

ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΗΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΑ ΠΕΡΙ ΕΥΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΑΣ

[1264b] [1] But again, if Socrates intends to make the Farmers have their wives in common but their property private, who is to manage the household in the way in which the women's husbands will carry on the work of the farms? And if the property and the wives of the Farmers are to be common . . . ¹⁵

It is also strange that Socrates employs the comparison of the lower animals to show that the women are to have the same occupations as the men, considering that animals have no households to manage. Also Socrates' method of appointing the magistrates is not a safe one. For he makes the same persons hold office always; but this occasions rebellion even among people of no special distinction, much more so then among high-spirited and warlike men. But it is clear that he is compelled to make the same persons govern always, for the god-given admixture of gold in the soul is not bestowed on some at one time and others at another time, but is always in the same men, and Socrates says that at the moment of birth some men receive an admixture of gold and others of silver and those who are to be the Artisans and Farmers an admixture of copper and iron. And again, although he deprives the Guardians of happiness, he says that it is the duty of the law-giver to make the whole city happy. But it is not possible for the whole to be happy unless most or all of its parts, or some of them, possess happiness. For happiness is not a thing of the same sort [20] as being an even number: that may belong to a whole but not to either of its parts, but happiness cannot belong to the whole and not to its parts. But yet, if the Guardians are not happy, what other class is? For clearly the Artisans and the general mass of the vulgar classes are not.

The Republic discussed by Socrates therefore possesses these difficulties and also others not smaller than these.

And almost the same holds good of the Laws also, which was written later, so that it will be advantageous to make some small examination of the constitution described in that book as well. For in the Republic Socrates has laid down details about very few matters—regulations about community of wives and children and about property, and the structure of the constitution (for the mass of the population is divided into two parts, one forming the Farmer class and the other the class that defends the state in war, and there is a third class drawn from these latter that forms the council and governs the state) , but about the Farmers and the Artisans, whether they are excluded from government or have some part in it, and whether these classes also are to possess arms and to serve in war with the others or not, on these points Socrates has made no decision, but though he thinks that the women ought to serve in war with the Guardians and share the same education, the rest of the discourse he has filled up with external topics, and about the sort of education which it is proper for the Guardians to have.¹⁶

[1324a] [1] is the life conjoined with virtue furnished with sufficient means for taking part in virtuous actions⁶; while objections to this position we must pass over in the course of the present inquiry, and reserve them for future consideration, if anyone be found to disagree with what has been said.

On the other hand it remains to say whether the happiness of a state is to be pronounced the same as that of each individual man, or whether it is different. Here too the answer is clear: everybody would agree that it is the same; for all those who base the good life upon wealth in the case of the individual, also assign felicity to the state as a whole if it is wealthy; and all who value the life of the tyrant highest, would also say that the state which rules the widest empire is the happiest; and if any body accepts the individual as happy on account of virtue, he will also say that the state which is the better morally is the happier. But there now arise these two questions that require consideration: first, which mode of life is the more desirable, the life of active citizenship and participation in politics, or rather the life of an alien and that of detachment from the political partnership; next, what constitution and what organization of a state is to be deemed the best,—either on the assumption that to take an active part in the state is desirable for everybody, or that it is undesirable for some men although desirable for most. But as it is [20] the latter question that is the business of political study and speculation, and not the question of what is desirable for the individual, and as it is the investigation of politics that we have now taken up, the former question would be a side issue, and the latter is the business of political inquiry.

Now it is clear that the best constitution is the system under which anybody whatsoever would be best off and would live in felicity; but the question is raised even on the part of those who agree that the life accompanied by virtue is the most desirable, whether the life of citizenship and activity is desirable or rather a life released from all external affairs, for example some form of contemplative life, which is said by some to be the only life that is philosophic.⁷ For it is manifest that these are the two modes of life principally chosen by the men most ambitious of excelling in virtue, both in past times and at the present day—I mean the life of politics and the life of philosophy. And it makes no little difference which way the truth lies; for assuredly the wise are bound to arrange their affairs in the direction of the better goal—and this applies to the state collectively as well as to the individual human being. Some persons think that empire over one's neighbors, if despotically exercised, involves a definite injustice of the greatest kind, and if constitutionally, although it carries no injustice, yet is a hindrance to the ruler's own well-being; but others hold almost the opposite view to these—they think that the life of action and citizenship is the only life fit for a man, since with each of the virtues its exercise in actions is just as possible for men engaged in public affairs and in politics as for those who live a private life.

[1328b] [1] for as each set of people pursues participation in happiness in a different manner and by different means they make for themselves different modes of life and different constitutions. And we must also further consider how many there are of these things referred to that are indispensable for the existence of a state; for among them will be the things which we pronounce to be parts of a state, owing to which their presence is essential. We must therefore consider the list of occupations that a state requires : for from these it will appear what the indispensable classes are. First then a state must have a supply of food; secondly, handicrafts (since life needs many tools) ; third, arms (since the members of the association must necessarily possess arms both to use among themselves and for purposes of government, in cases of insubordination, and to employ against those who try to molest them from without) ; also a certain abundance of money, in order that they may have enough both for their

internal needs and for requirements of war; fifth, a primary need, the service of religion, termed a priesthood; and sixth in number and most necessary of all, a provision for deciding questions of interests and of rights between the citizens. These

then are the occupations that virtually every state requires (for the state is not any chance multitude of people but one self-sufficient for the needs of life, as we say,³² and if any of these industries happens to be wanting, it is impossible for that association to be absolutely self-sufficient) . It is necessary therefore for the state to be organized [20] on the lines of these functions; consequently it must possess a number of farmers who will provide the food, and craftsmen, and the military class, and the wealthy, and priests and judges to decide questions of necessity³³ and of interests.

These matters having been settled, it remains to consider whether everybody is to take part in all of these functions (for it is possible for the whole of the people to be at once farmers and craftsmen and the councillors and judges) , or whether we are to assume different classes corresponding to each of the functions mentioned, or whether some of them must necessarily be specialized and others combined. But it will not be the same in every form of constitution; for, as we said,³⁴ it is possible either for all the people to take part in all the functions or for not all to take part in all but for certain people to have certain functions. In fact these different distributions of functions are the cause of the difference between constitutions: democracies are states in which all the people participate in all the functions, oligarchies where the contrary is the case. But at present we are studying the best constitution, and this is the constitution under which the state would be most happy, and it has been stated before³⁵ that happiness cannot be forthcoming without virtue; it is therefore clear from these considerations that in the most nobly constituted state, and the one that possesses men that are absolutely just, not merely just relatively to the principle that is the basis of the constitution, the citizens must not live a mechanic or a mercantile life (for such a life is ignoble and inimical to virtue) , nor yet must those who are to be citizens in the best state be tillers of the soil

[1332a] [1] and although it needs less of this for men of better natural disposition it needs more for those of worse) ; while others, although they have the power, go wrong at the start in their search for happiness.⁵⁶ But the object before us is to discern the best constitution, and this is the one under which a state will be best governed, and a state will be best governed under the constitution under which it has the most opportunity for happiness; it is therefore clear that we must know what happiness is. The view that we maintain (and this is the definition that we laid down in the *Ethics*,⁵⁷ if those discourses are of any value) is that happiness is the complete activity and employment of virtue, and this not conditionally but absolutely. When I say 'conditionally' I refer to things necessary, by 'absolutely' I mean 'nobly': for instance, to take the case of just actions, just acts of vengeance and of punishment spring it is true from virtue, but are necessary, and have the quality of nobility only in a limited manner (since it would be preferable that neither individual nor state should have any need of such things) , whereas actions aiming at honors and resources⁵⁸ are the noblest actions absolutely; for the former class of acts consist in the removal⁵⁹ of something evil, but actions of the latter kind are the opposite—they are the foundation and the generation of things good. The virtuous man will use even poverty, disease, and [20] the other forms of bad fortune in a noble manner, but felicity

consists in their opposites (for it is a definition established by our ethical discourses⁶⁰ that the virtuous man is the man of such a character that because of his virtue things absolutely good are good to him, and it is therefore clear that his employment of these goods must also be virtuous and noble absolutely) ; and hence men actually suppose that external goods are the cause of happiness, just as if they were to assign the cause of a brilliantly fine performance on the harp to the instrument rather than to the skill of the player. It follows therefore from what has been said that some goods must be forthcoming to start with and others must be provided by the legislator. Hence we pray that the organization of the state may be successful in securing those goods which are in the control of fortune (for that fortune does control external goods we take as axiomatic) ; but when we come to the state's being virtuous, to secure this is not the function of fortune but of science and policy. But then the virtue of the state is of course caused by the citizens who share in its government being virtuous; and in our state all the citizens share in the government. The point we have to consider therefore is, how does a man become virtuous? For even if it be possible for the citizens to be virtuous collectively without being so individually, the latter is preferable, since for each individual to be virtuous entails as a consequence the collective virtue of all. But there are admittedly three things by which men are made good and virtuous, and these three things are nature, habit and reason. For to start with, one must be born with the nature of a human being and not of some other animal; and secondly, one must be born of a certain quality of body and of soul. But there are some qualities that it is of no use to be born with,

[1338a] [1] But leisure seems itself to contain pleasure and happiness and felicity of life. And this is not possessed by the busy but by the leisured; for the busy man busies himself for the sake of some end as not being in his possession, but happiness is an end achieved, which all men think is accompanied by pleasure and not by pain. But all men do not go on to define this pleasure in the same way, but according to their various natures and to their own characters, and the pleasure with which the best man thinks that happiness is conjoined is the best pleasure and the one arising from the noblest sources. So that it is clear that some subjects must be learnt and acquired merely with a view to the pleasure in their pursuit, and that these studies and these branches of learning are ends in themselves, while the forms of learning related to business are studied as necessary and as means to other things. Hence our predecessors included music in education not as a necessity (for there is nothing necessary about it) , nor as useful (in the way in which reading and writing are useful for business and for household management and for acquiring learning and for many pursuits of civil life, while drawing also seems to be useful in making us better judges of the works of artists) , nor yet again as we pursue gymnastics, [20] for the sake of health and strength (for we do not see either of these things produced as a result of music) ; it remains therefore that it is useful as a pastime in leisure, which is evidently the purpose for which people actually introduce it, for they rank it as a form of pastime that they think proper for free men. For this reason Homer wrote thus: “
But him alone

'Tis meet to summon to the festal banquet⁴;

” and after these words he speaks of certain others “ Who call the bard that he may gladden all.⁵

” And also in other verses Odysseus says that this is the best pastime, when, as men are enjoying good cheer, “ The banqueters, seated in order due
Throughout the hall, may hear a minstrel sing.⁶

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It is clear therefore that there is a form of education in which boys should be trained not because it is useful or necessary but as being liberal and noble; though whether there is one such subject of education or several, and what these are and how they are to be pursued, must be discussed later,⁷ but as it is we have made this much progress on the way, that we have some testimony even from the ancients, derived from the courses of education which they founded—for the point is proved by music. And it is also clear that some of the useful subjects as well ought to be studied by the young not only because of their utility, like the study of reading and writing, but also because they may lead on to many other branches of knowledge; and similarly they should study drawing not in order that they may not go wrong in their private purchases and may avoid being cheated in buying and selling furniture,

ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΗ:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0058%3Abook%3D2>