

# interpretation

A JOURNAL OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

May & Sept. 1984 Volume 12 Numbers 2 & 3

- 141 Robert Sacks The Lion and the Ass: a Commentary on the Book of Genesis (Chapters 44–50)
- 193 Kent Moors Justice and Philosophy in Plato's *Republic*: the Nature of a Definition
- 225 Marlo Lewis, Jr. An Interpretation of Plato's *Euthyphro* (Introduction; Part I, Sections 1–3)
- 261 Jack D'Amico The *Virtù* of Women: Machiavelli's *Mandragola* and *Clizia*
- 275 Jim MacAdam Rousseau's *Contract* with and without his *Inequality*
- 287 David Boucher The Denial of Perennial Problems: the Negative Side of Quentin Skinner's Theory
- 301 David Schaefer Libertarianism and Political Philosophy: a Critique of Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*
- Discussion*
- 335 Laurence Berns Spiritedness in Ethics and Politics: a Study in Aristotelian Psychology
- 349 Ernest Fortin Rational Theologians and Irrational Philosophers: a Straussian Perspective
- 357 Stanley Corngold & Michael Jennings Walter Benjamin / Gershom Scholem
- 367 Charles M. Sherover The Political Implications of Heidegger's *Being and Time*: on Heidegger's "Being and Time" and the Possibility of Political Philosophy by Mark Blitz
- 381 Mark Blitz Response to Sherover
- Book Review*
- 387 Will Morrisey *Algeny* by Jeremy Rifkin
- Short Notices*
- 391 Will Morrisey *How Democratic is the Constitution? and How Capitalistic is the Constitution?* edited by Robert A. Goldwin & William A. Schambra; *Statesmanship: Essays in Honor of Sir Winston S. Churchill* edited by Harry V. Jaffa; *Winston Churchill's World View* by Kenneth W. Thompson; *Richard Hooker and the Politics of a Christian England* by Robert K. Faulkner; *Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle* by Carnes Lord; *Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders: the Discourses on Livy* by Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr.; *Rousseau's Social Contract: the Design of the Argument* by Hilail Gildin; *Rousseau's State of Nature: the Discourse on Inequality* by Marc F. Plattner

# interpretation

Volume 12 numbers 2 & 3

Editor-in-Chief Hilail Gildin

Editors Seth G. Benardete • Charles E. Butterworth • Hilail Gildin • Robert Horwitz • Howard B. White (d.1974)

Consulting Editors John Hallowell • Wilhelm Hennis • Erich Hula • Arnaldo Momigliano • Michael Oakeshott • Ellis Sandoz • Leo Strauss (d.1973) • Kenneth W. Thompson

Associate Editors Fred Baumann • Patrick Coby • Christopher A. Colmo • Derek Cross • Edward J. Erler • Maureen Feder-Marcus • Joseph E. Goldberg • Pamela K. Jensen • Will Morrisey • Charles Rubin • Leslie Rubin • John A. Wettergreen • Bradford Wilson • Catherine Zuckert • Michael Zuckert

Assistant Editors Marianne C. Grey • Laurette G. Hupman

Design & Production Martyn Hitchcock

Annual subscription rates individual \$13; institutional \$16; student (3-year limit) \$7. INTERPRETATION appears three times a year.

Address for correspondence INTERPRETATION, Queens College, Flushing, N.Y. 11367, U.S.A.

Authors submitting manuscripts for publication in INTERPRETATION are requested to follow the *MLA Style Sheet* and to send clear and readable copies of their work.

Copyright 1984 • Interpretation

## *Discussion*

### Spiritedness in Ethics and Politics: A Study in Aristotelian Psychology

LAURENCE BERNS

*St. John's College, Annapolis*

the light of reason, from which all the clarity and beauty of virtue is derived.

—*Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 142, A. 4

Admirers of Aristotle's writings on ethics and politics have often hailed these works for their "sublime good sense", their common and their uncommon sense. We modern scholars are both amazed and puzzled by the concentration, comprehensiveness and uncommon theoretical seriousness with which the master of the scientific syllogism articulates and analyzes the positions of common sense. Serious thought, we have come to expect, splits apart *the* world of common sense, separating the "real" from the "ideal", or, with Plato and modern science, the knowable from the merely opinable, or with Kant, the realm of nature from the realm of morality. Aristotle's procedures seem, in contrast, to vindicate good common sense. Ethics and tough-minded realism are found together in organic unity. Every goal has its natural basis, every natural power its inherent goal.

Despite this admiration, the depth and competence of Aristotle's greatest detractors command our serious attention. The Machiavellian critique of Aristotle and classical political philosophy was, perhaps, never put more elegantly than by Francis Bacon: "As for the philosophers, they make imaginary laws for imaginary commonwealths; and their discourses are as the stars, which give little light because they are so high."<sup>1</sup> Classical political philosophy is beautiful, but too "high" to be truly useful, seems to be the verdict.

Bacon's criticism might seem to be borne out by Book One of the *Politics*, where Aristotle draws the fundamental distinction between ruler by nature and ruled by nature. The distinction is fundamental if the fundamental political question is who, or what kind of man, ought to govern the political community. Among associations or pairings, the pairing of ruler and ruled by nature ranks next in unreflective natural primacy to the first pairing, the pairing of male and female. As male and female pair together for life and procreation, so ruler by na-

A paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September, 1981, under the auspices of The Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy.

1. *Advancement of Learning*, II. Emphasis supplied.

ture and ruled by nature pair together for preservation. "For that which is capable of looking ahead through intelligence [by thinking things through] is a ruler by nature and a master by nature, and that which is capable [only] of doing those things [which the former has thought through] with his body is ruled and by nature a [servant or] slave."<sup>2</sup> The political man in this account is defined primarily by his intellectuality, his thoughtfulness, as if only intellectual differences mattered. It requires only a modicum of experience with human affairs, not to speak of the reading of history, to know that something essential seems to be missing from this account. Hobbes's gibing comment seems plausible:

Aristotle in the first booke of his Politiques, for a foundation of his doctrine, maketh men by nature, some more worthy to Command, meaning the wiser sort (such as he thought himself to be for his Philosophy;) others to serve, (meaning those that had strong bodies, but were not Philosophers, as he;) as if Master and Servant were . . . introduced by difference of Wit: which is not only against reason; but also against experience.<sup>3</sup>

Hegel, the least commonsensical of philosophers, begins his account of political life with a speculative mythology entitled "Lordship and Bondage," which corresponds to Aristotle's distinguishing between ruler and ruled by nature.<sup>4</sup> If we discount the form and concentrate on the content, how much more down to earth is Hegel's account! Driven by the desire for recognition, the Lord is willing to risk his life in a battle for domination. Subordinating his desire for recognition to his desire for self-preservation, the Servant yields and submits himself to the domination of the Lord. It is, in non-Hegelian language, superior spiritedness that most characterizes the political man, the natural ruler.

Aristotle, as is clear to every reader of his *Ethics*, *Rhetoric*, and *Politics*, knew about and reflected on the importance of spiritedness, *θυμός*, in the makeup of the political man. In *Politics*, Book Seven, Chapter Seven, he says, "For all men, both ruling and freedom derive from this power: for spirit is something inclined to rule [or command] and unbeatable." In the same chapter, Aristotle goes on to describe what the natural qualities of the political multitude of the best regime ought to be: spiritedness and intelligence are the qualities focussed upon. The tribes of the cold places in Europe are full of spirit, but lack intelligence. They are free but politically unstructured and unable to rule their neighbors: they have political freedom without civilization. In the empires of Asia the people are intelligent and artful, but lack spirit. Slavish and enslaved, they have civilization without political freedom. In Greece, one finds both spiritedness and intelligence; its cities can combine civilization with political freedom.

The human material for the best regime should be, as are the Greeks, not only

2. 1252<sup>a</sup>26–34.

3. *Leviathan*, Ch. 15.

4. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Ch. IV, A.

intelligent, like the natural ruler of Book One, but also spirited. Why was spiritedness left out of the discussion in Book One? One possible answer is that in Book One Aristotle is seeking that which can *justify* the rule of one man over another.<sup>5</sup> Spiritedness may be a natural presupposition of that rule, but it cannot justify it: superiority in capacity to discern what conduces to their common good can justify it. Why does spiritedness not justify rule, and more generally, how does Aristotle understand the relation between spiritedness and virtue?

## II

Before addressing these questions, some prefatory remarks are in order. The efficient cause of practical action is called forechoice, or pre-election, *προαίρεσις*, by Aristotle.<sup>6</sup> It is usually mistranslated as choice. (Children and animals, Aristotle says, lack forechoice; they do not, as his translators have him say, lack choice.) The full definition of forechoice is deliberative appetite of those things in our power. At one point Aristotle remarks that forechoice is either appetitive intellect or intelligent appetite,<sup>7</sup> thus raising the question as to how appetite and intellect are related in practical action.<sup>8</sup> The efficient cause of forechoice itself then is appetite and reason, reason which is directed to some end. But the distinction between appetite and reason is not altogether clear. Appetite, (*ὄρεξις*), consists of desire, (*ἐπιθυμία*), spirit, (*θυμός*), and wish, or wanting, (*βούλησις*);<sup>9</sup> but wish, Aristotle says, is in the rational part of the soul, while spirit and desire are in the irrational part, though spirit seems somehow closer to reason than desire.<sup>10</sup> This and other evidence indicates that Aristotle did not have high expectations for an unambiguous division of the soul into parts. This in no way prevented him from analyzing and describing its powers and their relations with as much precision as the subject allows.

There are three factors in movement, he argues: the mover, that by which it moves, and the moved. There are two kinds of movers: movers that cause others to move without moving themselves, and movers that are themselves also

5. This solution was first suggested to me by Hilail Gildin.

6. *Nicomachean Ethics*, vi.2, 1139<sup>a</sup>31–32.

7. Ὁρεκτικὸς νοῦς or ὄρεξις διανοητική, *ibid.*, 1139<sup>b</sup>5–6.

8. More precisely, there are two questions raised. (1) Which of the two actually moves? and (2) Which of the two most determines the character of practical action? I have discussed these matters in an unpublished essay, "The Natural Basis of What Is Not by Nature in Ethics." For the first question, as Thomas puts it, the "more true" alternative is intelligent appetite. Cf. Aristotle *Metaphysics*, IX, Ch. 5; *De Anima*, 433<sup>a</sup>31–32.

9. *De Anima*, 414<sup>b</sup>3; *De Motu Animalium*, 700<sup>b</sup>22–23.

10. *De Anima*, 432<sup>b</sup>5–7 and *Metaphysics*, 1072<sup>a</sup>26–28; *N. Ethics*, 1149<sup>b</sup>1. Cf. *Politics*, 1334<sup>b</sup>17–28, where *βούλησις* is included in the irrational part. Wish in infants is clearly irrational and dominated by desire and spiritedness. It is, however, that part of appetite that is most susceptible to, or transformable by, reason and intellect. The different powers of the soul, then, are not to be understood as spatially separated "parts," but as interpenetrating powers.

moved. Forechoice, we recall, is the mover of practical action, and the distinction between unmoved and moved mover reveals the relation between the two parts of the term: “fore” indicates deliberation or reason as unmoved mover, “choice,” appetite as moved mover. This matter, however, admits of a more detailed treatment.

The ultimate unmoved mover of practical action is the object of appetite (*ὄρεκτόν*). In the soul, however, the immediate unmoved mover is the object of appetite as presented by the imagination, or fancy (*φαντασία*), the power that presents the appearances of things. Irrational animals are moved by the sensitive imagination, keyed primarily to pleasure and pain, while rational animals are moved by what Aristotle calls the deliberative or calculative imagination, the imagination brought under the influence of, or into accord with, what the reason has found to be, in general, good. For rational animals the object of appetite, the unmoved mover, is presented by the imagination as the apparent (*φαινόμενον*) good. Thus, the higher appetite, the part of appetite directed primarily to ends or goals, wish or wanting, is formed.<sup>11</sup> The moved mover is appetite itself, or lower appetite, the affections and passions of the desiring and spirited elements, moved—shaped and prepared—by the imagination. With experience and through habituation this shaping goes on for a long time, if not for a lifetime. In the *Movement of Animals* Aristotle speaks of how the imagination through sensation or intellection fittingly prepares the appetite, the appetite fittingly prepares the passions or affections, and the passions prepare the organic parts. That which is moved, without itself moving another, is the animal itself.<sup>12</sup>

In the beginning of the *Politics*, after arguing that the polis develops naturally out of the family household and the village, Aristotle writes,

And that man is a political animal more than any bee or herding animal is clear. For nature, as we affirm, makes nothing in vain, and man alone among the animals has *λόγος*, rational speech, or reason. Now then voice is a sign of the painful and the pleasant, therefore it also belongs to the other animals; for their nature has gone as far as this, to have sensation of painful and pleasant and to signify these things to one another. But *λόγος*, rational speech or reason, is for making the advantageous and the harmful clear, and so also the just and the unjust. For this in relation to the other animals is special to men, to have alone sensation of good and bad and just and unjust and the rest. And the community of these things makes a household and a *πόλις*.<sup>13</sup>

11. *Metaphysics*, 1072<sup>a</sup>27–28.

12. *De Anima*, III.10, 433<sup>a</sup>10ff.; *N. Ethics*, VI.2, 1139<sup>a</sup>32–33; *De Motu Animalium*, VI–VIII, 700<sup>b</sup>4ff., esp. 702<sup>a</sup>17–19; *The Ethics of Aristotle*, ed. John Burnet (Methuen, 1900), pp. 255–56. *Aristotle's De Motu Animalium*, Text, Trans. Commentary and Interpretive Essays, Martha Craven Nussbaum (Princeton, 1978), pp. 333–36. Strictly speaking, the second major factor, that *by which* movement takes place, the instrument, should include an account of what Aristotle calls “connate pneuma,” that bodily element closest to the psychic or divine. See A. L. Peck’s Appendix B, in Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, Loeb ed., pp. 576ff., esp. p. 578, and pp. lxviii and lix, and *De Motu Animal.* x, 703<sup>a</sup>4–28. (The analogue to the connate pneuma in contemporary physiology would appear to be the neuron.)

13. 1253<sup>a</sup>7–18.

Animals possess a great variety of characteristics analogous to human virtues, and many of them have memory and various capacities for learning.<sup>14</sup> Yet governed by sensual or sensitive imagination and passion, they are confined in their mutual signaling to the signification of the pleasures and pains they are feeling at the present moment; they are unable to communicate information about the nature of the causes of their feelings, apart from what is revealed through the effects on their feelings.

Human thought, however, through intellection has access to the intelligible natures, the universals, implicit in what men sense and do. In matters of practice the universals, when fully explicit, issue in a true *λόγος* about a certain kind of action being good for a certain kind of being, such as a man or a community; the true practical *λόγος* expresses what right appetite pursues. But, as Aristotle notes, in practice men with experience are usually more successful than those who can discourse in universal terms, but lack experience. In practice there does not seem to be much difference between experience and science or art, for both experience and practice are concerned with individuals, with particulars. Experience, (*ἐμπειρία*), for Aristotle, is the link between memory and science or art. Experience rises from memory, when many memories of the same thing are linked together in a unity: this was good for Smith, it was also good for Jones, for Green and for Quinn, therefore it should also be good for Wilson.<sup>15</sup> Although experience is cognition of individuals, universals (a certain *kind* of good

14. *Hist. of Animals*, VIII.1, 588<sup>a</sup>18ff.

15. Thomas Aquinas speaks of a "cogitative power," or "particular reason," a reason directed to particulars. Cf. *Summa Theologica*, I, Q. 78, A. 1 ad 3, A. 3, A. 4 and ad 5; Q. 81, A. 3; II-II, Q. 74, A. 3 and ad 1. Cf. Aristotle, *De Anima*, II, 6, 418<sup>a</sup>7-26, and 428<sup>b</sup>18-26, which establishes that some power of judgment is operative in the perception of accidental and common sensibles. Cf. also *N. Ethics*, VI, 10 and 11, 1142<sup>b</sup> end to 1143<sup>b</sup>14; *Hist. Animal.*, VIII.1, 588<sup>a</sup>16-588<sup>b</sup>3; and *Politics*, 1291<sup>a</sup>27-28. (Aristotle's *σύνεσις* and Thomas's *collatio* are very close in meaning, i.e., "a bringing together.") The power of judgment in animals that operates on sensible particulars, or correlates individualized notions, Thomas calls the estimative power. It operates by natural instinct, e.g., when an antelope flees a lion, or a bird takes a piece of straw for nest building. In man it is called cogitative power, because, although it is a power of sensitivity, it is joined to universal intellect. The cogitative power "apprehends the individual thing as existing in a common nature, and this because it is united to intellect in one and the same subject. Hence it is aware of a man as this *man*, and a tree as this *tree*; whereas instinct is not aware of an individual thing as in a common nature, but only in so far as this individual thing is the term or principle of some action or passion." The antelope knows the lion not as this lion, but as something to flee; the bird knows the straw not as this straw, but as something to put in the nest. Thomas's *Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima*, trans. Kenelm Foster and Sylvester Humphries, (Yale, 1959), sections 395-98. This uniting of intellect and sensation that allows the object of sense to be sensed as an object of a certain kind, is evidently what constitutes the *φραντασία λογιστική*, the calculative imagination, for Aristotle. Cf. *De Anima*, 420<sup>b</sup>29-34, 433<sup>b</sup>30-434<sup>a</sup>10; *De Motu Animalium*, 700<sup>b</sup>4-702<sup>a</sup>21.

This power of judgment in its deliberative mode, because it is connected to reason and "reason in contingent matters may follow opposite courses," is "free judgment," and is the basis, according to Thomas, of the Aristotelian doctrine of free will. *Op. cit.*, I, Q. 83, A. 1 and ad 5. Thomas may have in mind, among other places, the arguments in IX.2, 1046<sup>a</sup>36ff., of the *Metaphysics*, about reason being a faculty of contraries.

thing or action, a certain *kind* of man, in a certain *kind* of situation) would seem to be operative in the linkage and the unity, even though not fully and explicitly recognized. When they are fully and explicitly recognized we have knowledge, or science and art. With art and science one knows not only that something is so, but also why it is so.<sup>16</sup>

The advantageous is what is, or conduces to, the good for some individual or some particular group.<sup>17</sup> The good or the bad in practice, since practice is always the practice of individuals, always takes the form of the advantageous or the harmful. Sound practice in the service of the truly advantageous cannot be carried out by men of experience without some awareness, although not full knowledge, of the goods making that practice sound. Λόγος, rational speech, (which is essentially thoughtful, and only accidentally though necessarily audible,<sup>18</sup>) makes it possible for men to share and to compare one another's thoughts and experiences, including their thoughts about the advantageous and the harmful. Such thoughtful sharing leads naturally to consideration of how advantages and disadvantages are to be shared, apportioned, and distributed, especially those that accrue from joint or interrelated actions. The right or correct distribution of advantages and harms among men who live together, distributive justice, is their mutual or common advantage, their common good. "Justice is the political good, and this is the common advantage."<sup>19</sup> Some shared awareness of how advantages and disadvantages are to be distributed is operative in every political community. This shared awareness of good and bad and the common advantage, justice, makes the household and the πόλις.

But why does Aristotle say that man is *more* political than any bee or herding animal? In the *History of Animals* he distinguishes between herding, or gregarious, animals and solitary (μοναδικοί—"loners") animals. The distinctions apply to footed, winged and swimming animals alike. Some animals, he adds, are both herding and solitary: man is one of these.<sup>20</sup> These animals are divided further into the political and the scattered. Examples of political animals are man, bees, wasps, ants and cranes. "Political animals are all those from which some one and common work comes into being, which is not the sort of thing all herding or gregarious animals effect."<sup>21</sup> Man, then, would be more political than the other gregarious political animals because the result of human association can be a work which is more one and common than that resulting from any other animal association.

Our discussion of man's distinction through the possession of λόγος thus far

16. *Metaphysics*, I.1, 980<sup>a</sup>1–981<sup>b</sup>10.

17. *Rhetoric*, 1389<sup>b</sup> end.

18. *De Sensu*, 437<sup>a</sup>4–17, *De Interpretatione*, 16<sup>a</sup>9–11.

19. *Politics*, 1282<sup>b</sup>16–18, 1279<sup>a</sup>17–1279<sup>b</sup>10; *N. Ethics*, 1129<sup>b</sup>15, 1160<sup>a</sup>14; Plato, *Sophist*, 263e; *Rhetoric*, I.6.16, 1362<sup>b</sup>.

20. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed*, II.40.

21. *Hist. Animal.*, I.1, 487<sup>b</sup>33–488<sup>a</sup>13.

has focussed especially on the capacity to generalize and the capacity for sharing thoughts and experiences.<sup>22</sup> These considerations come together in the argument just presented. The basis of any human community is the “one and common work,” the notion of distributive justice that is in fact operative in that community. This notion, the notion of what is most generally held to be the right distribution of advantages and harms in the community, can be more one and common, and hence more political, because human thoughts through intellection are the most sharable beings in the world. Human thoughts, according to Aristotle, can be truly the same in different minds, because the human mind is capable of receiving the very sensible and intelligible forms of things themselves.<sup>23</sup> This is reflected in the literature of both domestic tragedy and comedy, in their reliance on the fact that the deepest intimacy comes only through mutual understanding.

### III

The virtue most closely associated with the spiritedness that kept the northern Europeans and the Greeks free is, of course, courage. “For those who are not capable of facing danger courageously are slaves of those who go against them.”<sup>24</sup> Our examination of spiritedness and virtue will begin with the treatment of courage in the third book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Again, some prefatory remarks seem to be called for. Serious students of Aristotle have always been interested in how he proceeds as well as what he says. We are struck by how we have been obliged to pull together strands scattered far apart in Aristotle’s writings; Aristotle did not seem to make this kind of psychological investigation the central theme of any of his books. Differences between addressees are clearly important, and may be connected with even more important differences.

A heightened sense of prudence accounts for some of the difference of approach. By spelling out the truth implicit in sound practice, political philosophy tacitly or openly exposes the cognitive insufficiency of experience. Aristotle evidently took care, as far as possible, to prevent the natural enemies of sound practice—sophistry, fanaticism, and simple villainy—from taking advantage of such exposures. There is, however, another reason for the difference of approach. Aristotle the philosopher, especially in his writings on human things, where the modes of human understanding become essential parts of what is to be understood, was not content only to talk *about* a particular subject, but seemed

22. Cf. Gisela Berns, “Nomos and Physis (An Interpretation of Euripides’ *Hippolytos*),” *Hermes*, 101, No. 2 (1973) 172–73.

23. *De Anima*, III.8, 431<sup>b</sup>20–432<sup>a</sup>4; *De Motu Animal.*, 701<sup>b</sup>18–22. Cf. Laurence Berns, “Rational Animal—Political Animal: Nature and Convention in Human Speech and Politics,” *The Review of Politics* (April, 1976), revised and corrected in *Essays in Honor of Jacob Klein* (Annapolis: St. John’s College Press, 1976), pp. 29–35.

24. *Politics*, 1334<sup>a</sup>21–23. Cf. 1283<sup>a</sup>16–23.

rather to try to present his subject matter in its own inner, or natural, articulation.<sup>25</sup> The perspectives within which the subject matter manifests itself are presented as they exist in their prescientific, prephilosophic form. The adequacy of the subsequent analysis and refinement of views depends on the adequacy of the presentation of the initial phenomena.<sup>26</sup> The analysis and criticism is itself presented not as a break with the opinions and perspectives with which it begins, but as a normal and natural development, a fulfillment and refinement of those views.<sup>27</sup> For instance, early in Book One of the *Nicomachean Ethics* we are told that it is the mark of an educated man to seek that degree of precision that the nature of the subject matter permits. Aristotle says that ethical virtue, the subject of Books One through Five, does not permit a high degree of precision. But the articulation of ethical virtue and the problems inherent in it point naturally to the need for greater clarity about the intellectual virtues, the subject of Book Six. At the point where precision constitutes part of his subject matter, intellectual virtue, Aristotle notes that precise speech is now required.<sup>28</sup>

With the thematic treatment of the intellectual virtues a new perspective is opened up. What was seen before as necessary for the sake of ethical virtue is now worthy in itself. Old subject matters are viewed in new ways. For example, the greatest of external goods in Book Four is said to be honor, while in Book Nine it is said to be friendship. The contradiction is to be understood dialectically. The great-souled man at first sees honor as the greatest of external goods, but within that very chapter, as Aristotle presents the inner development of the great-souled man's perspective, the doubts about that position are developed. Honor is as valuable as the cognitive capacities of its bestowers: it only makes sense when it is bestowed for genuine virtue. In Book Nine, after the intellectual virtues have been discussed, it becomes clear that the most perfect form of esteem from other human beings is the mutual love, or friendship, of the virtuous. This friendship is based on understanding, understanding virtue and understand-

25. This, I believe, more than anything else accounts for the proliferation of commentaries on Aristotle's works: namely, the prospect of coming to understand the very inner, or natural, articulation of the subject one is interested in.

26. Cf. Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, 1970), section 44, beginning; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (London, 1962), pp. 96–97 (*S. u. Z.*, p. 68); and Leo Strauss, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science and Political Philosophy," *Interpretation*, 2, No. 1 (1971), 8–9.

27. Cf. Leo Strauss, "On Classical Political Philosophy," in *What is Political Philosophy?* (Glencoe, Ill., 1959; reprint, Greenwood Press, 1973), pp. 78ff.; and in *Political Philosophy: Six Essays by Leo Strauss*, ed. Hilail Gildin (Indianapolis & New York, 1975), pp. 59ff. These remarks require at least one important qualification, which cannot be discussed here: see Leo Strauss, *The City and Man* (Chicago, 1964; reprint, University of Chicago), pp. 240–41. Cf. my "Aristotle's *Poetics*," in *Ancients and Moderns: Essays on the Tradition of Political Philosophy in Honor of Leo Strauss*, ed. Joseph Cropsey (New York: Basic Books, 1964), pp. 76–78, and 81.

28. *N. Ethics*, 1094<sup>b</sup>12–28, 1139<sup>b</sup>18–19, 1141<sup>a</sup>9–20; *Metaphysics*, 982<sup>a</sup>12–18.

ing one another.<sup>29</sup> The following discussion will attend, then, to the mode of presentation as well as to what is said about courage.

Courage, in general, had been defined in Book Two as a mean with respect to feelings of fear and feelings of daring. The thematic discussion of courage in Book Three raises the question of which fears courage is particularly concerned with, since it is not concerned with all (for example, it is not courageous, but base, not to fear disgrace). The presentation takes on the character of a dialogue. "What kinds of fearful things then is the courageous man concerned with? The greatest, I should think; . . . and the most frightening thing is death. . . . What kind of death? The noblest, I should think, and that is death in battle, for that is where the greatest and most noble danger lies. The honors bestowed by cities and monarchies are also in agreement with this. In an authoritative way, then, it might be said that the courageous man is he who is not afraid of a noble death, even when the dangers that bring it on are close at hand; and such are, most of all, the dangers of war." Courage in Book Three, Chapter Six, comes to sight in its elementary and most conspicuous form, in the perspective of the citizen soldier.

The next chapter begins by noting that the same things are not frightening to all people, but there are some things beyond human endurance. And this sort of thing "is fearful for everyone, at any rate, for everyone who has sense (. . . τῶ γε νοῦν ἔχοντι)." This word, which in its colloquial usage can be translated "sense," is also the technical term for intellect, νοῦς. With the almost parenthetical mention of the one who has sense-intellect, a new unannounced perspective emerges, the perspective of the man who endures fears and is bold towards those things which he ought, for the sake of what he ought, as he ought, and when he ought. He both feels and acts as reason dictates, for the sake of the noble, that is, for the sake of what is choiceworthy in itself. The courageous man is a mean, or median, between the altogether fearless man who is either mad or insensitive to pain, and the coward. Rash men, Aristotle says, breaking from the general scheme, seem to be a mixture of both extremes: they pretend to fearlessness and courage before danger is at hand, but hang back and disappear with the cowards when it is to be faced.<sup>30</sup>

Chapter Eight speaks of five states that are also said to be courage, but are properly likenesses of courage. The first, and most like true courage, is political, or civic, courage, the courage of the citizen soldier.<sup>31</sup> The hero of the introduc-

29. *N. Ethics*, 1123<sup>b</sup>15–1124<sup>a</sup>20, and 1169<sup>b</sup>8–10.

30. Cf. the Dauphin in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, and Abraham Lincoln, Speech of December 26, 1839, *The Collected Works of . . .* ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick, N.J., 1953), Vol. I, pp. 177–79.

31. Cf. Plato *Republic*, 429e–430c; and *Phaedo*, 67b–69e. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I–II, Q.61, A. 5. The standard translation is particularly misleading here: (*virtutes*) *politicas* is rendered "social," *purgatorias* "perfecting," and *purgati animi* [not *animas*] "perfect." Cf. *N. Ethics*, VI.13.

tory dialogue on courage now has first place among the likenesses. The rhetorical emphasis here is not on political courage's falling short of true courage, but on the excellence that entitles it to first place among the likenesses, "because it arises on account of virtue, for it arises on account of shame, and on account of an appetite for nobility, (that is, for honor), and avoidance of reproach, which is a disgrace."<sup>32</sup> Aristotle here concedes to the common opinion that speaks of shame-respect as a virtue, because it is praiseworthy and good and operates preventively against vice. Both before and after this passage, (in Book Four, Chapter Nine), Aristotle asserts that, strictly speaking, shame is not a virtue, but a passion.<sup>33</sup> Virtue is not a passion, but a fixed habitual disposition toward passions and actions, determined by reason as the prudent man would determine it. Virtue is the completion, or perfection, of a fixed disposition. The discussion of shame in Book Four anticipates the distinction between continence and temperance of Book Seven. The continent man is and should be commonly praised for virtue; but the base desires that he has and fears, although he does master and "contain" them, keep him from qualifying for virtue in the strict sense of the word. In the general definition of ethical, or moral, virtue, which occurs early in the sections on ethical virtue, the possession of an intellectual virtue is an essential requirement.<sup>34</sup> Not all passions are equal, and those soldiers who are compelled into battle by their commanders are inferior, as the fear of bodily pains is inferior to the fear of disgrace.<sup>35</sup>

The third and central likeness to courage is spiritedness.<sup>36</sup> "Men moved by spirit seem to be courageous, like beasts rushing on one who has wounded them; *because the courageous also are spirited*, and spirit is most ready to encounter dangers."<sup>37</sup> Beasts and spirit itself move from passion. The courageous seek the noble, but spirit works along with them. "The 'courage' due to spirit seems to be most natural, and when forechoice and purpose have been added to it, it is courage."<sup>38</sup> Spiritedness, then, is the natural and passionate basis of courage. It becomes courage when it is formed by forechoice and wish, through habit, into a fixed disposition to act in accordance with the noble.

To summarize briefly: courage comes to sight first in the dialogue form of Chapter Six as the character of the citizen soldier, who is not afraid of a noble

32. On the difference between shame-respect, *αἰδώς*, *verecundia*, as used here, and shame-disgrace, *αἰσχύνη*, *turpitude*, cf. Kurt Riezler, *Man, Mutable and Immutable* (Regnery, 1950; reprint, Greenwood Press, 1975), Ch. 8. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 144, A. 2, near the end.

33. *N. Ethics*, 1108<sup>a</sup>31-32, and 1128<sup>b</sup>10-16; cf. Aquinas, *loc. cit.*, A. 1.

34. *N. Ethics*, 1106<sup>b</sup>36-1107<sup>a</sup>6; cf. *Physics*, 246<sup>a</sup>10-248<sup>a</sup>9.

35. The "mistaken" attribution of Agamemnon's words to Hector at 1116<sup>a</sup>32-35 may be connected with Aristotle's sense of what is more appropriate for easterners. Cf. *Politics*, 1285<sup>a</sup>10-14, where the attribution is correct, and the aforesaid Ch. 7 of Book VII. Cf. Seth Benardete, "Achilles and the *Iliad*," *Hermes*, 91, No. 1 (January 1963), 1-16, esp. 5-12.

36. The word for spiritedness, *θυμός*, is often used colloquially for anger.

37. Emphasis supplied.

38. Some translators might render the "is" in the last clause as "seems to be."

death when it is close at hand. In Chapter Seven the perspective shifts to that of the man of good sense or intellect, and courage is defined primarily in terms of the reasonable and the noble. In Chapter Eight the likenesses of courage are presented in descending order of distance from true courage. The citizen soldier, moved by shame-respect and the love of honor, who at first appeared as the exemplar of courage, is now not the exemplar, but the nearest and noblest likeness of the courageous man, the man of good sense-intellect. Spiritedness is shown to be the irrational natural basis of courage, the material of courage, to be shaped and guided by reason. With the ranking of the likenesses the description is completed. It ranges from (1) the mad or anaesthetic fearless man, (2) the coward, (3) the rash man, (4) the courageous man, (5) the honor-loving citizen soldier, (6) the experienced professional soldier, (7) the spirited, pugnacious man, (8) the optimist, to (9) the man ignorant of dangers. The final chapter deals with the problem of the intrinsic pleasantness of virtue, where the virtue itself is primarily concerned with enduring pains. There is the briefest indication that true courage cannot be possessed in isolation from the other virtues. "The more a man possesses virtue in its entirety (*τὴν ἀρετὴν πᾶσαν*), the more happy he is, and the more will he be pained by death; for life is most worth living for such a man." The end returns to and qualifies the theme of the beginning. The truly courageous men might not always make the best soldiers.

#### IV

Unfortunately, in the works of Aristotle left to us there does not seem to be any full and thematic analysis of spiritedness.<sup>39</sup> The word is very common in Greek literature, especially in Homer. Aristotle was, of course, well acquainted with the extended discussions of spiritedness in Plato, and up to a point seems to agree with them.<sup>40</sup>

Spiritedness manifests itself most conspicuously in anger and courage.<sup>41</sup> It is that power of the soul that is activated whenever something threatens or opposes what the soul seeks or cherishes as desirable or good; spirit rises to overcome the difficulty. Fear, "a painful disturbance caused by the apprehension of an impending destructive or painful evil," and hope seem to be the primary passions of spir-

39. There is such a treatment in Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*, I, Q. 81, and I-II, QQ. 23, 25, 40-48, on the irascible faculty.

40. *Republic*, 374b-376c, 411a-e, 429a-430c, 435c-441d; cf. Allan Bloom in his translation of the *Republic* (Basic Books, 1968), pp. 353-58, 375-78 and 436; *Laws*, 731b-d, and 963e; Leo Strauss, *The City and Man* (University of Chicago, reprint), pp. 110-13.

41. The rational control and ordination of anger is treated as the virtue of gentleness, or good temper, in *N. Ethics*, IV.5. Gentleness is treated as a passion in *Rhetoric*, II.3. It has been aptly called "the domestic side of courage" by Ken Masugi. Aristotle argues that ferocity does not go along with courage, (*Politics*, 1338<sup>b</sup>17-24; cf. *Hist. of Animals*, 629<sup>b</sup>8) with one possible exception "in relation to those who act unjustly" (*Politics*, 1328<sup>a</sup>7-11).

itedness. Daring, fear's opposite, rises with the strength of the hope of overcoming the fearful evils. The sense of urgency that is part of fear, and distinguishes fear from grief and despair, indicates that fear is never without some hope of escape. A frightened coward deficient in spiritedness could not, then, be altogether devoid of hope; what he lacks is the power to set himself against the impending evil.

Not only is spiritedness the temperamental condition of political freedom, but in social and political life it is the indispensable temperamental basis for the fight against injustice. It is indispensable as well for the individual's fight against the vices within himself. The classical equivalent of conscience would seem to be a certain compound of spiritedness and shame. Shame seems to bridge the spirited and the rational parts of appetite. As fear of disgrace, shame attests to the presence of some moral danger, but the very recognition of the danger points to the simultaneous presence of some standard of goodness, even if it should only be a wish for the good opinion of those before whom one would be ashamed. Some kind of rational estimation, or comparison of the behavior with the standard, seems to be implied.<sup>42</sup> Lacking the standard of comparison, the shameless man fails to see his vices as disgraceful. *Αἰδώς*, shame-respect, is the natural predisposition for the virtue of moderation, as spiritedness is for courage; although, as we have suggested, the element of self-reproach and sense of danger in shame indicates the presence of spiritedness there too.<sup>43</sup> Yet, if spiritedness is material for virtuous enmity, it is also material for the opposed perversions, for vicious enmity—spitefulness, insolence, self-righteousness, hatred and cruelty. Much, if not everything, depends upon how spiritedness is guided and trained by its leading powers. "Spiritedness too [as well as desire] perverts rulers, even those who are the best men."<sup>44</sup>

Spiritedness as the soul's fighting element is not difficult to recognize, but in this same small chapter of the *Politics* (VII.7), Aristotle informs us, in a reference to the *Republic* (375e), that "it is the spirit that produces the ability for affection (*τὸ φιλητικόν*); for this is the power of the soul by which we love (*φιλοῦμεν*)." This is not as easy to understand.

As a sign of the two-fold character of spiritedness, Aristotle refers to spiritedness as rising more powerfully against intimates and friends, when it believes itself to be slighted, than it does against those it does not know. That the intensity of the anger matches the intensity of the affection, suggests a common source. Among other lines of poetry, he quotes, "Surely those who loved beyond bounds

42. Cf. note 15, above.

43. *Eudemian Ethics*, 1234<sup>a</sup>24–34. Thomas Aquinas, *op. cit.*, II–II Q. 144, A. 4, ad 4; Gisela Berns, *op. cit.*, note 22, above, pp. 165ff.

44. *Politics*, 1287<sup>a</sup>30–32. Cf. Shakespeare's Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, esp. IV.ii.80ff. I have discussed these lines in *Shakespeare as Political Thinker*, eds. John Alvis and Thomas P. West (Carolina Academic Press, 1981), pp. 47–48.

also hate beyond bounds.” “Not without reason, it seems,” he says in another place, “did the first teller of myths yoke Ares together with Aphrodite.”<sup>45</sup>

There is a feeling or attitude, a substratum as it were, common to both friendship and enmity—care.<sup>46</sup> One shows that one cares by making the cause of one’s care one’s own. “There are two things which most of all make men care and love (*φιλεῖν*), one’s own and the cherishable (*ἀγαπητόν*).”<sup>47</sup> *Θυμὸς*, or spiritedness, would then be the source of those feelings directed primarily to the care for one’s own, such as concern for self, parental love, patriotism, perhaps even a feeling for the cosmos itself, seen as an object or product of personal care.<sup>48</sup>

While Plato more than does justice to the political utility of spiritedness, his emphasis is on the tension between the love of one’s own and the love of the good, the tension between spiritedness and philosophy.<sup>49</sup> Decent men naturally feel the need to strengthen and encourage the sources of human decency; they are led naturally to exaggerate the strength and significance of the cosmic supports for decency. Indecent men too are led, by some strain of decency in themselves, to justify their own indecency by exaggerating its cosmic supports.<sup>50</sup> Our spiritedness vies with our honesty. This tension can take a great variety of forms, even the self-defeating form of a perverted zeal for honesty that refuses to recognize the very possibility of cosmic support for decency.

The love of wisdom, of course, implies hatred of dishonesty. The philosophic man strives to be good without being dishonest with himself. In Plato’s *Symposium*, the dialogue on love, the tension between the love of one’s own and the love of the good is resolved. The two come together in the teaching about Eros. The object of love, *ἔρωσ*, is to have “the good be one’s own forever.”<sup>51</sup> How-

45. *Politics*, 1269<sup>b</sup>27–29.

46. Cf. Kurt Riezler, *op. cit.*, Part Four, Ch. 2 and 3 (Care); Ch. 4. on humor and play. is entitled *Carefreeness*.

47. *Politics*, 1262<sup>b</sup>22–23.

48. Seen from the Platonic-Aristotelian point of view, Heidegger’s “thinking” and “authenticity” (one’s-ownness) with their emphasis on “Being-in-the-World,” “the ready-to-hand” (*das Zuhandene*), “mineness” (*Jemeinigkeit*), and care (*Sorge*), appear to be a reevaluation and exaltation of spiritedness in human behavior and cognition. This might provide an interesting perspective on the question of the connection between Heidegger’s “existential analytic” and his politics. Historicism in all its forms would seem to entail an elevation of the love of one’s own, of spiritedness. I have treated these questions more fully in a paper, “The Prescientific World and Historicism: Some Reflections on Strauss, Heidegger and Husserl,” delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September, 1983, under the auspices of the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy.

49. Cf. *Republic*, 330a–c; and *Laws*, 963e; and Leo Strauss and Allan Bloom, *loc. cit.*, note 40, above. See also Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny*, revised and enlarged (Free Press, 1963), pp. 202–26. Harry V. Jaffa in *How to Think about the American Revolution* (Carolina Academic Press, 1978), p. 169, quotes p. 208, but see p. 209, and especially p. 210. Cf. Aristotle, *N. Ethics*, 1096<sup>a</sup>11–18.

50. Cf. Shakespeare, *King Lear*, i.ii.1–22.

51. 206a.

ever, the tension between spiritedness and philosophy is never resolved. Where love is celebrated as the main theme, its highest human form being philosophy, spiritedness simply disappears unmentioned.<sup>52</sup>

The love of one's own and its spiritedness, for Aristotle, reach fulfillment when together they are shaped and disposed by reason as material for virtue. One's own and the cherishable come together, according to Aristotle, in the friendship of the virtuous. All the appetitive parts of the good man's soul seek the same thing: his desire seeking it as pleasure, his spirit caring for it as his own, and his faculty of wishing wanting it as good.<sup>53</sup> He seeks what is at the same time good for himself and good simply, and that is the good of the dominant part of himself, the part which is most of all himself, the intellect. Since he is by nature political and framed to live with others, living with others like himself will enhance his happiness. The good man extends his relationship to himself to his friend, his other self. The virtuous friends' mutual conversation and their contemplation of their own and each other's goodness is pleasant in itself. Their friendship is itself a celebration of existence: for "to be is itself desirable through one's perception of oneself as being good, and such perception is pleasant in itself."<sup>54</sup>

Something of this difference between Plato and Aristotle seems to have been caught by Raphael in his painting, *The School of Athens*. Plato, with a somewhat troubled expression, is pointing his index finger upwards. The heels of his unshod feet are up, raising him from the ground. Aristotle, a more tranquil expression on his face, makes a calming gesture, holding the palm of his hand down. His well-sandalled feet are planted solidly on the ground.

52. Cf., for example, 178d–180b, 194b, 196d, 203d, 207b, 208c–e, *et al.*, where one might expect references to θυμός.

53. *N. Ethics*, 1166<sup>a</sup>13–15.

54. *Ibid.*, 1170<sup>b</sup>8–10.