11-1988

Aristotle' s Three Cities and the Problem of Faction

John Patrick Coby

Smith College, pcoby@smith.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.smith.edu/gov_facpubs

Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Coby, John Patrick, "Aristotle' s Three Cities and the Problem of Faction" (1988). Government: Faculty Publications, Smith College, Northampton, MA.

https://scholarworks.smith.edu/gov_facpubs/35

This Article has been accepted for inclusion in Government: Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Smith ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@smith.edu

ARISTOTLE'S THREE CITIES AND THE PROBLEM OF FACTION

John Patrick Coby
Professor of Government
Smith College
Northampton, MA

pcoby@smith.edu

Published in the *Journal of Politics* (November 1988): 896-919.

Aristotle's Three Cities and the Problem of Faction

Abstract

Aristotle describes the polis as a self-sufficient compound. Its regime, he says, is responsible for shaping the whole character of the city's people. But rarely is the city unified in its parts, and the formative power of the regime is not always this extensive. There are in fact three kinds of cities depicted in the Politics. They differ by the degree of partnership tying city members together. Accordingly, the problem of faction and its cure differs for each: for some cities, where the regime is unitary, the cure is consent; for others, with mixed regimes, it is participation; but for the ideal city it is homogeneity.

Aristotle's Three Cities and the Problem of Faction

I. Unity, Diversity, and Virtue

Aristotle is never more voluble in his criticism of Plato than when the subject is political unity. In the Politics Aristotle charges that Plato's Socrates wrongly imposed on the city the unity appropriate to a single individual, where all of the body's parts feel pleasure and pain together, or to a single family, where all family members say "mine" and "not mine" about the same things. The city is by its nature a self-sufficient association, and too much unity destroys the diversity necessary for perfected communal existence.

Aristotle explains that the city is self-sufficient in two respects, materially and spiritually. In book 7 of the Politics, he lists several functions necessary to the city's survival, observing that "the city is not any chance multitude [tuchon plēthos], but one self-sufficient with a view to life" (7.8.8).¹ Here Aristotle is speaking of material self-sufficiency: the city must provide itself with sustenance, artifacts, defense, finance, worship, and rule--all just to live.² The city, Aristotle observes, comes into being for the sake of mere life (1.2.8). By diversity of population and specialization of trades, it continues the work of self-preservation begun in the household and the village. But the special function and final end of the city is to cultivate man's talent for reason and speech, or to provide people with what Aristotle famously says is a good life (1.2.8.). Thus the city attains its self-sufficiency (autarkeia) primarily in terms of the soul of man and only secondarily in terms of the body. Diversity is again important because it is a source of disagreement, and the resolution of disagreements among different but equal people requires that city members act as moral reasoners (Yak, 1985, pp. 101-12). The family and the village, on the other hand, obviate the moral development of men because as traditional and hierarchical communities all matters therein are well settled and accepted, and political authority is mostly beyond challenge.³ It is, therefore, a mistake to model the city after the family and to base the city's unity on the sameness of its members: for the city necessarily is a compound (syntheton) consisting of dependent and

complementary parts.⁴ The interaction of these diverse parts, to repeat, helps to perfect men as moral beings by demanding of them reflection and conversation about the advantageous and the just (1.2.1).⁵ And this achievement--far more than the division of labor--explains why the city is a self-sufficient association. Accordingly, civic unity, as urged by Socrates, rather than the greatest good for cities, in fact destroys them (2.2.6-7):

...to seek to unify the city excessively is not good. For a household is more self-sufficient than one person, and a city than a household; and a city tends to come into being at the point when the partnership formed by a multitude is self-sufficient. If, therefore, the more self-sufficient is more choiceworthy, what is less a unity is more choiceworthy than what is more a unity (2.2.8).

Aristotle's apparent complaint then against the city of the Republic is that its institutions impose a oneness of life and thought that suffocates the individual and stifles his moral growth.⁶ Morality, Aristotle believes, depends on diversity.

But there is a limit to how much diversity the city can absorb and still accomplish its moral purpose. Larger communities, such as empires, are undoubtedly "less a unity" than the polis, but Aristotle does not say of them that they are the most natural associations. The explanation, apparently, is that their greater size and diversity compromises their self-sufficiency. The problem with empires, but more obviously with nation-states of today, is that they are too heterogeneous for virtue to be the public business. Because the citizens of large states are divided in their beliefs, moral discourse among them will rarely lead to communal agreement. And so the argument is made, and repeated as a maxim of liberal democracy, that politics cannot legislate morality, meaning that moral questions should be confined to lesser associations (to religious congregations and families especially) where their investigation is less a danger to public peace. Aristotle says that large states--in fact large cities--are unlikely to have a regime (politeia): "[the city] that is made up of too many persons is with respect to the necessary things self-sufficient like a nation, but is not a city; for it is not easy for a regime to be present" (7.4.11). A regime exists where there is

agreement about who should rule and agreement about the community's way of life (4.11.3). Where there is instead competing life-styles that either oppress or tolerate one another, there is no regime, at least none that is complete. And where there is no regime, it may be best that moral disputes remain more or less private and that the full potential of the political association--a common life of virtue--not be attempted. But to abandon public virtue is to retreat from self-sufficiency; accordingly the large state, with its greater diversity of people, is less self-sufficient than the small polis. It can therefore be inferred from Aristotle that excessive size and excessive controversy are hindrances to human development since the lack of consensus results in the privatization of morality and the end of public reasoning about it.

There is, however, another criterion for determining the optimal size of states. Small, unified cities and large, diverse nations have in common the fact that each affords a remedy for the problem of faction (stasis). Socrates, in the Republic, places a premium on civic unity because he is responding to the sophist's charge that political life is riven by faction and political rule the instrument for class oppression (338c-339a).⁷ A unified and homogeneous city, Socrates reasons, will rid politics of injustice by preventing the emergence of factious unrest (462a-d). And with respect to the benefits of size, James Madison explains in Federalist 10 that an extended republic is the best defense against factions--which are otherwise permitted to exist--because the multiplication and fragmentation of interests minimize the chances that any one faction will be a ruling majority by itself.⁸ The lessons taught are that either unity or diversity can provide internal stability to a regime. But Aristotle opts for a position seemingly midway between the homogeneity of Socrates' Republic and the heterogeneity of Madison's extended republic.⁹ He does so for the sake of the moral self-sufficiency of the polis, which, as noted, requires enough disagreement that people find it necessary to talk about right and wrong, but not so much disagreement that such talk is ruled unacceptable for public debate. Because Aristotle dedicates the polis to the moral development of citizens, he necessarily exposes it to a high degree of factional turbulence. Up to a point, Aristotle

is accepting of faction. But how does he propose managing faction so as to stabilize the polis and make of it a defensible form of association? This is the topic of the present paper.

II. Three Cities

The polis is a species of human association (koinōnia); within the polis the regime is a type of rule. Before considering the polis and the problem of faction, some further discussion of the regime will be necessary. Aristotle identifies four constitutive elements of a regime or politeia (4.1.10). The first is the creation and arrangement of political offices: an assembly, council, magistracies, courts, etc. The second is the distribution of these offices to particular groups or individuals--the rules of eligibility, in other words. The third--and certainly most important--is the location of sovereign power (kuros), or the determination of the regime's kind, be it democratic, oligarchic, monarchic. The kind of regime is a function of citizenship, for the citizens are the governing body (politeuma), and the governing body is sovereign (3.6.1-2). In an aristocracy the aristocrats make up the citizenry and are the repository of authoritative power. Finally, there is the matter of purpose; each regime devotes itself to some end, such as freedom in a democracy.

Aristotle is known for the vast powers he attributes to the regime, much beyond the distribution of benefits and the regulation of competing interests; for it is the business of the regime, he says, to shape and mold the body politic (Newman, 1973, pp. 209-11). The expression body politic, even though modern in its origin, is particularly apt since the people, as Aristotle suggests, are like matter given form and identity by the regime (3.3.7-8). There are democratic people by virtue of their common life in a democratic city--likewise oligarchic and aristocratic people. Each is determined by its way of life--by its collective view of happiness expressed through what it praises and blames, rewards and punishes; and this in turn is an issue settled by the choice of a regime and manifested by the regime thereafter (Yak, 1985, p. 98). Aristotle comments, "For it is through hunting for this [i.e., happiness] in a different manner and by means of different things that

[groups of] individuals create ways of life and regimes that differ" (7.8.5).¹⁰

The above remarks speak to the social effect of the regime, that through its agency a multitude becomes a single people. But there is as well a political effect concerning the question of rule. The affection, kind regard, or friendship--all translations of philia--that the regime spreads among the community, and itself reflects, is a function of the people's agreement about who should rule (N. E., 1167a34-1167b2) and to a lesser extent their agreement about matters of policy (N. E., 1167a27-33). A body politic is defined by this political agreement perhaps more so than by its manners, habits, and traditions. People stand united as democrats if their regime is commonly supported, or as oligarchs if oligarchy is what the people want. But how feasible is it for all the people to want the same regime and for the regime, therefore, to extend its authority to all the people?

Having considered the unifying effect of the regime, we return to Aristotle's central contention that the city is a compound made up of distinct and complementary parts. Aristotle sometimes remarks that the city, in truth, is two cities, consisting chiefly of the rich and the poor (4.4.18-19, 5.11.32, 6.3.4). More familiar though is his claim that the people are of two sorts, the citizens, who are full partners in the regime, and the workers, whose labors are needed for the city's survival but who are not themselves participants in the city's politics (3.1.6, 3.5.2, 4.4.14, 7.8.1-5). There seems then not to be a single people over whom the regime exerts its influence and formative power. Citizens are educated by the regime; they share in a common life and affirm its value; they occupy the offices of state. But non-citizens are excluded from and untouched by this educational, communal, and political activity. The democratic poor in an oligarchy are not products of the regime in the same way that the ruling oligarchs are. By the same token, oligarchs and aristocrats living under democracy retain the habits and aspirations of opposing regimes, even though democratic equality affords them an equal role in political life. The regime then is less influential than first impressions would suggest. But are we to conclude that oligarchs and democrats, rich and

poor, cannot be members of the same one city, participants in and embodiments of the same regime; that there cannot be a common life of virtue between them? And is it the case, contrary to previous beliefs, that the city's much vaunted diversity serves only its material needs, with the ruling rich extracting labor from the multitude and the ruling poor expropriating wealth from the few? Are we to understand that the spiritual benefits of city-living are reserved for those who are similar in kind and who rule and are ruled in turn? What responsibility then has the regime toward free people who are not citizens, or who are not the type of citizen (oligarchs in a democracy) that the regime admires? Finally, how does the city, seen now to be divided into the few and the many, handle their factious contests for sovereign power?

These questions arise because the city, that *quintessentially* ~~penultimately~~ natural and self-sufficient association, undergoes significant change through the course of Aristotle's discussion of regimes. The city is not always the same; in fact there are three different cities that Aristotle refers to or has in mind. What distinguishes them is the level of partnership at work among the residents.¹¹ City members are necessarily partners in a common enterprise, but the enterprise can vary widely in its scope. In the first place, and as noted just above, the city can be two cities, its people divided into rich and poor and joined together largely for material purposes. Those who are citizens, who rotate in and out of office, are partners in a regime; their association is political. But those who are not citizens, or who do not share in the spirit of the regime, are members of an economic alliance. The city for them lacks the humanizing features which Aristotle describes and extols. These free persons, to the degree that they are not resisting rule, are united contractually with their citizen counterparts and are partners in the regime by virtue of their consent.

The second sort of city is a single city, although it attempts to combine both unity and diversity. The city is unified because rich and poor support the regime and share in its offices, and because, in a modest way, the regime extends its educational authority to all the people. But the city is also diverse because social classes continue to exist. The regime best suited to such an

association is a middle-class polity where the rich, the poor, and those of moderate means all share in the exercise of power. Thus the members of this city are partners, not by consent alone, but by their joint participation in the political life of the association.

The third type of city is Aristotle's ideal, or what he calls the city to be prayed for (7.4.1). This too is a single city, but unlike the previous example, its unity derives from the absence of social classes. Here there are not factions of rich and poor living in uneasy harmony; instead there are citizens and slaves, between whom no partnership exists. The citizens engage in politics, or perform sundry public duties, and are sufficiently alike that they look to be members of an extended family, distinguished more by age than by property. The partnership among them is complete on all counts, for they agree about who should rule, participate severally in public affairs, and share a common way of life, having been determined in their moral habits by the education of the regime.

III. The Problem of Faction

It would be a mistake to suppose that Aristotle's middle way solution to the problem of stasis, between communist homogeneity and liberal heterogeneity, is as focused and developed as either of the extremes. Aristotle's remarks on the subject, while extensive, are often scattered, pragmatic, and regime-based.¹² Moreover, Aristotle adopts a tack different from Socrates and Madison, concerning himself more with the stability of existing regimes than with the just treatment of the ruled; thus the onus of Aristotle's analysis falls on rebellious subjects rather than on oppressive rulers. Nevertheless, there is a constant core and an interest in justice in all of what Aristotle says, and, with a little flushing out, even a theory of faction. To help explain this theory, the preceding three-city schema will be utilized.

1. Unitary Regimes

When the regime is unitary, that is to say, monarchic, aristocratic, oligarchic, democratic,

tyrannical,¹³ domestic tranquillity is maintained by the consent of the governed and, to a lesser degree, by cooperation among the rulers. The rulers include those who actually hold office and those who are eligible, or the citizen body. The support of the citizen body for the regime is partly taken for granted, although it is certainly possible that conflict among the privileged could occur. In oligarchies, for instance, disloyalty and private ambition are serious causes of civil unrest (5.6.1-9). Nevertheless, it is generally true that oligarchs support oligarchy, aristocrats aristocracy, and democrats democracy for the simple reason that those who are citizens are favored by the regime. The real source of trouble, therefore, in a unitary regime lies with the excluded. The democratic many in an oligarchy are given to faction since they are removed from power and treated as inferiors. Likewise, the oligarchic few in a democracy think themselves mistreated since their putative superiority is unrecognized and their voices unheard amidst the clamor of the multitude. Is it conceivable then that the governed would ever support a regime which excludes or ignores them? Or do they merely suffer the rule of others while looking always for the opportunity to rebel? Is faction an inevitable feature of unitary regimes and sedition the necessary outcome of alterations in the balance of power?

However intractable the problem of faction, Aristotle does not despair of a resolution. In his first effort to classify regimes, he distinguishes between correct regimes (orthai politeiai) and deviant regimes (parekbebēkuiai politeiai). Correct regimes, of which there are three, look only to the common advantage, while deviant regimes promote the interest of the rulers. Insofar as a regime is correct, it is possible for non-citizen inhabitants, the ruled, to give their consent, because their interests are taken into account. What though are their interests? The most important point to note is that these people are not citizens bound morally and politically to the regime. Their relationship instead is essentially that of an ally, and, as Aristotle explains in book 3, the objectives of an alliance are more limited than those of a self-sufficing political partnership. Allies are joined together for military and commercial purposes. Accordingly, the interests of those elements of the

Laws VIII 832c
II 713a

city united to others as allies are confined to the common defense and the exchange of goods, and they are well-treated if their persons are secure and their property respected. A good regime owes to this segment of the people a system of law that provides them with rectificatory justice and that facilitates the transaction of business. Such is the position of democrats in an aristocracy. For them law is "a compact [*synthēkē*]. . . a guarantor among one another of the just things" [*tōn dikaiōn*] (3.9.8); whereas for aristocrats in an aristocracy law communicates a way of life; it is "the sort of thing to make citizens good and just" (3.9.8). Every city with a unitary regime is a compound (two cities) which includes non-political elements. And the consent of these elements can be won if their contractual rights are respected and their material lives made tolerable and secure.

Even a good regime though is open to faction and sedition. Aristotle lists numerous sources of danger--some of them accidental, many of them a direct consequence of the city's limited size--and suggests precautions which might be taken. But the peculiar weakness of monarchy and aristocracy is the relative transience of human superiority. Both regimes define themselves by the excellence of their rules. But these superior beings are liable to decline and corruption; and what is just as likely, the subjects under them are capable of improvement and growth. The mere effect of city-living is almost certain, in time, to turn mechanics, farmers, and slaves into politically conscious individuals. Indeed, the one great advantage of the city over lesser associations is that it has this edifying effect on people. To be sure, the full effect of city-living is reserved for those who play the part of citizen, but some residual benefits necessarily come to those who simply watch. In this regard Aristotle observes that kingship generally is an antique form of government, practiced among people whose primitiveness is responsible for the king's seeming greatness. But as these people emerge from barbarism, they have less need of a single ruler and are less able to find someone who is outstanding relative to themselves. Aristotle's advice to kings is that they surrender power gradually and gracefully (5.11.1-3), in part because kingship, by definition, is consensual rule (5.10.37-38, 7.2.13, 3.14.12) and in part because the regime must fit the character of

its people. It is almost a natural law with Aristotle that only a well-constructed regime is stable (4.12.6, 5.7.5, 6.6.4-5). And the first rule of good construction is that the regime be suitable to the people it rules. Thus even if the regime is just in dealing with its subjects, there is no reason to suppose that these subjects will be forever content with their non-political existence. Man is by nature a political animal, Aristotle avows (1.2.9, 3.6.3). Some men at some times may be incapable of politics, but life in a city will tend to awaken and develop what potential there is. Kingship and aristocracy can respond by co-opting the leadership of the rising class (Jaffa, 1972, p. 125), and by doing so forestall their own demise and influence the conduct of their successors. But what they cannot do is perpetuate themselves, for the polis has a democratizing effect that militates against the long-term survival of non-egalitarian regimes.¹⁴

Among unitary regimes there are three listed as deviant: democracy, oligarchy, and tyranny. They are deviant because they serve the interests of the rulers to the detriment of the ruled. Their injustice and abuse of power is the central cause of stasis. Democrats, at the urging of demagogues, expropriate the property of the wealthy few; oligarchs grow arrogant in office and despoil the many; the tyrant, alone at the top, thinks himself a god to whom all is permitted. Each regime has a defining principle or animating spirit that is defective in its own right and, if absolutized, leads the regime to excess. In democracy this spirit is freedom (4.8.7). Aristotle observes that democratic freedom manifests itself in two ways. First, freedom can be public and political, in which case it means majority rule. When combined with numerical equality as a principle of justice, it encourages the belief that "the multitude must necessarily have authority, and what is resolved by the majority must be final and must be justice" (6.2.2). Justice is whatever the multitude wants, even if what the multitude wants is to "distribute among themselves the things of the wealthy.... By Zeus," declare the many, this expropriation is just since "it was resolved in just fashion by the authoritative element" (3.10.1). Freedom also has a second meaning that is private and personal. The democratic citizen is entitled to behave as he wishes, for subjection to the regime and its laws is

treated as slavery (5.9.16, 6.2.3). Although disapproving of this attitude himself, Aristotle admits that personal freedom, or civil liberty, is what democrats mainly desire and that political liberty is a second-best alternative (6.2.4). In regard to the matter of faction, political liberty clearly carries the seed of civil unrest; personal liberty though seems less directly a cause of stasis except as it provokes the contempt of the few or as the lawlessness that might result necessitates deliverance by a despotic government.

Wealth is the defining principle of oligarchy (4.8.7). Because the wealthy are few in number, oligarchy has a small base of support. It is thus an unstable regime even if temperate in its rule. But oligarchies are not famous for their temperance. The insolence and greed of oligarchs usually leads to the oppression of the people, who are ready for revolt whenever some leader offers to champion their cause. Oligarchies are also threatened from within, by dissension among the rulers. The rulers quarrel, conspire, and rebel because they are timocrats who want honor and position as testimonies of their worth. Indeed, Aristotle maintains that it is the many who seek profit (6.4.3, 2.7.19) and that oligarchies are in fact small democracies if the rulers use office for the sake of gain (6.7.7). The defining principle of oligarchy, therefore, is altered to include not only wealth, but also pride. Since the pride of oligarchs cannot well be satisfied outside of politics, as can the love of freedom of the democratic poor, the competition among oligarchs will be especially intense. Accordingly, one notices that of the eight sources of domestic revolution (metabolē) listed in book 5, chapter 6, five concern the struggle for position and the suffering of perceived indignities.

The essential feature of tyrannical government is rule without consent: the tyrant "may rule not only willing persons, but also those who are unwilling; for if this is thrown away, so is the tyranny" (5.11.18). Tyranny is inherently unstable, but Aristotle mentions two ways in which the tyrant can preserve himself. Conventionally, the tyrant undertakes to weaken his own subjects, making them frightened and servile, distrustful of one another, and so poor and burdened with work

that they are incapable of political action (5.11.4-16). The other way, recommended though little practiced, is for the tyrant to imitate the king and thus win the admiration and affection of his people. This would require of the tyrant that he act as steward of the public funds and levy taxes for public purposes; that he adorn the city and show zeal for the cult of the gods; that he honor good men and discipline in the spirit of a father; that he support both rich and poor or align himself with the stronger faction; and that he cultivate military qualities, avoid sexual offense, and moderate his pleasures. In effect, Aristotle asks the tyrant to give up the very things he became a tyrant to enjoy--that he not exalt himself, bully his subjects, or indulge his appetites. The tyrant, in other words, is instructed to act contrary to the defining principle of the regime.¹⁵ The lesson that Aristotle conveys is that only through moderation can tyranny endure (with a similar lesson for the other deviant regimes).¹⁶ Nature, it seems, is so constituted as to favor limitation and restraint. And nature is "lawful" in that the grasping and unrestrained are destroyed. On the surface Aristotle's teaching respecting tyranny is similar to Machiavelli's, but in fact they are profoundly opposite. Machiavelli would have the prince choose freely from the two modes of tyranny depending on what circumstances required. Keeping pace with circumstances is all important, and if done well ensures the prince in his tyranny (Orwin, 1978, pp. 1218-19). The reason given by Machiavelli is that nature favors the audacious over the cautious; nature condones tyranny (Machiavelli, 1970, pp. 118-24). Thus Machiavelli's prince, set free by nature, is fully a tyrant, whereas Aristotle's tyrant, constrained by nature, is indistinguishable from a king.¹⁷ According to Aristotle, deviant regimes can best survive by ceasing to be deviant; moderation, Aristotle explains, is in the rulers' self-interest.

2. Mixed Regimes

The one regime still to be discussed is polity. Polity is first introduced as the correct form of rule by the many (3.7.3), also as a regime where the people possess military virtue (3.7.4, 2.6.16),

and later as a democratic regime under law (3.17.4). Mainly though polity is a mixed regime, one which includes the rich, the poor, and the middle class--if a middle class exists (4.8.3, 4.12.4-6). It is not the only mixed regime, however, since aristocracy can be a mix of aristocrats, oligarchs, and democrats (4.7.4), or simply of oligarchs and democrats if the balance of power is with the former (4.8.3, 5.7.6); but polity is the mixture that is most prominent. As a mixed regime, polity is noteworthy for its stability (5.7.6). The various classes of society share in sovereign power and are thus secure, content, and supportive of the constitution. But in order to share, they must first make their presence felt. A mixed regime exists where the principal classes are sufficiently powerful that their claims to rule are perforce recognized. In unitary regimes, by contrast, the ruled are politically less important and can expect little more than to be governed with their consent. But why should multiple claims to rule result in peaceful sharing of power instead of dissention and civil war? Why, in other words, is a mixed regime stable?¹⁸ Aristotle does concede that not all mixtures are stable; for example, a polity composed only of rich and poor is a perilous arrangement since each party is anxious about slight increases in the power of its rival--and it is especially dangerous when the balance between them is perfect (5.4.11). Aristotle suggests that in order for the mixture to produce the desired results, a middle class is necessary. The material circumstances of the middle class help it to avoid the arrogance and malice of the wealthy as well as the servility and envy of the poor. The former are given to mastery, the latter to slavery, but only the middle class is well equipped to rule and be ruled as citizens (4.11.5-9). Because of the moderation of the middle class and of its ability to negotiate the differences between the two extremes, a mixed regime featuring a middle class is the most free of factional disturbance and the one most stable (4.11.12).

Aristotle, however, does not confine his analysis of stasis in mixed regimes to this one sociological observation.¹⁹ After all, the middle class is a rare occurrence, and nothing much is done to make its appearance more common.²⁰ In fact, Aristotle has other means to promote civic concord in mixed regimes, including those mixed regimes called aristocracies. In book 2, where

Aristotle faults Socrates for wanting too much unity, he offers reciprocal equality and rotation in office as substitute solutions to the problem of faction (2.2.4-6). Reciprocal equality is distributive justice--giving classes power proportionate to their contribution. Reciprocal equality makes people friends because all believe that they are being treated fairly (2.5.3-5). But does reciprocity actually solve the problem of faction, as Aristotle affirms, or is reciprocity itself a major cause of faction, as Aristotle also affirms (5.1.3-5)? It happens that people quarrel over the true meaning of distributive justice. Oligarchs believe that inequality of possessions means inequality in all things politically consequential; thus oligarchs should rule. Democrats believe that equality of freedom, such as free birth, means equality of power; thus the majority of the freeborn should rule (3.9.4, 5.1.3-4, 6.3.1-2). If either faction is excluded, it is wont to think itself abused and to conspire against the regime. But if the factions share the offices, as in a mixed regime, they are likely to bring their discontents with them into the government, quarreling instead over the precise distributions of power. The only remedy for people judging in their own case and handicapped by fallible reasoning is that they be educated so as to appreciate and respect their counterpart's position. It is not enough for democrats to behave as partisans inside institutional arrangements that provide them sufficient power to protect their interests. They must also adopt the perspective of oligarchs, just as oligarchs must think as democrats, while both must respect and emulate aristocrats. The success of a mixed regime depends on the creation of a single community (4.11.7-8), and this in turn, if a middle class is absent, depends on the kind of political education that Aristotle, acting as legislator, attempts to provide (Yak, 1986, pp. 22-23).

In book 3, chapter 13, Aristotle considers the case of a pluralistic city where multiple claimants to rule are present--the good, the wealthy, the wellborn, and the many (3.13.4-5). Aristotle sifts through their arguments with an eye to finding and establishing the most suitable unitary regime. But the justice of a unitary regime is itself challenged by the existence of so many prominent classes (3.13.2-4),²¹ and the thrust of the chapter is to make each class receptive to the

opinions of its opponents. Thus the net result, though not stated explicitly, is power sharing in a mixed regime.

Aristotle very quickly shows that no defining principle (wealth, freedom, virtue) is in the complete interest of those who advance and defend it (Jaffa, 1972, pp. 113-14), for every principle is subject to monarchical usurpation. If the wealthy merit rule by reason of their property, then the wealthiest among them deserves to rule those of lesser fortunes. Similarly, free birth must surrender to good birth, aristocratic virtue to kingly virtue, and strength of numbers to the greater strength of talent or resources (3.13.7-8, 6.3.3). But lest this line of argument too neatly conclude for the rule of one, Aristotle mentions, and to a surprising degree condones, the practice of ostracism. The excellent risk banishment since pronounced superiority is inconsistent with the equality needed for politics and the rule of law (3.13.13-23).

The above admonition serves to dampen the fires of righteousness and fanaticism which might otherwise inflame adherents to the competing principles of rule. What is next required is for the members of each class to see the political landscape from the vantage of its rivals. In chapter 11 Aristotle defends the collective judgment of the many. As a group, the many are better judges of musical and poetic productions, just as taken together they can provide a dinner more sumptuous and various than that hosted by the few. The particular advantage of collective judgment is comprehensiveness--nothing passes undetected when the many bear witness. Thus were the many to deliver a literary review, their presentation would cover every conceivable aspect of the work. Aristotle proceeds to liken the virtuous individual to a painting in which all the excellent parts that nature normally scatters about are arranged into one beautiful ensemble. But no matter how wonderful the painted eye or ear, says Aristotle against this individual, somewhere in nature there is a real eye or ear that surpasses it (3.11.2-4). The multitude represent a great warehouse of human virtue needing only some organization and assembly in order to become politically useful; they are the audience who see everything in the play but who require a theater critic to bring coherence to

their observations. Given this potential--and Aristotle cautions that not every multitude is so good (3.11.5)--the many need not be prejudiced by appeals to excellence. Collective judgment is thus defended aristocratically, in terms of its contribution to excellence, rather than on grounds that all opinions are equal. Treated as colleagues in an aristocratic venture, the democratic multitude are given an interest in aristocracy and are more inclined to share its values.

In chapter 15 Aristotle repeats this procedure but in reverse--he provides a democratic argument to defend aristocracy. The question in 15 concerns the corruptibility of judgment and the likelihood that a single individual is more prone to corruption than a crowd. Nevertheless, the choice favors the judgment of the one individual unless the many are good men and good citizens--aristocrats in other words. Aristocracy is susceptible to factional conflict, Aristotle admits, and this is an argument against it. But still he prefers aristocracy to kingship because of the security against corruption which numbers provide:

If, then, the rule of a number of persons who are all good men is to be regarded as aristocracy, and the rule of a single person as kingship, aristocracy would be more choiceworthy for cities than kingship... provided it is possible to find a number of persons who are similar (3.15.10).

There is no issue more central to the Politics than the best regime and no question more urgent to political men than who should rule. Here Aristotle decides this matter in favor of aristocracy using what is essentially a democratic argument--where there is rough equality of virtue, numbers are determinative. The aristocrats find themselves protected against kingship by the utility and justice of equality. Although accustomed to arguing their case in terms of excellence, they are made to see that democratic equality, and majority rule as its corollary (we aristocrats should rule because we are more numerous than a king), can serve their interests just as well.²²

We pass over the wellborn and the wealthy because it is thought that as classes they are not so distinctive. Good birth is either a variation on free birth, or it is an accompaniment of wealth and virtue (3.13.2-3, 4.8.9). And wealth is a commodity valued by the rich and poor alike. The class of

wealthy oligarchs divide between the democratic multitude who join them in their love of money, and the aristocratic few who share with them a love of honor. In effect they disappear as a class, leaving the field to democrats and aristocrats. The real ideological battle in politics then is between excellence and equality rather than between wealth and freedom. This is not to say that aristocrats fight with democrats, for it is reported that aristocrats are the least likely to force their claim to rule (5.1.6, 5.4.12); nor does it mean that democrats and oligarchs live happily in peace, for the contest between rich and poor is the central drama of politics (5.9.10). What is meant instead is that the defining principles of aristocracy and democracy are at the furthest remove and that therefore they are the most difficult to reconcile. Aristocrats are wont to feel contempt for democratic freedom which is private, purposeless, and without standards--i.e., egalitarian. Likewise democrats are likely to feel threatened by the ambition and presumption that marks the aristocratic pursuit of excellence. Making friends of these two classes is a serious political challenge. As a practical measure, and apart from the instruction explained above, Aristotle recommends the following remedy: "a very great thing in every regime is to have the laws and management of the rest arranged in such a way that it is impossible to profit from the offices" (5.8.15).²³ Although Aristotle maintains that oligarchy has the most to benefit from such a law, his subsequent discussion focuses on democracy and aristocracy:

Indeed, the only way it is possible for democracy and aristocracy to exist together is if someone instituted this. For it would then be possible for both the notables and the multitude to have what they want. Having it open to all to rule is characteristic of democracy; having the notables in the offices is characteristic of aristocracy. But this is what will happen when it is impossible to profit from the offices. The poor will not want to rule on account of not profiting, but rather will want to attend to their private affairs; the well off will be able to rule because they will need nothing from the common [funds]. The result for the poor is that they will become well off through spending their time at work; for the well off, that they will not be ruled by ordinary persons. To prevent the stealing of common [funds], then, let the transfer of funds occur in the presence of all the citizens, and let records of this be deposited with each clan, company, and tribe. But to ensure profitless rule, there should be legislation assigning honors to those of good reputation (5.8.17-19).

Aristotle stated that every regime is advantaged by having the profit taken out of politics, but the main advantage is that it allows the notables (hoi gnōrimoi) to rule under the supervision of the many. Such an arrangement, however, produces a mixed regime of the aristocratic kind. Thus the advantage of profitless officeholding to every regime is that it turns every regime into a mixed aristocracy. And let it be noted that the oligarchs have disappeared as a separate class--either they are money-loving and are out of politics--with the many, pursuing their private affairs; or they are well off (euporoi), indifferent to profit, and in politics for the honor of it; i.e., they are timocratic/aristocratic.²⁴

Before leaving this review of actual cities and actual regimes, mention is in order of the method used by Aristotle to organize the empirical evidence bearing on faction. He never quite says so, but his account of faction in the early chapters of book 5 seems to rely on the four operative causes outlined in the Physics (2.3): efficient, material, formal, and final. For instance, faction has its efficient cause in the beginning points, occasions, and opportunities (1302a21: archai) which trigger civil unrest. These include, to name but a few, fear of punishment, contempt for the rulers, and election intrigue. The material cause of faction is the unsuitability of a regime to its people, a disproportion that occurs at some time in the regime's history or at the moment of its founding (1302b3: auxēsin tēn para to analogon; 1302b5: anomoiotēta).²⁵ An increase of the poor in an oligarchic regime or an extreme democracy forced upon an agrarian people are examples (6.1.8). The formal cause (1302a20: pōs te echontes) is the disagreement among citizens about who should rule, those disputes over distributive justice and reciprocal equality. "Factional conflict," Aristotle declares, "is everywhere the result of inequality, at any rate where there is no proportion among those who are unequal" (5.1.11). The last is final cause (1302a21: tinōn heneken), or the objectives people pursue when they resort to faction. There are two objectives which Aristotle allows: profit

(kerdos) and honor (timē). The many want profit, while the few seek honor. To all of these causes the solution is fundamentally the same, namely institutional arrangements and adjustments in the distribution of power such that a majority of the people always supports the regime (4.12.1, 5.9.5, 6.6.2).

3. The Ideal Regime

There is a still more serious cause of stasis which no amount of institutional tinkering will cure, and consideration of it will serve as an introduction to Aristotle's ideal city. The underlying cause, says Aristotle, is human depravity (mochthēria). Bad people--the vicious, the greedy, the unjust--lack control of their appetites and are unable to live amicably with others. They are the natural enemies of good people who are constant, reliable, and attentive to the commonweal (N.E.1167b5-16). "The greatest factional split is perhaps that between virtue and depravity" (5.3.16).²⁶ What then is to be done with the bad? If it is possible--as it might be in the founding of a new city, especially a city of one's dreams--the bad should be excluded from membership. The legislator should not even attempt to work his art on those whose natures are unpromising and whose evil ways are likely to defeat all efforts at correction. The city can be no better than its human material. A good city, therefore, will not admit as citizens those who lack spirit (thumos) and thought (dianoia), such as the barbarians of excessively cold and excessively hot climates (7.7.2-4). For those who pass inspection and are admitted, their own wicked tendencies can best be controlled by an education designed to moderate desire (2.7.8, 12). Education is the principal means whereby the potentially good become good in fact, and the principal means for averting future problems of faction. But poverty can also be a cause of faction (2.6.13);²⁷ thus some additional advantage is to be found in equalizing property. The advantage though "is by no means a great one" (2.7.18), since equality of possessions causes disaffection among those who believe themselves more than equal. The final judgment seems then to be that equalization of property is an

uncertain good at best. On the other hand, communization of property is a manifest evil. True, "this sort of legislation has an attractive face and might be held humane; he who hears of it accepts it gladly, thinking it will produce a marvelous affection in all for each other" (2.5.11). But in reality communism offends most people's sense of justice and makes the difficult business of living together to be more difficult still (2.5.3-4). Civil concord (homonoia) is more surely provided if property is private and its use communal. A community is blessed if there is affection (philia) among the people. "For we suppose affection to be the greatest of good things for cities, for in this way they would least of all engage in factional conflict" (2.4.6). Affection exists among similar people, people who are spirited in temperament (7.7.5-7), joined together by marriage (3.9.13), and partners in a common enterprise. "The city wishes," says Aristotle, ". . .to be made up of equal and similar persons to the extent possible" (4.11.8). Between dissimilar and unequal people--slaves and masters at the extreme--there can be no affection and no political partnership, for "the ones are consumed by envy, the others by contempt" (4.11.7). A perfect city, an ideal city, is composed of good, spirited, and like-minded people, who because of these qualities feel affection for one another; and the property arrangement that is suited to their partnership is private possession and public use (7.10.9, 2.4.9).

These reflections, scattered throughout the Politics, provide the rationale for Aristotle's ideal city, at least as regards the subject of faction. Now one notes that this city of his prayers is in two respects homogeneous. First, the citizens are more alike than those in existing unitary regimes because they are products of a common education that seeks to make them good through habituation and instruction (8.1.3-4) (nature having made them freedom-loving and capable of ruling, i.e., spirited and thoughtful).²⁸ As adults they lead similar lives of leisure, lives devoted to virtue, culture, and politics. They are property owners, with land on the border and at the center to give them common interests (7.10.11) (although differences of fortune are permitted since some citizens are expected to be too poor to contribute to the common messes [7.10.10]). All are politically

active as soldiers, governors, and priests, depending on age. And since each age group receives its turn at rule, there is less resentment of those who actually hold the deliberative and judicial offices:

Nature has provided the distinction by making that which is the same by type have a younger and an older element, of which it is proper for the former to be ruled and the latter to rule. No one chafes at being ruled on the basis of age or considers himself superior, particularly when he is going to recover his contribution when he attains the age to come (7.14.5).

In effect, the city is a family, with duties and powers distributed appropriately among the generations.

But the city is also a materially self-sufficient association. In addition to citizens there are workers in this community, farmers, mechanics, and tradesmen. Of course the same holds true of all unitary regimes, that an inferior class of workers cohabit the territory with citizens. But in these cities the workers are free people who expect to be ruled voluntarily and often are; whereas in Aristotle's ideal city, the workers are slaves or spiritless barbarians.²⁹ Because other cities are heterogeneous, composed of at least two classes, the ruling class is obliged to deal politically³⁰ with the ruled, if only because their presence is a threat to the stability of the regime. But the ruled in Aristotle's city are politically irrelevant--and this is the second sense in which the city is homogeneous. The ruled are slaves, and the slaves of this city pose little danger of rebellion since Aristotle "prays for" their pusillanimity and ethnic dissimilarity (7.10.13, 2.5.25). It is as if the city were populated by ideal citizens only, with material necessities provided by animate tools (1.4.2), or by the human equivalent of machines (Strauss, 1964, p. 37). Under such circumstances the problem of faction is of minimal import, because the diversity is missing of which faction is born: by nature and by nurture all citizens are politically competent and morally good--the servile and the depraved are removed; all belong to the ruling class and among themselves relate generationally, as children (soldiers), parents (rulers), and grandparents (priests); property is private and in varying amounts, but its use is partly common; moreover, the chief purpose of private property is to promote like-mindedness and affection among citizens. Although the city is constructed more for the sake of

virtue than for the sake of stability, still the homogeneity of the virtuous proves to be the city's primary cure for faction. Aristotle attacks Socrates for homogenizing the city too much, but Aristotle acknowledges that homogeneity is a valuable means for promoting domestic harmony: "For just as in war the crossing of ditches, even if they are small, splits apart the ranks, so every difference, it appears, makes a factional split" (5.3.16). Aristotle, as it were, has filled in most of the ditches and has evened the terrain over which his army of citizens will march.

What then has become of Aristotle's argument that the city, a diverse and self-sufficient compound, is unlike the family and superior to it because "what is less a unity is more choiceworthy than what is more a unity" (2.2.8)? Is Aristotle's ideal city any less unified than Socrates' Republic? To be sure, Aristotle does not eliminate the family, private possessions, or sexual differentiation. But then he understands these institutions and differences to be conducive to civil concord, and he accuses Socrates of electing means incongruous with the end of civil unity. At the very moment when Aristotle is championing diversity, in book 2, he is also explaining the conditions for the successful unification of the city, namely, the lessons of love, piety, and ownership as taught by the family.³¹ Furthermore, Aristotle nowhere introduces a philosopher king, as does Socrates, nor are his age-based distinctions within the ruling class as constant a barrier as Socrates' educational division of guardians and warriors; and his working class, being all or mostly slaves, are less politically visible than Socrates' farmers and artisans. Socrates' Republic begins with the division of labor--one man, one art--and ends with a class society. Aristotle's polis, on the other hand, is a place where equals rotate through office; and in his ideal city there is such singleness of purpose that the same education is given to all citizens--for it is said that the individual belongs not to himself but to the whole (8.1.3-4). It is at least arguable, therefore, that the best city of Socrates' devising contains more internal diversity than Aristotle's ideal.

Aristotle said of diversity that its purpose in part is to provide the material base of the city's existence. This much of the original position is retained, for there are slaves and metics who do the

work of society. But it was also, and more importantly, said that diversity is needed for self-sufficiency, that self-sufficiency makes for happiness, and that happiness is a matter of practicing virtue. The city's diversity was credited with turning amoral children (family members) into morally mature adults (free and equal citizens). Their virtue, of course, was practical in nature--deliberating about good and evil in order to do the good (N.E. 1095a6). If the city were a school and its citizens philosophers, then presumably no limit to diversity would be necessary, for the wider the range of opinions, the better the chances of reaching truth through debate. But since its people are less than philosophers, and since its purpose is action rather than thought, the city needs agreement and thus a limit to diversity. This limit has its focal point in the regime, for the regime itself represents agreement and choice respecting the most central political question, namely, who is worthy and who should rule. Moral dispute then takes place within the context of a regime. But regimes are good and bad with numerous gradations in between. What is the value of deliberation about the advantageous and the just in a bad regime? Is it of any moral benefit, for instance, to have oligarchs debate their strategy for despoiling the poor, those oligarchs who take an oath to treat the poor with malice and contempt (5.9.11)? One recalls that Aristotle argues in book 3 that a good person must be a citizen of a good regime, to say nothing of being the ruler of a good regime (3.5.10). Apparently the political life of citizens in bad regimes counts for little morally. But does diversity help to bring about good regimes? Perhaps. Diversity brings about faction. If properly handled, faction can lead to the compromise of a mixed regime--and a mixed regime is preferable to a bad regime.³² But mixed government is not on the same plane with aristocracy. Compared with the best, mixed government is itself a deviation (parekbasis), for where there is a mixed regime, aristocrats must accommodate themselves to the lesser standards of democrats and oligarchs. Such diversity of standards is injurious to aristocrats, since political debate proceeds on the assumption that freedom and wealth are more admirable than virtue, or that all principles are equal. Again, were it Aristotle's purpose to make his aristocrats philosophers,³³ then the challenge of defending

virtue before the freedom-loving and the money-loving would be beneficial. But given Aristotle's distinction between being virtuous and knowing virtue, his aristocrats do not need the company of democrats and oligarchs in order to develop themselves spiritually--for theirs is a "partnership of similar persons for the sake of a life that is the best possible" (7.8.4).³⁴ In Aristotle's ideal city, diversity is replaced by a public education that endeavors to make all citizens good, not by the clash of opinions in a marketplace of ideas, but by exhortation, habituation, and law, using the morally serious man of the Nicomachean Ethics, the spoudaios, as the model.

IV. Conclusion

Aristotle's theory of faction is tailored to each of the three variations of the civic compound. In some cities the rulers govern themselves and their class as members of a political partnership, but are also joined in an economic alliance to other classes which complete the city by contributing to its material self-sufficiency. These are the unitary regimes, and they are either correct or deviant. Correct regimes guard against faction by protecting the interests of the governed; they rule with consent. But they are still not durable since the effect of city-living is to encourage the disfranchized to seek a political life and a partnership that is more than contractual. Deviant regimes are even less durable since their selfish injustice induces the ruled to rebel. In order to stabilize themselves they must imitate the justice of their counterparts or share power with the ruled and gradually surrender their identities as unitary regimes.

The city governed by a unitary regime is in fact two cities, usually one of the rich and one of the poor. But where a mixed regime is in power, there the city is single and whole, for no class of free persons is excluded from office. Power sharing is the principal means by which a mixed regime diffuses factious discontent. But if the city is not blessed with a middle class, then something additional is needed to keep all elements living together in harmony. This something is an education designed to teach the meritorious their interest in equality and the mediocre their

capacity for excellence. Aristotle himself supplies this education in the Politics, but it is expected that regimes will teach these same lessons to their citizens.

The ideal city is also a single city because its working class of slaves and metics is politically insignificant and because everyone else is regarded a citizen. Also citizenship in the ideal city is a far more homogenizing experience than it is in any other city, because a citizen here is fully set in his character by the education of the regime and because all citizens, with allowances made for age, lead comparable lives of leisure. Aristotle's city-to-be-prayed-for is homogeneous then in these two respects, and it relies on this homogeneity as its remedy for faction. Thus in the contest between Socratic unity and Madisonian diversity, Aristotle, in the end, comes to side with Socrates.

Notes

¹Translations of the Politics are from Lord (1984); also from Lord are book, chapter, and section divisions, which are the same as those found in Barker (1958). Where more precise identification is required, the Bekker page numbers are used, with line citations corresponding to those in the Oxford Classical Text (1957).

²Three of these functions also contribute to the good life. Thus those permitted to exercise them are counted as full partners in the association, as citizens.

³The distinction in Aristotle between unified and diverse associations might be compared to Emile Durkheim's discussion of mechanical and organic solidarity, to his critique of economic libertarianism, and to his plea for reviving the corporation as a kind of industrial polis (1933, pp. 1-32, 70-232).

⁴Aristotle can be granted his initial point that the family is more unified than the city: the family approximates on the collective level the unity and oneness of the individual. But in other respects the relation is reversed, for the household is composed of discrete parts (male-female, master-slave) with property related to specified and limited needs; whereas the polis is populated by equal citizens who rule and are ruled in turn; it also is the place where homogenized currency (money) renders commensurate unlike things. From this latter perspective, the city seems homogeneous and the household diverse. See Booth (1981, pp. 222-25), Saxonhouse (1982, pp. 211-13), and Blits (1985, p. 223).

⁵Conversations about the advantageous and the just (1.2.1) are not the only way that the city teaches virtue. It also habituates through education and law and uses coercion to make parental authority effective (Nicomachean Ethics 1179b31-1180a24; hereafter N.E.). Like the city, the household is a moral association (1253a18), but it is incomplete for want of diversity and power. See Blits (1985, pp. 234-38).

⁶This is not to deny that the larger part of Aristotle's critique concerns the failure of Socrates to achieve complete unity by means of communist institutions. Aristotle's own preference for unity over diversity will be discussed below, at which point some attention will be paid to this much debated issue.

⁷Political tranquillity is not Socrates' only interest in unity. He attacks the family, and more generally things private and particular, in order to prepare the way for philosophy, as that thing which is truly public and universal. See Strauss (1964, p. 115), Bloom (1968, p. 387), and Saxonhouse (1982, p. 218).

⁸Other precautions and institutions serving to control the effects of faction are separation of powers, bicameralism, representation, federalism, and a written constitution. See especially Federalist 9 and 51.

⁹Barker (1959, pp. 403-5) maintains that Aristotle is unlike modern contract theorists in regarding the state as a moral unity, and that he is unlike Plato in thinking that differentiated unity is the cause of self-sufficiency and individual excellence.

¹⁰It is reasonably clear that Aristotle lays greater stress on the political than on the social or the cultural. But the formative power of the regime spoken of in book 3 (3.3.8-9) is amended appreciably in later books where it is said that the regime must be compatible with the people (e.g., 6.4.1). Matter limits form almost as much as form shapes matter. For a critical discussion of the influence of the polis and the regime, see Newman (1973, pp. 69-83).

¹¹Yak (1986, pp. 25-28) speaks of the different kinds of friendship, equal and unequal, present in the political community.

¹²Newman (1973, pp. 527-28) goes further and says that Aristotle's teaching on revolution is inconsistent. But Newman treats the middle books as a wholly distinct section of the Politics and seems disturbed that all remarks bearing on revolution and faction are not gathered therein.

¹³Polity will be treated as a mixed regime.

¹⁴Where there is equality, Aristotle often remarks, the people must share in the exercise of power (2.2.6, 3.16.2-3, 4.11.8, 5.8.6).

¹⁵Oligarchs and democrats are similarly instructed, for they are told to educate the population in a manner consistent with the regime. "But to be educated relative to the regime is not to do the things that oligarchs or those who want democracy enjoy, but rather the things by which the former will be able to run an oligarchy and the latter to have a regime that is run democratically" (5.9.13). Oligarchy values wealth; it is thus incumbent on those who rule to make wealth respectable. Likewise, democracy values freedom; thus democrats must behave so as to preserve freedom's good name. In an oligarchy conspicuous consumption should be avoided, and in a democracy living as one wants should be discouraged.

¹⁶Mulgan (1977, p. 134) tends to hold this conclusion against Aristotle, who he thinks is obliged to devise constitutional remedies consistent with the nature of each constitution; thus only extremely democratic measures can be employed to correct the deficiencies of extreme democracy. But Aristotle would never allow that people can have whatever they want, or that it is his job as a political scientist to tell them how to get it. The most he can do is to show why certain desires are unattainable--hence his conviction that moderation is the essence of virtue (virtue as the mean) and that virtue is the cause of happiness. There is no point in the Politics where Aristotle dons the cap of the value-free empiricist, ignoring the importance of moderation to human welfare.

¹⁷Morral (1977, p. 100) discounts any difference, thinking Aristotle and Machiavelli to be similarly averse to tyranny.

¹⁸Thomas Hobbes, for one, believes that a mixed regime is the least stable of all, a political monstrosity that will either fly apart or convert itself into a unitary regime (1968, pp. 372-73; 1978, pp. 194, 248-49).

¹⁹Morral (1977, p. 93) finds nothing else in Aristotle's treatment of faction besides his introduction of the middle class.

²⁰Aristotle points out that a middle class more frequently occurs in a large city than in a small city, and that most regimes are either democratic or oligarchic because they lack the middle element (4.11.12-16). Although a middle class is a function of size, and understood to be such, conspicuously absent from the Politics is any effort to foster a middle-class polity by extending the size of the city. (If a middle class polity also depends on wealth--enough to make some of the poor moderate property owners--then it should be noted as well that Aristotle objects to the kind of economic activity that would most likely produce wealth, namely chrēmatismos, or business. Regarding Aristotle's treatment of acquisition, see Barker, 1959, p. 376; Newman, 1973, pp. 134-35; Brown, 1982, pp. 171-90; Nichols, 1983, p. 179; Ambler, 1984, pp. 490-98; 1985, p. 174.) As explained above, a large city or state forfeits the moral self-sufficiency of a polis. For Aristotle, a small city is a given, and what remains optional is the regime--e.g., the best simply, the best generally, the best for this or that people. For James Madison, on the other hand--and in the context of revolutionary America--a republican regime is a given, and what people contest is the size of the territory.

²¹At the start of chapter 13, Aristotle repeats the point that those who contribute to the city's good life have the best claim to rule and that equality or inequality in some one thing ought not to be extended to everything political, for "all regimes of this sort are necessarily deviations." Aristotle then proceeds to consider regimes that "dispute justly in a certain way, but not justly in an unqualified sense." Included in these regimes is aristocracy. Aristotle states that the wealthy, the free, and the wellborn have a claim, and "in a similar way [homoiōs] . . . virtue has a just claim in the dispute" (1283a37-38). See also 3.13.8-9.

²²See 5.6.7 where this same argument is applied to oligarchs.

²³At the Constitutional Convention of 1787, Benjamin Franklin recommended that no salary be paid to the executive (June 2) (or to the senators [June 26], and that only moderate remuneration be granted to representatives [June 12]). He reasoned that love of power and love of money were the two passions having the greatest influence on the behavior of men; that "separately

each of these has great force in prompting men to action; but when united in view of the same object, they have in many minds the most violent effects. . . .And of what kind are the men who will strive for this profitable pre-eminence. . .? It will not be the wise and the moderate. . . . It will be the bold and the violent. . . ." Franklin's proposal was politely seconded, then tabled and forgotten. (Farrand, 1966, pp. 82, 216, 427.)

²⁴There are other institutional arrangements that are good for domestic harmony and that seem appropriate to a mixed regime. They are alluded to by Aristotle but left mostly undeveloped. Still they are worth mentioning, if only because they make Aristotle look like the forefather of liberal democracy. In book 2 Aristotle speaks of the division of power among Spartan kings. To its proponents this division is an important means of preventing factional conflict (2.9.30). Aristotle though seems unconvinced and to prefer an education which would make gentlemen of the kings. Even so, the idea of dividing governmental power as a cure for faction is on the table. But Aristotle adds to it, in a fashion, when he delineates in book 4 the three functions or branches of government. He never quite proposes the separation of these functions as a safeguard against tyranny; rather his purpose is to fit the right arrangement of legislative, executive, and judicial powers to the right regime. But throughout the discussion there is an interest in achieving balance and moderation so as to minimize the chances of factious discontent (e.g., 4.14.12-16). Along the same lines Aristotle warns against the concentration of political and economic power and counsels their separation (5.8.13-14). And with an eye toward efficiency, as opposed to justice, he recommends specialization of functions (4.15.6) and even, in some cases, decentralization or localism (4.15.9). Also mentioned in passing is legislative representation (4.14.13) and, at somewhat greater length, popular control of executive offices through election and audits (6.4.5-7). When discussing polity, Aristotle advises various strategies for mixing democratic and oligarchic elements, such as a system of incentives and disincentives to achieve a balanced participation of the social classes (Resnick, 1979, pp. 78-85); he concludes that the best mix is one that defies precise identification (4.9.2-4, 6). Finally, he suggests certain voting arrangements which sound suspiciously like bicameralism. Of

course the term is not used, but the proposal in book 6, chapter 3 that the rich and the poor be provided separate voting seems to amount to the same thing: each body is to vote, with the votes weighted by property assessments; if there is a difference in outcome, the majority of one joins with the minority of the other--and vice versa--and the larger of the two combined votes wins the decision. In this case, as in most of the cases above, the purpose is to control faction by dispersing power among all of the relevant groups. (Jaffa [1972, p. 119] suggests that the purpose is additionally to encourage the poorer of the rich and the richer of the poor to combine against the extremes, thus creating a middle class interest.)

²⁵The three beginning points and causes (tas archas kai tas aitiās) spoken of by Aristotle at 1302a18 are here increased to four by identifying two "material" causes within the list of eleven "efficient" causes given at 1302a37-1302b5.

²⁶Lord translates isōs as perhaps. An alternate rendering is in like manner, which if used would remove the note of uncertainty from Aristotle's statement.

²⁷Wheeler (1951, pp. 151-55) discusses the economic factors at work in faction but regards Marxist interpretations as out of place. Likewise Lintott (1982, pp. 257-58), who nonetheless gives primacy to the economic (p. 248). Barker (1959, p. 488) says that "the economic interpretation of Greek stasis... finds little support in [Aristotle's] pages."

²⁸Yak (1985) argues persuasively that political friendship for Aristotle is a mixture of interest friendship and virtue friendship, and that the conflicting expectations associated with each are a source of disappointment, recrimination, and dissension. Because Aristotle accepts these consequences, thinking them in fact useful for the citizen's rational development, Yak concludes that the Aristotelian polis is marked by strife and that contemporary critics are mistaken who see the polis as a nurturing, fraternal society and an implicit reproach to the alienation of liberal contractarianism. But is Aristotle content to have the citizens of his ideal community united--and torn--by this political friendship so described? In order to replace the mixture with the comaraderie of virtue friendship, Yak suggests, "one would have to find a way of turning [all citizens] into

virtuous individuals" (p. 108). Yak presumes this to be impossible (also Yak, 1986, p. 25); but is not communal virtue precisely what Aristotle is up to in books 7 and 8?

²⁹Only of the farmers does Aristotle actually say that they are slaves or barbarians lacking in spirit. The other workers are not described, except that as necessities (anagkaia) of the city, rather than as parts (moria), they are likened to the instruments of a craftsman (7.8.3). This, however, is the same characterization that Aristotle elsewhere uses of slaves.

³⁰"Political" here is not used in the full sense to denote a partnership in a common moral life; rather it refers to that lesser order of politics that regulates the contractual agreements of an economic alliance.

³¹Okin (1979, p. 85) notes an inconsistency in Aristotle's argument; she asks: "If doing away with the family would severely dilute the bonds of kinship, how could it at the same time lead to much unity?" A good question, to which the answer presumably is that it would not lead to much unity; on the contrary, it would cause a general disaffection that would undermine the city's friendship. Perhaps Aristotle's position can be stated thus: Socrates erred in trying to turn the city into a single human being by abolishing private families and private property; this could not be done and should not be tried because real human beings, so reared, would relate to each other as selfish and distrusting strangers; but by retaining private families and private property some semblance of the communal family is possible, and--in light of books 7 and 8 of the Politics--even desirable. On the significance of families and private property for civic philia, or homonoia, see Saxonhouse (1982, pp. 214-16) and Dobbs (1985, pp. 36-41); Blits (1985, pp. 229-34) provides a discussion of piety.

³²A polity seems to be the only regime that thrives on and is improved by spiritual diversity.

³³See Lord (1982, pp. 34-35) whose thesis is that music education in Aristotle is primarily moral rather than aesthetic, that it instructs adults as well as children, and that it is preferred as a curriculum to science or philosophy because it is within the reach of most people, which is to say egalitarian. On the dubious status of philosophy in the city, see pp. 64-65.

³⁴What is truly the best association is friendship among philosophers. But Aristotle does not regard such a relationship as a suitable model for politics. The best for politics is a community of the morally virtuous.

References

- Ambler, W. (1984). "Aristotle on Acquisition." Canadian Journal of Political Science 17: 487-502.
- _____ (1985). "Aristotle's Understanding of the Naturalness of the City," Review of Politics 47: 163-85.
- Aristotle (1957). Aristotelis Politics. W. D. Ross, ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- _____ (1970). Physics, vol. 1. P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford, trans. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- _____ (1985). Nicomachean Ethics. T. Irwin, trans. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Barker, E. (1958). The Politics of Aristotle. London: Oxford University Press.
- _____ (1959). The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle. London: Oxford University Press.
- Blits, J. (1985). "Privacy and Public Moral Education." Educational Theory 35: 225-38.
- Bloom, A. (1968). Introduction, The Republic of Plato. New York: Basic Books.
- Booth, W. (1981). "Politics and the Household: A Commentary on Aristotle's Politics Book One." History of Political Thought 2: 203-26.
- Brown, W. (1982). "Aristotle's Art of Acquisition and the Conquest of Nature." Interpretation 10: 159-95.
- Dobbs, D. (1985). "Aristotle's Anticommunism." American Journal of Political Science 29: 29-46.
- Durkheim, E. (1933). The Division of Labor in Society. G. Simpson, trans. New York: MacMillan Company.
- Farrand, M. ed. (1966). The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787, vol. 1. New Haven: Yale University Press.

- Hamilton, A., Madison, J., Jay, J. (1961). The Federalist Papers. New York: New American Library.
- Hobbes, T. (1968). Leviathan. New York: Penguin Books.
- _____. (1978). Man and Citizen. Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith.
- Jaffa, H. (1972). "Aristotle." In L. Strauss and J. Cropsey, eds., History of Political Philosophy, 2nd ed. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Lintott, A. (1982). Violence, Civil Strife, and Revolution in the Classical City. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.
- Lord, C. (1982). Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- _____. trans. (1984). The Politics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Machiavelli, N. (1970). The Discourses. New York: Penguin Books.
- Morral, J. (1977). Aristotle. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Mulgan, R. (1977). Aristotle's Political Theory. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Newman, W. L. (1973). The Politics of Aristotle, vol. 1, rpt. New York: Arno Press.
- Nichols, M. (1983). "The Good Life, Slavery, and Acquisition: Aristotle's Introduction to Politics." Interpretation 11: 171-83.
- Okin, S. (1979). Women in Western Political Thought. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Orwin, C. (1978). "Machiavelli's Unchristian Charity." American Political Science Review 72: 1217-28.
- Resnick, D. (1979). "Justice, Compromise, and Constitutional Rules in Aristotle's Politics." In R. Pennock and J. Chapman, eds., Compromise in Ethics, Law, and Politics: Nomos XXI. New York: New York University Press.
- Saxonhouse, A. (1982). "Family, Polity and Unity: Aristotle on Socrates' Community of Wives." Polity 15: 202-19.
- Strauss, L. (1964). The City and Man. Chicago: Rand McNally.

- Wheeler, M. (1951). "Aristotle's Analysis of the Nature of Political Struggle." American Journal of Philology 72: 145-61.
- Yak, B. (1985). "Community and Conflict in Aristotle's Political Philosophy." Review of Politics 47: 92-112.
- _____. (1986). "Towards an Aristotelian Theory of Class Conflict." Unpublished paper.