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ARISTOTLE'S REGIME-CENTERED POLITICAL SCIENCE AND MACHIAVELLI'S OBJECTIONS

a dissertation

by

JOY SAMAD

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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INFORMATION TO USERS

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Chair Christopher Bruell, Professor

Member Robert Faulkner, Professor

Member Christopher Kelly, Professor

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ABSTRACT

ARISTOTLE'S REGIME-CENTERED POLITICAL SCIENCE

AND MACHIAVELLI'S OBJECTIONS

Joy Samad

Advisor: Christopher Bruell

My topic is an examination of the core concept of Aristotle's political science --- the regime: what does he mean by this term, how does he arrive at it, and what are the presuppositions of a regime-centered political science? I try to answer these questions by a careful study of Book III of the *Politics*. There Aristotle shows that such routine political questions of who does, and does not, deserve to be a citizen, and who should rule, are unavoidably tied up with questions about the identity of the city, and what human type should be honored by the city. The variety of answers to these questions provided by the various groups contending for rule (the poor, the rich, the aristocrats, etc), give rise to the various regimes. Aristotle shows that the claims to rule made by the various groups contain within them a vision of the whole over which the groups wish to rule, and a notion of the common good that follows from that vision. The ruling group's conception of justice seeps into the parts of the city and integrates them in a certain way, and this integration is both psychic and structural, since the regime affects not just the external actions of the citizens, but also their inner-disposition, their soul. This comprehensive integration is what makes the regime the fundamental political fact, the key to understanding the nature of a political order. Machiavelli in his *Discourses on Livy*

also begins from opposed groups in political life, but understands them not by examining what they say, but by looking beyond their speeches to a particular conception of the necessities they face. Machiavelli finds that these groups have essentially selfish and irreconcilable goals, and shows us how these selfish goals can be aligned to achieve a limited common good consisting of political stability, order and liberty. The dissertation ends by comparing and contrasting Aristotle and Machiavelli's differing analysis of the opposing groups in political life and suggests reasons for preferring the Aristotelian approach.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

In what follows references to Aristotle's text are in the form (x, y) where x is the book number and y is the chapter number in the Oxford edition of his texts; citations to line numbers use the standard Bekker numbers. NM = Niccolo Machiavelli. References to Machiavelli's *Discourses* will be in the form (D x/y/z), where x is the book number, y the chapter number, and z the paragraph number in the Mansfield and Tarcov translation of the *Discourses*. References to Machiavelli's *Prince* are in the form P x, where x is the chapter number. References to secondary works are in the form Author Name (x, y), where x is the year of publication (as listed in the REFERENCES section) and y is the page number.

INTRODUCTION

My topic is an examination of the core concept of Aristotle's political science --- the regime: what does he mean by this term, how does he arrive at it, and what are the presuppositions of a regime-centered political science? Aristotle has a regime-centered analysis of political life: he sees the regime as the fundamental political fact, as the fact that tells us more about the political life of a city than anything else, as the key to understanding the nature of a political order. This way of understanding political life would point to the fact that America is a liberal democracy with no established church as the most important key to understanding America; America's regime (liberal democracy) is more important to understanding it than the ethnic origins, cultural practices, or religious beliefs of its population. Ethnicity, culture, or religion, are important, but their importance is in a way regulated by the regime. American Protestants are different from English Anglican Protestants, American Catholics are different from Chilean Catholics and Nigerian Catholics, and American Jews are different from Iranian Jews and Tunisian Jews. As Michael Walzer (1997, p.67) observes: "American Catholics and Jews gradually came to look less and less like Catholics and Jews in other countries: communal control weakened; clerics spoke with less authority; individuals asserted their religious independence, drifted away from the community, and intermarried; fissiparous tendencies well known from the first days of the Reformation became a general feature of American religious life." Aristotle would say that here we see the American regime's principles (freedom and equality, and religious non-establishment) affecting how its citizens

practice their faith, just as it affects their family life, their schools, and so on. In other words, America's regime, liberal democracy, is not just a form of government; it is also a way of life. Expressions such as "the democratic personality," "the democratic family," testify to this all pervasive influence of the regime. A regime can thus provisionally be defined as the way of life of a community, while keeping in mind that every way of life is ultimately the result of some principle or principles that the rulers of a community hold up as justifying their rule and their actions as rulers. These principles seep into the other institutions of a community (such as churches and families) and make that community what it is. A regime is what gives a political order its unique and distinctive character.

We can use Saudi Arabia as another example to illustrate the importance of regime. Its rulers have chosen to give enormous political power to the clerics who preach a particular form of Islam (often called Wahhabi Islam), and so its regime can be described as a theocratic monarchy. As a result Islam in Saudi Arabia is very different from Islam in Indonesia, or Turkey, or Jordan. Women in Turkey, Jordan and Indonesia can vote, hold political office (Turkey has had a female prime minister, Indonesia has had a female president), they are allowed to drive, they are not required to veil themselves in public, whereas women in Saudi Arabia are not allowed to do any of these things. The male head of household has much greater power in Saudi Arabia than in these other Muslim countries: Indonesian, Jordanian, and Turkish women do not need written permission from their husband or father to travel abroad. Christian are free to practice their religion in varying degree in Turkey, Jordan and Indonesia, but not in Saudi Arabia: practice of any religion other than Wahhabi Islam is prohibited there. Non-Muslims cannot even be

buried there: foreign Christian and Hindu guest workers who die while in Saudi Arabia have to be transported out of the country for burial, whereas there are Christian cemeteries in the other Muslim countries mentioned. Just as there are differences between Saudi Arabia, on the one hand, and Turkey, Jordan and Indonesia, on the other, so there are differences between the latter three Muslim countries. An Aristotelian regime analysis of political life would trace the differences between these Muslim countries to the difference in their regimes: Turkey and Indonesia are struggling democracies, Jordan is a relatively secular monarchy, and Saudi Arabia is a theocratic monarchy. The rulers in these Muslim countries justify their rule and their actions as rulers using different principles, and the shaping effect of these principles on the other institutions in these countries leads the people there to have different ways of life and to practice different forms of Islam. What I have said thus far is just a very rough sketch of what a regime is and how it can explain what we see around us; much more detailed observations and arguments are needed to explain more clearly what a regime is and why it is important to the proper understanding of political life. Since the most through exposition of the concept of regime can be found in the writings of Aristotle, especially in Book III of his *Politics*, this dissertation will focus on that text in an effort to explain just what Aristotle means by the term regime, how he develops this concept in the course of his examination of political life, and why he sees regime as the fundamental political fact.

The regime-centered analysis of political life culminated in the doctrine of the best regime --- the various regimes with their different ways of life gave rise to the search for the regime whose way of life aimed at the full development of human nature. This best

regime became the standard by which all other regimes were judged. Later writes condemned this whole approach as utopian: the regime-centered analysis of political life gave rise to unrealistic expectations of human perfection through politics, so a new beginning with a new way of looking at political life was needed. This objection raises the following question: was Aristotle's mode of analysis empirical or utopian? Did he describe the phenomena accurately or did he try to fit what he observed into a procrustean bed of his own making? Since we do not have our own independent and definitive analysis of political life, in light of which we can judge Aristotle's approach, we need the help of another thinker, one who was familiar with Aristotle's approach and critical of it. Machiavelli is famous for his clear and eloquent denunciation of the doctrine of the best regime as utopian in chapter 15 of the *Prince* --- "many have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen or known to exist in truth." A comparison of Aristotle and Machiavelli will be illuminating not only because of Machiavelli's clear and eloquent denunciation of Aristotle's "utopianism," but because both start their analysis of political life at the same place (the quarrel between the few and the many) and proceed to take us step by step from their observations to their conclusions. Our two authors' step by step way of proceeding will allow us to compare and contrast their observations and judgments of the various actors in political life; see how they try to get at the motives, intents and goals of rulers; and examine their understanding of the common good and how it can be achieved.

A definitive judgment about the merits of these two different approaches to understanding political life has as its precondition the possession of a comprehensive

interpretation of Aristotle's and Machiavelli's political science. That is too big a task for this dissertation, but I will lay the basis for such a judgment by tracing the movement of thought in these two authors from similar starting points to different conclusions. My work can thus best be described as an exercise in recovery --- recovery of the core differences between these two authors. There is a beautiful passage on the meaning of such exercises in recovery at the beginning of Heidegger's study of Plato's *Sophist*:

> This past, to which our lectures are seeking access, is nothing detached from us, lying far away. On the contrary, we are this past itself. And we are it not insofar as we explicitly cultivate the tradition and become friends of classical antiquity, but, instead, our philosophy and science live on these foundations, i.e., those of Greek philosophy, and do so to such an extent that we are no longer conscious of it: the foundations have become obvious. Precisely in what we no longer see, in what has become an everyday matter, something is at work that was once the object of the greatest spiritual exertions ever undertaken in Western history. The goal of our interpretation of the Platonic dialogues is to take what has become obvious and make it transparent in these foundations. To understand history cannot mean anything else than to understand ourselves --- not in the sense that we might establish various things about ourselves, but that we experience what we *ought* to be" (Heidegger, 1997, p.7; emphasis in original).

In my case I would say that the modern world in which we live is in large part the product of modern political thought, which is itself the product of a quarrel between ancient and modern political science. To properly understand our situation we must begin by recovering the arguments and issues on both sides of this quarrel, and my work is intended to be a contribution to this effort.

In Book III of the *Politics* Aristotle begins his political analysis by examining the disputes that arise in political life, and his examination of the citizen's perspective on political disputes leads him to develop his notion of regime as the entity which determines citizenship, the identity of the city, and other important matters. So in Part I of my dissertation I examine those chapters of Book III which are concerned with

developing Aristotle's notion of regime; Part II is concerned with bringing out why and how regime becomes the fundamental political fact in Aristotle's political science. Machiavelli's political science has two parts --- a critical part that critiques the classical and Biblical approach to politics, and a positive part that lays out his own approach. I am concerned primarily with Machiavelli's critique in Part III, especially his critique of the classical notion of regime at the beginning of the *Discourses*. I end by laying out the crucial differences between the two authors in Part IV.

PART I: ARISTOTLE
POLITICS III/1-11

III/1

Book III chapter 1 begins with the statement that when investigating the regime one should start with the city, for the regime is a certain arrangement of those who inhabit the city. But there are disputes about the city in political life: Aristotle gives the example of a dispute about whether a city should be held responsible for the actions of its rulers, for some (presumably democrats) might argue that the city should not be held responsible for the actions of a tyrant or of an oligarchy. Instead of going into this dispute, Aristotle takes a more scientific approach: the city belongs among composite things, and is made up of many parts, and since the city is a certain multitude of citizens, the first thing we should do is investigate the citizen. But once again we find ourselves in the midst of disputes—"for not everyone agrees that the same person is a citizen—someone who is a citizen in a democracy is often not one in an oligarchy." And once again Aristotle tries to sidestep such disputes by taking a scientific approach: he tries to define the citizen simply, and finds that the citizen simply shares in judgment and rule. But as soon as he tries to specify what judgment and rule mean—for example, sharing in judgment and rule means serving as jurors and assemblymen---he re-enters disputed territory: for some might object that jurors and assemblymen are not rulers. Another objection is that since regimes differ from one another in kind, citizens differ from regime to regime, and there might be little or nothing in common between citizens of different regimes. Aristotle is thus forced to admit that the definition he has given fits the democratic citizen more than citizens in other regimes, and hence is really a partisan definition of the citizen. Such objections lead Aristotle to loosen his definition of the citizen: instead of sharing in judgment or rule, the

citizen is now said to be someone who has the right to share in an office involving deliberation or judgment. The chapter thus shows the difficulty of finding a nonpartisan definition of the citizen, but ends with the hope of having found such a definition still intact.

III/2

In the next chapter Aristotle shows the superiority of his definition of the citizen to the definitions that are used in practice. In practice a citizen is someone whose parents are citizens, and this linking of birth and citizenship that is so characteristic of ordinary political life obscures the fact some human making is involved in determining citizenship. For this practical definition cannot explain how the founders of a city were citizens, whereas Aristotle's definition, since it links citizenship with a specific activity (in this case, sharing in rule) can account for founders as well as those who became citizens after the founding. Aristotle's functional definition of the citizen, unlike the biological definition used in practice, can account for citizenship across time ---it can account for citizenship throughout the life of a city.

The primacy of human making with respect to the determination of citizenship is visible not only during foundings, but also after revolutions, when new citizens are often admitted. This focus on human making raises another question about the considerations that guide such making: when is the creation of new citizens just? Aristotle points out that those who oppose the creation of new citizens after a revolution often go so far as to link the *is* and the *ought* of citizenship, and claim that those who have been unjustly made citizens are not citizens at all. Here we see that the partisan disputes about citizenship that

Aristotle has been trying to sidestep all involve the question of justice: why is it just for some to be citizens, while others are excluded? Aristotle's functional definition of citizenship is completely silent on this point: it speaks only of who *is* a citizen, and says nothing about who *ought* to be a citizen. At the end of chapter 2 Aristotle seeks to maintain the separation of the *is* and the *ought* in citizenship by relying on ordinary (as opposed to precise) speech: citizenship has been defined by a kind of rule, and since "we" admit that unjust rulers are still rulers, those who participate in rule must be admitted to be citizens.

III/3

After having discussed the most important part of the city---the citizen--- in chapters one and two, Aristotle begins a discussion of the city in chapter 3. The chapter begins by returning to the dispute mentioned at the beginning of chapter 1--- when did the city act, and when did it not act? This question is raised by those who distinguish between the city and its rulers, such as partisans of democracy who hold that rulers in an oligarchy or tyranny are not the true representatives of a city. The democrats seek to justify their contention by holding that some regimes exist through force and do not act with a view to the common advantage. Instead of rejecting or questioning this reasoning, Aristotle radicalizes and extends it: if a democracy doesn't act with a view to the common advantage, then we must say that the actions of that regime are just as unrepresentative of the city as the actions of an oligarchy or a tyranny. We thus see that if we use the common advantage as a standard to judge the actions of a regime, doubts can be raised about the actions not just of oligarchies and tyrannies, but also democracy and

indeed all other regimes. If we kept questioning the actions of regimes in this way we could easily end up Machiavellian or Thrasymachean view that all cities act with a view to the advantage of their rulers and hence that all regimes are mired in injustice.

At this point in the chapter Aristotle could begin a discussion of the relation between regimes and the common advantage, but he puts this off, and turns instead to an investigation of the possibility of understanding the city apart from the regime. This turn is not unrelated to the question that began chapter 3, for when the partisan of democracy distinguished between the city and its rulers, he was separating the city from its regime, and claiming that the identity of the city is not determined by its regime. I think this is what Aristotle has in mind when he claims that the second question he raises in chapter 3 ---- "the question of the sense in which the city ought to be spoken of as the same, or as not the same but different"---- is "somehow kindred" to the first question of chapter 3 ---- "the question of when the city performed an action and when it did not."

To know when the city remains the same, or when it changes into another city, one must find the crucial factor that determines the identity of the city. If we try to understand the identity of the city apart from its regime, the most obvious alternatives we would turn to are the location and the human beings constituting the city. In terms of location, Aristotle points out that the city is more a political unit than a geographical unit: one cannot form a city just by enclosing within walls the people who live in a certain location. One can have political units like Athens that are geographically split between two locations --- a hinterland and a port at some distance from the main location, with the

population split between the two locations. Conversely, places like the Peloponnese and Babylon are geographically united but not politically united, so they do not form cities.

Another answer to the question of what determines the identity of the city over time is the population. Aristotle deals with this solution in a peculiar manner: he raises two questions, and instead of answering them, points to the regime as the most plausible determinant of the identity of the city over time. Before speaking of the regime he does indicate in passing that those who would contend that the city remains the same as long as the same persons inhabit the same location must face a radical Heraclitean argument: following Heraclitus, who is famous for saying that we never step into the same river twice, one might object that the city is never the same in terms of its inhabitants: some are always dying, and new ones are always being born, so that the city is constantly in flux.

Aristotle presents the regime as the thing which best accounts for the identity of the city over time, but this presentation is done in a very conditional manner as he uses two "if's" and a "might" in his statement:

" *if* a city is a kind of community, and *if* it is a community of citizens in a regime, then when the regime becomes and remains different in kind, it *might* be held that the city as well is necessarily not the same." (emphasis added)

The two "if's" are crucial here, for someone like Thrasymachus will contend that the city is *not* a genuine community, not a genuine whole, but is divided between rulers and ruled, and others could also object that the city is a community broader than the regime, including women, children, slaves and resident aliens who are not part of the ruling class.

Aristotle is aware that when a revolution changes the regime of the city the human beings in the city for the most part remain the same ---- there is a certain continuity of the "human matter" which the new regime tries to shape in a different way. He does not say that the sameness of the city depends *exclusively* on the sameness of the regime; instead, he ends the chapter by insisting that the sameness of the city depends *above all* (and hence not solely) on the sameness of the regime.

III/4

Chapter 4 will examine whether the virtue of the good man and the serious citizen are the same. This ofcourse requires that we know the two things --- the good man and the serious citizen --- to be compared, but Aristotle only mentions knowing the virtue of the citizen in outline. The ship of state metaphor is introduced to help us understand the work and virtue of the citizen. Both sailors and citizens are one of a number of partners who are dissimilar in their capacities, and in both cases the partners share a common task ---- preservation of the ship in its voyage, in the first case, and preservation of the regime, in the second case. The virtue of the citizen is therefore relative to the regime, and since there are several kinds of regime, the virtue of the serious citizen cannot be "single or complete virtue" while "we say" that the good man is good by a single complete virtue. Thus there cannot be a simple identity between the serious citizen and the good man. We note that the assertion about the good man being good by a single complete virtue is just that --- a simple assertion that is unsupported by any arguments that establish its validity.

Aristotle next considers the virtue of citizens in the best regime. Here he argues that the virtue of all the citizens in the best regime cannot be the same as the virtue of the good man because citizens differ in their specific role in the regime, and so will have different virtues. The reasoning moves from noting the consequences of differences among regimes (because of different goals) to noting the consequences of differences among citizens (because of different roles). It may be the case that most, maybe all, citizens in the best regime can do their work well without exercising the virtue of a good man. As Michael Rabieh explains: "the best city has excellent leaders, judges, customs officials, etc. It need not consist entirely of, say, Lincolns, for the talents of a Lincoln are not necessary to the work of every citizen --- and it is not clear that even a Lincoln needs all of the good man's virtue for his work. But however the case may be with Lincolns, even in the best regime there is thus not "a single virtue of the citizen and the good man" because not every citizen qua citizen needs the virtue of the good man" (Rabieh, 1996, p.52). Thus even in the unlikely case that all the citizens of the best regime are good men, their work will not require all of them to exercise the virtue of the good man.

Having shown that all the citizens of any particular regime cannot be good men, Aristotle now examines if in some cases some (and so not all) citizens of a regime will be good men. Rule, and the virtues that good rulers must possess, now take center stage in the discussion. Two distinguishing characteristics of rulers are stated: "we assert" that the serious ruler is good and prudent, and "some say" that rulers require a special education (a quote from Euripides is provided to show his support of this point). After speaking about the qualities of rulers, Aristotle assumes a similarity between good rulers and good

men ("if the virtue of the good ruler and the good man is the same") and then proceeds on this basis to compare the serious citizen and the good man. In the course of this comparison the good man first appears superior to the serious citizen, then inferior to him, and is finally shown to be similar to him.

The first comparative statement reads:

"if the virtue of the good ruler and the good man is the same, and if one who is ruled is also a citizen, the virtue of citizen and man would not be the same unqualifiedly, but only in the case of a certain sort of citizen."

Here the good man appears superior to the citizen as ruling all the time appears as something superior to both ruling and being ruled. In the immediate sequel, however, ruling all the time takes on a negative connotation as the tyrant Jason is used as an example of one who exercises such rule: he said "he was hungry except when he was tyrant, as one who did not know how to be a private individual." Ruling appears as a kind of addiction, something that leaves you unable to enjoy private life. Along with this depreciation of ruling we get a corresponding elevation of ruling and being ruled: people praise it, and the virtue of a reputable citizen "is held to be the capacity to rule and be ruled finely." This lays the groundwork for Aristotle's second comparative statement: "Now if we regard the virtue of the good man as being of a ruling sort, while that of the citizen is both [of a ruling and ruled sort] they would not be praiseworthy to a similar extent."

This second comparative statement, in sharp contrast to the first one, sees the citizen's capacity as something higher than the good man's, as the capacity to rule and be ruled

seems to require something extra beyond knowing just rule. As Aristotle now leads us to see, the premise of the first comparative statement is that rulers and the ruled should have different educations, while the premise of the second comparative statement is that it is possible for a citizen to possess the capacity to both rule and be ruled and thus combine what the first statement separates. He proceeds to reconcile the two opposing views (and one person can hold both these views simultaneously) by differentiating rule into two kinds: rule of a master, and political rule. The master should know only how to direct his servant, without knowing how to perform the servant's menial tasks. Political rule is rule over those who are similar in stock and free, and one learns it by being ruled --- as in the military, where one learns to perform the tasks of the higher ranks by first having served in the lower ranks. The conclusion that follows from this differentiation of rule comes as a surprise (in light of what had preceded it) because it asserts a fundamental similarity between the good citizen and the good man. This third comparative statement states that: "the good citizen should know and have the capacity both to be ruled and to rule, and this very thing is the virtue of a citizen --- knowledge of rule over free persons from both [points of view]. Both belong to the good man too, as well as whatever kind of moderation and justice is characteristic of ruling."

The last sentence simultaneously both assimilates and differentiates the good man from the good citizen. In light of the first two comparative statements' clear position that the good man possessed only the ruling capacity, Aristotle's assertion now that he possesses both the capacity to rule and be ruled means that he has significantly revised his view of what such a man knows. He adds, almost in passing, that the good man possesses

"whatever kind of moderation and justice is characteristic of ruling" --- as if this were an extra capacity that the good man has, in addition to the citizen's capacity to rule and be ruled. Implied in this statement is the proposition that there is a qualitative difference when the same virtue is possessed by a ruler, on the one hand, and someone who is ruled, on the other hand. Aristotle tries to explain this difference between the virtues of rulers and the ruled by using the example of the difference between male and female virtue: "for a man would be held a coward if he were as courageous as a courageous woman, and a woman talkative if she were as modest as the good man." A second, and even more significant difference in virtue between rulers and the ruled is now stated: "prudence is the only virtue peculiar to the ruler," and hence it is absent in the ruled, who possess true opinion instead. The example of the difference between the virtues of the two sexes is no longer used here --- perhaps there is no virtue that is the exclusive possession of one of the two sexes? Instead, the ruler is compared to a flute player and the ruled to a flute maker --- the user of a product is superior to the maker of the product. But what do the ruled make that a ruler uses?

We are finally ready for a concluding statement that will answer the question raised at the beginning of the chapter, but for some reason Aristotle puts this off till the end of chapter 5 and here he leaves it for the reader to figure out by saying that it " is evident from these things."

III/5

Chapter 5 begins: "one of the questions concerning the citizen still remains." So far we have dealt with three questions: the identity of the citizen (III/1), the identity of the

city (III/3) and the relation between the good man and the serious citizen (III/4). Chapter 2 had raised a question about the justice of citizenship --- why is it just for some to be citizens while others are excluded? --- but the question of the identity of the city was substituted for this question in III/3.

The remaining question concerns the place of vulgar persons in the city, "vulgar" being understood here as people who do the "works of necessity" for the community. According to Aristotle "it is impossible to pursue the things of virtue when one lives the life of a vulgar mechanic or laborer" (1278a20), presumably because they lack the leisure necessary for acquiring virtue, and this may be also why Aristotle says they "have no part in offices" (1277b36). This fact mitigates what might otherwise appear to be a sharp difference among regimes --- wealthy vulgar mechanics can be citizens in oligarchies, and even non-wealthy ones in certain democracies, but neither an aristocracy nor the best city will make citizens of this class of people (1278a8-1278a34). For if he is "most of all [a citizen] who shares in the honors of office" (1278a36), and such people "have no share in offices" (1277b36), then they are citizens in a weak, secondary sense, even in defective regimes like oligarchy and democracy --- so that Aristotle goes so far as to say that a person from this class of people is "like an alien" (1278a38) in the city.

But are vulgar mechanics and laborers who are citizens really so inconsequential as Aristotle suggests? Even if they do not hold offices, as citizens don't they have some say in who gets to occupy offices --- say by voting? Since they are citizens, won't officeholders have to cater to them and their views in certain respects? Aristotle says that having them be citizens who never hold office is a sort of deception (1278a38-39), for

they seem to be included while they are in fact excluded, but why is the deception necessary in the first place? Might it be because there are enough of them to cause trouble if they are openly excluded and not made citizens, especially if some of them are wealthy enough to be citizens if the city were an oligarchy? Read this way, the chapter presents two alternatives: include vulgar mechanics or laborers for the sake of civic peace, and allow their influence to limit a city's efforts to promote virtue in its citizens, or exclude them to focus more squarely on virtue, but run the risk of having a resentful class of people, some of them wealthy, living in the city because they, and the work they do, are necessary for the existence of the city (1278a2). Pursuit of one good will hamper the pursuit of another, and only after pointing out the costs of the pursuit of citizen virtue does Aristotle give us the conclusion of the inquiry of chapter 4: only the political ruler --- one having authority or capable of having authority over common matters --- in "one sort of city" (which sort?) will be both a serious citizen and a good man.

III/6

In III/1-5 Aristotle sought to understand a whole by examining one of its parts --- to understand the regime he looked at the city and its part, the citizen, and now in chapter 6 he turns to a direct examination of the whole, or that which makes a city a whole ---- the regime. We can see the need for such a step when we recall that at crucial stages of the argument in chapters 1 to 5 the problems concerning the citizen were resolved by reference to the regime: in chapter 1 Aristotle stated that since "regimes differ from one another in kind" someone who is a citizen in a democracy is not necessarily so in another regime (1275a40); in chapter 4 we saw that "the virtue of the citizen must necessarily be

with a view to the regime" (1276b29); and in chapter 5 we learnt that "since there are several regimes, there must necessarily be several kinds of citizen, and particularly of the citizen who is ruled" (1278a14). We thus see that in order to know the citizen we must have some knowledge of the whole of which it is a part, and so Aristotle now turns to a direct examination of regimes.

In the first section of Book III (III/1-5) certain assumptions about regimes were made, and these assumptions now become subject to questioning and verification. In particular, the three statements about citizens that I quoted in the preceding paragraph were based on an assumption about regimes: they assume that there exists more than one kind of regime. Aristotle opens III/6 by declaring that the existence of more than one kind of regime remains an open question:

"since these things have been discussed, what comes after them must be investigated--whether we are to regard there as being one regime or many...."

Early modern writers such as Machiavelli have held that there are no significant differences among regimes (other than the number of rulers), and I take Aristotle to be asking if there are any significant differences, such as differences of goal, purpose or intent among the rulers in the various regimes. This is the primary question raised at the beginning of III/6; in addition, if we find that there are many kinds of regime, the discussion will seek to establish "which and how many [kinds of regime] there are and what the differences are between them."

Aristotle begins to answer these questions by providing a definition of regime, and giving us short discussions of the ends of the city and the kinds of rule. In III/1 the

regime was said to be "a certain ordering [*taxis*] of those who inhabit the city" (1274b38), and now in III/6 we are told that "the regime is an ordering [*taxis*] of the city with respect to its offices, particularly the one that has authority over all [matters]." This second statement is both more specific and makes a stronger claim: it speaks of ordering the city, and not just its inhabitants, and implies that the offices, especially the most authoritative one, are the most important part of the city. Once we learn that the governing body --- the *politeuma* --- is the regime, we are able to understand more fully why Aristotle had indicated earlier (in III/2 and III/5) that the regime determines who gets to be a citizen and that the regime most of all determines the identity of the city (III/3). This identification of the rulers of a city with the regime tells us that the crucial political fact in a city is its rulers and the principles they stand for, but here in III/6 all talk of principles is left out and the focus remains on just the rulers themselves. In democratic regimes the people have authority while in oligarchies the few have authority, so "we say" the regimes are different in these cases. We note that the only difference between democracies and oligarchies mentioned here is the number of rulers in these regimes; nothing is said here about different intent, purposes or goals in the rulers of these regimes.

Perhaps with a view to finding more substantial differences among regimes Aristotle now turns to a discussion about why cities are established and the kinds of rule. We get a tripartite/three-layered explanation of why people live in cities. The first explanation refers us back to Aristotle's statement in Book I that human beings are by nature political animals. He tells us now that this means that human beings desire to live

together even when they have no need of each other's help. Thus men desire to live together independent of any calculation of benefit or gain; as Leo Strauss puts it (Strauss, 1953, p.129) man's "sociality does not proceed, then, from a calculation of the pleasures which he expects from association, but he derives pleasure from association because he is by nature social."

The second explanation for people living in common reads:
"It is also true that the common advantage draws them into union insofar as noble living is something they each partake of. So this above all is the end for all both in common and separately." I will make several points about this very compressed and very complex statement. First, the common advantage seems to consist, either wholly or in part, in noble living. Second, each member of the political community seems to draw some benefit from the common advantage: each individual can understand the common advantage as something that is good *for him*. Third, the noble life is above all, or most of all, the end of living in common. Fourth, the noble life is the end both for the people as a collectivity and for each person by himself . Fifth, Aristotle leaves unspecified the link between these two pursuits: how does the collective pursuit of the noble life relate to the individual pursuit of the noble life?

Finally, men come together in cities for mere life, for "perhaps" there is something noble even in life taken by itself, and men fight hard and suffer much just to cling on to life, "as if it contained in itself some natural gladness and sweetness."

After this tripartite discussion of the ends of the political community, we see that rule in cities should aim at achieving these ends, and so we should next expect a

discussion of the kinds of rule with a view to seeing which of these kinds of rule succeed in achieving the three ends Aristotle mentions. But what we get instead is a discussion of the kinds of rule that looks only at whether any of these kinds of rule strives to achieve only one of the three ends --- the common advantage. Nothing is said about how the kinds of rule affect our desire to live together regardless of need (the first end mentioned), or about how they affect the natural sweetness that goes with being alive.

Looking at the kinds of rule from the standpoint of the common advantage, we see that three possibilities exist: one can exercise rule either for the sake of the ruled, or for the sake of the rulers, or for the sake of something common to both. These three possibilities encapsulate the intended beneficiaries of rule, but rule can also have unintended consequences, and we will also look at how rulers can end up benefiting someone without intending to do so. Aristotle speaks of three kinds of rule: mastery, rule over the household, and political rule. The discussion of mastery is limited to a discussion of natural slavery: the master by nature rules with a view to his own advantage, but ends up benefiting the natural slave as well. The opposite is true in the case of "rule over children and wife and the household as a whole": the male head of the household rules with a view to the advantage of the ruled, but can end up benefiting himself as well. How this happens is explained by reference to three other arts: medicine, gymnastic and the piloting art. The trainer can end up benefiting himself by sometimes being one of those engaged in gymnastic exercise, and the pilot benefits himself since he is always one of the sailors. These three examples from the arts may have been offered with a certain hierarchy in mind: medicine is dropped as soon as it is raised, perhaps because it is hard

to specify how the doctor benefits himself while looking after his patients; the trainer *sometimes* benefits himself by exercising with his pupils; the pilot is *always* one of the sailors he benefits.

We now come to political rule. In cities characterized by "equality and similarity among the citizens," men in the past would rule in turns, and since rule was understood as looking after the good of the ruled, they would benefit others when ruling and be benefited in turn by others when they were being ruled. Aristotle calls such rule "natural," implying that its opposite is unnatural. By Aristotle's time rulers had begun to profit personally from ruling (through misuse of common funds, Aristotle suggests), and men wished to rule continuously, as if they were sick and ruling made them healthy. What is striking in this discussion of political rule is the absence of any mention of accidental (unintended) advantages or the common advantage. Rulers are not said to accidentally benefit themselves when they rule with a view to benefiting others (as in the case of household rule), nor are they said to accidentally benefit others when they seek their own good while ruling (as in the case of mastery). Since there is also no mention of any common advantage in which rulers and the ruled share, we seem to get a simple and stark choice in political rule: either the rulers or the ruled are benefited by such rule, and there are not even any accidental advantages which can unite rulers and the ruled by having both groups reap the benefits of political rule.

In light of this conclusion it comes as something of a shock when we read in the very next sentence that "all regimes that look to the common advantage turn out, according to what is simply just, to be correct ones, while those that look only to the

advantage of the rulers are mistaken and are all deviations from the correct regimes." We would expect the standard of correctness to be ruling with a view to the advantage of the ruled, but this has been replaced by ruling with a view to the common advantage, as if to imply that the former standard is too demanding, so that in practice we will never see political rulers so unmindful of their own good that they rule only for the benefit of the ruled. But if ruling for the common advantage is a viable alternative why wasn't it included in the discussion of political rule that preceded this twofold division of regimes?

III/7

At the beginning of III/6 three questions were posed: 1st, whether there exists more than one kind of regime, 2nd, if more than one, which and how many these regimes are, and 3rd, what the differences are between the regimes. At the beginning of III/7 one of these three questions is reposed: we must examine how many and which the regimes are. The implication is that the two other questions have been answered in the course of the discussion in III/6, and this is indeed the case: at the end of III/6 regimes were divided into two kinds, correct and deviant, and the difference between them was that one kind looked to the common advantage while the other kind looked to the advantage of the rulers. The task that remains is the determination of how many regimes there are in each kind and what they are.

The first step is to determine the correct regimes, then "the deviations will be manifest once these have been defined." That is, our understanding of deviant regimes is conceptually/theoretically dependent on our understanding of correct regimes: one understands deviant regimes only by reference to the correct regimes, for the deviant

regimes are deviations from something, they are "all deviations from the correct regimes" (III/6/1279a20).

Regimes have been differentiated into correct and deviant kinds, and we now get the number and identity of the regimes in each kind through a numerical division of the rulers who may be in control of any given city. Regime (*politeia*) and ruling body (*politeuma*) signify the same thing, and the *politeuma* is the authoritative element (*to kurion*) in cities. This authoritative element is "necessarily" either one or a few or the many, and when they rule for the common advantage the three resulting regimes are "necessarily" correct, while when rule is exercised for the private advantage of the one, the few, or the many the three resulting regimes are deviant (1279b25-31). "For either it must be denied that persons sharing [in the regime] are citizens, or they must participate in its advantages" (1279b31-32): i.e. the other inhabitants of a city with a deviant regime have been reduced to a status below that of citizen, perhaps to second-class citizens, by the self-seeking conduct of the city's rulers.

So there are six regimes, and the rest of the chapter is devoted to naming these regimes. The correct regimes are named first, and very soon we see that Aristotle's criteria for determining which regimes are correct seem to change, or undergo modification/addition. The first case is the only straightforward one: the regime among monarchies which looks to the common advantage we customarily call kingship. But when we come to the correct regime ruled by a few the common advantage is not mentioned; instead, this regime is said to be called aristocracy "either because the best rule, or because they rule with a view to what is best for the city and for those

participating in it" (1279a35-36). So a correct regime can be characterized either by the character of its rulers or by the goal of the rulers, and thus a new criteria for correct regimes has emerged, for the character of the rulers was not mentioned at the end of III/6 or early in III/7 when correct regimes were defined. Moreover, as Mary Nichols points out (Nichols, 1992, p.63), when speaking of the goal of the rulers Aristotle avoids the phrase "common advantage" and substitutes in its place the phrase "what is best for the city and for those participating in it." We have to wonder why Aristotle distinguishes "the city" from "those participating in it," and if he has doubts about whether the rulers in an aristocracy can have common interests with the other citizens.

The two criteria --- the goal of the rulers, and the character of the rulers --- are once again used when Aristotle speaks of the third correct regime (polity). Perhaps there is an obvious connection between the two criteria, since virtuous rulers may be needed to pursue a correct goal (the common good), but Aristotle does not explicitly spell that out here. A new term is used for the rulers in a polity here (the multitude [*to plethos*] instead of the many [*hoi polloi*]), and while they cannot be outstanding in virtue like one person or a few people, they can be proficient in military virtue, and so in this regime the warrior element is most powerful.

The chapter ends by naming the three deviant regimes. The deviant form of kingship is tyranny, the deviant form of aristocracy is oligarchy, and the deviant form of polity is democracy. Tyrants rule for their own advantage, oligarchs rule for the advantage of the well-off (*euporoi*), and democrats rule for the advantage of the poor (*aporoi*). We note that in the last two cases the intended beneficiaries of rule are two

mutually exclusive socio-economic groups, rather than a random few or a random many, with oligarchy favoring the rich at the expense of others, and democracy favoring the poor at the expense of others.

III/8

Aristotle himself had some doubts about the adequacy of the sixfold classification of regimes laid out in III/7, for he begins III/8 by stating that one should speak at "greater length of what each of these regimes is," for certain difficulties (*aporias*) arise, and since he is "philosophizing" about this matter, and not just inquiring with a view to action, he will try to "make clear the truth concerning each thing." We are told that the "who" or "which" (*tis*) of the regimes needs further explanation, and the *Politics* is a philosophical inquiry into such matters (later on in Book III he will speak of "political philosophy").

He begins by redoing what he just did at the end of III/7: he defines the deviant regimes. Tyranny is the despotic rule of one man over the political community, oligarchy is when those with property control the regime, and democracy is when those without much property control the regime (1279b16-20). The assumption behind the definitions in both these chapters seems to be that the rich are always a minority and the poor are always a majority, but this definition of regimes would "not be held to be a fine one" (1279b26), Aristotle next says, if it somewhere happened that the poor were a minority (outnumbered by the rich) and had control of the regime, or if the rich were a majority and had control of the regime. So how important is the consideration of the number of rulers in the definition of oligarchy and democracy? For Aristotle the fact that the poor are everywhere a majority and the rich are everywhere a minority is an "accidental"

(*sumbebekos* -- 1279b36) consideration in the definition of oligarchy and democracy. What separates the two regimes is poverty and wealth: wherever rule is exercised on account of wealth, whether by a majority or a minority, the regime is an oligarchy, and wherever the poor rule we have a democracy. So of the two factors used (the number of rulers, the goal of the rulers) in the classification of regimes, the second factor (the goal) is the crucial one, and Aristotle's assumption here seems to be that the two classes --- the rich and the poor --- always rule in their own private interest when they have control in the city, which is what makes their regimes deviant.

But is this correct? Don't all rulers, even rulers in deviant regimes, claim to rule for the common advantage? Is knowing the common advantage a simple matter, so that if one really wanted to rule for the common advantage one could do so, or is knowing the common advantage a complex affair, so that we would have to examine the various claims to rule to see if they properly understood the common advantage? A thoughtful citizen will accept Aristotle's conclusions about correct and deviant regimes if he can be shown that such conclusions are required by the decent man's beliefs about distributive justice and the city (for instance, the belief that the city is more than a defensive alliance or a business partnership among the citizens). To do this one must examine the speeches of the actors in political life, especially the claims to rule, for such claims contain within them a vision of the entity (the city) over which, or in which, one wants to rule. I think this is why Aristotle starts to examine the claims to rule in the next chapter (III/9), and we get a preview of two of those claims at the end of III/8: "few are well off, but all share in freedom --- which are the causes of both [groups] disputing over the regime." So the rich

claim to rule on the basis of their riches, and the poor claim to rule, not on the basis of their poverty (a shortcoming which sets them apart from others), but on the basis of their freedom, a positive quality they share with others. So Aristotle turns to examining the speeches of the actors in everyday political life at the beginning of III/9.

III/9

The turn to the speeches, to the reasoning of the partisans of the various regimes in everyday political life, is evident at the very beginning of chapter 9 as Aristotle declares that first we must grasp what "they" (i.e. oligarchs and democrats) speak of as the defining principles of their respective regimes and what they understand justice to require. He begins, not by specifying their understanding of justice, but by telling us why they go wrong, and then goes through their claims and reveals their flaws. Oligarchs and democrats err because they fail to speak of the "authoritatively just" and instead they get hold of a "sort of justice," so that in practice justice is held to be equality (the democratic view), and Aristotle says that it is, but only for equals; justice is also held to be inequality (the oligarchic view), and Aristotle says that this is also true, but only for unequals. The partisans thus judge badly because they disregard the element of persons, or the "for whom." Aristotle explains that the cause of this disregard is that such judgments concern oneself, and "most people are bad judges concerning their own things."

So we have three things: the partisans grasping only a sort of justice, their disregarding of the element of persons (or the "for whom"), and their being bad judges of their own cases. At this point one might throw up one's hands and say that since both

sides seem diametrically and totally opposed, there is no hope of rationally resolving this dispute. But Aristotle now shows (with a reference to a passage in the *Ethics*) that there is a common principle that both sides agree on, for all agree that superior people should receive more, and people who are equal should receive equal shares, of things that must be distributed and shared among a number of people. Their disagreement concerns their judgment of human beings, for oligarchs and democrats are unable to agree on whether they themselves are equal or unequal. More precisely, they disagree about what should determine political equality and inequality: "all agree that the just in distributions must accord with some sort of worth, but what they call worth is not the same" (*Ethics*, V, 3, 1131a25). Oligarchs contend that inequality in property should be the crucial consideration, while democrats contend that equality in freedom is what matters. Aristotle declares that they are both wrong: "of the most authoritative [consideration] they say nothing" (1280a25).

What the most authoritative consideration is Aristotle doesn't tell us. Instead, he shows us that the oligarchic and democratic claims to rule imply, or contain within them, a view of what the city aims at, of the kind of life it promotes. Aristotle subjects these views of what the city should aim at to a vigorous critique, and by showing us why these views are defective, he also shows us what an adequate view of the goals of the city would be. That is, by showing us what is missing from the defective views of the aims of the city, he also shows us what the concerns of a true political order should be. Aristotle next defends and fleshes out this view of the proper concerns of a true political order

(1280b8-1281a1), and then at the end of the chapter tells us that political equality and inequality should be determined on the basis of contributions to the city so understood.

The oligarchic argument would be strong, Aristotle tells us, if people came together for the sake of possessions (*ktemata*). In this view, the political order is similar to a business venture: people join together to start a business with the expectation of mutual gain, with profits being divided up according to one's contribution to the business. In such enterprises the biggest investor owns more shares in the business and it is therefore just for him to get a larger share of the profits than others: if two people start a business with a hundred minas, with one person contributing one mina and another person all the rest, "it is not just ...[for the partners] to have equal shares ...either of the capital or of the proceeds" (1280a28-30).

The oligarchic argument would be weak, however, "if [the city exists] primarily for the sake of living well, ...[and not only] for the sake of life alone, ...[or] for the sake of an alliance to prevent their suffering injustice from anyone, ...[or] for purposes of exchange and mutual utility" (1280a31-a36). Aristotle is suggesting that holding that people come together for the sake of possessions is the same as asserting that the city exists for the sake of mere life. When one conceives of the city as directed toward mere life what is left out is "a life lived according to deliberate choice" (1280a33), and this is the key fact, according to Aristotle, that separates free humans living in cities from slaves and animals: lacking *logos*, animals cannot deliberate, and do not form cities; Aristotle adds that they cannot share in happiness either, in part undoubtedly because they are limited to enjoying mostly physical pleasures.

There are also problems associated with thinking of the city as existing only, or primarily, for defense and commerce. For two cities (say the Etruscans and the Carthaginians --- 1280a6) can have defensive and commercial agreements and treaties with each other, but this does not mean that "all those who have treaties with each other would be citizens of one city." Why not? What more is needed to unify two cities sharing defensive and commercial links? Aristotle mentions two things that are missing in this situation. First, the two cities do not have common offices "to deal with these matters" : i.e. each city has its own generals and its own courts, rather than one set of common offices and officials. Second, the people in either one of the two cities " do not concern themselves about what kind of persons the ones [in the other city] ought to be, nor are they concerned that no one coming under the compact BE unjust or depraved in any way. They are only concerned that they DO nothing unjust to one another" (1280b3-4; capitalization added). Thus the people of one city do not concern themselves with the character of the people in the other city, or with what we might call their *inner disposition*; they only seek to ensure that the people in the other city are not unjust in their *external actions*, and do not concern themselves with whether these people care for justice or any other virtue in their souls.

The implications of this second point Aristotle raises is that in every city each citizen does care about the character of every other citizen, and this implication is fleshed out in the very next sentence. Two qualifications occur: not every citizen, but only " those who are concerned about good laws (*eunomia*) give careful attention to political virtue and vice," and not every city, but only cities "to which the term [city] applies truly and not

merely in a manner of speaking" (1280b7) make virtue their care. This is a very strong statement: cities that do not make virtue their care do not deserve to be called cities. This means that not only the political associations dominant in our time (liberal democracies, with their professed agnosticism about the best life), but even most cities in Aristotle's time, were not truly political associations, for as he told us in the *Ethics*: "it is only in Sparta, or in a few other cities as well, that the legislator seems to have attended to upbringing and practices. In most other cities they are neglected, and an individual lives as he wishes, "laying down the rules for his children and wife," like a Cyclops" (X, 9, 1180a25-30). Or should we say that *every* city does affect the character of its citizens, the only difference being that some cities do this consciously and other do it unconsciously? For there seems to be a connection between the two things Aristotle found missing in an alliance of two cities: common offices and concern for the character of the citizens. The first seems to lead directly to the second, for these officials have to be selected somehow, which means that some criteria have to be established for their selection, and the public declaration of these criteria is bound to have some effect on the character of the citizens. For example, if wealth is a criterion, that would amount to a public declaration that wealth is a good quality, a very important quality, which is deserving of public honor; and "whatever those in control conceive to be honorable will necessarily be followed by the opinion of the other citizens" (II, 11, 1273a39-40). Aristotle prefers we explicitly acknowledge this shaping influence of the political order on the character of its citizens, so that it can be done consciously and thus well.

We are next told that if the city doesn't make virtue its care, certain negative consequences will follow: "for otherwise the community becomes an alliance (*summakia*) that differs only in location from other alliances ... and the law becomes a compact (*suntheke*) and a guarantor ..among one another of the just things, but not the sort of thing to make the citizens good and just" (1280b8-12). This is a negative statement, stating what the community shouldn't be and what the law shouldn't be, and causes us to wonder what Aristotle's positive statement would be. We have already had some indication of what the community should be, and now we are in a position to see that Aristotle has also given us some indications about what the law should be. The city should make virtue (or, more precisely, political virtue, and so not virtue simply) its care, and Aristotle's statements here suggest that we might see law and virtue related as means to end. For we have been told that those who are serious about good laws give careful attention to political virtue and vice (1280b6), and that when the law becomes merely a compact it fails to "make" the citizens good and just. Later Aristotelians certainly saw law and virtue related as means to end: for Maimonides (see *Guide* III/27) the law as a whole aimed at the well-being of the body and the perfection of the soul, and for Thomas Aquinas the proper effect of the law was to lead its subject to virtue.

The rest of chapter 9 is devoted to a defense and demonstration of the correctness of Aristotle's statement that in the absence of a care for virtue the community becomes an alliance and the law becomes a compact. We are shown that many things need to come together to make a city --- such as a common location for the citizens to share, the practice of intermarriage among various groups of citizens, and laws against committing

injustice in commercial dealings --- but even when all these things are taken together, "those studying the matter precisely" will see that something more is needed to make a city. Something more is needed because people joined in the ways mentioned are still "associating in the same way when together as when apart" (1280b29) --- i.e. there is no fundamental change in their attitude toward each other, so that people view each other more as an "other" than as a "us," and this leads to each man using "his own household like a city" and coming to another's "aid only against those committing injustice." So something more in needed in addition to a common location, intermarriage and laws against committing injustice, but before telling us what this something more is Aristotle gives us his fullest statement so far (in Book III) of the end of the city.

The end of the city is "living well" (*euzen*) and the city is a "community in living well both of households and tribes for the sake of a complete and self-sufficient life" (1280b33-34). We note that the parts of the city mentioned here (households and families) are not the only part of the city mentioned in Book III chapter 1 (the citizen). John M Cooper (Cooper, 1999, p.374) suggests that this is because the living well aimed at in cities is the living well of the city's constituent households, and that individual citizens' lives are affected only insofar as the living well of these intermediate associations carries with it their well being as well. Cooper may be correct, but his suggestion doesn't explain why Aristotle indicated earlier that the virtue of individuals should be a care for the city (1280b3-4 and 1280b7). For the city to achieve its end of living well, not only must the previously mentioned necessary preconditions of a common location and intermarriage be present, but friendship among the citizens must

also be present. In cities, friendship among the citizens gives rise to marriage connections (*kedeia*), clans (*thratra*), religious festivals (*thusia*) and the other pastimes (*diagoge*) of living together, for the intentional choice (*prohairesis*) to live together is friendship. Friendship thus appears to be the something more that was needed (in addition to a common location, intermarriage and laws against committing injustice) to make a city. But what happened to the care for virtue that was given such importance earlier in the chapter (1280b3-4 and 1280b7)? Given the earlier statements, a reader might be led to think that that was the something more needed, in addition to the preconditions, to make a city. Is the care for virtue one of the things that arise out of friendship, like the pastimes (*diagoge*) of living together? If the friendship mentioned here is civic friendship, what exactly is the connection between civic friendship (*politike philia*) and political virtue (*politike arete*)?

We next get a restatement of the end of the city, only this time it is tribes and villages (instead of tribes and households) that form the community whose end is living well. Aristotle may be indicating here that these secondary associations (the households, tribes and villages), which are prior to the city in time, continue to exist in most cases after cities are formed, and serve as conduits of the city's moral teaching, and their continued existence may be necessary because the good city needs them to carry out its pedagogic function. Living well is living happily and nobly, and the political community exists for the sake of noble actions (1281a2). Robert Bartlett (2001, p.152) suggests that noble actions "are here choiceworthy because they secure for each and for all a happy life," but perhaps noble actions are also choiceworthy in and of themselves, for they are

intrinsically good, and living well consists in performing such actions, in doing the right thing, regardless of whether we are physically or materially benefited by such actions. We have already seen that Aristotle himself qualifies his sixfold classification of regimes in chapters 7 and 8, and from the drift of the argument here in chapter 9 we can add another qualification: "oligarchs and democrats ...have a partial grasp of the end of the city," and so their regimes are deviant, "not so much because they *pursue something bad* as because they *pursue the good partially or incompletely*" (Simpson, 1998, p.164; italics added). I think we can complete Simpson's observation by concluding that oligarchies and democracies are therefore deviant, not because they consciously pursue a private good, but because they pursue a mistaken or false notion of the common advantage.

The chapter ends by returning to the problem of desert for rule with which it began. After going through the reasoning behind the oligarchic and democratic claims to rule, Aristotle had declared them both defective because they failed to identify "the most authoritative consideration" (1280a25), and now, after he has shown us the true end of the city, we are told that "those who contribute most to a community of this sort" (i.e. one taking living well as its end) have a greater claim to rule than oligarchs and democrats: superiority in political virtue should count more than superiority in wealth or equality in freedom (1281a3-6). This is a distinctly aristocratic argument, for such reasoning is supportive of the claims to rule that aristocrats would make. But as soon as Aristotle states this conclusion that is supportive of aristocracy he shows us that he has reservations against the aristocratic argument as well, for the very next sentence reads: "that *all* who dispute about regimes speak of some part of justice, then, is evident from

what has been said" (italics added). This is the last sentence of the chapter, and that aristocrats are included in the "all" here we can see from what follows. So we turn to chapter 10 expecting to learn the problems with the aristocratic claim and the other claims to rule.

III/10

Most of III/9 was devoted to bringing out the highest end of the city, and when this highest end was revealed to be the cultivation of virtue and the doing of noble deeds, it followed that the virtuous (i.e. the aristocrats) had the strongest claim to rule. But while aristocrats may have the strongest claim to rule from the point of view of the highest end of the city, a lower end of the city, such as avoiding civil strife among the various groups in the city, might require giving greater weight to the claims of the democrats than they would deserve from the point of view of virtue. I think this is why Aristotle ends chapter 9 by stating that "all [i.e. all groups vying for rule, including the aristocrats] who dispute about regimes speak of some part of justice," and this is also why he opens III/10 by declaring that what "the authoritative element" (*to kurion*) of the city should be remains an open question.

Five contenders for rule are mentioned by Aristotle in III/10: the multitude, the wealthy, the decent (*epieikes*), the best one of all, and the tyrant (1281a12-13). In III/9 the two contenders for rule were clearly identified as oligarchs and democrats, but one of the peculiarities of III/10 is that not only is the word "regime" never used in the chapter, but even the names of the six regimes (oligarchy, democracy, kingship, etc) are never mentioned (the words "oligarchic," "democratic," and "tyrant" [but not "tyranny"] are

used). Does he leave it for us to somehow match the five claimants to the six regimes? Or is this discussion more fundamental than the discussion in III/6-8, since it shows that the common advantage is very complicated, consisting of high (virtue) and low (avoidance of civil strife) elements, and that different claimants have a stronger claim to rule from the point of view of different elements of the common advantage? In this chapter, unlike in III/9, no one claimant appears to have an unproblematic claim, but they "all ....appear to involve difficulties" (1281a13-14).

The first of the five claimants, "the multitude," could be either the poor who form democracy (III/7/1279b8-9), or the multitude with military virtue who form polity (III/7/1279b1-2). Here the multitude whose behavior Aristotle examines are the poor (1281a14), and he proceeds on the assumption that they will act unjustly, distributing "among themselves the things of the wealthy." Two questions follow. First: "is this not unjust?" The poor reply "by Zeus, it seemed justly done to the authoritative element" (1281a16). Aristotle responds (is he playing the role of an oligarch here?) with another question: what, then, is "the extreme" (*eskatos*) of injustice? Isn't it typical of an oligarch to passionately claim that taking his property is the extreme of injustice? Or is the extreme of injustice because of its wider consequence? For Aristotle next claims that expropriation of the minority's property by the majority will destroy the city (1281a18-19). Then follows this striking statement: "It is certainly not virtue that destroys the element possessing it, nor is justice destructive of a city" (1281a19-20). After this statement Aristotle concludes: "so it is clear that this law cannot be just." Is this argument not conclusive enough? Perhaps to convince the democrats, he gives a second argument

that shows the democrats that their argument can be used against them by others: by the democratic argument a tyrant who uses his superior force to take other's property is also acting justly (for another comparison of democracy and tyranny, see III/3/1276a13-16).

The next claimant for rule is the minority and the wealthy, and Aristotle says that "if they act in the same way" as the poor and plunder the possessions of others, and consider such behavior to be just, then the plundering of the poor will be justified as well. The conclusion that follows seems to be meant to apply to both the rule of the poor and the rule of the wealthy: "that all these things are bad and unjust, then, is evident" (1281a27-28).

The next two claimants considered are the decent and the single most serious man, and it becomes clear from Aristotle's remarks that he is objecting to them from the point of view of the multitude. The objection to the rule of the decent is that "all the others" (1281a28) would be deprived of the honor of office if only the decent rule, and in a similar vein, rule of the single most serious man is "still more oligarchic, as [even] more [people] are deprived of prerogatives" (1281a34). Thus rule that from the point of view of III/7 should be characterized as aristocratic and kingly is characterized as oligarchic and "still more oligarchic" in III/10. This is a distinctly democratic argument. The defects of these two claimants stem not from their unjust behavior when they are in control (as was the case with the poor and the wealthy), but from the fact that others feel left out when they rule. One could take a Machiavellian tack and say that here we see necessity (the necessity of appeasing the demands of the many) taking precedence over justice (the best must share rule with those who are less deserving of this honor), but Aristotle does

not take this view. After all, the many are needed to perform necessary tasks for others in the city (as we saw in III/5), and also for civil defense against foreign enemies, so there is a certain justice to their desire to share in rule. Justice means taking into account both the merit of the decent and the importance of the bodily work of the many, and the prudent statesman/legislator must balance such considerations, for "it is certainly not virtue that destroys the element possessing it, nor is justice destructive of a city" (1281a19-20).

One could try to sidestep this difficulty by saying that the laws (rather than men) should be "the authoritative element," but Aristotle ends the chapter by pointing out that the law is either democratic or oligarchic law (that is, it is relative to the regime), and so the difficulty remains.

III/11

Chapter 11 is long and complicated, so to make my exegesis easier to grasp, I have divided my commentary into 4 sections.

Section 1

Chapter 11 considers the view that "the multitude should be the authoritative element rather than those who are best but few," and starts by noting that this view, "while questionable," also "perhaps" has some truth to it. So we have a contest between two claimants, "the multitude" and "the few best." The multitude here are not immediately identified with the poor, as they were in III/10, and the few best were not even mentioned there ("the decent" were the nearest equivalent of the few best in III/10).

Aristotle begins by clarifying the nature of the claim made on behalf of the multitude: while none of the many is individually a serious man (*spoudaios aner*, 1281b1), all together, as a group, they can be better than the few best. So this is a claim

of collective superiority, which is something new, since the basis of the democrat's claim in III/9, individual equality in freedom, goes counter to the individual inferiority of the many to the serious man that is conceded here, and there is also no mention of the military virtue that characterized the individuals who made up the ruling multitude in polity in III/7. This claim of collective superiority is immediately illustrated by an example: "meals furnished collectively are better than meals furnished at one person's expense." This statement is dubious: "one may contest whether a potluck dinner is better than a carefully planned and organized banquet" (Waldron, 1995, p.567); "is a feast of a large number of common dishes superior to that provided by ...[a] ..culinary expert" (Lindsay, 1992, p.104)? It becomes even more dubious when we note that the terms of comparison are the many vs. one rather than the many vs. the few: a few aristocrats might put on an even better feast than one wealthy person. Even if we should grant Aristotle's point, what has superiority in meal preparation got to do with superiority in ruling?

So we are not surprised that Aristotle next mentions "virtue" and "prudence": each of the many can have a part of virtue and prudence, and when joined together they become a single human being with many hands, feet and senses, and may also have many qualities of character (*ethos*) and thought (*dianoia*) (1281b4-7). But is it possible to add qualities of soul such as character and thought to reach a correct political judgment in the same way that one can add many hands and feet to perform physical tasks such as digging trenches and moving heavy objects? And what is to prevent the addition of negative qualities of soul rather than positive ones? Isn't it easier for many to agree on what they don't like than on what they like? Anger and desire for vengeance without

much thought could often sweep through ancient direct democracies, as the American founders remind us in *The Federalist Papers*, and a very famous example of such behavior, that must have been well known to Aristotle, can be found in Xenophon's *Hellenica* (I, 6-7). In Xenophon's text we learn how Socrates tried, and failed, to restrain the Athenian Assembly, as it voted, in a fit of passion, to condemn eight generals to death, after they had failed to pick up dead bodies from the ocean, as religious tradition required, after a naval battle. Later, the people came to regret their hasty condemnation of the generals.

As an example of areas in which the many, as a group, can exercise better judgment (better than whom the text doesn't say), Aristotle mentions "the works of music and of the poets" (1281b8-9). Mary Nichols comments: "even if each individual member of the multitude can best judge some part of the whole [as Aristotle states], a work of music or poetry is more than the sum of its parts. Who is it who judges or appreciates the whole?" (Nichols, 1992, p.66). Thus Nichols finds that the many need a coordinator or statesman to synthesize all the individual contributions and make an overall judgment. This point comes up again in the next statement Aristotle makes; to explain the difference between serious men and each of the many taken singly, he asks us to consider the difference between beautiful people and those who are not beautiful, and the difference between painted things and genuine things. It isn't immediately clear who represents whom in these comparisons, but it seems that the serious man is represented by the beautiful person, who combines good qualities in a way that the individuals who make up the many (the not beautiful) don't. The painted thing, however, seems to represent not the serious

man but the many as a group, with their good qualities combined. But a painting requires a painter, and so once again we see that the many need a coordinator or statesman to bring out the best in them. Further, won't a painted thing that combines elements taken from beautiful people (the few best) be better than a painted thing that combines elements taken from non-beautiful people (the many)?

Section 2

Aristotle next limits his claims by stating that it is "not clear" whether "every people and every multitude" can judge as well as his previous statements suggest. An oligarchic voice interjects itself into the text at this point and goes further: by Zeus, it declares, the collective superiority argument doesn't apply to beasts, but what difference is there between some multitudes and beasts? Here we have an oligarchic oath against the many (1281b18) that balances the previous oath of the many (1281a16) defending their actions against the rich (and these are the only two oaths in all of Aristotle, according to Seth Benardete [Benardete, 1993, p.142n20]). This oligarchic statement does recognize the possibility I mentioned earlier: the many can combine their bad qualities instead of their good ones. The question therefore arises: what kind of multitude, under what circumstances, can exhibit good judgment? Aristotle raises the question this way: over what matters should the many have authority? The many whose share in rule Aristotle is considering here are characterized as those who are "neither wealthy nor ha[ve] any claim at all deriving from virtue" (1281b24-25), which doesn't sound like the many mentioned earlier in this same chapter (1281b4-5), where each member had a share of virtue and prudence, and are certainly not the many who constitute the ruling class in

polity in III/7, each of whom possess military virtue (1279b1-2). The defense of the many in the earlier part of the chapter (1281a39-1281b21) was an aristocratic defense of the many, arguing that they should rule because of their collective superiority in virtue. The many Aristotle now considers in this second part of chapter 11 (1281b21-1281b38) is more like the poor many in III/9 and III/10, since its members are "neither rich nor ha[ve] any claim at all deriving from virtue." With the change in the character of the many being considered comes a change in the basis of Aristotle's defense of their participation in political life.

Aristotle makes two opposing statements regarding the participation of this virtue-less many in political life --- one against letting them share in certain kinds of rule, another against their total exclusion from political life, and then reaches a conclusion on the basis of these two statements. The first statement declares that it is "not safe" (1281b26) to have the many share in "the greatest offices" (we are not told what these are) because of their "injustice and imprudence" (1281b27; this reference to injustice and imprudence seems to confirm my suggestion that the many of 1281b24-25 are not the same many mentioned at 1281b4-5). Total exclusion, on the other hand, is dangerous, "since the city that has many in it who lack honor and are poor must of necessity be full of enemies" (1281b29-30). Aristotle's conclusion, which takes into consideration the truth contained in both of these statements, is that the many should "share in" deliberation and judgment. Solon is cited as an example of a legislator who instituted such an arrangement, in which the many were allowed to choose and audit officials.

So Aristotle has made a case that even a virtue-less multitude should have some share in rule, but we must not overlook the fact that the basis of his argument has changed: he no longer speaks of their collective superiority to anyone, but says that it is dangerous to leave them out and make them enemies to the regime. To this prudential reason for inclusion, which focuses on the harm the many can do instead of any positive contribution the they can make, Aristotle adds a supplement in the immediate sequel. When the many are joined together they have "an adequate perception" (1281b35; the claim of better judgment made at 1281b1-2 and 1281b8-9 has thus been downgraded to a claim of adequate perception), and when they are "mixed with those who are better, bring benefit to cities, just as raw food combined with wholesome makes the whole more useful than a small amount of the latter" (1281b36-38). But what is the "benefit" from this mixing, and in what way is the mixture "more useful" than the elements of the mixture taken in isolation? An interesting suggestion about the answer to this question has been made by Aristide Tessitore in his discussion of political friendship in *Ethics* (IX/6). Aristotle identifies political friendship with *homonoia* (concord, or oneness of mind), and Tessitore suggests that the mixing suggested in *Politics* III/11 is "based on a fundamental agreement among heterogeneous [groups of] citizens that the best should rule. The "more useful" substance produced by this mixture is *homonoia* within the civic association as a whole, something that insures the domestic stability of a regime" (Tessitore, 1996, p.86). Aristotle next says that each of the elements of the mixture taken separately "is incomplete with respect to judging" (1281b38), and if Tessitore's suggestion is correct, this means that the incompleteness with respect to judging on the

part of the aristocrats stems, not from any lack of capacity to make good political judgments (for this group is characterized by political virtue), but from other groups objecting to the sole rule of the aristocrats. Since *ateles* can also mean "ineffectual" (in addition to "incomplete"), it may also be that the suggested regime gains self-sufficiency in terms of physical strength by combining the many and those better than them.

So far in chapter 11 we have seen a questionable case made for the superior judgment of a multitude whose members have some share in virtue, and a case for giving a share in rule to a multitude made up of non-virtuous individuals based largely on the trouble they can cause when excluded rather than on any special political skill they possess. The trouble the many can cause when excluded stems from their collective superiority in physical strength, yet Aristotle refrains from making this point and says instead that they have "an adequate perception" as a group. Thus, as mentioned before, Aristotle makes an aristocratic defense of the many, one based on their virtue and judgment, yet any claim on behalf of the many on such grounds leave them vulnerable to attack. The many do not possess any special education or training, for such things are always the province of a few (in the ancient context, at least), and the many's competence for rule has often been attacked throughout the ages because they are non-knowers, non-experts. This is exactly what happens in the next section of the chapter (1281b38-1282a23).

Section 3

This third section of chapter 11, where giving the many a share in rule is questioned on the ground that they are non-knowers, begins: "but this arrangement [*taxis*]

of the regime involves questions." This regime suggested by Aristotle, where the many, mixed with others, elect and audit high officials, is not given a name. So we must entertain the possibility that the regime suggested here is not identical to any of the six regimes mentioned in III/7. As in III/10, none of the six regime names are used in III/11.

The first difficulty concerns judgment: aren't experts properly judged by other experts? According to this argument, only a doctor can properly judge the work of another doctor, and this would hold for other kinds of experience (*emperia*) and art (1282a1). We see that this line of thought questions the capacity of the many to properly judge those who hold the highest offices when they are audited (Aristotle speaks of a doctor submitting to an audit [*euthuna*] by other doctors). Having raised the bar so high in terms of the knowledge required for proper judgment of others, Aristotle now lowers it a bit by broadening the class of competent judges. The class "doctor," he tells us, includes the ordinary craftsman (*demiourgos*), the master craftsman (*architektonikos*), and any person educated in the art (1282a3-4). In our terms we can say that "doctor" includes the family physician *(demiourgos*), specialists such as neurologists and oncologists *(architektonikos*), and anyone who has had some specialized education in biology or medicine but doesn't practice the art. Despite this expansion of the class of competent judges, the many don't seem to fit into any of these three groups.

Having spoken of auditing, Aristotle observes that knowledge is also required of those who would choose or elect officials. Experts in geometry should choose geometers, and experts in piloting should choose pilots. Aristotle concludes that "according to this

argument" (1282a12) the multitude should not have authority over either choosing or auditing officials.

There are flaws in this argument, however, according to Aristotle, and he identifies two of them. His first objection refers us back to his contention, made at the beginning of this chapter, that the many, taken as a group, can have combinations of qualities that they only separately possess as individuals. He adds the qualification that the many should not be overly "slavish" (*andrapododes* – 1282a15-16), and when this condition is met, their judgment will be "either better or no worse" than that of an expert. This is the third kind of multitude mentioned in this chapter: in the first kind of multitude (1281b4-5) each member had a share of virtue and prudence; in the second kind (1281b24-25) none of the members were wealthy or had any claim at all deriving from virtue; and now we have a multitude that is not (individually or collectively?) overly slavish (1282a15-16). The first multitude were "better judges" than the few best (1281b8-9), the second had "an adequate perception" (1281b35) for making judgments, and now this third multitude is said to possess judgment that is "either better or no worse" (1282a17) than that of an expert. The first statement about the multitude's better judgment was based on questionable arguments, and the two statements Aristotle has made about the judgment of the other two multitudes are similarly questionable, since they assume the correctness of the arguments justifying his first statement.

Aristotle has a second objection to this attack on the many that is based on their lack of expertise in an art of ruling: he says that there are some arts about which "the maker (*ho poiesas* – 1282a18) might not be the only or the best judge, but where those

who do not possess the art also have some knowledge of its works." Three examples are cited: the household manager judges a house better than its maker, the pilot judges a rudder better than the carpenter who made it, and the diner is a better judge of a meal than the cook.

This objection can be questioned on three grounds. First, action *(praxis)* is not the same as making or production (*poiesis*) (*Ethics* VI/4), and housebuilding, carpentry and cooking are arts whose end is the production of artifacts, while ruling is an art whose end is action. Thus it is not accurate to use these three arts to represent the ruling activity of high officials. Second, two of the three users --- the household manager and the pilot --- of the artifacts produced by these three arts are themselves artisans: they are the practitioners of superior arts which direct and use the inferior arts (housebuilding and carpentry) to achieve their own ends (see *Ethics* I/1/1094a6-16). Thus two of the three judges mentioned are not laymen, like the many, but experts, and so the objection that the many are not competent to elect and audit officials because they are non-knowers, non-experts, remains. Third, while the final judge mentioned --- the diner --- is a layman, we can doubt whether a diner who is one of the many will be a better judge of a meal than a nutritionist. Such a diner will tend to choose the food that is most pleasant to him, that tastes good, rather than the food that is good for him, good for his health. Socrates the soul doctor knew he would lose if he were accused by a pastry chef before a jury of children (*Gorgias*, 521e-522b), and the many, who, according to Aristotle, "live by their feelings....and have not even a notion of what is fine and [hence] truly pleasant" (*Ethics*, X/9, 1179b14-16), might prefer a chef who offers steak and chocolate cake over a chef

who offers broccoli and fish. In the light of these difficulties with Aristotle's statements, it is not surprising that he concludes this section of the chapter by stating that his arguments are "perhaps" a sufficient refutation of this difficulty (1282a23).

Section 4

Aristotle next mentions a second objection to letting the many choose and audit the highest officials; this objection is notable for underscoring just what it means to let the many share in rule in this way. The objection asserts that it is "absurd for mean persons (*hoi phauloi*) to have authority over greater matters than the decent *(epieikes*), but auditing and the choice of officials are a very great thing" (1282a25-27). Aristotle doesn't explain why auditing and choosing are a "very great thing," but it is easy to see why this is a valid claim. For the many voters are effectively the highest authority in the regime under this system: they get to hire and judge the highest officials, while the highest officials can't do that to the voters. Thus, in terms of III/6-8, the many voters become "the authoritative element," and "whatever the authoritative element conceives to be honorable will necessarily be followed in the opinion of the other citizens" (II/11/1273a39-40). Forced to justify themselves before the tribunal of the many, the highest officials must cater to their tastes, their beliefs and their opinions. Thus, as Michael Rabieh notes, nothing prevents the many from making "their preferences, their tastes, the standard for all citizens," and their "understanding of what constitutes an admirable character ...will come to dominate the city" (Rabieh 1996, p.135).

In practice, Aristotle tells us, "in some regimes" with such arrangements "people from the lowest assessments and of whatever age share in the assembly and deliberate

and adjudicate, while those from the greatest assessments ...hold the greatest offices" (1282a27-32). Thus the many end up choosing which oligarchs get to serve in the greatest offices, and it is *this* arrangement that Aristotle defends. Is he suggesting that the many will tend to choose the rich rather than the virtuous, and thereby showing us the limits of their judgment, while also reassuring the oligarchs that they will not be excluded in the type of arrangement suggested in this chapter? In defending the many this time Aristotle uses the oligarchs' own claim to rule against them: the many's assessment as a group is greater than that of the oligarchs, taken individually or collectively (1282a40). In addition, once again he refers to his claim that the many as a group have better judgment than the many taken individually. Just before making this two-pronged defense of the many, Aristotle had said "the multitude justly has authority over greater things," and I think Aristotle refers to justice now because the many are dealing with oligarchs here, not "the few best," and can use the oligarchs own claim against them.

Summing up the chapter, Aristotle shows that he has doubts about the arguments he has made in it, for he says that "it makes nothing more evident than that it is laws – correctly enacted – that should be authoritative" (1282b2-3). Thus "correctly enacted laws" take the place that the various kinds of multitudes – the not overly slavish many (1282a15-16), the many whose members are neither wealthy nor have any claim at all deriving from virtue (1281b24-25), and the many where each member had a share of virtue and prudence (1281b4-5) – occupied earlier in the chapter. Not only that, but when it comes time to say who should complete the laws, which need completion because they "are completely unable to speak precisely on account of the difficulty of making clear

general declarations about everything," Aristotle doesn't say that the many should do the work of completing the laws. He just leaves us with the alternatives –"one person or more." All that this "one person or more" will do is what the laws cannot do – completing the laws does not mean improving them. Since the laws are derivative – the character of the regime determines whether the laws are "correctly enacted" or not, as we saw at the end of III/10, sovereignty of law emerges as a partial or incomplete solution, and we are back to the *aporia* about who should rule that was reached at the end of III/10.

PART II:
SUMMARY COMMENTS ON ARISTOTLE:
WHY REGIME IS CENTRAL TO HIS POLITICAL SCIENCE

Book III begins as an investigation of the regime, and the first provisional definition we get is that "the regime is a certain arrangement [*taxis*] of those who inhabit the city." So we have three elements that are part of this definition: the city, its inhabitants, and the arrangement of the inhabitants. Aristotle starts by examining one of these three elements: the city; and the reasons he gives for starting there are (first) that in political life there are disputes about the city --- about when it acted and when it did not --- and (second) that the entire activity of the legislator concerns the city. The investigation of regime, therefore, is going to be guided, at least in part, by the concerns and controversies that animate political life.

The city is a "composite thing," a "composite whole," which we will examine by looking at its parts: in particular, the part that is called "citizen." Since "citizens" are a subset of inhabitants, who were one of the three elements in the provisional definition of regime, the other part of the city from this perspective must be "inhabitant who is not a citizen." This is the citizen's way of looking at the city—as composed of two parts, citizen and non-citizen.

Citizenship varies from regime to regime, so that "someone who is a citizen in a democracy is often not one in an oligarchy." Aristotle is looking for the "citizen simply," for a definition of citizen that will hold across the various regimes. The definition that he comes up with holds that citizenship is essentially connected to ruling. This is a functional definition--- the citizen is defined by what he does, by a characteristic activity. It says nothing about who ought to be a citizen, and dosen't link citizenship with desert. But there are times in political life, such as after a revolution, when new citizens are often

admitted, and this raises the question of what standards should be used to govern this transformation of non-citizens into citizens. The right standard will be a just standard, one that will justify a decision to include some while excluding others.

In chapter 3 Aristotle tells us that there is a link between the question "when did the city act?" and the question "who is justly a citizen?"---without specifying exactly what this link is. He elaborates on the dispute mentioned at the beginning of chapter 1 by identifying the reasoning behind a democracy's claim that it doesn't have to honor an agreement made by the oligarchy or the tyranny that preceded it. Aristotle finds that "the assumption" underlying this claim is that those other regimes exist through force and do not act for the common advantage. The connection between the two questions may therefore be that new citizens are justly citizens when their joining the citizen body advances the common advantage, or when the new citizens are added by a regime that acts for the common advantage. Aristotle merely points out that this linkage of consent, pursuit of the common advantage, and democracy that exists in the democratic mind does not always hold; consent and the common advantage are regime-independent standards that can be used against democracy in the same way that they can be used against other regimes.

One could continue this line of questioning democratic assumptions as follows: doesn't every regime, whether or not it acts for the common good, at least claim to act for the common good? The democrats' claim that democracy acts for the common good is not unique---the partisans of the other regimes will make similar claims. The democrats might respond that such claims are insincere proclamations under which unjust regimes

hide, but perhaps such claims merely reflect the fact that the partisans of the various regimes have very different understandings of what constitutes the common advantage. A logical next step at this point in Book III might be to engage in a dialectical examination of the various conceptions of the common good that animate the partisans of the various regimes. This is exactly what Aristotle does---in chapter 9! This is what I was pointing to when I wrote at the end of my commentary on chapter 8 that Aristotle returns to examining the speeches of the actors in everyday political life at the beginning of III/9: the discussion from the beginning of Book III to the first part of III/3 is a sort of dialectical ascent from common opinion, and this procedure is resumed at the beginning of III/9, but inbetween ---most of III/3 to the end of III/8---something else takes its place.

Instead of developing the discussion along the lines of III/9 Aristotle next says: "this argument seems related to the question of the sense in which the city ought to be spoken of as the same, or as not the same but different." Related how? Why does he take this turn? I can only make the following suggestions. Aristotle has just pointed out that the common good can be used as a standard to judge the various regimes, and one could easily conclude from this that the common good of the city exists apart from any regime -- on the assumption that the government of one's city may be bad, but the people are good, because they are unaffected, and remain unaffected, by the regime. This is the attitude of the patriot, who wants to be loyal to the city regardless of its regime, because the city is more fundamental than any regime. But can we understand a city or its common good apart from its regime? If each regime will claim that it serves the common good, it will put forward its own conception of the common good, and will assert that its

actions are meant to serve this conception of the common good. Each regime thus acts to serve its notion of the common good, and we must ask how these actions affect the city, the entity on whose behalf the regime claims to act. Is the city the passive recipient of these actions, or is it shaped and molded, and thus in part constituted, by these actions? Further, is the regime (understood as the present rulers of a city) something detached from the city, or is it a part that is more than just another part, a part that shapes and orders the other parts, and leads them in pursuit of a goal, and in doing so, makes them into a whole? I think the two questions, the question of the sameness of the city, and the question of when the city acted, are related because they point to the question: what is the precise relation between a city and its regime? Aristotle's famous answer is that when the regime changes the city also changes, because "it is looking to the regime above all that the city must be said to be the same." I think it is significant that Aristotle says "ought" instead of "is" ("the sense in which the city ought to be spoken of as the same"), and "must be said" instead of "is said"("it is looking to the regime above all that the city must be said"): ordinary speech does not ascribe such importance to the regime of a city, because there is confusion about the status of regime in ordinary speech, but Aristotle is trying to show us why we "ought" to speak this way, why we "must" speak this way.

We should note, however, that the primacy of regime in determining the identity of a city is established mostly by negation: by showing that the other ways to identify the city across time---population and location---fail to do the job. In particular, Aristotle does not say what I have said ---that the regime sets a goal for the city through its understanding of the common good, and thus when the regime changes the goal of the

city changes, and this is why the city becomes a different city in the most important respect. He does, however, point to such an explanation by his example of the chorus: we say that a tragic and a comic chorus are different even when the members of the chorus are the same. We must conclude from Aristotle's example that people speak this way because the goal of the chorus has changed, from making us cry to making us laugh. Therefore I conclude that Aristotle's positive case (at the end of III/3) for the primacy of regime in determining the identity of a city is murky and unclear, and he maintains a certain reticence about this topic at this point in his text.

If the regime moulds and shapes the city in such a way that it becomes the crucial factor in determining the identity of the city, then it in a way sets the horizon within which the citizens live and form their opinions about right and wrong, good and bad. But what are the limits to the city's molding and shaping of the citizen? I believe this question is the background against which Aristotle examines the relation between the virtue of the good man and the virtue of the serious citizen in chapter 4. The examination of this relation, according to Aristotle, is "connected" with what has been said so far in Book III, and I believe the connection is that after pointing to the primacy of a city's regime in determining what the city takes as its goal and thus looks up to, Aristotle wishes to show us the limits to the city's primacy in determining the moral and intellectual life of its citizens.

Aristotle's examination of the relation between the virtue of the serious citizen and the virtue of the good man in III/4 has three main parts: first, he shows that the virtue of

the good man and the serious citizen cannot be the same in all regimes; next, that they cannot be the same even in the best regime; and finally, that they can be the same for some citizens in some circumstances. The beginning of the chapter limits the discussion to examining "whether the virtue of the good man and the serious citizen is to be regarded as the same or as not the same," but the results of the discussion go beyond answering this question of sameness and point to an answer to the more important question of compatibility: we can see that in some cases being a serious citizen will be incompatible with being a good man.

Aristotle's argument in the first part of the chapter is as follows: he asserts (without proving, but in accordance with ordinary understanding) that the good man is characterized by the same virtue at all times and places (and thus in every regime), whereas citizen virtue (which has as its goal the preservation of the regime of one's city) is variable because there is a variety of regimes. Spelling out this cryptic reasoning, we can say that serious citizens are characterized by different qualities (or virtues) in different regimes because the regimes have different goals; so that preserving a polity in which hoplites (and their notion of virtue) predominate requires different qualities in the citizens than preserving an oligarchy in which the rich (and their notion of virtue) predominate. Once again, Aristotle makes no mention of the goal of a regime, nor does he describe the differences among regimes as a difference of goal, but I think that this is the only way to make sense of Aristotle's argument here.

Aristotle next considers the virtue of citizens in the best regime. Here, as we saw in my commentary on this chapter in Part I, he argues that the virtue of all the citizens of

the best regime cannot be the same as the virtue of the good man because citizens differ in their specific role in the regime, and so will have different virtues. The judges, customs officials, etc., do not need all of the good man's virtue for their work, so their virtue will not be the same as the good man's.

The final part of the chapter takes up the question of when some of the serious citizens in a regime can have the same virtue as a good man. Once again, the work of the citizen is crucial: the serious citizen must rule to have the virtue of a good man, for Aristotle now assumes that the virtue of the good ruler and the good man are the same. We are next given a discussion of how the serious citizen can acquire the virtue of the good ruler; nothing is said about how the good man acquires the virtue of the good ruler, which consists chiefly of prudence. We must conclude that the good man is capable of acquiring on his own, without the aid of any pedagogic activity of the city, the virtue of the good ruler.

How can a citizen acquire the virtue of a good ruler since he cannot rule all the time, but rules and is ruled in turn by his fellow citizens? Aristotle tries to resolve this problem by differentiating rule into two kinds: rule of a master, and political rule. Citizens qua citizens participate in political rule, which is rule over those who are similar in stock and free, and one learns it by being ruled, as in the military, where one learns to perform the tasks of the higher ranks by first having served in the lower ranks. Aristotle concludes on this basis that both the good man and the good citizen know how to rule and be ruled. But the military example is misleading here because military rule is generational, with older, more experienced officers ruling younger ones, but political rule is not like that. In the

city you rule one year and are ruled the next, whereas in the military one does not go from being a general in one year to being a lieutenant the next year. Aristotle himself notes another difference between a good ruler and a citizen who is ruled: justice and moderation differ in the ruler and the ruled, and a good ruler possesses a virtue (prudence) that is lacking in the ruled qua ruled (who possess right opinion instead). Since Aristotle doesn't qualify this statement by stating that this holds true only in defective regimes, we should understand him as saying that even in the best regime the ordinary citizen qua citizen will have some opinions that will not be shared by the good man/good ruler. This means that the good man/good ruler has an inner freedom, an inner independence, which frees him from relying on others, or from relying on the prevailing climate of opinion in his regime, for his views on fundamental matters. The good man can free himself from what for most people are uncritically accepted, widely prevalent and socially respectable opinions, and find on his own the truth about fundamental matters.

We are now in a position to address the question of sameness and compatibility I raised at the beginning of my summary comments on III/4. Since citizen virtue varies with the regime, because different regimes have different goals, in defective regimes the good man will not only not be a serious citizen, he will be a bad citizen. As Ernest Barker writes (Barker, 1959, p. 287): "in a State which does not pursue a moral purpose, but has made wealth its aim and goal....to be a good citizen is simply to seek and accumulate wealth; and consequently, in such a State, the good citizen would be a bad man, and the good man a bad citizen." Richard Kraut objects to this interpretation because according to

Aristotle a good citizen has right opinion about practical matters, whereas according to Barker the good citizen of a bad regime has decidedly false opinions about practical matters (Kraut, 2002, p. 369). Kraut proposes this alternate interpretation: " a good citizen of a democracy or an oligarchy is someone who tries to moderate the defects of such regimes. Instead of supposing that such a person pursues the democratic goal (freedom) or the oligarchic goal (wealth) single-mindedly and without limit, we should explore the idea that, on the contrary, he makes a democracy less of a pure democracy by accepting non-democratic elements into its constitution (and similarly for oligarchy)" (p. 370). Kraut holds that his interpretation is correct because according to Aristotle a good citizen preserves his regime (III/4), and since we are told in V/9 that the way to preserve a democracy and an oligarchy is to moderate it, his suggestion is supported by Aristotle's later remarks in Books IV-VI (p. 370). Kraut's moderation-promoting citizen preserves his regime by improving it (p. 372), and a good democratic or oligarchic citizen preserves his regime by making it more like a polity (p. 375), in accordance with Aristotle's suggestions in Books IV-VI.

I think Barker is closer to the truth than Kraut. First, Aristotle does not say that a good citizen has right opinion; he only says that "the ruled" have right opinion, while the good ruler has prudence. Second, I will argue that both Barker and Kraut mistakenly think that Aristotle sees the serious (*spoudaios*) citizen and the good (*agathon*) citizen as one and the same. Aristotle uses the term "serious citizen" throughout III/4, but when speaking of the two kinds of rule (despotic and political) in the third part of III/4, he twice uses the term "good citizen." Michael Rabieh notes this discrepancy in his

dissertation (Rabieh, 1996, p. 57): "Aristotle here [1277a33-b7] speaks for the first time not of the serious but of the good citizen, whose identity seems independent of the regime. Is he inbetween the good man and the serious citizen?" (emphasis in the original). I will suggest an interpretation that is not fully satisfying, but it does, in my view, capture something about Aristotle's text that Barker, Kraut and Rabieh have missed. I think the best way to interpret the text here is to see the good citizen as the good man, because he is independent of the regime in the same way the good man is --- in his thoughts, in his inner freedom from the opinions the regime seeks to inculcate in its citizens. This is why the good citizen is able to do what Kraut would have him do: try to improve and preserve his regime by moderating it. The serious citizen, however, cannot do this, because he accepts as true what the regime tells him about fundamental matters--- he has right opinion, not prudence. By right opinion here Aristotle doesn't mean opinion that is necessarily in conformity with the truth (as Kraut would have it), but opinion that is in conformity with a regime's understanding of right. In a correct regime right opinion is closer to the truth than in a defective regime, but it is still opinion (as opposed to knowledge), something the citizen gets secondhand (from others), not something that he figures out by himself.

To use a concrete example of how this might play out in practice, if I am correct this would mean that a man like Churchill would be a good citizen but not a serious citizen. Churchill, the savior of democracy, was not just a good citizen, but perhaps the greatest British citizen ever, but he did have reservations about the democratic dogma of equality,

and its consequence --- universal suffrage. As John Lukacs notes in his book, Churchill in 1930, in his Romanes lecture

" questioned the principle and practice of universal suffrage. [In the lecture Churchill said] "Democracy has shown itself careless about those very institutions by which its own political status has been achieved. It seems ready to yield up the tangible rights hard won in rugged centuries to party organizations, to leagues and societies, to military chiefs or to dictatorships in various forms." About universal suffrage he wrote in 1932: "why at this moment we should force upon the untutored races of India that very system, the inconveniences of which are now felt even in the most highly developed nations, the United States, Germany, France and in England itself?" (Lukacs, 2002, p.137).

Yet during the war "he who had questioned universal suffrage (as late as 1935 he thought that perhaps it ought to be either limited, or doubled to heads of households) became the champion of and world spokesman for parliamentary democracy" (ibid, p.138). Lukacs sees this as Churchill changing his mind, but I think he just made the prudent decision to stress the superiority of the imperfect (democracy) over the evil (national socialism) and rally support to his side --- and embolden those who fought for his cause. After all, Churchill is famous for once having said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others. This sort of qualified endorsement of democracy would hardly be forthcoming from Aristotle's serious citizen, but his (and Kraut's?) good citizen would say such a thing. Some might say that Churchill was a remnant from an old aristocratic past, an old plant somehow thriving in the new democratic soil, with its strength to fight tyranny and its aristocratic disdain for democracy, but I don't think that he was ultimately the product of any regime, democracy or aristocracy, but a prudent man able to think for himself.

In conclusion, when a good man has acquired, on his own, the capacity to exercise prudence, and when this man then gets the opportunity to rule in his regime, only then

can we say that the virtue of the good man and the virtue of the good citizen are the same. Even the best regime may try to inculcate "noble lies" (as in the *Republic*) or half-truths in its citizens, and the good man and the good citizen will be free from any inner acceptance of such opinions. The serious citizen, who doesn't truly think for himself about justice, but accepts what his regime tells him about it, cannot have the same virtue as the good man.

In Part I we saw that in chapter 5 Aristotle shows us that one must choose between making vulgar persons (those who do the works of necessity for the community) citizens and thereby reducing our understanding of citizen virtue (for such persons are lacking in leisure and so cannot develop the capacity to rule and be ruled), or not making them citizens and leaving them in an awkward undefined situation, for they are not foreigners or resident aliens either. The general point is that "this is true: not all those are to be regarded as citizens without whom there would not be a city" (III/v/1278a2), and while the exclusion of children is unproblematic, the exclusion of adult males may carry grave political consequences. Aristotle points out in this chapter that a conflict exists between two desirable goals: focusing on the cultivation of citizen virtue by excluding the vulgar may harm civic peace, while securing civic peace by including the vulgar will retard efforts to promote citizen virtue.

Chapters 1-5 comprise the first section of Book III. In chapters 1-3 we see that the city and the citizen cannot be understood apart from the regime of the city. In the case of citizenship, who is (and is not) a citizen is determined by the regime (chapter 2).

Similarly, when we seek to determine what constitutes the identity of the city across time, the regime emerges as the most important consideration, ahead of such physical characteristics of the city as its territory and population (chapter 3). Aristotle maintains a certain reticence about why this is the case, but his choice of examples is suggestive: he uses the example of the chorus (in both chapters 3 and 4), and compares the regime to a ship (in effect, the ship of state metaphor—in chapter 4). A ship has a destination and a plan that lays out how to get there; a chorus has as its goal certain emotions it wants to arouse in its audience, and chooses its words and tunes with a view to achieving that goal; similarly, we can say, a regime sets a goal for the city through its choice of criteria to determine citizenship and through its understanding of the common good, and in pursuing this goal it gives the city its political-moral identity, an identity that endures over time as long as the regime endures. The goal of all regimes is similar in the abstract but different in specifics or content: all regimes aim to achieve the good society (or, to use a more Greek term, the good city), where the good citizen is also a good man, but each regime has a different understanding of what constitutes a good city or a good man. It is in promoting this understanding of the good city and the good man that the regime exerts a shaping influence on the characters of its citizens, and Aristotle gives us some idea of the limits of this influence in chapter 4. The chapter focuses tightly on the most important claim a regime can make: to what extent is it true in any regime (and perhaps especially in the best regime) that a good citizen will also be a good man? Aristotle's main point is that the chief virtue of the good man is prudence, while a citizen who is not a ruler has only true opinion, so that the good man, through the use of his own rational

powers, possesses the inner independence and freedom that comes from finding the truth on one's own, without the assistance of one's city. If it is the case that the truth about fundamental political matters is something that one can only acquire on one's own, through the use of one's own heart and mind, and that it is therefore not something that someone else can give to you --- like a physical good --- then those citizens in any regime who are good men become so in large part through their own efforts, even if the regime of their city gives them some assistance in the effort to become good men. Thus even if it is the case that a regime will not feed its citizens "noble lies" as in Plato's *Republic*, the most it can do is give its citizens true opinion (in this case, opinion that is in conformity with the truth), and opinion is not knowledge, which I am arguing (without proving) is something that can only be individually acquired, not given or received. Chapter 5 adds another qualification to every regime's claim to promote virtue: in addition to the functional limitation in chapter 4 (the regime cannot give its citizens the knowledge that true virtue requires), there is also a structural limitation --- the city needs people to do the works of necessity for the community, but being engaged in such work severely limits one's capacity for virtue. This class of people thus presents a problem for the legislator who wants to set up a regime to promote and recognize virtue: to exclude them from citizenship is to dishonor them and make them potential enemies to the regime, while including them, even when they do not hold office, is to let a group, with at best a very limited capacity for virtue, have a say in determining the character of the regime.

Given these broad limitations, other, more specific, questions come to mind at this point: do regimes serve other human needs other than the desire for excellence and virtue?

Since there seem to be several regimes, how do we rank regimes in terms of better and worse? What is the common good that regimes claim to serve? The rest of Book III takes up such questions.

Aristotle proceeds in III/6-8 to provide a more comprehensive discussion of the ends of political life (for regimes have ends other than the production of good men), a discussion of the kinds of rule, and, based on these two discussions, a schema for classifying regimes with which he immediately finds fault.

The three ends of political life mentioned in III/6, as we saw in my commentary on this chapter, were (1) a human desire to live together "even when they need no help from each other" (i.e. independent of any calculation of benefit or gain), (2) the common advantage, and (3) life itself. The three ends are separated by Aristotle in speech, but in everyday life there is of-course no such neat separation. I want to suggest here that for the citizens of a city, the third end (mere life, or survival), is not just bare physical survival but the survival of a way of life, because the matter (the inhabitants of the city) and the form (the regime, the way of life) are always co-present. That is, as long as a city remains a city [i.e. is not destroyed], it will always have a form, and its survival will be the survival of a way of life. Even this seemingly low goal of political life points beyond mere physical survival.

There follows the discussion of mastery, domestic rule, and political rule. In these cases Aristotle speaks of ruling with a view to benefiting the ruler (mastery and corrupt political rulers), or with a view to benefiting the ruled (domestic rule, and

political rule in earlier times), but no mention is made of the common advantage, which is nonetheless used in the very next sentence to distinguish between correct and deviant regimes. What are we to make of this? Michael Rabieh suggests that Aristotle discusses the three kinds of rule together because he wants us to conclude that a real common advantage is not possible in political rule just as it is not possible in mastery and domestic rule. He writes:

"A failure to show a political common advantage worth serving seems to leave us with a choice between Thrasymachus' and Socrates' positions: sensible human beings ought either to rule for their own sake or to treat ruling as a burden to avoid. Chapter 6's treatment of political rule *implicitly points to the latter position.* The fact that hard on its heels follows a vigorous invocation of the common advantage and a famous classification of regimes based on that advantage *may hide* its similarity to Socrates' analysis, *but that similarity remains discernible*....he indicates that from the "natural" perspective political rule is a *burden.* He presents human beings living according to nature as seeking to rule in turn because they wish to have someone else look after their good. This implies that in ruling they neglect their own good or at least a weighty portion of it. Their justice may lead them to share ruling with their peers, but they share it as a *burden.* Now they do benefit from their rule since they inhabit the city they serve...By failing, however, to speak of common or even incidental advantages for rulers, Aristotle implies that they benefit as citizens, not rulers, just as pilots benefit from ruling as sailors, not pilots...If rulers benefit from rule as citizens rather than as rulers, they thus *benefit most when they are not burdened by ruling...* [Aristotle's] contemptuous likening of the passion to rule to a sickness *accords perfectly with the natural perspective on rule*...[but] his reference to common funds is likely to arouse indignation in decent rulers [who may thereby fail to]...notice that Aristotle's teaching about the political rule that accords with nature points [not to rulers who truly care for the ruled, but] to a different alternative, the Socratic one: avoiding rule altogether...Chapter 6's discussion of advantages for rulers and ruled thus seems to try to steer a middle course between Thrasymachus and Socrates, *but it fails to do so*....The common advantage mentioned in chapter 6's conclusion, then, seems common *only to the ruled* (italics added; Rabieh, 1996, p.86, 87, 88, 89).

Rabieh may be correct in his reading of Aristotle, but I would like to give some reasons supporting a somewhat different interpretation of the text. First of all, the juxtaposition of mastery and domestic rule with political rule is odd, given the differences between the first two forms of rule and the last one. Who the ruled are in each of these three cases

differs greatly, for only political rule involves ruling one's peers, while natural slaves have at best only limited virtue, while rule over children is primarily a matter of developing in them habits which will make them capable of acquiring virtue. The goals of the three kinds of rule differ too: meeting life's necessities and preparing children for a virtuous life in the first two cases, versus a much more complex and heterogeneous set of goals in the third case (as articulated earlier in III/6). As Aristotle explains in the *Ethics* (VIII/9), the political community aims "not at some advantage close at hand, but at advantage for the whole of life." These differences in the type of people one rules over and the goals of rule mean that political rule differs in kind from the other two types of rule (the city is more than a large household), and much greater virtue is required in political rule than in the other kinds of rule, as Aristotle repeatedly points out (*Politics* I/1, I/7, VII/14: "rule over free persons is nobler and accompanied to a greater extent by virtue than ruling in the spirit of a master"). This opportunity to exercise virtue on a grand scale is not available in private life; as Aristotle approvingly quotes a saying of Bias, "ruling will reveal the man" (*Ethics* V/1, 1130a1). Rabieh keeps insisting that rulers should benefit from their rule as rulers, and not as citizens, and I would say that this is it: rule over a city provides rulers an unique opportunity to see for themselves, and show others, what they are capable of: "ruling will reveal the man." In the excerpt from his dissertation I quoted above, Rabieh twice uses the word "burden," but I fail to see how he derives this from Aristotle's text in III/6. According to Aristotle "when [the regime] is established in accordance with equality and similarity among the citizens, they claim to merit ruling in turn. Previously, as accords with nature, they claimed to merit doing

public service by turns and having someone look to their good, just as when ruling previously they looked to his advantage" (III/6/1279a8ff). A claim to merit (*axia*) rule is used twice here, and when you claim to merit rule you are acting as if rule is a privilege, an honor, in exchange for which you will serve the community which gives you this honor. Aristotle's text here, in my view, describes a situation in which citizens agree to share rule because they see their fellow citizens as being equally deserving of the honor that is accorded those who rule; Rabieh, by contrast, sees a situation in which citizens seek to "rule in turn because they wish to have someone else look after their good." In a strange sentence Rabieh writes that "their justice may lead them to share ruling with their peers, but they share it as a burden[;]" I find this sentence strange because the justice referred to here consists, not in handing over a burden to someone else, but in giving someone a share in something good.

Rabieh wants Aristotle to show us a twofold advantage for rulers: they should benefit the same as everyone else (public safety keeps the rulers safe, along with all other members of the public), and they should receive other benefits that are peculiar to them as rulers. Why should we require that the common advantage include benefits for the rulers as rulers? If Rabieh is correct and ruling is a burden, and if citizens take turns being benefited as citizen-subjects and being burdened as citizen-rulers, then don't they all end up receiving an equal share of benefits and burdens?

I have suggested that rulers benefit from ruling because first, ruling will reveal the man (or, to use an old US Army recruiting slogan, it enables a man to be all that he can be), and second, because rulers are honored by the community. Rabieh, it seems to me, is

led to deny the existence of a political common advantage encompassing rulers and ruled because he believes, as he suggests throughout his dissertation, that the philosophic life is superior to the political life. Thus he suggests that honor is not a genuine advantage, not a sufficient compensation for political rule (dissertation, p.89, note8). Now it may be that a man like Socrates can actualize all the powers of his soul without ruling, and that he prefers being honored by men like Plato and Xenophon to being honored by the Athenian demos. But this by itself does not show that a political common advantage does not exist, or that a striving for a common advantage by those who are not Socrates is futile. I think Aristotle juxtaposes political rule, domestic rule, and mastery, to make us think about how they are different, not to suggest that they all lack a common advantage. We cannot say definitely at the end of III/6 whether or not there is such a thing as a political common advantage, but Aristotle's invocation of it at the end of III/6 is not rhetorical; rather, it is meant to make us think about just what it could be.

Our perplexity about the common advantage and its place in Aristotle's political thought increases when in the next two chapters the correct and deviant regimes are named and defined. The initial stress on the number of the rulers (one, few or many) and on their goal (defined here as one of two alternatives: the common advantage or the private advantage of the rulers) gradually gives way to a stress on the character of the rulers. This can be seen in Aristotle's definition of the second of the three correct regimes (aristocracy): the first reason given for why this regime is correct is that a group with a certain character (in this case, "the best persons") rules. The character of the rulers in the third correct regime (polity) is also stressed: the ruling multitude in this regime is

characterized by their proficiency in a type of virtue, by their proficiency in military virtue. After being defined once in III/7, the deviant regimes are defined again in III/8: oligarchy is the regime where those with property have control, and democracy is the regime where the poor have control. Aristotle explicitly says that these definitions would hold even if it somehow happened that the poor were a minority and the rich were a majority, thus making it clear that the number of rulers in these regimes is not crucial to understanding them; the character of the rulers is what counts. Why this stress on character? Could it be because Aristotle regards an examination of the character of the rulers as the key to understanding the common advantage? His definition of regimes did seem to assume that the two classes-- the rich and the poor --always rule with a view to their own private advantage when they are in control in the city, and conversely, that "the best" will rule for the common advantage when they are in control. But as the claims to rule made by the rich and the poor (presented at the end of III/8) show, they would dispute Aristotle's assertion that they form deviant regimes because they seek a private advantage. These two groups, along with the other groups mentioned in III/6-8 (the best, and those possessing military virtue) co-exist in the same city as contenders for rule, and put forward arguments to support their claims to rule. All these claims to rule contain within them an unstated understanding of the ends of the city, and a notion of the common advantage that follows from that understanding. Since all the groups claim they are striving for the same thing --- a common advantage that is fair to everyone in the city --- only a dialectical examination of these dueling claims will show us where they agree, where they disagree, and what they point to. By beginning from what people say and

proceeding from there, this approach has the potential to reach conclusions about the common advantage that the various groups will accept, even if the conclusions differ from their initial positions.

So Aristotle returns to his dialectical examination of the opinions of the protagonists in political life, an approach that he had abandoned midway through III/3, after pointing out that if we adopt a democratic suggestion and take the common advantage as our standard, and then find that a democratic regime fails to live up to this standard, its actions would then be as illegitimate as that of the oligarchy and tyranny the democrats condemn. In the non-dialectical interlude that followed (most of III/3 to the end of III/8) we saw why the regime should be the most important factor in determining the identity of the city over time, how a regime is limited in its desire to make all the citizens of its city into good men, and what the various ends of political life are; and we received a preliminary ranking of the different regimes that the various groups contending for rule in a city can form. The common advantage has emerged as a standard for judging regimes, and we now return to dialectics in an attempt to better understand just what the common advantage is and what it entails.

Aristotle's critical examination of the oligarchic and democratic claims to rule in III/9 reveals that they fail to understand the highest part of the common advantage. Oligarchs and democrats view the city as existing primarily for defense of the citizens against external enemies and for commerce, and Aristotle carefully lays out the implications of this view. This view of the ends of the city turns the city into an alliance (*summakia*) that differs from other alliances only in location (i.e. it destroys all

substantive differences between different cities), and turns the law into a compact (*suntheke*) to avoid injustice among the citizens, leaving out any concern with making the citizens just and good. This means that the citizens of a city only want their fellow citizens to avoid injustice in their external actions, but are not concerned with their inner disposition, with their character. In opposition to this way of looking at the city, Aristotle puts forward the correct conception of city and law: those citizens who are concerned about good laws (*eunomia*) give careful attention to virtue and vice, and that city which is truly a city (i.e. a city in the full sense of the term "city") will make virtue its care. The law is related to virtue as means to end, since the goal of the law is to develop good character in the citizens. The city, therefore, is concerned with ordering the souls of its citizens, with creating that order in the souls of its citizens which will make them good and just men.

We must avoid thinking of this as a lofty conception of politics as it should be, rather than as it is. Every city must have public officials, and therefore it must choose these officials, and Aristotle helps us uncover just what is implied in this choice. We see that the public declaration of the criteria for choosing public officials is at the same time a public declaration of what is admirable in human beings, of what is worthy of public honor --- so that the choice of virtue or wealth as the criteria for choosing public officials amounts to a public declaration that men who embody this criteria should be looked up to by the other citizens. "Every human being and every society is what it is by virtue of the highest to which it looks up" (Strauss, 1964, p.153). Thus every city does affect the character of its citizens, it does affect the order of their souls, by showing them what they

should look up to. The criteria for choosing public officials vary from city to city according to the regime --- oligarchies favor wealth, aristocracies favor virtue, and polities favor courage and the other qualities associated with the warrior class. Thus how a city affects the souls of its citizens depends on its regime, and this is what makes the regime the fundamental political fact in Aristotle's political science.

To put this is slightly different terms, the common good can be said to have two different parts --- a noncontroversial part that consists of public safety and civic peace, and an inherently controversial part that concerns the character and composition of the citizen body. Such routine questions of who does, and does not, deserve to be a citizen, and who should rule, are unavoidably tied up with questions about the identity of the city, and what human type, or which human qualities, should be honored by the city. The variety of answers to these questions, based on the various conceptions of the human good, give rise to the various regimes. In III/9 Aristotle found the answers to these questions embedded in the oligarchic and democratic claims to rule, and his dialectical examination of these claims led him, as we have seen, to the conclusion that the laws of a city should take the promotion of virtue as their goal. The considerations Aristotle used to reach this conclusion are in conformity with ordinary moral opinion: ordinary moral opinion agrees with Aristotle that orthodoxy (right opinion) is the firmest basis of orthopraxy (right action). Thus concern with avoiding unjust acts by citizens inevitably leads to concern with making the citizens good and just. To choose to make this our goal in political life is to choose "a life lived according to deliberate choice (*prohairesis*)." Since aristocrats make virtue their highest concern, they have the strongest claim to rule.

The question of who should rule is not so easily resolved, however, since the goals of the city include stability and security, and not just virtue; so Aristotle in III/10-11 looks at the contribution other groups can make to the city, and especially at the many (III/11), since by virtue of their numbers they are essential to defending the city against foreigners, and can cause a great deal of trouble if they are dissatisfied with existing political arrangements. These multiple goals of the city --- citizen virtue, stability, and security --- must be met simultaneously, and depending on the situation, one of these goals will become more pressing than the others (so that security becomes paramount in wartime). Since there is no formulaic way to balance these goals, a prudent statesman is needed to find the right balance between these often competing goals in different situations, and to give different groups more or less of a say in running the city as the situation requires. Stephen Salkever (1990; p.84-85) explains this very well:

"The essential or definitive purpose of politics --- its reason for being --- is the development of flourishing or virtuous persons. But this defining activity --- living well --- depends upon the simultaneous presence of two other activities: before we can live well, we must both live and live together; *eu zen* is the goal, but this presupposes the achievement of some tolerable level of *zen* (security [literally: live]) and *suzen* (integration [literally: living together]) (*Pol* 3, 1280b30-35). Survival or stability and political integration (a minimum of *stasis*, or civil disorder) are only necessary conditions for good politics, but they are very necessary. Moreover, the relationship between the necessary and the constitutive conditions of good politics cannot be viewed as a temporal sequence: we can't take care of them one at a time.....if the *nomoi* best suited to achieving the constitutive aim of politics (educating virtuous persons) were also in every case those most appropriate for achieving its simultaneous necessary conditions (peace and integration), then social science could in principle provide precise answers to questions concerning the sorts of *nomoi* that could best serve the ends of the *polis*. But the requirements of virtue and those of peace and integration seldom coincide; at the heart of the problem of human affairs lies a tension among conflicting needs that does not admit of precise theoretical resolution."

Finally, I will end by underlining my main contention by indicating my qualified disagreement with a leading contemporary Aristotle scholar. Fred Miller makes a valuable statement when he compares a regime's relation to its city to the soul's relation to the body: "the constitution [he translates *politeia* as "constitution" rather than as "regime"] plays a comparable role for the polis, organizing it, guiding it to its end, and defining its essential identity" (Miller, 1995, p.151). I would like to stress that these three roles must be ranked in order of importance in order for us to truly appreciate the true import of the notion of "regime." Since the regime orders (*taxis*) a city with a view to something --- with a view to its end, and since the identity of the city is similarly derivative from the goal of the city, we should complete Miller's statement by saying that "guiding it [i.e. the city] to its end" is the most valuable role of the regime, because the other two roles (organizing the city, and giving the city its identity) necessarily follow from this one and presuppose it. We should also change "guiding it to its end" to "giving it its end," since the regime doesn't just guide the city to its end, it gives it its end to begin with. This goal setting function is its most important role, because, as we have seen, it affects the souls of the citizens of the city. Finally, Miller's fine statement about the regime serving "as the unifying principle of the polis, transforming it from a mere multitude or collection of unintegrated communities, into an orderly, goal-directed community" (ibid, p.151), should be supplemented by noting that the integration is both psychic and structural, since the regime affects not just the external actions of the citizens, but also their inner-dispositions, their souls.

PART III: MACHIAVELLI
DISCOURSES I/2-10

Very early in the Discourses (in D I/2) Machiavelli takes up the classical regime-centered analysis of political life (presented here in the form of the cycle of regimes), and objects to many of its central tenets, especially the distinction between good and bad regimes. He goes further in the chapters that follow: in D I/3-5 he presents us with a very different analysis (in contrast to Aristotle) of the principal parts of cities --- the many and the few; he sees them as irreconcilably opposed groups who cannot come together to form a true political whole, and follows this up in D I/6-10 by showing how the selfish interests of these opposing groups can nevertheless be aligned to produce a degree of public order, stability and freedom in a republic like Rome. In this part of the dissertation I will present a careful analysis of these chapters, which will prepare us for a confrontation between the Aristotelian and Machiavellian teachings in Part IV.

D I/2

The first distinction NM makes in D/I/2 is between two ways of ordering cities. In the first category are cities that were "given laws by one alone and at a stroke" (Sparta is the example given), while the second category comprises cities that received their laws "by chance and at many different times, and according to accidents, as had Rome."
In the immediate sequel this classification is expanded or modified into something like a threefold classification: the "happy" republic (living securely under laws given by a prudent man without need of correction), the city that has "some degree of unhappiness" (without a prudent orderer, and forced of necessity to reorder itself), and finally a "still more unhappy" city (its orders are altogether off the right road). NM here speaks of " the

perfect and true end," of becoming "perfect" and of "a perfection of order" without explaining what he means by perfection.

We are told that cities without "perfect order" (presumably the second of the three categories above), if they have a good beginning that is capable of becoming better, can become perfect through accidents. This rarely happens though, because only danger can force men "to agree to a new law that looks to a new order in a city," and such dangers often destroy republics before they reach perfection. The stage is now set for NM's discussion of Rome---a city without a perfect beginning that became perfect through accidents. But before speaking of Rome he feels the need to spend five paragraphs (in a chapter consisting of 7 paragraphs) to lay out the traditional classification of regimes---i.e. he first lays out the inadequate classical analysis for us, and then gives us his own superior analysis as its replacement.

NM divides the ancient writers on regimes into two groups ---those who hold that there are three regimes, and those who hold that there are six (the many, NM tells us, see this second group as "wiser" than the first---but he doesn't endorse this view). The main difference between the two groups is that the second group allows for good and bad versions of the three basic forms of government---and NM, as we will see, has reservations about this. Here we are not told what principle the ancient writers used to separate the three good forms from the three bad ones, but we are told that the good ones are "easily corrupted" and so quickly change into their corresponding bad forms (so that a principality quickly becomes tyrannical). By contrast, Polybius, whom NM seems to have

used as a source for this chapter, does explain what separates the good regimes from the bad ones:

"we cannot hold every absolute government to be a kingship, but only that which is accepted voluntarily and is directed by an appeal to reason rather than to fear and force" (Book VI, section 4; translated by Evelyn Shuckburgh, edited by Alvin Bernstein, Regnery/Gateway 1980).

In addition, Polybius mentions the soul in his account of the cycle, while NM never uses "soul" in the *Discourses* and the *Prince*; Polybius says (Book VI, sec 5) men outside of civil life herd together like beasts, while NM says they are dispersed like beasts. In NM's account of the cycle of six regimes what stands out is how unstable the regimes are---the good forms quickly changing into the bad forms, and vice versa. While Polybius repeatedly ascribes the changes from one regime to another to nature (Book VI, sec 4 and 5), according to NM the changes occur by chance. After his account of the cycle is completed, NM, speaking in his own name ("I say"), condemns all six regimes: "all the six modes are pestiferous," the good ones because of their short duration, the bad ones because of the "malignity" that exists in them. Prudent orderers of laws have recognized "this defect" (the cycle?) and sought a remedy in the mixed regime. This mixed regime, according to NM, was "one that shared in all" ---i.e. all six regimes, and not just the three good ones. Yet, at the end of the very sentence where NM says this he names the elements of the mixture and mentions only the three good forms: "in one and the same city there are the principality, the aristocrats, and the popular government." He seems to be suggesting here (paragraph 5), as he did earlier (paragraph 2), that he prefers the threefold classification of regimes to the sixfold, because he sees no significant difference between the good and the bad forms: kingship/tyranny---what's the difference between

them? Aren't the similarities between them more important than the differences? It might be useful here to recall that the *Prince* is notorious for never using the word "tyrant"--- Pandolfo Petrucci is called "prince of Siena" in *Prince* 20 and 22, instead of "tyrant of Siena" as in D/III/6/2. Polybius' mixed regime (VI, 10) combines

> "together all the excellences and distinctive features of the best constitutions, that no part should become unduly predominant and be perverted into its kindred vice; and that, each power being checked by the others, no one part should turn the scale or decisively out-balance the others; but that, by being accurately adjusted and in exact equilibrium, the whole might remain long steady like a ship sailing close to the wind."

Polybius mentions mixing only the three good forms, and while NM mentions only the guarding-each-other function of the elements, Polybius mentions also the mixing of their virtues ("excellences and distinctive features"). NM's mixed regime is not the classical mixed regime.

In the 7th and last paragraph of D/I/2 NM gives us a third indication of his preference for the threefold classification of regimes: Rome became more stable, he tells us, after "all three kinds of government there had their part." This last paragraph begins by stating that what Lycurgus did for Sparta, chance did for Rome, through accidents that "arose through the disunion between the plebs and the Senate," and its ends by declaring that Rome became "a perfect republic, to which perfection it came through the disunion of the plebs and the Senate." The tumults between the many and the nobles is thus identified as the hidden source of Rome's perfection, and NM turns to this topic in the next four chapters.

D I/3-5

In D/I/3 we get some indication of why NM disapproves of distinguishing good from bad

regimes. He uses the authority of all those who reason on a civil way of life to assert that orderers of republics must "presuppose that all men are bad," and adds that if men behave well, this must be due to "a hidden cause," which cause is revealed only with the passage of time. Mansfield (1979, 41) comments: "If applied to the cycle [of regimes], this presumption would imply that in the good states the malignity of the bad states is not absent, but hidden, or that the good states do not in fact exist." This may explain why after distinguishing between "a government of aristocrats" and "a government of the few" in D/I/2, and using the term *ottimati* (aristocrats) ten times in that chapter (once in paragraphs 3 and 5, twice in paragraphs 2 and 6, and four times in paragraph 7), he never again refers to the nobles as *ottimati* in D/I/3-8.

In D/I/4 the common good is mentioned for the first time in the *Discourses*. In Aristotle (*Pol* III/7) the goodness of the good regimes stems from the fact that "the one or the few or the many rule *with a view to* the common advantage," but NM is concerned with the outcome, or the end result, of political actions, and not the intent of the actors. Thus he openly breaks with previous writers who condemned the tumults in Rome between the plebs and the Senate: they erred in this judgment because "they consider the noises and the cries that would arise in such tumults more than the good effects that they engendered." Might "noises and cries" here include the accusations of the nobles and the plebs against each other ---their attempts to give reasons for their demands and views? NM defends tumults not by anything said by one of the two groups, but by "their end" in the sense of their outcome: "for whoever examines their end will find that they have engendered not any exile or violence unfavorable to the common good but laws and

orders in benefit of public freedom." At the end of D/I/4, when we read that "the desires of free peoples are rarely pernicious to freedom because they arise either from being oppressed or from suspicion that they may be oppressed," we are still in danger of believing that the plebs intend freedom out of a devotion to liberty, and so NM makes sure in D/I/5 that we lose such illusions. There we are told that

> "if one considers the end of the nobles and of the ignobles, one will see great desire to dominate in the former, and in the latter only desire not to be dominated; and, in consequence, a greater will to live free, being less able to hope to usurp it than are the great."

This is one of those distinctively Machiavellian sentences, in the course of which what we are told at the beginning appears in a whole new light at the end. The plebs do not intend freedom to begin with, but seem to settle on it as a sort of second best, after they realize that they are unable to "usurp" it. Not also how the nobles are said to want to "dominate," and not "rule"; NM is probably aware of Platonic and Xenophontic arguments that rule in the strict sense requires serving the ruled, and so uses the word "dominate" instead. This chapter (D/I/5), which considers arguments about who is the better guard of freedom---the plebs or the nobles, shows that neither of these two groups is truly devoted to freedom. The "good effects" mentioned in D/I/4 do not stem from good intent.

D I/6

There was a negative effect from the tumults --- for at the time of the Gracchi they "were the cause of the ruin of a free way of life," and so NM begins an inquiry to see "whether a state could have been ordered in Rome that would have removed the aforesaid controversies." NM conducts his inquiry by examining the many and the great

in two republics, one ancient (Sparta) and one modern (Venice) --- republics that had been "free for a long while without such enmities and tumults."

The governing arrangement in Venice came to be "by chance more than by the prudence of him who gave them laws." Made up of people who had fled "the wars that arose every day in Italy" after the collapse of the Roman Empire (D I/1/2), the Venetians closed their government to newcomers "when it appeared to them that there were as many as would be sufficient for a political way of life" (D I/6/1). Tumult was avoided because the newcomers had neither cause nor occasion nor the numbers for tumult. No cause because nothing had been taken from them, no occasion because they were not given any work which would have allowed them to seize authority (i.e. they did not employ the plebs in war –D I/6/3), and not sufficient numbers because the ruling class were numerically equal or greater than them.

In the case of Sparta NM cites two principal causes that kept the city united: the small number of inhabitants meant that the city "could be governed by few," and since immigrants were not allowed the inhabitants were "neither…[corrupted] nor ..[grew]..so much that it was unendurable by the few who governed it." I note in passing that earlier in this same paragraph (paragraph 2 of I/6), while explaining that the plebs in Sparta neither feared nor desired rule because the Spartan kings "defended [them] from every injury" from the nobles, NM had suddenly called Sparta a "principality," while both earlier and later in the chapter he calls Sparta a "republic."

These three causes of Venetian unity and two causes of Spartan unity are next reduced to a single cause for each city: Rome would have remained "quiet" if it had

followed Venice and avoided using the plebs in war, or if it had followed Sparta and closed the way to foreigners. Thus the rule of the few in Sparta and Venice is exposed as stemming not from any superior internal qualities ---virtues or capacities---they possess, but from external limitations they put on the plebs to make them more controllable. In this connection we note that twice in the first paragraph of this chapter NM had noted that the rulers of Venice were "called" gentlemen, and had said nothing about their deserving such a name. I also note the implications behind two different words --- "united" and "quiet" --- NM uses to describe the absence of tumults in Sparta and Venice. The use of the word "united" seems to imply agreement between nobles and plebs, as when we use the phrase "unity of purpose," whereas "quiet" can be the result of losing an argument or a fight, as when you are muzzled by someone. After three reasons for the absence of tumults in Venice are given in D I/6/1, Venice is called "united," and Sparta is called "united" in the next paragraph. But in paragraph 3, when he shows that tumults were absent in these cities because the plebs were kept down, he calls them "quiet" instead of "united."

In the final two paragraphs of I/6 the contrast between Rome on the one hand and Sparta and Venice on the other is brought to a head. First (paragraph 3), we are shown what price Rome would have paid for choosing quiet (over tumults) like Sparta and Venice. Finally (paragraph 4), NM casts doubt on the viability of the Spartan/Venetian arrangement.

At the beginning of the chapter NM had posed the question "whether a state could have been ordered in Rome that would have removed" the tumults, and here he proceeds

on the assumption that the quiet of Sparta and Venice is viable, but shows that such quiet comes at a price. Rome, unlike Sparta and Venice, "gave the plebs strength and increase," and the resulting "numerous and armed" populace made it possible for Rome "to make a great empire;" thus, if Rome removed "the causes of tumults, it removed too the causes of expansion." The necessity of this tradeoff is driven home by two pithy Machiavellian maxims: in "all human things...one inconvenience can never be suppressed without another's cropping up," and since "nothing entirely clean and entirely without suspicion is ever found," in every decision one should "consider where are the fewer inconveniences and take that for the best policy." The inconveniences between which one must choose in this case are, on the one hand, a numerous and armed populace that cannot be managed in "your mode," and on the other hand, a small or unarmed people that leaves you unable to hang onto any territory that you may acquire, or makes you so cowardly that "you are the prey of whoever assaults you." NM does not say which of these rival inconveniences he would choose, and there is no need for him to, for from the way the alternatives are put forth it is clear which one a sensible man would choose.

As if this were not enough, NM now casts doubt on the viability of the Spartan/Venetian policy. When the causes of tumults were also said to be the causes of expansion in the previous paragraph, domestic and foreign policy were linked, and now, when the choice between tumults and quiet is framed as a choice between expansion and remaining "within narrow limits," we see that foreign policy will *determine* domestic policy. NM tells us how someone who wishes "to order a republic anew" should order for expansion (a new Rome) or for remaining within limits (a new Sparta or Venice). In the

second case, since "expansion is poison for such republics," it should be located "in a strong place of such power" that it is difficult for others to capture it, while not being so powerful that it is formidable to its neighbors; in addition, it should have a constitution and laws that prohibit it from expanding. Such a arrangement would be "the true political way of life and the true quiet of a city."

As soon as this double truth is announced we get a Machiavellian "but" undermining it ---"but since all human things are in motion and cannot stay steady, they must either rise or fall; to many things that reason does not bring you, necessity brings you." In this case, necessity may lead such a republic to expand, and this would take away its foundations and ruin it. Even if such a republic managed to avoid war due to the kindness of "heaven," the resulting idleness would lead to effeminacy or division, either or both of which would cause ruin. So the kindness of "heaven" is counterproductive because it ends up harming humans, and human political foundations, presumably of all cities, must decay since "all human things are in motion and cannot stay steady." Or is NM's new Rome somehow exempt from this necessity? However this is, NM states his conclusion at the end of the chapter: "I believe that it is necessary to follow the Roman order and not that of the other republics...and to tolerate the enmities that arise between the people and the Senate, taking them as an inconvenience necessary to arrive at Roman greatness." Since NM repeatedly uses the phrase "I believe" at the end of this chapter, his rejection of Sparta/Venice is tentative and not definitive. In moral terms, he "believes" that the justice of a city's conduct --- a policy of non-imperialism, or the inner rectitude of its foreign policy, gives it no advantage when it comes to survival: trying to be moral

is dangerous, and it is better to follow Rome and opt for imperialism. In D I/5/2 NM had said that "the freedom of Sparta and Venice had a longer life than that of Rome," but the conclusion of D I/6 shows us that he "believes" this longer life of Sparta and Venice was based on fortune, because of the arguments he has made and because both these cities showed their "weak foundation" when they were ruined "upon one slightest accident" (D I/6/4). It was Rome, and perhaps especially the new Rome that NM is showing us how to build, that did not (and will not) owe its longevity to fortune.

D I/7-8

In D I/4/1 the tumults were said (by a critic of tumults) to be characterized by "extraordinary modes" ---- "the people together crying out against the Senate, the Senate against the people, running tumultuously through the streets, closing shops, the whole plebs leaving Rome;" in I/6 we saw that the price Rome ultimately paid for such tumults was the loss of her liberty; and in D I/7/1 we are told that "recourse to extraordinary modes ..bring a whole republic to ruin." Can the negative effects of tumults be mitigated by an order that makes a republic "steady and stable" by providing a way to vent "those alternating humors that agitate it ...in a way ordered by the laws (D I/7/1)?" NM turns to the production of steadiness and stability through this venting by ordinary (as opposed to extraordinary) modes in his discussion of accusation and calumny in III/7-8.

Just what is vented through accusations remains a bit unclear in III/7-8: NM speaks of venting "humors," of the "indignation" (indegnazione) of the plebs against Coriolanus, but doesn't mention "ambition." In D I/4/1 he had told us that "every city ought to have its modes with which the people can vent its ambition, and especially those cities that

wish to avail themselves of the people in important things." Note that *every* city should provide for such venting, and in a city like Rome, where the plebs are powerful, such venting is both more necessary and more likely to be properly ordered (especially after its founders or legislators are educated by NM). But why would venting be more necessary in Rome than in, say, Venice or Sparta? NM doesn't say, but the following quote from Tocqueville's *Ancien Regime* (Book III, chapter 4) helps us to see why:

"It is not always in going from bad to worse that one falls into revolution. It more often happens that a people who have borne without complaint, as if they did not feel them, the most burdensome laws, reject them violently once their weight is lifted. The regime that a revolution destroys is almost always better than the one that immediately preceded it....The inevitable evil that one bears patiently seems unbearable as soon as one conceives the idea of removing it. Every abuse that is then eliminated seems to highlight those that remain, and makes them feel more biting; the evil has decreased, it is true, but the sensitivity to it is greater."

The plebs in Sparta and Venice did not think of venting because they knew they were too weak do so, while the powerful plebs of Rome, precisely because they were powerful and free, had a greater sensitivity to any sign of oppression and thus a greater need to vent (since nobles always desire to dominate, according to NM --- D I/5/2).

Accusations, we are told in D I/7/1, not only provide for such venting (or purging), but also have a deterrent effect, since "for fear of being accused citizens do not attempt things against the state; and when attempting them, they are crushed instantly and without respect." We note that fear of being accused is not sufficient to stop some from trying things against the state; as Mansfield notes, "since purging cannot occur unless deterrence fails, one must count on citizens ambitious enough not to be deterred" (Mansfield, 1979, p.53). NM's psychology (D I/5/4) has shown us that the most ambitious men in a republic are likely to be part of the class of nobles.

So the ambition of the plebs must be used to check that part of the ambition of the nobles that is harmful to freedom in a republic, and this requires that accusations must be made in public and that accusers must be made responsible for their accusation. To make this clear NM distinguishes between accusation and calumny in D I/8/2: "calumnies have need neither of witnesses nor of any other specific corroboration to prove them, so that everyone can be calumniated by everyone; but everyone cannot ofcourse be accused, since accusations have need of true corroborations and of circumstances that show the truth of the accusation. Men are accused to magistrates, to peoples, to councils; they are calumniated in piazzas and in loggias." This leads one to think that calumny is a sort of accusation, but a false accusation, made before a different audience ("piazzas and loggias") and without evidence, and one is tempted to conclude that what NM calls accusation is true accusation, since it has need of "true corroboration" and other evidence. But a careful consideration of NM's statements in D I/7 reveals that he is concerned not so much with the truth of the accusation as with its effectiveness in purging "malignant humors" (D I/7/5) that arise in the plebs. Thus he writes that accusations are useful because they allow the plebs to vent humors "in some mode against some citizen" (D I/7/1) --- "some" citizen, and therefore not necessarily a guilty one. The benefit from the plebs being able to crush a citizen they dislike using ordinary modes is that "there follows little or no disorder in the republic, even though he [the crushed citizen] has been done a wrong" (D I/7/2). Is an innocent citizen who is unjustly accused and then killed supposed to take comfort in the fact that it is better to be executed by the state in an orderly fashion than to be lawlessly lynched by a mob? By stressing, in

D I/8, that accusations be specific and public --- a public charge that *this* person (or group of persons) have engaged in *this* specific wrongdoing, NM is suggesting that one can harmonize purgative benefits with true accusations, but here again the emphasis on publicness seems to have at least as much to do with avoiding appeals to "foreign forces" (is the God of the Bible included here?) as with ensuring truth. In the end, therefore, NM is concerned with justice or the truth of accusations in these chapters only to the extent that it goes along with his notions of human responsibility and human self-assertion: "Machiavelli seems to propose a system of accusations based on one's own initiative, instead of a regime of justice in which men get what they deserve rather than what they ask for" (Mansfield, 1979, p.60).

So the benefit from accusations is that they help calm a free, assertive and vigilant populace by letting them vent their "humors," and this moderates the tumults that occur in a republic and makes it more "steady and stable." A downside is that innocent individuals may be unjustly harmed in the process, but NM would doubtless say that this is one of the "inconveniences" that crop up as a side effect of suppressing another, greater "inconvenience" (see D I/6/3) --- uncontrolled tumults, which are not just harmful to those disliked by the multitude, but also to many others. Thus he cites the harm done to many individuals in modern Florence (D I/7/3), where Francesco Valori "was judged by many to be ambitious and a man who...wished to transcend a civil way of life;" lacking ordinary modes to deal with him, such people had to turn to "extraordinary ways" to eliminate him. People for and against Valori formed rival "sects," and while ordinary modes [i.e. a provision for accusation] would have allowed people to eliminate Valori's

authority "with harm to him alone," their need to use extraordinary modes meant that "there followed harm not only to him but to many other noble citizens."

I want to end my comments by noting an additional benefit that NM expects from accusations --- in addition to the "purging and stabilizing" benefit mentioned above. As I said, accusations are meant to check that part of the ambition of the nobles that is harmful to freedom in a republic, and this means that nobles are left free to exercise their ambition in ways that benefit the common good. As Mansfield notes (1979, p.59):

"in an unfriendly world of chance and necessity men need ambition; they need the ambitious men among them. If the ambitious men are not to be accused merely for their ambition but for "transcending civil life," they must be accused by a man willing to take the responsibility that unambitious men shirk or deny. Even or especially in accusing ambition, men must exercise ambition so that it is not simply repressed. Accusations, as opposed to calumnies, attack this or that ambition rather than ambition itself, both because they must state the particulars and because they must be moved by ambitious men."

This reminds one of *Federalist 51*'s famous statement: "ambition must be made to counteract ambition," but we should note that NM probably wishes to go beyond this and have ambition direct ambition into paths that benefit everyone in a republic. In terms of foreign policy, the nobles are left free to join their ambition to that of the plebs and pursue a policy of imperialism that is seen as benefiting the common good by both sides. So this benefit from accusations can be described as the proper channeling of ambition: unleashing the ambition of the plebs by allowing accusations forces the nobles to harmonize their ambition with the common good, and this purified and directed ambition ends up benefiting both groups in the republic. Summing up the movement of NM's argument in D I/6-8 we see that the option he began with was tumults vs. union at the beginning of D I/6, and at the end of that chapter the option changes to tumult vs. quiet,

with quiet leaving a republic weak and vulnerable and tumult going along with a powerful republic that is able to defend itself and conquer others. In D I/7-8 accusations are introduced as a way of keeping tumults from getting too out of control, and as a way to make the ambition of various citizens serve the common good.

D I/9

After having spoken of the nature of the many and the few, the inevitability of tumult between them in Rome, and the good effects that can result from such tumult in D I/2-8, NM introduces three new topics at the beginning of D I/9: the orderers of Rome, and the orders concerning religion and the military. Speaking first of the orderers of Rome, NM defends Rome's founder, Romulus. Romulus needs someone to defend him because he was guilty of fratricide (he killed Remus), and also of consenting to the death of his partner Titus Tatius the Sabine. Before excusing these actions NM brings forward those who would object to them: "many will perhaps" object to such behavior because it sets a "bad example that others will follow." The emphasis in this objection seems to be on consequences, for while "bad example" may imply that fratricide and killing your partner is intrinsically wrong, the main concern seems to be that others will draw the wrong lesson from such conduct --- that murder is an acceptable means to achieving your selfish political objectives. This is an amazingly lax morality in comparison to what the Catholic Church has always taught: the morality of certain actions (such as murder and adultery) does not inhere in their context, intent, or consequence; the morality of such actions lies simply in the act itself, and such actions are just wrong, forbidden, anathema, *intrinsece malum* in the delightful Latin phrase, always and everywhere. Even that

notoriously wily anti-relativist Aristotle, who affirms natural right only while simultaneously noting that it is changeable, seems to agree with such unqualified condemnations of murder and adultery (see *Ethics* 1107a9ff). NM seems to dismiss this view of morality right from the outset.

To the objection that focuses primarily on bad-consequences NM brings forward his own good-intent and good-consequences standard: one should judge such actions, NM says, by considering "what end had induced him [Romulus] to commit such a homicide." Romulus' actions should be excused if they were done with the aim of helping the common good: "a prudent orderer of a republic, who has the intent to wish to help not himself but the common good, not for his own succession but for the common fatherland," should be excused by "a wise understanding" for any "extraordinary action" [i.e. criminal action] used to order a kingdom or constitute a republic. Such extraordinary action may be unavoidable because "it never or rarely happens that any republic or kingdom is ordered well from the beginning ...unless it is ordered by one individual," and so, for a man like Romulus, "when the deed accuses him, the effect excuses him; and when the effect is good, as was that of Romulus, it will always excuse the deed."

How do we know that Romulus acted for the common good? According to NM, that Romulus did "what he did...for the common good and not for his own ambition, is demonstrated by his having at once ordered a Senate with which he took counsel and by whose opinion he decided." We should take Romulus' ordering of the Senate as an indication of long term thinking on his part, for according to NM, a newly founded political order "last[s] long not if it remains on the shoulders of one individual but rather

if it remains in the care of many." The many are better maintainers because once they come to know the good of a thing "they do not agree to abandon it," while leaving one man in charge of a new political order is unwise, "since men are more prone to evil than to good, [&] his successor could use ambitiously that which had been used virtuously by him." So the founder starts out as a king and the new political order is initially a kingdom, but before he dies he should make arrangements for it to continue as a republic. This may explain why, while only "republic" is used in the title of the chapter, in the body of the chapter NM uses phrases like "republic or kingdom" and "kingdoms and republics" three times (in paragraphs two and three) to describe new political orders.

D I/10

In the title of I/10 NM promises to show that the founders of a republic or kingdom are as praiseworthy as those of a tyranny are blameworthy: the distinction between kingship and tyranny is maintained in the title. In I/2, as we saw, NM preferred the threefold classification of regimes over the sixfold classification, and we suspected that this was because he saw no fundamental difference between good and bad regimes, between kingship and tyranny. But this was not explicitly stated, and won't be until at least I/25, and in this chapter NM seems to stick firmly to the traditional distinction between kingship and tyranny. This is in keeping with I/9, where despite his crimes and his having "authority alone" Romulus is never called a tyrant (or a king, for that matter); he is just referred to as a "founder of a civil way of life" who acted for the common good and a partner in a "kingdom" with Titus Tatius (I/9/1).

In the first paragraph of I/10 we get two pairs of opposing lists. The first pair deals with men who are praised and men who are "infamous and detestable," and the lists are presented as rank-orderings. Most praised are heads and orderers of religions, then founders, then leaders of armies who were successful expansionists, and "added" to this last group are literary men, each according to his rank. When it comes to reproach we have destroyers of religions, squanderers of kingdoms and republics, and enemies of the virtues, of letters, and of other useful and honorable arts. "When the choice between the two qualities of men" is placed before people, all will praise what is to be praised and blame what is to be blamed; yet, when people act, "almost all," deceived by a "false glory" and a "false good," forsake "perpetual honor" by not making a republic or a kingdom, and turn to tyranny. The second pair of lists lays out what the two kinds of founders gain by their choice: on the one hand, fame, glory, honor, security, and quiet (with satisfaction of mind), and on the other hand, infamy, reproach, blame, danger and disquiet. Examples follow: Scipio, Agesilaus, Timoleon, and Dion, on the one hand, and Caesar, Nabis, Phalaris, and Dionysius, on the other. The former are "exceedingly praised," the latter "reproached to the utmost;" the first group did not have less authority than the second, and in addition had more security by far.

Immediately after making Caesar part of a group whose members are "reproached to the utmost," NM says no-one should "deceive himself because of the glory of Caesar, hearing him especially celebrated by the writers" (I/6/3). So here we have a man likened by NM to tyrants such as Nabis, Phalaris, and Dionysius, who is said to have "glory" rather than the "infamy, reproach, [&] blame" a founder of a tyranny was said to receive

at the end of the first paragraph. NM tries to explain this anomaly by noting that "those [writers] who praise him" were corrupted by his "fortune" and unable to speak freely against him because of the duration of the empire that ruled under his name. We can tell what they thought of him by their blame of Catiline and praise of Brutus, "as though, unable to blame Caesar…they celebrate his enemy" (I/10/3). NM's argument so far in this chapter, as in I/9, rests on consequences: tyranny isn't worth it because tyrants are condemned to live insecure lives and have bad reputations; but while he reminds us of Caesar's violent death by mentioning Brutus, he is also unable to deny that Caesar achieved public "glory," meeting only covert condemnation by the writers. So at a minimum he was an unusually successful tyrant, given his posthumous reputation. Were there others like him?

NM now addresses him "who has become a prince in a republic." "A prince in a republic" is an odd-sounding, distinctly Machiavellian phrase, suggesting that he finds a kingly/tyrannical element existing within republican regimes. This prince is asked to "consider" certain facts NM presents about the twenty-six emperors from Caesar to Maximinius. Why does NM go against tradition and count Caesar as the first emperor? If Caesar was an emperor, was he a unique kind of emperor, one who achieved that station only after he died, by virtue of the fact that the emperors who came after him ruled in his name? I will list the emperors (followed by dates of rule) to make it easier for the reader to follow my commentary.

1) Caesar (?-44BC)
2) Augustus (27BC-AD14)
3) Tiberius (14-37)
4) Caligula (37-41)

5) Claudius (41-54)	6) Nero (54-68)
7) Galba (68-69)	8) Otho (69)
9) Vitellius (69)	10) Vespasian (69-79)
11) Titus Flavius (79-81)	12) Domitian (81-96)
13) Nerva (96-98)	14) Trajan (98-117)
15) Hadrian (117-138)	16) Antonius Pius (138-161)
17) Marcus Aurelius (161-180)	18) Commodus (180-192)
19) Pertinax (193)	20) Julianus (193)
21) Septemius Severus (193-211)	22) Caracalla (211-217)
23) Macrinus (217-218)	24) Heliogabalus (218-222)
25) Alexander (222-235)	26) Maximinius (235-238)

The first thing we see from this list is that the last ten emperors in this list (Marcus to Maximinius) are discussed in P 19, and the two mentions of "history" in I/10/4 may well be a reference to that discussion. In P 19 the ten emperors are divided into three groups: good emperors (P 19, p.76—Marcus, Pertinax, and Alexander), only one of whom (Marcus) had a happy end; bad emperors (P 19, p.77---Commodus, Severus, Caracalla, and Maximinius), only one of whom (Severus) had a happy end; and "altogether contemptible" emperors (P 19, p.81---Heliogabalus, Macrinus, and Julianus) who were "immediately eliminated." Thus the success rate for the good emperors in P 19 was not much better than the success rate for the bad emperors, for success, according to NM in P 19, comes not from being good or bad, but from avoiding hatred and contempt, and an emperor like Severus can avoid both even while being "very cruel and very rapacious"

(P 19, p.78). Earlier in the chapter we are examining (I/10/1) the universal praise of good men and the blame of bad men was found to be insufficient to stop men from setting up tyrannies rather than republics or kingdoms; could this be because they see what NM points to in P 19---that the bad emperors are just as likely to be successful as the good ones? NM scrupulously avoids taking this position in I/10, and in I/10/4 he links goodness with praise and success. Here the twenty-six emperors are divided into two groups: first, those "who lived under the laws and as good princes," and second, "criminal emperors." The first deserve "much more praise" than the second (for what do the second deserve some praise?), and did not need praetorian soldiers, since they were defended by "their customs, the benevolence of the people, and the love of the Senate," while the eastern and the western armies were not sufficient to defend the second from the enemies generated by their "wicked customs" and "malevolent life." After pointing out that sixteen of the twenty-six emperors were killed while ten died ordinarily, NM does acknowledge that some good ones were killed ("such as Galba and Pertinax"---why is Alexander [P 19, p.76-77] left out here?), while a "criminal" like Severus died ordinarily, but he blames others for the failure of the good and says Severus survived because of his "very great fortune and virtue." P 19, needless to say, tells a different story. In I/10/4 Pertinax is killed by soldiers corrupted by his predecessor Commodus, so it seems he is not to blame for his death, but in P 19, p.82 he is blamed for wanting to imitate Marcus, and for not recognizing that "hatred is acquired through good deeds as well as bad ones; ...[so that] a prince who wants to maintain his state is often forced not to be good" (P 19, p.77). Much is said in P 19 of Severus' "virtue," and he is there called

"a very fierce lion and a very astute fox" (P 19, p.79), and his success is not attributed in any way to "fortune," as it is in I/10/4. Finally, we should note that even in I/10/4 Severus is the *only* emperor to whom "virtue" is ascribed, while the others are called either "good" or "bad": is it possible to be "good" without having virtue, just as it is possible for Severus to have virtue while being a criminal?

The last lesson of the paragraph uses these emperors as examples to prove a point NM had made before at I/2/3: hereditary succession is bad. According to him all those who became emperor through inheritance (except Titus) were bad, while all who became emperor through adoption were good, "as were the five from Nerva to Marcus." NM devotes the next paragraph to praising life in Rome during the rule of these five good emperors, and painting a very dark picture of life in Rome under the emperors before and after them. Other writers have praised the times under the five good emperors, most notably Gibbon in chapter III of *Decline and Fall* ("if a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus"), but anything he says pales in comparison to the impassioned and extravagant praise of these times we find in I/10/5, along with an equally extravagant denunciation of life under the other emperors. As Mansfield notes (1979, p.68), this contrasting description of life under the good and bad emperors is delivered "in the tones of a sermon as if they were heaven and hell on earth." Earlier there had been good emperors beyond these five, such as Titus, Galba and Pertinax (I/10/4; note also "the long peace that was born in the world under Octavian" in I/1/3), so

either they must have been very ineffective at providing secure lives for their subjects or NM for some other reason doesn't mention them here. After describing the miseries of life under the bad emperors the paragraph ends by declaring that we can now "know very well how many obligations Rome, Italy, and the world owe to Caesar." What exactly is Caesar being held responsible for here? Is he responsible only for the conduct of the bad emperors, and if so, how? Or is he responsible for the conduct of all the emperors, good and bad, because they were masters of an empire that ruled under his name?

The contrast between good and bad emperors is replaced by the contrast between Caesar and Romulus at the end of the chapter. A prince who seeks "the glory of the world" should desire to "possess a corrupt city" so he can reorder it like Romulus instead of spoiling it entirely "as did Caesar." So a prince who seeks his own personal self-interest ---"glory"---should follow Romulus rather than Caesar, even though we had been told earlier that Caesar enjoyed posthumous glory (I/10/3). If both Caesar and the prince NM is advising both act for the sake of glory (rather than with "the intent to wish to help not himself but the common good"---I/9/2), and if the new prince must use the homicidal means that Romulus was shown to have used in I/9, is there any difference in intent or means between them? Since Romulus' actions are fully explicable as those required for his own glory, and since one cannot prove from his actions that he acted for the common good, we should conclude that his intention was selfish.

CONCLUSION:
ARISTOTLE'S REGIME-CENTERED POLITICAL SCIENCE IN LIGHT OF MACHIAVELLI'S CRITIQUE

In Parts I, II, and III we have closely followed Aristotle and Machiavelli as they moved from similar starting points to different conclusions, and we are now ready to compare and contrast their different understandings of the many and the few, and the conclusions that follow from their different understandings of these two parts of a city. I begin (paragraphs 1 and 2) by recapitulating Machiavelli's implicit criticisms of Polybius in D I/2, point out his thoughts on the need for a mediator between the many and the few in D I/2-3, and then move on (in paragraph 3) to characterize the very different roles that Aristotle and Machiavelli take on as observes of the disputes between the many and the few. Next (paragraphs 4-8) I try to uncover and contrast the presuppositions that underlie the two author's different ways of proceeding with their analysis of political life. Finally, I close (paragraphs 9-15) by summing up the differences between the two authors, and offer some reasons for making a (tentative) judgment in favor of Aristotle's regime-centered analysis of political life.

[1] Machiavelli first speaks of regimes in the *Discourses* in the context of a discussion of how republics are ordered. The contrast is between Sparta and Rome: Sparta was given its laws "by one alone and at a stroke," whereas Rome received its laws over time by chance and according to accidents. Despite the fact that Rome lacked a legislator like Lycurgus who ordered it perfectly at its origin, Rome did eventually achieve perfection, and this perfection is explained by Machiavelli with reference to the classical cycle of regimes. In the course of describing the classical cycle of regimes Machiavelli indicates his disagreements with this way of understanding politics, and it becomes clear that his analysis of Rome is meant to provide a superior way of understanding political life. In his

description of the cycle Machiavelli closely follows Polybius, and indicates his disagreement with the classics by deviating from the Polybian text at crucial points. Thus while Polybius clearly accepts the traditional distinction between six regimes (the good and bad forms of rule by one, few and many), and gives reasons why kingship should be distinguished from tyranny (Polybius, Book VI, section 4), Machiavelli merely reports that some writers considered wise by the many divide regimes into six types instead of three, and gives us reason to believe (without explicitly saying so) that he prefers the threefold classification (that does not distinguish between good and bad regimes) over the sixfold classification. Polybius mentions the soul in his account of the cycle, while Machiavelli never uses "soul" in the *Discourses* and the *Prince*; Polybius says (Book VI, sec 5) men outside of civil life herd together like beasts, whereas Machiavelli says they are dispersed like beasts (thus he doesn't see men as naturally social and political); and while Polybius repeatedly ascribes the changes from one regime to another to nature (Book VI, sec 4 and 5), according to Machiavelli the changes occur by chance. Finally, unlike Polybius, Machiavelli declares all the regimes to be "pestiferous," and then calls for a mixed regime containing "all" types, but then names only the three good regimes --- I take this as a sign that he does not approve of distinguishing the three good regimes from their corruptions (the three bad regimes). This mixed regime is what Rome achieved, despite the fact that it lacked a Lycurgus, through accidents that arose as a result of the "disunion between the plebs and the Senate." This suggests that the Roman regime may have been a superstructure, a derivative phenomenon that is of secondary importance in comparison with the substratum, which would be the disunion of the plebs

and the Senate. In Rome's case, the accidents that arose from this substratum were more powerful than the work of any legislator, such as Romulus and the kings that followed, whose "end was to found a kingdom and not a republic," so that the city ended up with a mixed regime that does not appear to have been intended by any legislator.

[2] In D I/3 Machiavelli deviates from his statements in D I/2 in two important ways. In D I/2/3 the destruction of aristocracy occurs when the sons of the founders of the aristocracy come to power; "not knowing the variations of fortune, never having encountered evil," they turn to avarice and ambition and a popular revolt follows. In D I/3/2, however, one does not have to wait for a change in generations for things to go wrong; the nobles are said to be good to the plebs out of fear of the Tarquins, upon whose death "they began to spit out that poison against the plebs that they had held in their breasts." The lesson is clear: any seemingly genuine unity between the nobility and the common people is illusory, since it is based on fear of a third party, and not on any real goodwill between the two groups. The second change in D I/3 is the description of the tribunes of the plebs: they are said at the end of the chapter to be "intermediaries" between the Senate and the people, and to "prevent the insolence" of the former: i.e. to take the place of the Tarquins. But in D I/2/7 it was the consuls, not the tribunes, who took the place of the kings. It seems that the two main parts of Rome, and of any city, are the people and the great, and the third part is not a fixed identifiable group, but any individual or group of individuals who try to serve as intermediaries between the two fundamental groups, and the best that the third part, whether consuls or tribunes, can do is keep these two irreconcilable groups from coming to blows. The two main parts are

always in tension, and in a mixed regime the third part is active in dampening this tension, which cannot be resolved and won't go away, but can only be managed.

[3] Why the tension is always present, and why it cannot be resolved, is explained in D I/4-5. According to Machiavelli "in every republic [there] are two diverse humors, that of the people and that of the great" (D I/4/1), and "if one considers the end of the nobles and of the ignobles, one will see great desire to dominate in the former, and in the latter only desire not to be dominated" (D I/5/2). I would like to suggest that these chapters on tumults (D I/3-6) are Machiavelli's equivalent to *Politics* III/9-10, and the remarks quoted above on the many and the great are his substitute for the oligarchic-democratic dialogue in *Politics* III/9-10. In those chapters, Aristotle takes the position of an umpire, or what he later calls an "arbitrator" (IV/12/1297a6), while Machiavelli appears as a partisan, albeit a peculiar kind of partisan, siding with neither the many nor the few, but as a partisan of the view that the fundamental human necessity is the need to acquire. (One could say that Aristotle, by way of contrast, appears as a partisan of a certain kind of non-political [or supra-political] virtue in *Politics* III/4.) Aristotle's umpire/arbitrator would be easily understood by the parties in political life: he would be seen as a good citizen, one who tries to reduce civil strife by trying to find common ground among the various groups in political life, and promotes moderation by showing each group the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments they use to justify their claim to rule. Machiavelli dismisses this whole approach by not reporting the opinions of the two parties (dismissing such speech as "noises and cries" — D I/4/1 – heard during tumult), so that the basis for an attempted reconciliation is not even present. Instead, his whole

approach is characterized by a peculiar detachment from what the parties think and believe, from their self-understanding, or self-presentation in public; he, as it were, tells both groups not to waste their time fighting one another, but to join forces and beat up on the neighboring city that could be a potential threat to them (end of D I/6). But how does Machiavelli know that reconciliation is not possible? Since he doesn't consider the speeches of the parties, what evidence does he use to conclude that one group wants merely to oppress, while the other group wants merely to avoid oppression? According to Mansfield and Tarcov Machiavelli "tries to show that to understand political situations correctly, one must not listen to the intent of the words people use but rather look at the necessities people face" (Mansfield and Tarcov, 1996, xxxiii). This suggests that people change their behavior according to necessity, so this characterization of the many and the few may not be Machiavelli's last word on the subject.

[4] That the many are largely a-political, or that the few are more eager to rule than the many, was recognized by Aristotle as well, as can be seen from the following passages:

"For the poor are willing to remain tranquil even when they have no share in the prerogatives, provided no one acts arrogantly toward them nor deprives them of any of their property." (IV/13/1297b5-8)

"The many do not chafe as much at being kept away from ruling – they are even glad if someone leaves them the leisure for their private affairs – as they do when they suppose that their rulers are stealing common [funds]; then it pains them both not to share in the prerogatives and not to share in the profits." (V/8/1308b33-38)

"For the many strive more for profit than for honor. A sign of this is that they used to put up with the ancient tyrannies and still put up with oligarchies, if no one prevents them from working or takes away anything from them: before long some of them become rich, while others cease to be poor." (VI/4/1318b16-20)

Consideration of the context of these statements is crucial for seeing how Aristotle differs from Machiavelli. The first statement occurs in the course of a discussion of polities; the second occurs when Aristotle is discussing how to preserve regimes; and the third occurs as part of a discussion of the best democracy; all three make the point that it is possible for the few to treat the many humanely. For Machiavelli, however, the few cannot help oppressing the many; only external coercion, such as fear of the Tarquins, can restrain them. It seems that for Machiavelli rule is almost always oppressive, and is experienced as such by the many; this may explain why he doesn't discuss the kinds of rule as Aristotle does; why bother distinguishing between mastery, domestic rule and political rule (as in *Politics* III/4 and III/6) if rule is always experienced as oppressive? Non-oppressive rule is possible for Aristotle, as seen in the three quoted passages, in many regimes --- polity, ancient tyranny, and oligarchy. According to Machiavelli's initial presentation of the many, however, the many don't want to rule, and don't want to be ruled; they seem to be wholly lacking any receptivity to formation, and resist the formation, that goes with being ruled in the types of regimes Aristotle discusses.

[5] Ruling may involve oppression, but one is not entitled to conclude from this fact alone that the common good in a very basic sense does not exist. The common good in the most basic sense would include the safety and security of the citizens and their

property, and freedom from foreign domination. Now many regimes (including mild tyrannies) that are oppressive can achieve the common good so understood, if they are oppressive in the sense of suppressing desires that are harmful to the common good so understood, or oppressive in the sense of suppressing desires that are unrelated to the common good so understood. Suppression of desires there must be, because according to Machiavelli legislators should "presuppose that all men are bad, and that they always have to use the malignity of their spirit whenever they have a free opportunity for it" (D I/3/1). Machiavelli rejects Aristotle's contention that men are naturally directed toward the good; instead he says that men "never work any good unless through necessity" (D I/3/2). Ruling is oppressive because one cannot distinguish between suppressing good desires and suppressing bad desires, with a view to helping men achieve their natural end; since there is no natural hierarchy of desires, all desires are equally natural. In particular, "it is a very natural and ordinary thing to desire to acquire, and always, when men do it who can, they will be praised and not blamed" (P 3; note the "always").

[6] How do we know that Machiavelli doesn't distinguish between good and bad desires with reference to man's end? Our strongest evidence, apart from the fact that his writings point in this direction, is his silence on such matters. As far as I know, he never does what Aristotle does: he never speaks about "the function of a human being" (*Ethics* I/7/1097b25), and he never says that "just as a city and every other composite system seems to be above all its most controlling part, the same is true of a human being" (*Ethics* IX/8/1168b32-34). Instead he looks to man's (in his view) needy and unprotected

beginning, and stresses the need to acquire, all the while pointing out that justice gains you nothing (as we saw in my commentary on the end of D I/6), and is often even harmful. Acquisition is a constant necessity, even for someone who is one of the haves, because "the fear of losing generates in him the same wishes that are in those who desire to acquire; for it does not appear to men that they possess securely what a man has unless he acquires something else new" (D I/5/4). Further, the "incorrect and ambitious behavior [of the few] inflames in the breast of whoever does not possess the wish to possess." Thus we would have to modify Machiavelli's initial presentation of the many: they do not want to rule, they want only to avoid oppression, but they do wish to imitate the few when they see the few engage in successful acquisition through their bad behavior (i.e. they can be "inflamed" by the bad behavior of the few). Aristotle would seem to agree here: in the passage from *Politics* V/8 I just quoted, he had said that when the many think that their rulers are stealing common funds, "then it pains them both not to share in the prerogatives and not to share in the profits." There is this difference, however: Aristotle doesn't excuse the thievery of the few, while according to Machiavelli their greed is an understandable defensive reaction: "the fear of losing generates" in the haves "the same wishes that are in those who desire to acquire." This teaching on acquisition is ultimately more than an excuse, more than a mere description; it is also a prescription --- one cannot accept this teaching without being changed by it, without learning to think in terms of the need to acquire. This truth will indeed set you free --- it will set you free to focus on acquisition without a bad conscience, and a huge moral transformation will have taken place. "This is how the despised usurer is miraculously transformed into the respected

banker" (Bloom, 1990, p.283). The usurer Shylock, despised in Shakespeare's Venice, would be the president of Citibank in our time.

[7] Mansfield summarizes Machiavelli's lesson this way: "to keep a step ahead of the have-nots, the haves must think and behave like have-nots. They certainly cannot afford justice to the have-nots, nor can they waste time or money on sympathy" (Mansfield, 1996, p.182). Since the common good can be said to have two parts, a floor (what I earlier called the common good in the most basic sense --- the safety and security of the citizens) and a ceiling (development of virtue in the citizens, insofar as they are capable of it), Machiavelli's arguments for why the haves must behave and think like have-nots, and why justice in foreign policy is unwise (D I/6 end), add up to an assertion that these two parts of the common good are incompatible, and cannot go together. Thus our understanding of what constitutes human virtue must take its bearings from the necessity to acquire, not from the end of man as Aristotle conceived of it (and Machiavelli as we have seen, denies that man is naturally directed to any such end), and the highest end of politics is glory and empire, not the cultivation and development of character and reason in the citizens (already in D I/preface/2 Machiavelli refers to "the evil that an ambitious idleness has done to many Christian provinces and cities;" in D I/6/4 idleness leads to effeminacy and division).

[8] The old saying "the road to hell is paved with good intentions" seems to me to be a good one-line summary of Machiavelli's criticism of classical philosophy and its doctrine of the best regime. Along with Machiavelli's downgrading of speech in his study of political life, we find a downgrading of intent. Rome's mixed regime, as we saw in D

I/2/7, came about contrary to the intent of its legislators (since Romulus and the kings that followed wanted to found a kingdom). The lesson is that good things don't necessarily follow from good intentions. In the case of the very different ends of the few (desire to dominate) and the many (avoid domination), the few can be made to see that greater glory and safety comes from empire, and empire requires an armed populace. An armed populace is more willing to demand, and more able to obtain, a share of political power and respect for its rights, and, as we saw in our analysis of D I/7-8, accusations before a free, assertive, and vigilant populace help calm the people, moderate tumults, and make a republic more steady and stable. So once again good things for a city (republican freedom, respect for the rights of the many) come from a selfish motive (the nobles' desire for glory and empire), but at a cost --- other cities loose their freedom, and innocent citizens may be falsely accused and convicted before the many. Finally, in D I/9-10 we see that Romulus' actions (providing a good beginning for Rome) are fully explicable in terms of a selfish desire for glory, and so there is no reason to say that there is any difference in motives between him and Caesar. If there is no difference in means or intent between Romulus and Caesar, then the different results from their rule must be traced to another cause --- the great corruption of the Roman people in Caesar's time, and the lack of such corruption in earlier times (D I/17/1). All founders are moved by the same selfish intent, and must use the same criminal means; a founder should institute a republic if he "seeks the glory of the world" (D I/10/6).

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[9] Let me sum up the differences between the two men. Both begin from the disputes that rage in political life, and in particular from the disputes that rage between the many and the few. Aristotle, unlike Machiavelli, is willing to look into specific disputes, such as which inhabitants of the city should be citizens, and how we go about determining when a city acted and when it did not. He approaches the city as a composite thing, a composite whole whose principal part is the citizen. Machiavelli, by contrast, conceives of the city as an entity that is composed of two opposing factions, or, as he calls them, "humors" --- a term which seems to indicate that the opposition is at bottom a clash of two fundamental pre-rational dispositions which cannot be reconciled, since there is no common element between them. Since the group's self-understanding is bound to differ from Machiavelli's characterization of them (the few won't concede that all they want to do is dominate, and the many won't agree that all they want is to avoid domination), Machiavelli is able to comprehend both groups only by looking beyond their speech to his understanding of the necessity they face, an understanding that seems to put him in some sort of Archimedean point outside of both groups.

[10] Aristotle's attempt to answer the two questions raised by political disputes (see the previous paragraph) points to the regime as the entity which is most responsible for determining a city's identity over time, and as the entity which uses some standard of justice to determine who gets to be a citizen. The regime's conception of justice seeps like a liquid into the parts of the city and structures them in a certain way, and Aristotle next turns (in *Politics* III/4-5) to an examination of the limits of a regime's ability to mould its citizens. The meaning of "good man" is always and everywhere the same, and

in those rare cases where the good man is an active and engaged citizen, he possesses, and can display in the appropriate circumstances, an inner independence from social opinion that he has acquired on his own, rather than through any education provided by the regime. For Machiavelli a city can never publicly declare or teach what is (for him) the fundamental truth about the human situation --- the unsupportedness of justice, the lack of any extra-human support for justice. But in extreme situations a citizen might discover this truth when he sees that one has no option other than relying on "one's own arms." Relying on "one's own arms" means violating the traditional understanding of justice; since such situations arise often and in every regime, one cannot say that some regimes are good and others are bad because officials of all regimes have to regularly engage in unjust acts. Since extreme situations arise often and in every regime, they cannot be defined by their rarity; rather, an extreme situation seems to be defined (by Machiavelli) by its revealingness, by the fact that it reveals the truth about the unsupportedness of justice. Another way to reach this conclusion is by seeing that for Machiavelli men are not naturally social or political, which means that they are naturally "bad" in the sense of being selfish, and they have to be forced to be good, and this forcing includes unjust acts.

[11] Finally, in *Politics* III/9-13 Aristotle shows that the claims to rule made by the various groups contain within them a vision of the whole over which the groups wish to rule, and a notion of the common good that follows from that vision. Their claim to rule is thus based on their understanding of the city and its common good, and is justified only if those understandings are correct. The claimants to rule thus *intend* to make a just claim;

they *intend* their rule to serve the common good. But on further examination the claims prove to be defective because the understanding of the city and the common good on which they were based was defective. The careful dialectical examination of these defective conceptions points us to the correct understanding of the common good. In III/10 he tries to temper the many's desire for gain by appealing to their concern for justice --- Aristotle points out that if the many take control of a city and claim that they can justly confiscate the property of the rich, the city will be destroyed by this course of action, and declares that "yet it is certainly not virtue that destroys the element possessing it, nor is justice destructive of a city; so it is clear that this law cannot be just." He thus tries to give the many a proper understanding of justice, the acceptance of which will require them to temper their desire for acquisition for gain at the expense of the rich. Machiavelli, by contrast, subjects our concern for justice to a cost-benefit analysis and shows that just conduct in no way increases one's chances of success, and may even diminish it. He rejects Aristotle's mode of proceeding because it leads to imagined republics or utopias that have never been known to exist and never will exist; he flatly declares, as we have seen, that neither the many nor the few intend the common good, and shows us in D I/6-8 how a policy of imperialism and public accusations can force the few to align their ambition with the good of the many (at the expense of other cities and those individuals who may be unjustly accused).

[12] As I said in the introduction to this dissertation, I cannot make a definitive judgment about the merits of these two different approaches to understanding political life because I lack a comprehensive interpretation of Aristotle and Machiavelli's political

science, but I do want to end by giving a few reasons for believing that Aristotle's approach is the superior one. Machiavelli's contention that aristocracies are in fact always oligarchies and that tyrannies are merely (in Hobbes' words) kingships "misliked" is not supported by observed facts. We can all see the difference between a King Hussein of Jordan and a Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and between the genuine aristocracy that ruled Britain in the 18th century and the oligarchy that ruled France in the 18th century (see Tocqueville's *Ancien Regime*). Machiavelli would try to explain the difference between Iraq and Jordan, and between 18th century Britain and France, not by differences in the regimes of these countries, but by pointing to the absence or presence of successful mediation by a third party between the two fundamentally opposed groups (the many and the few), and we must ask whether this mode of explanation is superior to Aristotle's focus on the character and the goals of the rulers. Which explanation does justice to the phenomena we observe? A focus on mediation assumes, as we have seen, that the many and the few are irreconcilably opposed, and thus the best that we can achieve is an alignment of their selfish interests, rather than a genuine common good. According to Aristotle, however, it is possible to have mixed regimes where "both and neither of the elements must appear to exist, and it must be preserved through itself and not from outside — through itself not in the sense that the majority wish it to exist (for that might be true even in an evil regime) but in the sense that none of the parts of the city as a whole would even want a different regime" (*Politics* IV/9 end). A student who reads in Tocqueville's *Ancien Regime* that in England "the caste system had been not merely changed but really destroyed....[that the] nobles and commoners together engaged in the

same businesses, pursued the same professions, and, what is still more, married each other" (Book II, chapter 9), and that "in eighteenth-century England, it was the poor man who enjoyed tax privileges; in France, it was the rich" (Book II, chapter 10), will, in my view, find Aristotle's regime analysis more convincing.

[13] Force is used in all regimes against the enemies of the regime, but Machiavelli unjustifiably refuses to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate uses of force, just as he refuses to distinguish between a legitimate king and an usurper. He refuses to be guided by the opinions of decent people in these matters, and thereby presents us with a distorted understanding of the phenomena as they present themselves. He takes his bearings not so much by how men live (as he claims in P 15), but by extreme situations. One can make good arguments explaining why the actions decent statesmen take to preserve their city in extreme situations are not unjust, but Machiavelli refused to heed such arguments. He sought to bring about a radical change in human affairs as the bringer of "new modes and orders," which are needed because Christianity, which is the "effectual truth" of classical political philosophy, had led to "pious cruelty" (see P 21). Yet even if this accusation is true, or rather, precisely if this accusation is true, we must ask if an accusation of cruelty makes any sense in light of Machiavelli's moral teaching. For an accusation of this sort presupposes a law, a moral law, that is based on an understanding of what human beings are and what actions are appropriate for them, in light of which "cruelty" can be recognized as "cruelty." Since Machiavelli rejects natural law/natural right/natural justice by never using such terms in his writings, how can he speak of cruelty? We must ask, therefore, whether the cure he offers is worse than the

problem he sees. As for combating religious cruelty, there was a medieval Enlightenment before the modern Enlightenment initiated by Machiavelli, and I would suggest that we need to take a fresh look at the currently neglected and little understood leading authors of that period. Authors like the Christian Thomas More, the Jew Maimonides, and the Muslim Averroes were men who seem to have tried to rationalize religious laws, by rigorously examining the received religious and philosophic opinions of their day, thereby opening within their respective religious communities "the greatest possible room for reason and the life of reason" (Pangle and Ahrensdorf, 1999, p.124). Aristotle, I think, would have preferred their approach to revealed religion to Machiavelli's approach.

[14] Machiavelli was concerned with virtue, and he believed that his conception of necessity was conducive to the development of virtue: "as has been written by some moral philosophers, man's hands and tongue, two most noble instruments for ennobling him, would not have done their work perfectly nor would they have carried the works of men to the heights to which they are seen to have been carried, if they had not been driven on by necessity" (D III/12 beginning). What sort of world did he try to bring about through his writings to replace a Christian world that he believed had given rise to pious cruelty? According to Pangle and Ahrensdorf (1999, p.132) "Machiavelli seeks to recover, and to bring for the first time to full fruition, the human potential visible more in the politics and religion than in the philosophy of antiquity, a civilization dominated by men tempered to admire and pursue a life of energetic liberty and generosity rooted in intrepid spiritual self-sufficiency. But such excellence, Machiavelli teaches, depends on men's welcoming the ferociously competitive character of the human situation." But the

unleashing of ferocious competition, justified by a new, amoral political teaching, does not seem to have led to a world of "energetic liberty." According to one of the greatest statesmen of the last century, Charles de Gaulle, the modern world is

> "a world where human beings are herded together for work and pleasure, and where even their thoughts and interests are determined for them; ..a world where housing conditions, clothing, and food are gradually standardized; where everyone reads the same things in the same papers at the same time; where, from one end of the earth to the other, they see the same films, and hear the same news, ideas, and music broadcast; ..a world where, at the same hours, similar means of transport take people to the same workshops and offices, restaurants and canteens, sportsgrounds and theaters, to the same buildings, blocks or courts for work, food, recreation and rest; where men and women are similarly educated and informed, and all lead the same busy life and share the same worries" (quoted in Mahoney, 2000, p.106).

This depoliticized and homogenized existence is most prominent in the most technological societies, and exists in varying degrees elsewhere. The world remains divided into political orders that can be classified into a variety of regimes, yet this picture is complicated by the creeping homogenization brought about by modern technology and commerce. How this homogenization affects and interacts with the differences among regimes is a topic worthy of a dissertation length study, and I won't go into it here; I just want to suggest that if we judge Machiavelli by his own standard --- by the effectual truth of his political teaching, we see that it has not led to a world of "energetic liberty," and so we should look at the alternative provided by Aristotle and classical political philosophy.

[15] Considerations of justice are an unavoidable part of social life, since "there is no relation of man to man in which man absolutely free to act as he pleases or as it suits him" (Strauss, 1953, p.129), and Aristotle tries to uncover the full potential of political

life by understanding it as a kind of collective search for justice, a search that results in men organizing their political life by forming regimes. This all-important concern with justice, character and virtue gives political life its dignity, and this most important dimension of political life is missed if we try to understand the city in terms of lesser associations, such as a business enterprise. If we follow Machiavelli and see political life as existing for the sake of private ends, with the many and the few trying to use each other for their own private purposes, then we seem to end up with the depoliticized world de Gaulle depicts, homogenized by modern technology and commerce, peopled with men and women consumed by their private concerns, with "all lead[ing] the same busy life." To the extent that they seek relief from this condition, they seem to have no alternative but to turn "to our peculiarly modern combination of rootless individualism on the one hand and a dangerously obscurantist communitarianism --- secular as well as religious --- on the other" (Carnes Lord, 1997, p.122). So I think modern political scientists need to take a fresh look at Aristotle's regime-centered political science, and the doctrine of the best regime in which it culminates. That analysis is more harmonious with our self-understanding as citizens; it shows us the limits of our desire for justice without belittling or dismissing it; and it has greater explanatory power because it helps us understand political life in a way that goes beyond, but not counter to, the perspective of the citizen. The best regime need never be actual; it can guide us by merely making explicit what is implicit in every effort at political change and improvement.

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