

The Challenge of Nation-Building: Insights from Aristotle

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Article abstract

Nation-building has become a very controversial topic in recent years. From the Former Yugoslavia to Iraq and Afghanistan, the topic has generated much debate among policy makers, policy implementers, and academics. The contemporary literature on the issue of nation-building varies substantially on issues such as legitimacy, timing, order of development, and approaches. But nation-building as a concept is not one that is unique to the modern age. Aristotle, in his Politics, addresses the key themes of legitimacy, timing of development, and approaches that emerge from the current literature on nation-building. There are principles in Aristotle's work that can be directly applied to nation-building efforts today. Ensuring legitimacy through justice, simultaneous development, and an approach consistent with the mean will ensure a state becomes and remains stable. These ideas, first proposed by Aristotle, remain relevant today.

The Challenge of Nation-Building: Insights from Aristotle

by
Christian Breede

. . . let us study what sorts of influence preserve and destroy states, and what sorts preserve or destroy the particular kinds of constitutions, and to what causes it is due that some are well and others ill administered . . . we shall perhaps be more likely to see with a comprehensive view, which constitution is best, and how each must be ordered, and what laws and customs it must use, if it is to be best.¹

ABSTRACT

*Nation-building has become a very controversial topic in recent years. From the Former Yugoslavia to Iraq and Afghanistan, the topic has generated much debate among policy makers, policy implementers, and academics. The contemporary literature on the issue of nation-building varies substantially on issues such as legitimacy, timing, order of development, and approaches. But nation-building as a concept is not one that is unique to the modern age. Aristotle, in his *Politics*, addresses the key themes of legitimacy, timing of development, and approaches that emerge from the current literature on nation-building. There are principles in Aristotle's work that can be directly applied to nation-building efforts today. Ensuring legitimacy through justice, simultaneous development, and an approach consistent with the mean will ensure a state becomes and remains stable. These ideas, first proposed by Aristotle, remain relevant today.*

INTRODUCTION

It has been done before, to an extent. Journalists, political scientists, and sociologists have turned to the ancients for answers but examples are few. Robert Kaplan looked primarily to Sun-Tzu, Thucydides, and Machiavelli in his search for answers to modern problems in *Warrior Politics*.² Articles, such as Seth Cropsey's work on lessons for leadership derived from Homer's *The Iliad*,³ have also appeared in journals attempting to do the same, while others tried to draw lessons for foreign relations from Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle.⁴ However, despite the rich history of the greater Middle East, very little work has been done to ask what lessons the ancients may offer with respect to nation-building.

The works of ancient philosophy and history offer timeless insight into modern questions. Aristotle's *Politics* is as relevant today as it was when it was written over two thousand years ago. This article demonstrates that Aristotle was writing about state stability in *Politics*, exactly what contemporary authors Francis Fukuyama, Simon Chesterman, Antonio Donini, and others have argued over in the last few years. Although the insight offered by these authors is valuable, recent history has violently demonstrated that something is lacking in the analysis. Areas of the greater Middle East are no closer to self-sufficiency or stability than they were prior to the overwhelming attention the region received after September 2001. The improvements that have been achieved are unsustainable without continuous foreign intervention. Some of the authors touch on the need to understand the socio-economic realities of regions that are receiving the nation-building efforts. This is where Aristotle brings insight. The socio-economic realities are the single most important factor in ensuring a state is stable and self-sufficient.

The term nation-building is not without its own controversy and confusion. The same writers who have put such passionate pen to paper on the subject of state stability have also demonstrated the same passion in disagreeing about what nation-building really means. As one author suggests, "a decade ago, nation-building became a term of opprobrium,

leading a significant segment of American opinion to reject the whole concept. Ten years later, nation-building appears ever more clearly as a responsibility that neither the UN or US can escape.”⁵ As a result, current literature on nation-building is now much wider in scope, depth, and breadth.

Donini, Chesterman, and Fukuyama provide interesting perspectives on the nuance between *nation-building* and *state-building* with varying degrees of depth. Donini, who provides the most shallow of three viewpoints on the definition of nation-building, suggests that “The underlying objectives of such interventions — peace, stability, development accountable governance — have become steadily more ambitious, wide ranging, and trusteeship-like than in the past.”⁶ By focusing on stability and governance, Donini is referring to state-building as opposed to nation-building. Chesterman also writes about state-building by focusing on the institutions and governance issues as opposed to the question of common ethnic or cultural origins. He suggests that “The modern state is a manifestation of political power that has been progressively depersonalized, formalized and rationalized; the state is the medium through which political power is integrated into a comprehensive social order.”⁷ Again, similar to Donini, Chesterman writes about state-building versus nation-building. Fukuyama provides probably the broadest definition, as it incorporates both the state and the nation. He argues that “Nations — that is to say, communities of shared values, traditions and historical memory — by this argument are never built . . . rather they evolve out of an unplanned historical-evolutionary process.”⁸ He suggests that reconstruction of institutions and economies is state-building. However, Fukuyama’s work is entitled *Nation-Building*, not *State-Building*. He develops his line of argument further by suggesting that “Nation-building encompasses two different types of activities, reconstruction and development.”⁹ In Fukuyama’s eyes, nation-building is state-building plus development. For the purposes of this article, the term nation-building will be taken in the *Fukuyamian* sense to encompass both governance and the less tangible but equally important notions of political culture and community. The state is the political regime that operates within an existing nation or nations. It is the role of the state to bring together disparate national interests into a stable political regime.

As Catherine Holland recently suggests in a review essay for *Political Theory*, turning to the political philosophy of the ancients can be a positive feature of contemporary scholarship. She states that “the most creative scholarship that speaks to dilemmas of our present emerges from sustained reflection on classical texts.”¹⁰ However, one should also exercise caution. In 2000, Richard Mulgan wrote “with so much at stake politically, there must always be a temptation to read the ancient texts in a way that suits one’s own position at the expense of distorting their historical meaning.”¹¹ Mulgan counsels against relying too heavily upon ancient works for modern insight.

When it comes to the study of statecraft, Aristotle is a primary source. As Gerald Mara suggests, “our studying of democratic institutions and cultures should never be entirely separated from our reading and rereading of Aristotle.”¹² This article will reconstruct the key arguments in Aristotle’s foundational text, *Politics*, as they relate to this very modern problem of nation-building.

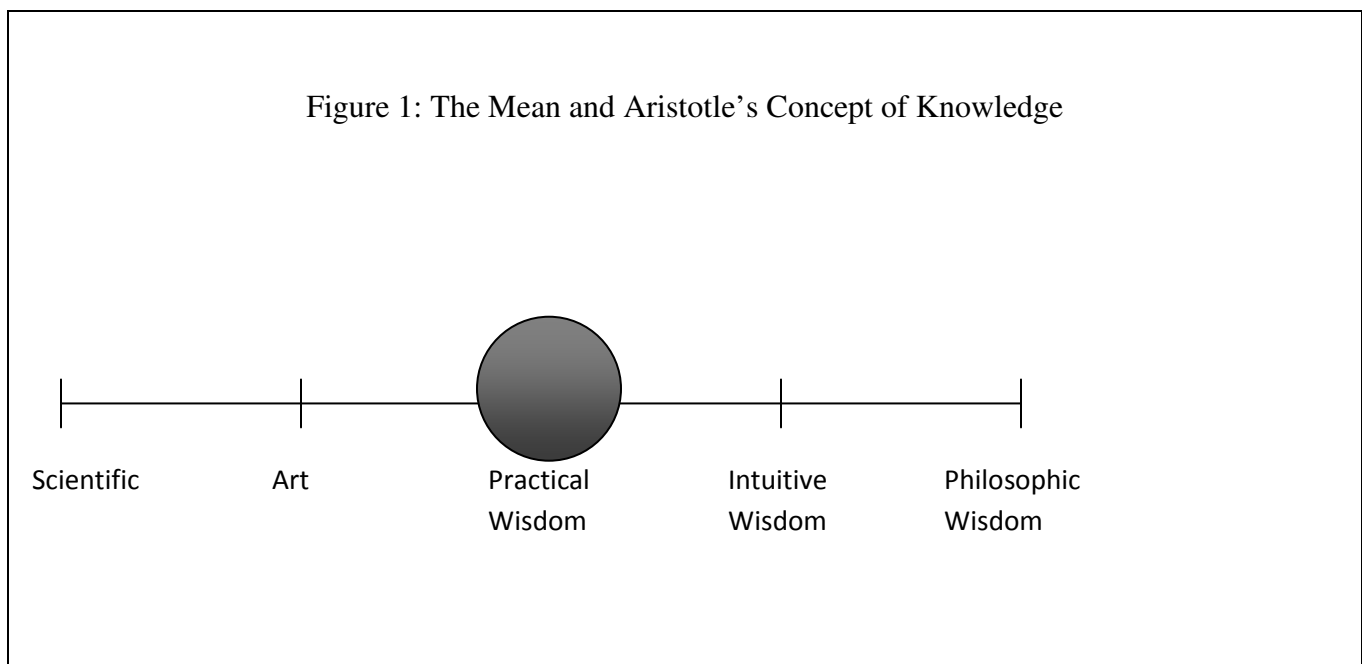
Born in 384 B.C., Aristotle was the son of Nicomachus, court physician to the king of Macedon, Amyntas II. After entering the Academy in 368, Aristotle traveled through much of the Aegean. He married and was eventually called back to Macedonia to serve as tutor to Philip of Macedon’s son, Alexander. For three years he served as Alexander’s personal tutor. Upon the boy’s appointment as regent, Aristotle left once again for Athens where he established the Lyceum. Following Alexander’s death in 323, Aristotle fled Athens under a cloud of suspicion. He died in Euboea in 322.¹³ As Richard McKeon writes, “an epoch in Greek history was brought to a close when Alexander [and] Aristotle . . . all died within somewhat more than a year.”¹⁴ In his sixty-two years, Aristotle produced works on science, ethics and foundational texts on politics.

Aristotle’s works on political matters represent the first recorded attempt to put political thought into a greater context. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle states that “since politics uses the rest of the sciences and since, again, it legislates as to what we are to do and what we are to abstain from, the end of this science must include those of the others, so that this end must be the good for man.”¹⁵ Aristotle was clearly one of the first political scientists. This article will reconstruct Aristotle’s argument, as presented in *Politics*, as they relate to these themes. It concludes with a series of principles that emerge from this examination. These principles should be applied if nation-building is to be truly successful.

The Mean

It is Aristotelian to seek the middle ground or mean between two extremes. One of Aristotle's key teachings is the concept of the mean. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines mean, aside from the mathematical or emotional definitions, as "a condition, quality, virtue, or course of action equally removed from two opposite (usually unsatisfactory) extremes."¹⁶ In the *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion*, William Reese defines the mean as "the doctrine that virtue lies between extremes (although closer to excess than to deficiency)."¹⁷ Both highlight the concept of *moderation* in their definitions.

Reconstruction of the Aristotelian mean from the primary sources is somewhat abstract. A definition does not appear in Aristotle's works but the theory is practiced in both his *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*. The most effective description of the mean is found in Book VI of *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle identifies five types of knowing: scientific;¹⁸ art;¹⁹ practical wisdom;²⁰ intuitive wisdom;²¹ and philosophic wisdom.²² These five types are recounted in *Ethics* in this order. The types progress from the knowing, which is based upon belief "in a certain way and the starting-points are known,"²³ to the opposite extreme where one is able to "know things that are remarkable, admirable, difficult, and divine, but useless."²⁴ In Aristotle's own words, scientific knowledge is seen as the most basic of understanding. In a spectrum, scientific knowledge is found at one extreme while philosophic wisdom occupies the other end (Figure 1).



According to Aristotle, philosophic wisdom — and Aristotle's judgement is rather harsh on its utility — is enlightened and "divine" but ultimately useless. Philosophic knowledge, or knowledge of more than just managing people's affairs, is the extreme as "there are other things much more divine in their nature even than man."²⁵ Aristotle identifies practical wisdom, or knowledge that allows one to "see what is good for themselves and what is good for men in general,"²⁶ as the middle point or mean on the same spectrum. Aristotle writes that "it would be strange to think of the art of politics, or practical wisdom, is the best knowledge, since man is not the best thing in the world."²⁷ Not only is this concept of practical wisdom important for effective governance, but its place as a middle position between two extreme forms of knowledge serves to illuminate the importance Aristotle places on the median.

At this point, a brief examination of Aristotle's definition of the state is useful. In Book III of *Politics*, Aristotle admits that the definition "is at present a disputed question."²⁸ Even though Aristotle's "present" was over two thousand years ago, the comment still rings true as debates continue as to exactly what constitutes a state. Aristotle found that where some argued that a state is a sort of monolithic entity, others saw the state's institutions as definitional. But Aristotle suggests "a state is a composite, like any other whole made up of many parts; these are citizens."²⁹ The notion

of people being the key element in the states is not Aristotle's alone and this fact simply reinforces its original importance. Thucydides, in *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, records Nicias, who states: "it is men who make the city, not the walls or ship with no men inside them."³⁰ According to Aristotle and his predecessors, a state is not about its institutions, but its people. It would follow that a study on nation-building would need to study the people as well as state institutions.

The Importance of Legitimacy

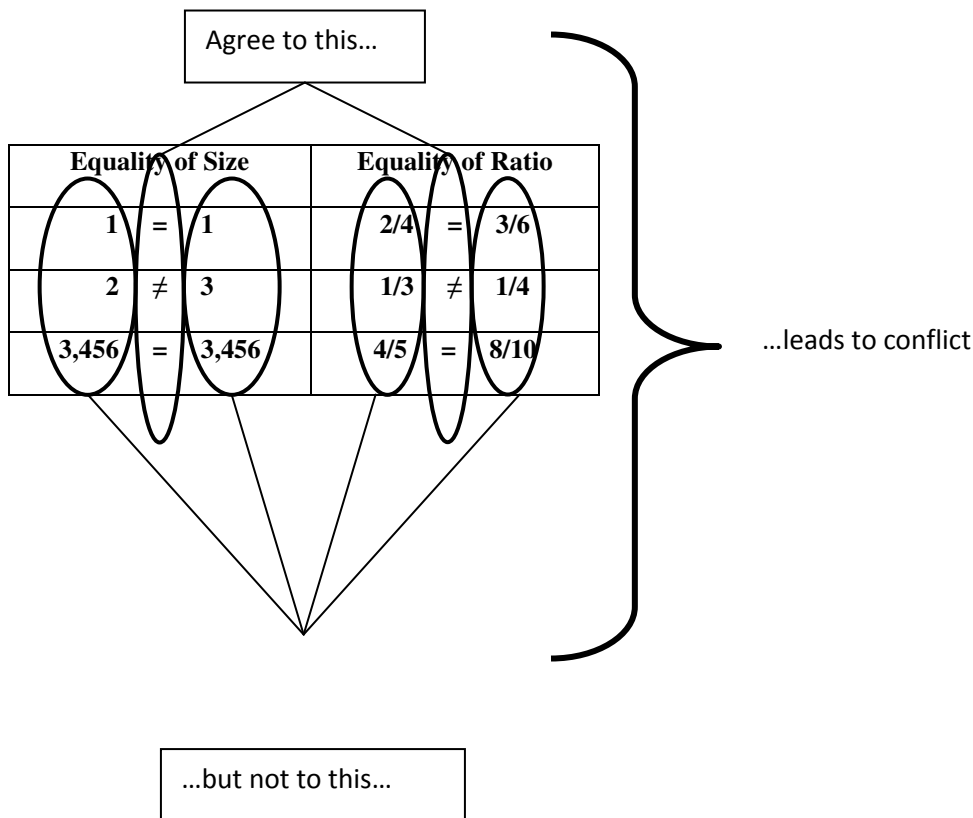
According to Aristotle, a legitimate state requires justice and appropriate constitutions or a formalization of who should rule and how. In Book I of *Politics*, Aristotle states "justice is the bond of men in states, for the administration of justice, which is the determination of what is just, is the principle of order in political society."³¹ Aristotle sees justice as a foundational concept for effective governance.

In Book III of *Politics*, Aristotle cites two different forms of justice, one from the perspective of democrats and the other from oligarchs. For Aristotle, democrats are those who believe in the rule of the poor, and subsequently justice for them is defined as equality. On the other hand, for an oligarch, one who believes in the rule of the wealthy, justice is defined proportionally to one's wealth. These two forms of justice are at odds; one preaches universal equality and the other equality qualified by wealth.³²

Patrick Coby, an expert on ancient political theory and philosophy, elaborates upon this: "Human beings would seem to be in agreement about nothing political."³³ There exists "one small patch of common ground upon which contending parties can stand and state their case. This is Aristotle's concept of distributive justice."³⁴ Aristotle's works led Coby to a common cause in governance, the desire for justice. By distributive justice, Coby is referring to the way in which Aristotle builds his case for the universality of its want. The conflict centers on the prepositions upon which justice is built, not its presence or absence. Everyone agrees that justice is required but they disagree on what justice means. In Book V of *Politics*, Aristotle writes, "That a state should be ordered, simply and wholly, according to either kind of equality, is not a good thing; and originally based on a mistake, and, as they begin badly, cannot fail to end badly. The inference is that both kinds of equality should be employed."³⁵

When Aristotle writes of "kinds of equality" he is differentiating between an equality based upon "sameness in number or size"³⁶ and an equality of "ratios."³⁷ While the first form of equality is obvious, the second is more abstract. Equality of ratios means that one out of two would be equal to two out of four, just as one out of two is unequal (by ratio) to one out of three. For Aristotle, and this is Coby's point on distributive justice, when conflict occurs, it is not over the idea of justice, but rather the distribution or form of the equality upon which that desire for justice is based (Figure 2). In other words, the parties in the conflict are mixing their concepts of equality. Where one party sees itself equal in ratio, the opposing party sees its opposite as equal in number or vice versa, thus leading to conflict. Conflict is thereby averted by accurately distributing justice in keeping with the appropriate "kinds of equality." It becomes a conflict between classes. The different classes — for Aristotle, the oligarchs and the democrats — must have their correct, corresponding concepts of justice imposed upon them. Oligarchic justice upon a democratic constitution will lead to conflict and ultimately regime collapse.

Figure 2: Distributive Justice and its relation to conflict



Aristotle's theory of the mean applies; justice is ultimately achieved through moderation. It is vital, whether moderating different kinds of equality or desires. Ronald Terchek and David Moore sum up this importance nicely, suggesting "neither arrangement is wholly right nor wholly wrong, a good regime will attempt to see the legitimacy and limitations of both views and attempt to arrange politics so that these classes enter into constructive negotiations rather than risk intense civil conflict."³⁸ Clearly, legitimacy requires a justice that is distributive. The desire for justice, from Aristotle's point of view, is universal.

Aristotle finds that "most people are bad judges in their own case . . . they agree about the equality of the things, but dispute about the equality of the persons . . . because they are bad judges in their own affairs."³⁹ It should be of little surprise that formalizing how such cases are judged would be an important part of his conception of legitimacy. Aristotle indicates that justice requires formal systems of resolution. These systems, in general terms, are referred to as constitutions. For Aristotle, a constitution is the "arrangement of magistracies in a state, especially of the highest of all. The government is everywhere sovereign in the state, and the constitution is in fact the government."⁴⁰ Aristotle's opinion on the importance of constitutions is clear. Justice means different things to different classes. Justice is required, but what changes is the definition of justice depends upon the class in question. Justice for a democrat is very different from justice for an oligarch.

For Aristotle, a constitution brings unity between classes. It allows judgement to be passed upon others with impartiality rather than basing it simply upon the opinion of the judge at the time. With a written code identifying what is just and what is not, the constitution removes the partiality of the present because a law passes judgement, not a person. A

constitution, in this sense, lends legitimacy to the court. But the importance of constitutions extends beyond the court. For Aristotle, the constitution lends legitimacy to the actions of government. But Aristotle is not suggesting that constitutions are perfect; in fact he argues that they are imperfect. Stephen Salkever suggests that “political rule is different from the others in that it is the rule over equals relative to imperfect but indispensable laws.”⁴¹ Salkever asserts that this is a typically Aristotelian conclusion on laws and more generally, on constitutions.⁴² Catherine Holland agrees: “[Institutions] are products of human action, and actors possess the capacity to shape and alter them.”⁴³ Both Salkever and Holland have struck upon a key principle in Aristotle’s view of constitutions. For Aristotle, there is a paradox when it comes to governance. Governance, in broad terms rule over equals, requires laws that are removed from partial or biased judgments of individuals. However, as people create these laws, they will be inherently biased or partial. The solution is that these systems must be open to continuous adjustment or amendment. A constitution is not an end in and of itself, but rather a process for governance.

For Aristotle, legitimacy is composed of justice and constitutions. The key is that the requirement for justice is not debated; its distribution within a given society is. Justice, improperly distributed, will lead to conflict. This conflict is different for each society in question. Aristotle would say that a concept of justice in one state would not necessarily work for another. As for constitutions, it is not a difficult leap for one to agree that codifying the rules of governance is advisable. This codification must be sufficiently flexible to allow for it to grow, evolve, and even react to changes in the society being governed. The constitution must account for the class realities of the state to which it is applied. An oligarchic constitution imposed upon a state primarily of working-class citizens would fail in much the same way as a purely democratic constitution would fail in a wealthy state.

The existing body of literature on nation-building does address legitimacy, but it focuses primarily on the interplay between justice and sovereignty. Although the emphasis on justice is certainly consistent with Aristotle, it misses the point about the importance of justice being distributed, either universal equality or equality in proportion, in a fashion consistent with the socio-economic realities of the country in question. It is interesting to note that Aristotle makes very little reference to the importance of sovereignty when it comes to the legitimacy of a state. In its place, Aristotle sees an appropriate and flexible constitution as the key to legitimacy and, by consequence, the stability of the state.

Sovereignty is something that several theorists on nation-building focus on. It is, however, inconsistent with Aristotle because, for him, a state is a natural phenomenon, a desire that “is implanted in all men by nature.”⁴⁴ For Aristotle, the word sovereignty has little meaning. A state is a natural desire because “he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god.”⁴⁵ The current focus on elections or physical boundaries for development and reconstruction work is misplaced; Aristotle would suggest that these do not ensure legitimacy. Aristotle’s views on legitimacy are more nuanced and qualified and dependent upon the particular socio-economic reality at the time. Elections are important, but they must include flexible constitutions and distribute justice in a manner appropriate to the society for legitimacy to be achieved.

Timing and Order of Development

Similar to his stance on the importance of legitimacy, Aristotle sees the timing and ordering of development as important. However, true to form, his view is one of balance. No single element — institutional, economic, or otherwise — should occur first. The order and timing of the development varies from situation to situation. Aristotle best expresses this in Books III to V of *Politics*. In these sections, Aristotle discusses the forms of government and how they must match the socio-economic realities of the state. This matching implies a requirement to vary the development of both institutions and society. Both must be developed concurrently, not at the other’s expense or in sequence.

In constructing this argument, Aristotle begins by outlining three forms of political power and subsequently their related perversions. As Patrick Coby suggests, political power “is rightly exercised when it serves the common good and not the special interests of the ruling class.”⁴⁶ Perversion occurs when political power serves the ruling class only. The three forms identified by Aristotle are kingship, aristocracy, and polity; the corresponding perversions are tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy (Figure 3).⁴⁷ Aristotle offers a succinct summary of the forms and their perversions:

The words constitution and government have the same meaning, and the government, which is the supreme authority in states, must be in the hands of one, or of a few, or of the many. The true forms of government, therefore, are those in which the one, the few, or the many, govern with a view to the common interest; but governments which rule with a view to the private interest, whether of the one, or of the few, or of the many, are perversions.⁴⁸

For Aristotle, rule of the one refers to kingship and tyranny while rule of the few is aristocracy and oligarchy. Rule of the many is polity⁴⁹ and democracy. Aristotle sees these six constitutional forms as ordered pairs, with one potentially devolving into the other. Kingship devolves into tyranny when the one stops making decisions based on the public good and instead makes them based upon his or her own good.⁵⁰ A similar occurrence happens when aristocracy devolves into oligarchy. Although Aristotle admits that of all the devolutions, that of polity to democracy is “least bad of deviation,”⁵¹ that same change in what could best be described as the locus of interest is what characterizes the transition of the third ordered pair. When the locus of interest shifts from external to internal, the constitutional form has devolved.

Figure 3: Aristotle’s Constitutional Forms

FORM		PERVERSION
Polity	→	Democracy
Aristocracy	→	Oligarchy
Monarchy	→	Tyranny

But it is in *Politics* that Aristotle further develops this shift in the locus of interest and in it he alludes to his previous arguments about distributive justice. Aristotle argues

those who are equal in one thing ought not to have an equal share in all, nor those who are unequal in one thing to have an unequal share in all, it is certain that all forms of government which rest on either of these principles are perversions.⁵²

Coby elaborates even further by suggesting that when “politics . . . [cease to be] a service performed by rulers for the benefit of the ruled”⁵³ it has been perverted in the Aristotelian sense. Whether through the distribution of justice or in the interest of rulers, the constitutional forms shift when these things change.

With the six constitutional forms now understood, their relationship with the timing of development can now be elaborated upon. Aristotle never fully commits to suggesting one constitutional form is absolutely the best. He suggests instead that some are better than others. In the *Politics*, it is not surprising to find him proposing different forms at

different times. This is intentional. Aristotle is making the point that there is no single solution, no absolutely best constitutional form for every situation. The form and society must match.

For that which is nearest to the best must of necessity be better, and that which is furthest from it worse, if we are judging absolutely and not relatively to given conditions: I say ‘relatively to given conditions,’ since a particular government may be preferable, but another form may be better for some people.⁵⁴

In this statement, Aristotle makes his case as to why absolutes in politics are fallacious. In suggesting that “another form may be better for some people” he is indicating the requirement for different constitutional forms to be applied in different situations. Aristotle suggests “every city is composed of quality and quantity”⁵⁵ and that if the poor outnumber the rich, “there will naturally be democracy . . . where the rich . . . exceed in quality more than they fall short in quantity, there oligarchy arises”⁵⁶ which further reinforces the idea of constitutional forms matching the socio-economic realities. Aristotle is making a distinction of class in this case; this distinction is ignored at one’s peril. In order for the forms and society to match, some development in both the constitution and in the socio-economic reality of society must occur together and into perpetuity and they must be tailored with class distinctions in mind.

Patrick Coby, borrowing Aristotle’s own analogy, summarizes the concept nicely by suggesting that the “study of politics, just like gymnastic training, needs to consider what is the best constitution simply, what is best for a specific body politic, how existing constitutions came into being and how they can be made to endure, and what type of constitution is best suited to the average community.”⁵⁷ In making them endure, both the form and society must be developed. Further elaborating upon this idea of development, Ronald Terchek and David Moore conclude that “Aristotle . . . shows a persistent attentiveness to a world of inequality and power and who asks how individuals can learn to share a time and place in ways that respect the integrity of each and that enable moral flourishing.”⁵⁸ For Aristotle politics is a continuous peaceful struggle, in itself a form of development.

It is no surprise then that Salkever and Holland both conclude that representative, legitimate governance must be dynamic.⁵⁹ It is a process. As Gerald Mara points out in his review essay in *Political Theory*, “the best political arrangement turns out to be not the regime in which the most beneficial reigning dogma drives out all competitors but, rather, the one in which tensions, like that between oligarchy and democracy, fruitfully coexists.”⁶⁰ This coexistence requires constant development across the socio-economic spectrum of a state. No single dimension can be developed first and no single shortfall can be addressed first. They must all develop in a common direction.

Aristotle sees governance as a process that must adapt to changes in the society it is trying to govern. Like a system of inputs and outputs in a feedback-loop, they are interdependent. Development cannot be achieved in one sector alone or in a linear fashion; all sectors must develop simultaneously and at varying rates dependent on the situation at the time. The debates in the contemporary literature on nation-building question whether economic development or institutional development should come first. For Aristotle, this debate misses the point. Development must be addressed simultaneously across all sectors. A template or model that will work in every situation is unrealistic. Nation-builders, Aristotle counsels, need to analyse the situation within the state or region being developed and apply appropriate developmental strategies that are able to shift and adjust with the changing socio-economic realities. Aristotle’s approach involves first identifying the socio-economic realities of the state and then applying a constitutional form that is consistent with those realities.

Aristotle articulates the importance of identifying the socio-economic realities in his seventh book in *Politics*. He states that the population is the most important of the “materials required by the statesman”⁶¹ and that a statesman “will consider what should be the number and character of the citizens, and then what should be the size and character of the country.”⁶² In identifying the character of the citizens, Stephen Everson suggests that Aristotle sees a basic characteristic for people. If someone is “to be rational”⁶³ then that demands “that one chooses the good life, the life in which we exercise our disposition for virtue and such a life is contingent upon the existence of the state.” For Aristotle, the search for the good life is a universal characteristic of humanity and it would seem that a state’s existence is necessary.

In Aristotle’s second consideration, he argues that there is a basic characteristic of a country universal to all societies. In Book I, Aristotle holds that property “is part of the household, and the art of acquiring property is a part of the art of managing the household; for no man can live well or indeed live at all, unless he be provided with

necessaries.”⁶⁴ Everson elaborates upon this by stating “human development depends on the existence of the state.”⁶⁵ Concomitant with this, almost a side effect of property rights, is a greater propensity toward stability. Terchek and Moore point out that “property ownership is important to Aristotle: It provides citizens with a tangible stake in the republic. . . . their good is intimately tied to the good of the republic.”⁶⁶ All people need their necessities. These necessities are provided first through the household and later the state. The state, through efficiencies and economies of scale, allows people to develop. Not unlike Maslow’s famous hierarchy of needs,⁶⁷ without the necessities enabled by the state, people will not develop to the good life that Aristotle argues we all desire.

Several notable political theorists have argued that this approach creates a paradox. The state removes certain freedoms yet one cannot be free to self-actualize (using Maslow’s more modern concept of Aristotle’s idea of virtue) without the state. Salkever explains the paradox as a system of limiters and enablers.

If there is a paradox at the heart of human politics, it is this: we need something authoritative in our emotional and dianoetic lives to restrain the tendency to unlimited acquisition and help develop the potential for practical reason and the virtues of character; but no person, no principle (or law), and no way of life can serve as a perfectly adequate and permanent authority.⁶⁸

Salkever’s take on the paradox alludes to the qualified importance Aristotle places upon governance and the subsequent need for constitutions to be flexible. It assumes, however, that unlimited acquisition is a natural human trait. Gerald Mara, steering clear of the assumption made by Salkever, suggests that “the arrangement that on the surface seems to be most effective in fostering the highest good for human beings now emerges as one in which its members would be deprived of certain opportunities or potentials essential to their humanity.”⁶⁹

Perhaps most satisfying, however, is the explanation offered by Charles Taylor as quoted in Steven Everson’s “Aristotle on the Foundations of the State.” Everson cites Taylor as saying “in the event of conflict, we should have to acknowledge that we were legitimately pulled both ways. For undermining such a society we should be making the activity defended by the right assertion impossible.”⁷⁰ Everson explains by suggesting that if we “regard citizenship of a state as a necessary condition of such as to be free — to develop in such a way as to realize one’s own nature . . . then such an opposition can only seem superficial.”⁷¹ The paradox, Everson and Taylor suggest is simply a nuance that again reflects the requirement for continuous development in governance. Because no system of government will perfectly represent or protect the rights of its citizens, it must develop and change as the society it represents changes.

The development of a system of government between extreme forms and shaping society between extremes of socio-economic conditions is a navigation of sorts. Aristotle suggests this navigation represents the mean. It should be clear how the concept of the mean applies to a state’s stability and, more importantly, how to create stability in a state where there is instability. Aristotle rejects the notion of political absolutes or fundamentals. Moreover, Aristotle rejects the notion that a single model for a regime is best in all situations. Instead, Aristotle embraces a system of government that is tailored to the socio-economic realities of a given state: a system of government that is the mean of two potential extremes. A democracy is not always the best. Tyranny is the only constitutional form that is never the best according to Aristotle. Neither a monarchy nor a polity is always best. Aristocracy and oligarchy are not the best regimes either. It is the very fact that Aristotle never commits to a single constitutional form as best that demonstrates his commitment to the idea of the mean. A combination of the forms, suited to the socio-economic realities, is consistent with Aristotle’s counsel.

Catherine Holland, in her review of Jill Frank’s *A Democracy of Distinction*, cites Frank, who suggests that governments “require a nontotalizing commonalty. . . . a unity of the different.”⁷² It is here that Holland credits Frank with providing some added insight into the concept of the mean. Thus far the mean has been best described as a centrist approach but Holland finds that Frank takes this to another level. In her reading of Aristotle’s mean, Frank finds that it is more than just the centre in a left versus right debate or a “reevaluation of an easy mediocrity.”⁷³ Instead, Frank sees the mean “positioned between excess and deficit . . . a call to an ethics and politics of distinction.”⁷⁴ For Frank, Holland writes, the mean is a co-dependence of ethics and politics. It is for this reason that Aristotle places such emphasis on justice. Politics without justice, achieved through adherence to the mean, is simply a perversion. As Coby states, the perversion occurs when the notion that “politics . . . is a service performed by rulers for the benefit of the ruled”⁷⁵ is lost. When this occurs, the mean is lost as politics are now divorced from ethics.

The character of a state depends upon the identification of the mean of the society, the way in which politics and ethics are combined. But it is also an examination of “the mutually constitutive nature of political structure and individual character . . . [the] products of human action”⁷⁶ whereby “reciprocity, dynamism, and recursiveness govern relations between and among politics and ethics, institutions and character.”⁷⁷

Recently, several sociologists and political scientists have identified this “reciprocity and dynamism” as a central feature to what is now commonly referred to as “social capital.” Although much debate exists on the exact definition of social capital, Robert Putnam’s *Bowling Alone* explores a variety of elements that make up this term. Using the same language as Frank, Putnam defines one of the key elements of social capital as “the principle of generalized reciprocity – I’ll do this for you . . . confident that down the road you or someone else will return the favour.”⁷⁸ Reciprocity is a form of altruism. Actions undertaken under the guise of reciprocity are completed without expectation of immediate rewards — at least in the short term. In the long term, however, reciprocity is very much an act of self-interest. Social capital, as defined by Putnam, indicates that a favorable reciprocal action is not expected immediately, but eventually, in some capacity.⁷⁹ Putnam summarizes the concept through an observation by Alexis de Tocqueville, who himself seems to be hinting at a broader notion of Aristotelian virtue when he says that Americans “pursue self-interest rightly understood.”⁸⁰

When Aristotle writes of determining the character of a state, he is arguing for an appreciation of these ideas. The character of the state is itself the mean between the politics of the state and the character of its citizens. The character of the state is often best demonstrated by the degree to which reciprocity is present in the society. In modern language, the amount of *Putnamesque* social capital present in a society can be a good litmus test for determining the character of the state.

Aristotle’s approach, unique in the current literature on nation-building, is nuanced. Based upon his larger concept of the mean, it involves determining the character of the state and then identifying and applying the appropriate constitutional form as a mode of governance for that state. Once this match is made, the system must be sufficiently flexible in order to change and remain an accurate match. The process is difficult to describe in theoretical terms and undoubtedly difficult to apply in real terms. As Holland suggests, it “is hard work . . . but it is also productive work,”⁸¹ which will ultimately lead to long-term stability. Failing to do so will lead to state instability.

The central theme in Aristotle’s *Politics* is about stability. Legitimacy, as discussed in Aristotle’s use of the concepts of justice and proper constitutions, is a means to stability. Timing development in a way that is consistent with Aristotle implies timing development that will lead to a stable regime. The approach advocated by Aristotle suggests matching constitutional form with socio-economic form not based upon what is right in some abstract moral sense but rather what will lead to a stable state. Straying from any of these principles will lead to states that are short-lived. For Aristotle, good governance is about stability.

The legislator should therefore endeavour to have a firm foundation according to the principle already laid down concerning the preservation and destruction of states; he should guard against the destructive elements, and should make laws, whether written or unwritten, which will contain all the preservatives of states. He must not think the truly democratical or oligarchical measure to be that which will give the greatest amount of democracy or oligarchy, but that which will make them last the longest.⁸²

Aristotle is not saying that democracy or any form of government is absolutely the best form, nor is he defining absolutely the best form of government. Instead, he is arguing that the best form of government — democracy, polity, oligarchy, aristocracy, or monarchy — depends on what will be most conducive to stability.

In a striking parallel with one of the main themes in the current literature on nation-building, Aristotle points out that when it comes to stability, it is often harder to keep it than to create it. “The mere establishment of a democracy,”⁸³ he writes, “is not the only . . . business of the legislator . . . for any state, however badly constituted, may last one, two, or three days; a far greater difficulty is the preservation of it.”⁸⁴ Chesterman and his co-authors, in *Making States Work*, held this as a defining feature in their collection of essays. They saw nation-building as something best aimed at states on a path to institutional failure rather than one that has already suffered it.⁸⁵ It is interesting to note that Chesterman appears

to have touched on the same idea that institutions require adjustments constantly, not just when in crisis. With this in mind, stability is clearly a central theme in Aristotle's *Politics*.

Aristotelian Principles of Nation-Building

Stability emerges as a central theme in Aristotle's work as it relates to nation-building. Once this focus is identified certain principles emerge from Aristotle's work as it relates to nation-building, a concept itself concerned with stability. In working toward stability, three principles emerge in Aristotle's *Politics*: justice leads to legitimacy; continuous institutional and societal development must occur if a state is to be stable; and nation-builders must remain consistent with the concept of the mean.

The first principle for Aristotelian nation-building is that justice leads to legitimacy. The contemporary literature and Aristotle both indicate that legitimacy is a key feature in a regime's stability. What has not been agreed upon is how best to achieve this legitimacy. Aristotle suggests that justice is the best method for achieving true legitimacy. Donini, in *Nation-Building Unraveled*, also argues that justice is the single element that will lead to an institution's legitimacy. Terchek elaborates: "a good regime will attempt to see the legitimacy and limitations of both views and attempt to arrange politics so that these factions enter into constructive negotiations rather than risk intense civil conflict."⁸⁶ This is essentially Aristotle's concept of distributive justice. The parties must first see each other as equal in principle at which point the issue itself can be successfully and meaningfully debated.

Continuous institutional development concomitant with continuous societal development is essentially a balance. This constitutes the second principle of nation-building. Leslie Goldstein refers to this balance as the "tension between the necessary conditions of political life — physical security and societal community — and the highest goals of political life — the wisdom and human excellence that are required for happiness."⁸⁷ A static or sequential approach to nation-building will simply fall short. The system of governance must address the realities of the society it is to govern and it must adapt to any changes in that society.

The third principle of finding the mean is one that is most consistent with Aristotle's general philosophy. As described earlier, it is more than just finding the middle ground or the average between two extremes; it is a blending of politics with ethics and moderation. As Aristotle suggests in Book V of *Politics*, the "only stable principle of government is equality according to proportion, and for every man to enjoy his own."⁸⁸ This general theme of moderation is so important. Goldstein says: "Constitutions that do not have an adequate amount of power-sharing in their initial structure, [Aristotle] writes, are bound to produce bad [policy] in the end."⁸⁹ As Aristotle demonstrates, this bad policy will lead to instability.

Using the organization and composition of a state's military as an example, Aristotle demonstrates that governments that are not correctly arranged will collapse. Aristotle points out that when "the country is adapted for cavalry, then strong oligarchy is likely to be established . . . only rich men can afford to keep horses."⁹⁰ But Aristotle cautions that if a military is organized inconsistently with the socio-economic reality of the state, the government "raises a power against itself."⁹¹ Institutions that do not reflect the society they are to govern will fail. Institutions that are static, unable or unwilling to respond to changes in the socio-economic conditions of the state, are also doomed to collapse eventually.

Historical Application

The three principles of legitimacy, simultaneous development, and finding the middle ground constitute the Aristotelian view on nation-building. Although the applications described below do not explicitly describe or condone the concept of a third party conducting nation-building (and what would likely have been simply referred to as conquest just the same), the application of the principles remains sound regardless of whether they are applied by the ruling class of the state in question or some outside agent. The three principles of justice as a key to legitimacy, continuous societal and institutional development, and the importance of finding the mean, when taken together, produce a lasting, stable state.

Cutting across the last two principles is the requirement for the socio-economic profile of the state to be accurately matched with the form of governance being considered.

Early in *Politics*, Aristotle applies these three principles to several contemporary examples. At first reading, it would seem Aristotle is praising the regimes of Carthage, Sparta, and Crete. Upon closer reading of the text, however, it becomes clear that he is in fact making a series of very pointed critiques of all three regimes. He is indicating, principally in Book II of *Politics*, that the contemporary constitutions are worth examining precisely because they are flawed.

We must therefore examine not only this but other constitutions, both such as actually exist in well-governed states, and any theoretical forms which are held in esteem; that what is good and useful may be brought to light . . . we only undertake this inquiry because all the constitutions with which we are acquainted are faulty.⁹²

Although Aristotle states later that these regimes are “justly celebrated,”⁹³ he is simply reinforcing the importance of comparative analysis and that just as much can be learned from bad regimes as good ones.

With the first principle of legitimacy in mind, Aristotle examines the importance of what can best be described as populism through the idea that the system of governance must be understood and desirable by the people being governed. Aristotle also differentiates between the rule of law and the rule of the people (a sort of “check” against populism). When referring to the constitution of Carthage, Aristotle states “The superiority of their constitution is proved by the fact that the common people remain loyal to the constitution.”⁹⁴ Taken in isolation this would certainly imply unqualified support for the Carthaginian system, but Aristotle differentiates between what is good for the state and what is good for the people. Populism needs to be balanced; if unchecked it would produce a perversion of governance as pure democracy.

For Aristotle, this check on populism originates from a differentiation between the rule of people and the rule of law (which originates from the people). In what can best be described as customary law as opposed to decrees of the day, Aristotle finds that “surely all matters of this kind are better regulated by law than by the will of man, which is a very unsafe rule.”⁹⁵ For Aristotle, regimes which tend to rule by decree — a category that populist regimes fall into — are reactionary, personified, and far from ideal. But balanced with this is the need for the customary law to reflect, to some extent, the realities and wishes of the people.⁹⁶ Here the notion of distributive justice becomes important. It is not merely enough to determine that a law is just or unjust; the law’s justice depends upon the society upon which it is applied.

In the governments of Lacedaemon [Sparta] and Crete, and indeed in all governments, two points have to be considered: first, whether any particular law is good or bad, when compared with the perfect state; secondly, whether it is or is not consistent with the idea and character which the lawgiver has set before his citizens.⁹⁷

What is just in one state will not necessarily be just in another. Although the desire for justice is certainly universal, its achievement depends upon the conditions in the state in question. Populism is important because without it the constitution loses its legitimacy. But, taken too far it can lead to a reactionary and personified form of government that will not survive a peaceful transition. Customary law can also be taken to a logical extreme that is harmful to a regime’s stability. When the will of the people is carefully considered, it will be unmoved by present pressures and the transitions of power will be more peaceful as governance is depersonalized, instead of institutionalized.

The importance of Aristotle’s second principle of simultaneous development is seen through his examination of Carthage, Sparta, and Crete. The division of labour, geographic realities, and the importance of taxation are all illustrated through Aristotle’s contemporary examples. He states: “It would seem also to be a bad principle that the same person should hold many offices, which is a favourite practice amongst the Carthaginians.”⁹⁸ Aristotle’s logic is simple. Responsibility for many tasks makes one weak in all and expert in none. Specifically with respect to a state’s bureaucracy: “the offices of the state should be distributed among many persons,”⁹⁹ not simply because it is fair, but also because “action familiarized by repetition is better and sooner performed.”¹⁰⁰ Aristotle uses the example to prove the importance of developing a system of division of labour within a society.

The simple geography of a state will require unique efforts at development, both economic and diplomatic. Recalling two examples, both involving Crete, Aristotle demonstrates how geography dictates the political development within a state. Crete enjoyed a degree of security because the island provided a natural defensive barrier from potential aggressors. Aristotle continues, in more general terms, about the importance of understanding the region and not just the state when assessing the best form of government. Neighboring states can ferment unrest in other states.

Nothing, however, of this kind has as yet happened to the Cretans; the reason probably is that the neighbouring cities, even when at war with one another, never form an alliance with rebellious serfs, rebellions not being for their interest. Whereas all the neighbours of the Lacedaemonians, whether Argives, Messenians, or Arcadians, were their enemies. In Thessaly, again, the original revolt of the slaves occurred because the Thessalians were still at war with the neighbouring Achaeans, Perrhaebians and Magnesians.¹⁰¹

In considering a state's stability, one cannot examine the state in isolation; the role its neighbours play in regional stability is important as well.

The final form of development addressed by Aristotle's examples is taxation. Examining the constitution of Sparta, Aristotle found it deficient because it had no method of building revenue outside that collected during their wars with other city-states. Unless plundering the coffers of others, the Spartan "revenues of the state [were] ill-managed; there [was] no money in the treasury, although they are obliged to carry on great wars, they are unwilling to pay taxes."¹⁰² Without taxes, a particularly difficult situation develops: "the city is poor, and his citizens greedy"¹⁰³ because they fail to see the benefit of taxation. More generally, development requires employment opportunities, both in the private sector and in the state's bureaucracy; it also requires building relationships and understanding of the role played by neighbouring states upon the state in question. Finally, it requires a system of revenue building; in its absence the state cannot function.

The importance of the concept of mean is the third and final principle to Aristotelian nation-building. Aristotle applies this principle in his contemporary examples by examining the application of law within a selected city-state, wealth distribution, and the importance of what Aristotle terms "the good life." Focusing mainly on Sparta, Aristotle examines these three applications by illuminating the shortcomings in the Spartan constitution.

The first citation made by Aristotle against the constitution of Sparta relates to the inequality with which the law is applied. His critique on the role of women aside,¹⁰⁴ Aristotle is arguing for a tempered application of the rule of law that is consistent with his notion of practical wisdom. For Aristotle, any leader of a state must have the sense of "what is good for themselves and what is good for men in general."¹⁰⁵ Without this, Aristotle cautions, the state will fall into a condition of greed and an insatiable desire to gain wealth.¹⁰⁶ Sparta, Aristotle found, fell into this trap. The people refused taxation and their highest office, the Ephorality, was prone to bribery. Although constantly at war, the Spartans were "unwilling to pay taxes. The greater part of the land being in the hands of the Spartans, they do not look closely into one another's contributions."¹⁰⁷ This inability to tax creates a vicious cycle of a poor state coupled with greedy citizens. Aristotle also cites the Ephors as being increasingly susceptible to bribes as they were too concerned with personal gain at the expense of the state.¹⁰⁸ This condition, known as avarice, is ruinous to a state's stability.

A second factor to consider in understanding Aristotle's application of the mean to governance revolves around the idea of the distribution of wealth, most often characterized by property in Aristotle's day. As the notion of the mean suggests, the ideal of equitable distribution is not complete but neither is it that wealth be only in the hands of the few; it is somewhere in between. For Aristotle, "property ownership is an essential characteristic of good citizens who do not have to please others to meet their needs."¹⁰⁹ In Sparta, Aristotle found that "While some of the Spartan citizens have quite small properties, others have very large ones; hence the land has passed into the hands of a few."¹¹⁰ Recalling Aristotle's concern for the Spartan propensity to avarice, the rationale for his caution is clear. But this is not to say Aristotle favoured total equality either. Instead, he suggests "how immeasurably greater is the pleasure, when a man feels a thing to be his own."¹¹¹ It is the balance between the accumulation of wealth and the need to refrain from avarice that Aristotle argues is the goal of good governance and something that the Spartan constitution lacked. The property distribution laws that were part of the Spartan constitution kept property in the hands of the few. Stability comes about through a navigation of the middle ground between the two extremes of avarice and charity. For

the poor are always receiving and always wanting more. . . . Yet the true friend of the people should see that they be not too poor, for extreme poverty lowers the character of the democracy; measures therefore should be taken which will give them lasting prosperity; and this is equally the interest of all classes.”¹¹²

Without a sense of a stake in the stability of the state, the citizens will revolt and the system of governance will not last.

The final factor in understanding Aristotle’s application of the mean is found in one of his principle theories: the purpose of the state is the good life.¹¹³ Again, Aristotle found Sparta to be deficient in this respect. He argues that for a state to be successful, it must aim at the highest good.

And the preference given to one or the other class of actions must necessarily be like the preference given to one or the other part of the soul and its actions over the other; there must be war for the sake of peace, business for the sake of leisure, things useful and necessary for the sake of things honourable.¹¹⁴

But Sparta, Aristotle found, sought only to go to war and did not strive for the life of “leisure and peace.”¹¹⁵ Instead, the Spartans lost sight of the greater purpose of the state and simply sought war and empire. Aristotle claims this is a new concept as many of his predecessors celebrated the Spartan constitution and the concomitant focus on conquest as just and noble.¹¹⁶ With the benefit of hindsight, Aristotle confidently states that the celebrants were mistaken for the Spartan empire no longer existed. But, suggests Aristotle, even if the Spartan empire did remain “they have lost the better part of life!”¹¹⁷ In a scarily prescient passage, Aristotle concludes that neither “is a city to be deemed happy or a legislator to be praised because he trains his citizens to conquer and obtain domination over their neighbours, for there is great evil in this.”¹¹⁸ A nation that focuses only on the accumulation of wealth and ignores the higher good that a state should provide — leisure and peace — faces instability. Such a state cannot be sustained.

Aristotle’s three themes of legitimacy, continuous development, and adherence to the mean are clearly demonstrated in his preceding critiques of the constitutions of Carthage, Crete, and Sparta. The constitutions under examination by Aristotle were deficient in these respects and led to the downfall of the various regimes. Carthage suffered under a constitution that encouraged populism, passing laws that addressed present issues without proper foresight, and institutions became personalized, which resulted in instability. All three states did not adhere to Aristotle’s second principle of simultaneous development. Some ignored regional issues, while others taxed inconsistently. Some failed to provide adequate employment opportunities within the public sector. Finally, Sparta was most deficient in Aristotle’s third principle of adherence to the mean. The myopic focus on conquest left it deficient in the true purpose of the state: the good life.

CONCLUSION

The principles of legitimacy through justice, simultaneous development, and adherence to the mean can be teased from these classic works, both through Aristotle’s general philosophies and in his critiques of several constitutions from his day. Although written over two thousand years ago, the teachings of this father of political science are still worthy of consideration today as many governments around the world find themselves engaged in exactly what is at the heart of Aristotle’s teachings: the search for stability.

Aristotle’s first principle is centred on legitimacy; specifically that legitimacy comes about through a shared sense of justice by the state’s citizens. This echoes and amplifies what Chesterman considers important in contemporary analysis. Chesterman articulates that state institutions have to be depersonalized. It is this depersonalization that minimizes bias and favouritism, thereby leading to a sense of fairness and by extension, legitimacy.

The principle of simultaneous development demands that the form of constitution match the society which it is trying to govern, while at the same time remain sufficiently flexible to accept input from society while also shaping society. This implies that development cannot be focused on a single sector in isolation. All sectors must be developed as

a system, responding to one another. It is notable that Aristotle places little emphasis on security provided by force as a basis for development; he suggests licit opportunities are what lead to security. With today's myriad nation-building efforts, this means that any constitution must first enshrine the values of the people holding the power; that employment and opportunities will promote further security; and development will have to be driven from within the country, not by external forces. This clearly speaks to Fukuyama and his contention, mentioned earlier in this piece, that nation-building and development are one and the same.

The third and final principle for nation-building according to Aristotle is pursuit of the mean. In the contemporary environment, cultural understanding is vital. Historic approaches to the question of how to address nuances, such as the tribal question in Afghanistan or religious differences in Iraq, have been varied and extreme. The concept of the mean remains relevant today as any approach to nation-building that aims to bring about lasting development must navigate between the extremes often imposed – both externally and internally – upon failed and failing states. Extremes in Aristotle's view only lead to instability as it marginalizes more often than it unifies. It behoves the modern political scientist to heed these lessons and continue to seek new ways to apply them. Ancient political philosophy continues to stand the proverbial test of time and understanding these teachings can illuminate solutions to some of our most pressing contemporary challenges.

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Endnotes

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⁴ Philippe Constantineau, *La Doctrine Classic de la Politique Étrangère: La cité et les autres* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997).

⁵ Seth G. Jones and James Dobbins, "The UN's Record in Nation-building." *Chicago Journal of International Law* 6, no. 2 (Winter 2006) p. 723.

⁶ Antonio Donini, Norah Niland, and Karin Wermester, "Introduction," in Antonio Donini, Norah Niland, and Karin Wermester, eds. *Nation-Building Unraveled? Aid, Peace and Justice in Afghanistan*, (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, Inc., 2004), p. 3.

⁷ Simon Chesterman, Michael Ignatieff, and Ramesh Thakur, "The Great Lakes and South Central Asia," in Simon Chesterman, Michael Ignatieff, and Ramesh Thakur, eds., *Making States Work: State Failure and the Crisis of Governance*, (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2005), p. 2.

⁸ Francis Fukuyama, "Nation-building and the Failure of Institutional Memory" in Francis Fukuyama, ed., *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), p. 3.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Catherine Holland, "Democracy Beside Itself." *Political Theory* 34, no. 4 (August 2006), p. 495.

¹¹ Richard Mulgan, "Was Aristotle an 'Aristotelian Social Democrat'?" *Ethics* 111 (October, 2000), p. 82.

¹² Gerald M. Mara, "The *Logos* of the Wise and the *Politeia* of the Many" *Political Theory* 28, no. 6 (December 2000), p. 859.

¹³ Richard McKeon, ed., *The Basic Works of Aristotle, 3rd ed.*, (Toronto: Random House, 2001), p. v.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. vi.

¹⁵ All citations from Aristotle's texts were drawn from McKeon's work (see footnote 5) and will be noted throughout by reference to the Berlin Academy pagination. As McKeon describes, this reference style, from the editions translated in the 1800s, has become the customary way in which to locate passages in Aristotle's work as each reprint, edition, and collection will have different pagination. The Berlin Academy system brings consistency to the citation. For example, the citation here is from *Ethica Nicomachea*, Book I, Chapter 2, page 1094, column a, lines 5 and 6. It will be presented as *Ethica Nicomachea*, I.2, 1094a5-6 from now on.

¹⁶ R.E. Allen, ed., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 8th ed.*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 735.

¹⁷ William L. Reese, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought* (Amherst: Humanity Books, 1999), p. 465.

¹⁸ *Ethica Nicomachea*, VI.3, 1139b, 32.

¹⁹ Ibid., VI.3, 1140a, 11.

- ²⁰ Ibid., VI.4, 1140a, 28.
- ²¹ Ibid., VI.6, 1141a, 6.
- ²² Ibid., VI.7, 1141a, 25.
- ²³ Ibid., VI.3, 1139b, 32.
- ²⁴ Ibid., VI.7, 1141b, 7.
- ²⁵ Ibid., VI.7, 1141a, 1.
- ²⁶ Ibid., VI.5, 1140b, 10.
- ²⁷ Ibid., VI.7, 1140b, 25.
- ²⁸ Aristotle, *Politica*, III.1, 1274b, 35.
- ²⁹ Ibid., III.1, 1274b, 40.
- ³⁰ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Rex Warner (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 530.
- ³¹ Ibid., I.2, 1253a, 35.
- ³² Ibid., III.9, 1280a, 10-15.
- ³³ Patrick Coby, "Aristotle's Four Conceptions of Politics." *Western Political Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (September, 1986), p. 487.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ *Politica*, V.1, 1301a, 39 to 1302b, 8.
- ³⁶ Ibid., V.1, 1301a, 29.
- ³⁷ Ibid., V.1, 1301a, 30.
- ³⁸ Ronald J. Terchek and David K. Moore, "Recovering the Political Aristotle: A Critical Response to Smith." *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (December 2000), p. 906.
- ³⁹ Ibid., III.9, 1280a, 15-20.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., III.6, 1278b, 10.
- ⁴¹ Stephen Salkever, "Whose Prayer? The Best Regime of Book 7 and the Lessons of Aristotle's *Politics*." *Political Theory* 35, no. 1 (February, 2007), p. 39.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Catherine A. Holland, "Democracy Beside Itself." *Political Theory* 34, no. 4 (August 2006), p. 496.
- ⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Politica*, I.2, 1253a, 25.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., I.2, 1253a, 30.
- ⁴⁶ Coby. "Aristotle's Four Conceptions of Politics," pp. 500.

- ⁴⁷ Aristotle, *Politica*, IV.2, 1289a, 30 and *Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII.10, 1160a, 35.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, III.7, 1279a, 25-35.
- ⁴⁹ In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle expands on the idea of polity as “that which is based on a property qualification” (VIII.10, 1160a, 32). He calls this *timocracy*. Aristotle even admits and subsequently adopts for himself the convention of polity as synonymous with *timocracy* as the word does appear in *Politics*.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, VIII.10, 1160b, 10.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, VIII.10, 1160b, 20.
- ⁵² *Politica*, III.13, 1283a, 26-29.
- ⁵³ Coby. “Aristotle’s Four Conceptions of Politics,” p. 500.
- ⁵⁴ *Politica*, IV.11, 1296b, 7.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, IV.12, 1296b, 22.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, IV.12, 1296b, 27.
- ⁵⁷ Coby. “Aristotle’s Four Conceptions of Politics,” p. 481.
- ⁵⁸ Terchek and Moore, “Recovering the Political Aristotle,” p. 911.
- ⁵⁹ Salkever. “Whose Prayer?” p. 42 and Holland. “Democracy Beside Itself,” p. 498.
- ⁶⁰ Gerald M. Mara, “The *Logos* of the Wise in the *Politeia* of the Many: Recent Books on Aristotle’s Political Philosophy.” *Political Theory* 28, no. 6 (December 2000), p. 847.
- ⁶¹ *Politica*, VII.4, 1326a, 5.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, VII.4, 1326a, 6-10.
- ⁶³ Stephen Everson, “Aristotle on the Foundation of the State,” *Political Studies* 36 (1988), p. 98.
- ⁶⁴ *Politica*, I.4, 1253b, 24-5.
- ⁶⁵ Everson, “Aristotle on the Foundations of the State,” p. 101.
- ⁶⁶ Terchek and Moore, “Recovering the Political Aristotle,” p. 908.
- ⁶⁷ Abraham Maslow described the rank-ordering of these needs as a pyramid with physiological as the base built upon by safety and security needs, followed by love and belonging needs, then self-esteem needs and finally self-actualization needs. Maslow suggests that one cannot proceed to the next “level” without first meeting all the needs below it. The same could be said about a person’s need for the state. The state provides the safety and security needs that are required for the self-actualization that occurs when one achieves the good life. See “Needs,” in *Miller-Keane Encyclopedia & Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, & Allied Health*. 6th ed., 1997 (Toronto: W.B. Saunders Company, 1972), p. 1071.
- ⁶⁸ Salkever, “Whose Prayer?” p. 41.
- ⁶⁹ Mara, “The *Logos* of the Wise and the *Politeia* of the Many,” p. 848.
- ⁷⁰ Charles Taylor in Everson, “Aristotle and the Foundations of the State,” p. 101.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Jill Frank in Holland, "Democracy Beside Itself," p. 496.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Coby, "Aristotle's Four Conceptions of Politics," p. 500.

⁷⁶ Holland, "Democracy Beside Itself," p. 496.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), p. 134.

⁷⁹ Holland, "Democracy Beside Itself," p. 496.

⁸⁰ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, p. 135.

⁸¹ Holland, "Democracy Beside Itself," p. 496.

⁸² Aristotle, *Politica*, VI.4, 1319b, 3.

⁸³ Ibid., VI.4, 1319b, 33.

⁸⁴ Ibid., VI.4, 1319b, 36.

⁸⁵ Simon Chesterman et al, eds. *Making States Work: State Failure and the Crisis of Governance* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2005), p.3.

⁸⁶ Terchek and Moore, "Recovering the Political Aristotle," p. 906.

⁸⁷ Leslie Friedman Goldstein, "Aristotle's Theory of Revolution: Looking at the Lockean Side." *Political Research Quarterly* 54 (June 2001), p. 329.

⁸⁸ Aristotle, *Politica*, V.7, 1307a, 25.

⁸⁹ Goldstein, "Aristotle's Theory of Revolution," p. 319.

⁹⁰ Aristotle, *Politica*, VI.7, 1321a, 10.

⁹¹ Ibid, VI.7, 1321a, 22.

⁹² Aristotle, *Politica*. II.9, 1260b, 29-35.

⁹³ Ibid., II.11, 1272b, 35.

⁹⁴ Ibid., II.9, 1269b, 30.

⁹⁵ Ibid. II.10, 1272b, 5.

⁹⁶ Ibid, II.10, 1272a, 38. Aristotle also states that "acting upon [one's] own judgement, and dispensing with written law, is dangerous."

⁹⁷ Ibid. II.9, 1269a, 30.

⁹⁸ Ibid. II.11, 1273b, 20.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., II.9, 1270a, 5-10.

¹⁰² Ibid. II.9, 1271b, 10.

¹⁰³ Ibid. II.9, 1271b, 15.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. II.9, 1269b, 15. Aristotle's view on the role of women is no longer consistent with contemporary Western values; however, his larger point is that laws must be applied equally, a view that is very much in keeping with modern, Western values.

¹⁰⁵ Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, VI. 4, 1140b, 10.

¹⁰⁶ Jowett translates this concept from ancient Greek into English as *avarice*, which has a more powerful connotation than simply the word *greed*.

¹⁰⁷ Aristotle. *Politica*, II.9, 1271b, 10.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, II.9, 1270b, 20.

¹⁰⁹ Tercek, "Recovering the Political Aristotle," p 908.

¹¹⁰ Aristotle, *Politica*, II.9, 1270a, 17.

¹¹¹ Ibid., II.5, 1263a, 40.

¹¹² Ibid., VI.5, 1320a, 35-40.

¹¹³ Ibid., I.1, 1252a, 5. In the opening paragraph to Aristotle's *Politics*, he states "if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good."

¹¹⁴ Ibid., VII.14, 1333a, 35.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., VII.14, 1333b, 1.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., VII.14, 1333b, 15-25.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., VII.14, 1333b, 25.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., VII.14, 1333b, 30.