalism and the Good, London: Den Uyl, Liberty and Nature: University of Notre Dame Press,

Chapter 6 : Ancient Political Philosophy (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

*The intensity of renewed study of Aristotle's Categories and Plato's Timaeus is an especially striking outcome of their discussions. The volume will be indispensable for scholars and students interested in the history of Platonism and Aristotelianism.*

Political Philosophy, Oxford University Press, , pp. As befits a volume meant to be accessible to non-specialists, he ranges widely over many topics and emphasizes the ways in which Plato is still able to engage a contemporary reader committed to open-minded reflection on the norms that should govern the modern nation-state. Political Philosophy is filled both with references to contemporary political thought R. Williams , and to Aristophanes, Isocrates, Thucydides, and Xenophon. On most readings of Plato, he is far removed from many of the assumptions that are central to the liberal and democratic traditions that now dominate political philosophy. One would have to strain to find in him anything hospitable to such notions as human equality, freedom of conscience, rights to political participation, limited government, constitutional rule, and so on. He holds that Plato has a field day with his devastating and still damaging critique of the shortcomings of democracy, and particularly the difficulty it has in acknowledging the authority of knowledge. His analysis of human acquisitiveness as pathological puts another disturbing question which retains its relevance. The Statesman is certainly not ignored, nor is the Laws. That is because his other political writings can best be understood by tracing their relationship to that pivotal text. These dialogues, he thinks, are preoccupied with different problems, and approach politics from different angles; perhaps they cannot be entirely brought into line with each other. For example, he notes that the noble lies in the Republic have disappeared from the Laws, having been replaced by rational theology. Nonetheless, he adopts the traditional view that takes the Republic and the Laws to be largely consonant with each other, the former work acknowledging that its utopia may never be achieved, the latter providing a blueprint for an approximation to that ideal that is not beyond the grasp of ordinary people who want to play a role in political life, own land, and live in conventional households. The first two chapters seek to justify the emphasis the volume places on the Republic, and orient the reader to the themes of that dialogue. Having suppressed his own voice through the construction of dialogues in which he never speaks directly to the reader, why would he reveal himself so openly through the publication of a letter available to all? That would be an "abrupt lurch out of his own carefully constructed literary persona" p. So Schofield counsels us not to read Plato as some of those who accept the authenticity of the Seventh Letter would have us read him: He seeks a position between that of Julia Annas, who finds in the Statesman a "newly sensible evaluation of democracy" p. They are, in other words, devoted to different but not incompatible projects. In the Laws, Plato has elected to talk to his readers in language that unlike the Republic offers no challenge to the conceptual framework with which they are antecedently familiar" p. Democratic freedom, so treated, promotes a permissive ethos that is at bottom anarchic. Schofield credits Plato with an insight into the logic of democracy: Schofield also defends the Republic against a complaint made by Bernard Williams, who thought that Plato was committed to the silly idea that the diversity of values in a democratic city can be explained only if it is assumed that every democratic citizen is devoted to that plurality. Jowett, by contrast, took the expertise Plato required of a ruling elite to be otherworldly metaphysics. Schofield suggests that both versions of Plato are present in his works: He defines utopian thinking as "the imagining of a blueprint for a desired world which is nevertheless located in present-day concerns, with questions about practicability and legitimacy not necessarily excluded, but regarded as secondary" p. The condemnation of greed was of course not original to Plato; as Schofield notes, it was a commonplace of Greek drama and historical writing. He concludes with the observation that "the problem of how to restrain the appetites of the economic class remains with us" p. The seventh and last chapter "Ideology" is principally devoted to the theme of political deception in the Republic, and the replacement of such lies by the rational religion of the Laws. What makes them go back to the cave is a patriotism anchored in an emotionally satisfying myth whose psychological force overpowers their recognition of the superiority of the case for living an apolitical and purely philosophical life p. If I understand this

correctly, the philosophers of the ideal city are not, after all, completely ruled by reason. This summary of a small sample of the themes and conclusions of Plato: Political Philosophy should convey how rich and wide-ranging a work it is.

#### Chapter 7 : Aristotle's Politics - Classics - Oxford Bibliographies

*Description* The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics illuminates Aristotle's ethics for both academics and students new to the work, with sixteen newly commissioned essays by distinguished international scholars.

#### Chapter 8 : Aristotle's Politics | Stanford Humanities

Richard Kraut (ed.), *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, Blackwell Publishing, , pp, \$ (pbk), ISBN  
Reviewed by Marco Zingano, University of São Paulo This is a most valuable book. Edited by Richard Kraut, it has sixteen chapters, all written by researchers.

#### Chapter 9 : Malcolm Schofield, Aristotle on the Imagination - PhilPapers

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