

# Part I

## Aristotle's Life and Works

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# Aristotle's Life

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To many, Aristotle is the last great figure in the distinguished philosophical tradition of Greece that is thought to begin with Thales (ca. 600 BCE). Of course, Greek philosophy did not end with Aristotle; it continued for several centuries in the various schools – those of the Epicureans, Sceptics, and Stoics as well as Plato's Academy and Aristotle's own Peripatetic School – that flourished in Athens and elsewhere up to the early centuries of the Byzantine Empire. Yet there is considerable truth in the opinion of the many, if viewed as a claim about great *individual* figures in the Greek philosophical tradition. For Aristotle was the last great individual philosopher of ancient times, one of the three thinkers – the others being Socrates (470–399 BCE) and Plato (427–347 BCE) – that comprise what many consider to be the greatest philosophical trio of all time. Their philosophical careers span more than a hundred years, and all three were major figures in the lively philosophical scene of fifth- and fourth-century Athens. It was a unique moment in the history of philosophy, one that saw Socrates engaging in discussions with Plato – by far the most distinguished of his followers – and Plato instructing and debating with Aristotle – by far the most eminent student to graduate from and do research in his own school, the Academy.

While Socrates and Plato were born and spent their entire lives in Athens – indeed, Socrates took pride in the fact he left Athens only for military service (Plato, *Crito* 52b–c) – Aristotle was not born in Athens, never became a citizen of it and, according to some, never felt at home in it, despite his extended stays there. He spent most of his life and died away from his birthplace. Aristotle's life may conveniently be divided into the following five periods, which correspond to his residency in certain parts of the Greek world and, according to some, to the main stages of his intellectual growth.

## Early Years in Stageira

Aristotle spent the first seventeen years of his life in the ancient Greek city-state of Stageira, where he was born in 384 BCE. Stageira, colonized by Andros (an Aegean island) and Chalcis of Euboea, is located in the eastern-most finger of the Chalcidici Peninsula, a region of the ancient Greek world located about 500 km north of Athens. His father's family had its origins in Messenia at the south-western tip of the

Peloponnesos; the family of his mother, Phaistis, came from Chalcis of Euboia, an island on the Aegean Sea, a few kilometers west of Athens. While there is no evidence that Aristotle retained any contact with Messenia, he stayed connected to his mother's family and estate in Chalcis; he spent the last year of his life and died there. Aristotle's father, Nicomachos, belonged to the Asclepiadae medical guild and served as a court physician to the Macedonian King Amyntas II. Aristotle probably spent some of his childhood in the Macedonian palace in Pella, thus establishing connections with the Macedonian monarchy that were to last throughout his whole life. Both of Aristotle's parents died when he was still a boy, and his upbringing was entrusted to a family relative named Proxenos, whose own son, Nicanor, was later adopted by Aristotle.

The paucity of information on Aristotle's childhood has made it difficult to answer questions about influences on him during the early, formative years of his life, and it has provided ample ground for speculation. Some have wondered how one of the world's greatest and most influential minds could have come from a rather remote part of the Greek world and far away from Athens. Such wondering seems unfounded. As G. E. R. Lloyd (1968: 3) observes, in the ancient Greek world, many great thinkers were born or flourished in places far away from Athens. Democritus, whose atomistic conception of matter has shaped the scientific account of the natural world for centuries, came from a place (Abdera) that is farther away from Athens than is Aristotle's birthplace. It is perhaps more interesting to ask about the influence his early surroundings may have had on Aristotle's attitudes or ideas. For example, one might puzzle about the personal basis of Aristotle's views on the ideal size of a polis (city-state). At the time he was articulating these views, Alexander the Great was creating a political entity that extended eastward from the Greek mainland to India, something Aristotle would not identify as a polis on account of its size. Many of the Greek city-states that were most familiar to Aristotle, including those of Athens and Sparta, far exceeded in size his ideal polis which, according to him: (a) should be self sufficient (*Pol* VII.5 1326b26 and throughout this work); (b) should have a population "that is the largest number sufficient for the purposes of life and can be taken at a single view" (VII.4 1326b25); and (c) its territory must be able to be taken in at one view (VII.5 1327a3). Of course, Aristotle gives arguments in support of his views, and any assessment of the plausibility of the latter would solely depend on the soundness and validity of these arguments. Yet it is striking how well Aristotle's birthplace met the requirements he sets for his ideal city. Its timber,<sup>1</sup> mining, and fishing industries probably provided enough for the sustenance of its citizens, and from the highest point of the site that is now identified with ancient Stageira one can see in one view what most likely was the whole city-state. Also, its proximity to the sea satisfied Aristotle's defense and commercial requirements (VII.5, 6). Its relatively small number of citizens would also have made it possible for its residents to know each other and develop the kind of friendship among themselves that Aristotle considers desirable in a polis. It is not unreasonable to suppose that his childhood experiences of living in Stageira left lasting impressions in Aristotle's mind and colored his attitudes toward and beliefs about aspects of the polis.

Scholarly opinion is almost unanimous in supposing Aristotle's interest in biology and on the empirical approach to inquiry, both evident throughout his works, were due to his father's influence during his childhood years. He and his associates compiled a vast body of facts and developed some far-reaching theories about nearly every bio-

logical phenomenon with which they were familiar. Indeed, Aristotle seems to be startled by the phenomena of living things, even ordinary ones (e.g., that trees have roots), and his desire to find explanations for them and, in turn, fit these into a comprehensive explanatory scheme is boundless. Members of the Asclepiadae guild were well-known in antiquity for carrying on empirical research that included dissections and, according to Galen (*On Anatomical Procedures* II.1), they also trained their sons in such research, suggesting that Aristotle's strong interest in the study of living things, his strong reliance on observation in such studies, and the doing of dissections were learned from his father and instilled in him from his early childhood. In his biological works, he makes references to dissections and even to works titled *Dissections*, which appear on the ancient lists of his writings but have not survived. These same lists include lost works on medicine.<sup>2</sup> It is apparent from the frequent references to medicine throughout his extant corpus that he had well-defined views about medicine as a scientific inquiry and healing art (*Sens* 436a17, and throughout his ethical works and *Met*). In addition, the surroundings of Aristotle's childhood were an ideal environment for the interest that was kindled by the family to flourish. The densely wooded area of his birthplace was teeming with animals as was the Aegean Sea with marine life, providing a large variety of specimens for observation and study, further exciting Aristotle's inquisitive mind.

### First Athenian Period

In 367 and at the age of seventeen/eighteen, Aristotle entered Plato's Academy, where he stayed for the next nineteen years, until Plato's death. The specific reasons that led Aristotle to join Plato's school are not known and, once more, scholarly speculation tries to fill the void. Thus W. D. Ross (1995: 1) surmises that "We need not suppose that it was any attraction to the life of philosophy that drew him to the Academy; he was simply getting the best education that Greece could offer." Given that in Plato's/Aristotle's time philosophy encompassed all disciplines – including mathematics, physics, astronomy, biology, politics, ethics, etc. – it is difficult to make sense of the distinction between education and philosophy Ross wishes to draw. More importantly, given the fact that Aristotle lived the life of philosophy and in his ethics defends the view that the ideal life for a human is the contemplative life, it is quite likely that what attracted him to Plato's Academy was precisely the life of philosophy.

Whatever Aristotle's reasons for entering the Academy, his long stay makes it abundantly clear that he found the aims, intellectual approaches, and research endeavors of the school to his liking. It seems that Aristotle did not have personal contact with or come under the direct influence of Plato in the first two years in the Academy, since the latter was absent in Sicily. But there is no doubt that those responsible for his instruction while he was a student were following the instructional guidelines of the Academy, which reflected Plato's own approach to education and the main tenets of his philosophical thinking. Aristotle, as was probably the case with the other prominent members of the Academy, shared some of the main tenets of Platonism, first as a student and then as an associate in the school, when he participated in teaching and engaged in research. According to Diogenes Laertius (third century CE) – one of our important sources of information on Aristotle's life – he was "the most genuine student of Plato"

(V.1). Years after his sojourn in Plato's school, he continues to speak with affection toward those sharing the Platonist outlook, some of whom had been his associates in the Academy, considers them friends, and appears to include himself among the followers of Plato (*NE* I.6 1096a11).

What survives from his early writings during his stay in the Academy clearly reflects his general, but not necessarily complete, adherence to Platonism with respect to the topics he discussed, the views he articulated, and even the genre of writing he chose for expressing these views. Like the master of the Academy, he chose the dialogue as the vehicle of philosophical inquiry, writing a number of dialogues, some having titles identical to dialogues of his teacher. While only fragments of these early writings survive, it appears that he was quite successful in the use of Socrates' and Plato's favorite way of philosophizing. The praise he received in antiquity from Cicero and Quintilian for his graceful style is probably for his dialogues. But the issues examined in his early writings are also within that set of questions that were Plato's main concern during his middle years – education, immortality of the soul, the nature of philosophy – and his own positions on them do not stray far from those of his teacher. But even in these early writings one can see that Aristotle does not hesitate to pursue lines that deviate from those of Plato. And if the works included in the Aristotelian *Organon* belong, as is commonly thought, to Aristotle's period in the Academy, Plato's student did not hesitate at all to challenge the teacher – indeed, to question some of the pillars of the edifice of Platonism. The relation of Aristotle's thought to that of his teacher is a rather complicated matter, and it will be touched on in the next chapter. What I wish to stress here is that, while we may all agree that Platonism left an indelible mark on Aristotle's thinking, it would be simplistic to suppose that we can identify a stage in his life, or that his stay in the Academy was precisely that stage, during which he was a blind follower of his teacher. Conversely, while Aristotle struck out in many new directions that are different from those taken by Plato and advanced competing theories that challenge fundamental Platonic tenets, it would also be equally simplistic to suppose that we can identify a stage in Aristotle's life when he cleanly and irrevocably broke away from Platonism, thereafter writing works that bear no connection to any of the views or approaches of his teacher.

Scholarly controversies also abound about Aristotle's departure from the Academy, both about the time it happened and his reasons. While Diogenes Laertius reports that Aristotle left the Academy while Plato was still alive, most scholars today believe that he departed soon after Plato died in 347. But what led Aristotle to leave the most prestigious and intellectually stimulating institution of learning of his time? Various reasons have been proposed. I. Düring (1957: 459), for example, has suggested that Aristotle's departure was in response to the rising anti-Macedonian sentiment in Athens after the sacking of Olynthus by Philip in 348. Most likely, this was a factor in Aristotle's decision. But many scholars believe that Aristotle's reasons primarily had to do with the choice of Plato's successor as head of the Academy, the changes that occurred in Plato's school following his death, and Aristotle's deteriorating relationship with him. There might be some truth to the last claim, which is echoed in Plato's alleged remark that "Aristotle spurns me, as colts kick the mother who bore them" (Diogenes Laertius V.1.2). But the most important reason, supposedly, was that he, like Xenocrates (another prominent member of the Academy), was not chosen to succeed Plato as

director of the Academy on account of “doctrinal unorthodoxy” (G. E. R. Lloyd 1968: 4–5), with the position going instead to Plato’s nephew, Speusippus.

We hardly have any direct evidence as to why Aristotle was bypassed for the directorship of the Academy. But it is unlikely that the decision in favor of Speusippus and against both Aristotle and Xenocrates had much to do with doctrinal orthodoxy/unorthodoxy. Speusippus was no more doctrinally orthodox than the other two, having been openly critical of the canonical theory of Forms.<sup>3</sup> W. Jaeger, one of the twentieth century’s most eminent Aristotelian scholars, took the opposite line: He recognized Speusippus’ supposed unorthodoxy (Jaeger 1962: 111) and argued in support of Aristotle’s and Xenocrates’ faithfulness to Platonism, seeing the break of the latter two from the Academy as their response to the choice of a successor to Plato who did not represent Platonism. According to him, “Aristotle’s departure from Athens was the expression of a crisis in his inner life” and “The departure of Aristotle and Xenocrates from the Academy was a secession: They went to Asia Minor in the conviction that Speusippus inherited merely the office and not the spirit [of the Academy]” (pp. 110–11). Jaeger may be right in stressing Speusippus’ deviation from aspects of Platonism, but his assumptions that Aristotle faithfully adhered to Platonism at this stage of his life – a central element in Jaeger’s account of Aristotle’s philosophical development (see ch. 2) – that a doctrinal chasm existed between him and Plato’s successor, and that the latter was the sole reason for Aristotle’s not being chosen to succeed Plato are questionable. As Lloyd (1968: 5) points out, Xenocrates, who eventually succeeded Speusippus, was the one who remained faithful to Platonism and, if that were the basis of choosing Plato’s successor, he, and not Speusippus, should have been the clear choice.

More recently, scholars have posited pragmatic reasons for bypassing Aristotle (and Xenocrates) for head of the Academy that had nothing to do with doctrinal differences among the eligible candidates. Aristotle and Xenocrates were not citizens of Athens and, as a consequence, they faced legal barriers with respect to owning property in the city. Speusippus, on the other hand, was an Athenian citizen and, most importantly, Plato’s relative. This last fact might have been a major factor in his being appointed head of the Academy; it guaranteed that Plato’s property remained in the family. At the same time, Aristotle’s decision to leave Plato’s school and Athens may have had as much, and possibly more, to do with an exceptional opportunity that arose around the time of Plato’s death – namely, to carry out research, with his close associates at an almost ideal setting – than with his being bypassed as Plato’s successor or with alleged doctrinal disagreements among the most prominent members of the Academy. In any case, his leaving Athens does not necessarily mean that he moved away from the circle of the Academy.

### **Period of Travels**

Around the time of Plato’s death, Aristotle was invited by Hermeias, a former fellow-student in Plato’s Academy who had risen from slavery to become the ruler of Atarneus and Assos in the north-western coast of Asia Minor and who maintained close connections with the Macedonian palace, to join a small group of other Academics gathered around him that included Erastus and Coriscus. The Sixth letter attributed to Plato

indicates that he viewed Hermeias' Academic circle as an extension of the Academy. Aristotle moved to Hermeias' court with Xenocrates, to be joined later by Theophrastus of Lesbos – a life-long associate of Aristotle who eventually succeeded him as director of his school upon his death – and Aristotle's nephew Callisthenes. Thus Aristotle's departure from Athens need not imply a complete break from the Academic circle. In the view of Jaeger “nothing more than a colony of the Athenian Academy was taking shape in Assos at this time, and there was laid the foundation of the school of Aristotle.” (p. 115) In speaking of “the foundation of the school of Aristotle,” Jaeger is thinking of areas of study and approaches to inquiry that are associated with Aristotle and his school – i.e., the study of living things, and nature in general, and the empiricist approach. The evidence bears this out. While at the court of Hermeias, Aristotle and his associates embarked on an extensive research program in biology, especially a study of the marine life of the area, which was essentially empirical in its character. It continued when he and his team moved to the nearby island of Lesbos. Place-names in his biological treatises, especially *HA*, indicate that the north-western coast of Asia Minor, the Hellespont, and the Propontis were frequented by Aristotle while carrying out his biological investigations (see Lee 1948; Thompson 1913).

Aristotle's relationship to Hermeias was a close one. He married his niece and adopted daughter, Pythias, with whom he had a daughter by the same name. After Pythias' death, Aristotle lived till his death with a native of Stageira named Herpyllis who, according to Diogenes Laertius (V.1), bore him a son,<sup>4</sup> Nicomachos, for whom his *Nicomachean Ethics* is named. The closeness of the relationship between Aristotle and Hermeias is evident in a hymn and epitaph (see Diogenes Laertius V.6, 7–8) the philosopher composed for his friend; both are highly laudatory of his friend and for that reason they were used against Aristotle in his final days in Athens (see below).

In 342, King Philip of Macedon invited Aristotle to his palace and entrusted him with the education of his son Alexander, who was at the time thirteen years old. Aristotle accepted the invitation, and spent two years in Pella and at the royal estate in Mieza, where there was a complete school. Again, we possess very little concrete information about what Aristotle taught the young Alexander, the future general and empire-builder, and about the kind of relationship the two had, thus leaving much room for speculation. Most scholars believe that while Aristotle's teaching relied heavily on Homer and the tragic poets, he also introduced the young Alexander to political studies and possibly wrote for him two works: on *Monarchy* and on *Colonies*, which are included in lists of Aristotle's works in antiquity but have not survived. Most likely, it was at this time that Aristotle also embarked on his major project of studying many of the existing constitutions (158 of them) in the Greek world.

The relationship between Aristotle and Alexander probably lasted until the latter died. Although tradition has it that Alexander contributed a major sum of money toward Aristotle's school in Athens, it is unlikely that the two were close.<sup>5</sup> Whatever the nature of the relationship was, it was not based on an affinity of their respective views on the end of human life or the best political association for humans. For Aristotle, the contemplative life is the best, happiest, and most pleasant one a human can attain, and he lived such a life. Alexander, on the other hand, chose the life of action and of empire-building. Aristotle argues that war cannot be the final end of human life (*NE* X.7), and while it is most likely that the ultimate objectives of Alexander and his father



aimed beyond warfare and conquest – possibly the Hellenizing of the world of the East – Aristotle seems to have had deep doubts and profound reservations about such a project. He had advised Phillip against trying to build a mixed empire of Hellenic and non-Hellenic subjects, and his steadfast defense of the city-state as the ideal political community reveals his strong opposition to Alexander's objectives. He thought that a state like the one his former pupil was aiming to build was neither conducive to nor necessary for the kind of human flourishing the polis, according to Aristotle, aims to achieve. His remark at *NE* X.8 1179a10 that “it is possible to perform noble acts without being ruler of land and sea,” makes clear what he thought of Alexander's kind of undertaking: conquering the world, building an empire, and engaging in endless warfare are not necessary for attaining the highest goals a human being can aim at. Again, his remarks on states and rulers bent on or giving primacy to war, warrior virtues, and despotic rule over non-free subjects (*Pol* VII.13) are at odds with his former pupil's ambitions.

In 340 Aristotle returned to Stageira, where he stayed until the death of Philip and the latter's succession by Alexander in 336, settling shortly after in Athens once more.

## Second Period in Athens

Aristotle's second stay in Athens, 335–323, is considered the most productive period of his life, the time when he composed or completed most of his major philosophical treatises. This is also the time when he established, with financial support from Alexander, his own school, the Lyceum, named after the area of Athens located just outside the city between the Hill of Lycabettus and the Illisos River, often frequented by Socrates. In the mid-1990s, archaeologists excavated ruins of several structures located in what was the Lyceum area of ancient Athens, which they believe to have been a part of Aristotle's school. Aristotle, not being a citizen of Athens, could not own the property constituting his school; he rented it. The wooded grove of the Lyceum provided an ideal setting for what tradition reports as his favorite way of teaching – taking a walk (*peripatos*) “up and down philosophizing together with his students . . . hence the name ‘Peripatetic’” (Diogenes Laertius V.2). The school is reputed to have had a major library, which contained hundreds of manuscripts, maps, and other objects essential to the teaching of natural science, and became the model of the great libraries of antiquity in Alexandria and Pergamon.<sup>6</sup>

Aristotle spent half his life in Athens, longer than he resided anywhere else. Yet evidence suggests that the city might have never felt like home to him and it, in turn, might not have been very warm to him. As a foreigner non-citizen (*metic*), he did not enjoy all the rights or privileges of Athenians. In a letter to his close friend, Antipater, he complains that “In Athens the same things are not proper for a foreigner as they are for a citizen; it is difficult to stay in Athens” (see *Vita Marciana* in Düring 1957: 105, and the latter's comments, p. 459). Undoubtedly he was self-conscious of his own status as a foreigner in Athens, and when in *Pol* VII.2 1324a14 he asks “which life is more choice-worthy, the one that involves taking part in politics with other people and participating in a city-state or the life of an alien cut off from the political community?”

he is probably articulating something of personal and profound significance to himself.<sup>7</sup> His critical attitude towards Athenian participatory democracy might have rubbed the wrong way ardent supporters of it, especially his exact contemporary Demosthenes,<sup>8</sup> and raised suspicions about him. His stay in Athens came to an abrupt end when Alexander died in 323. Diogenes Laertius (V.1.6) reports that he “was indicted for impiety by Eurymedon” or “according to Favorinus, by Demophilus, the ground of the charge being the hymn he [Aristotle] composed to . . . Hermeias as well as the . . . inscription for his [Hermeias’] statue at Delphi.”

The impiety charge by Eurymedon may not be altogether baseless, given Aristotle’s views on the gods. In the *Met* (983a6, 1072b13, 1074b33) Aristotle sees god as engaging only in self-contemplation; in *NE* he speaks of the gap separating gods from humans (VIII.7) and of the senselessness of thinking about the gods as acting like humans (X.7), claims that sharply contrast with popular religious beliefs of his time. At *Met* Λ.8 1074b Aristotle questions and rejects even more openly the anthropomorphism of popular religion and sides with the view of earlier thinkers that the natural world or the first substance are gods.<sup>9</sup> Eurymedon’s charge of impiety brings to mind the similar charge against Socrates. The latter argues in Plato’s *Apology* that the real reasons behind his indictment had nothing to do with his religious beliefs. There is good reason to believe that the same is true in Aristotle’s case. The timing of the indictment suggests that the reasons were political.

The charge by Demophilus seems to be even less believable, if it was based on the contents of Aristotle’s hymn to and epitaph for Hermeias. There seems to be nothing offensive in them. But again, the real reasons behind the charge might have been different – once more, political. Aristotle’s profuse praises for Hermeias, a person with a life-long connection to the Macedonian palace, most likely, irritated Athenian democrats at a time when anti-Macedonian sentiment was sweeping the city upon Alexander’s death. Aristotle’s connection to Alexander and an even closer one to Antipater – named by Aristotle the executor of his will, a member of the inner circle, and perhaps the closest advisor of Alexander, who appointed him regent of Macedonia and the rest of Greece during his eastern expeditions – made him an obvious target. Aristotle was forced to leave Athens, reportedly in order to “save it from sinning against philosophy twice,” (for the testimonies, see Düring 1957: 341–2) and leave Theophrastus as head of the Lyceum.

### **Last Year in Chalcis, Euboia**

After leaving Athens, Aristotle settled at his mother’s estate in Chalcis, where he died a year later (322). In the biographical tradition, many report that he died on account of his deep sorrow for being unable to explain the natural phenomenon of the powerful tide currents of Euripus, the narrow straight separating Euboia from the Greek mainland.<sup>10</sup> Given Aristotle’s character and life-long pursuit of explanations of natural phenomena, this seems improbable. Most scholars believe that Aristotle died from a chronic intestinal condition.

The appearance, manners, character, personality, and abilities of Aristotle attracted the attention of ancient and later biographers, and some of their comments have sur-

vived (see Düring 1957: 349–51). Diogenes Laertius, for instance, reports that Aristotle “spoke with a lisp . . . his calves were slender, his eyes small, and he was conspicuous by his attire, his rings, and the cut of his hair” (V.1.1); and that Plato, comparing Xenocrates’ quickness of mind to Aristotle’s, said “the one needed a spur [Xenocrates], the other a bridle [Aristotle]” and “see what an ass [Xenocrates] I am training and what a horse [Aristotle] he has to run against” (IV.2.1). But it is difficult to know whether any of these are true. Fortunately, concerning Aristotle’s intellectual abilities, his writings provide ample testimony. Concerning his character, we have his will, which gives us a glimpse into his feelings and attitudes. In it, he leaves instructions for his daughter’s marriage and his son’s supervision, and makes provisions for both of them as well as for Herpyllis, about whom he speaks with affection and gratitude. He asks that his first wife’s bones be buried wherever he is buried, honoring her request. He also makes arrangements for his household slaves, stipulating that none should be sold and that they should be freed when they are of age and if they deserve it. The latter might seem puzzling, given his defense of slavery in his *Pol* (especially I.3–6); but, in fact, it is in agreement with what he promises to discuss in a later book of the same work (*Pol* VII.10 1330a33) but never does. Finally, he leaves instructions for the placements of statues of intimate associates and of his mother that he has already commissioned as well for the commissioning and placement of life-size statues of Zeus and Athena in Stageira. These concerns of his and the whole tenor of his will show Aristotle to have been a person with strong attachments to associates and members of his household, including slaves with whom he might have enjoyed the kind of friendship he deems possible between master and slave (*Pol* I.6 1255b12 and *NE* VIII.11 1161b1). Commenting on the will, Jaeger remarks “There is something affecting in the spectacle of the exile putting his affairs in order. He is constantly calling to mind his home in Stageira and the lonely house of his parents far away . . . Between the lines of the sober dispositions . . . we read a strange language . . . It is the warm tone of true humanity, and at the same time of an almost terrifying gulf between him and the persons by whom he was surrounded. These words were written by a lonely man.” (pp. 320–1)<sup>11</sup> While there might be a bit of hyperbole and speculation on Jaeger’s part here, he is correct in seeing true humanity in Aristotle’s will – a humanity that permeates his practical philosophy, even when he emphasizes the theoretic life. As Jaeger goes on to say, Aristotle’s “full life was not exhausted, as a superficial eye might suppose, by all its science and research. His ‘theoretic life’ was rooted in a second life, hidden and profoundly personal, from which that ideal derived its force. The picture of Aristotle as nothing but a scientist is the reverse of the truth” (p. 361). In Aristotle’s thought, the pull of the theoretic life is strong; yet the life of action guided by practical wisdom and the excellences of character has its rightful place. There is no doubt that Aristotle shared in the first kind of life; his will shows the great extent to which he shared in the second as well.<sup>12</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Timber is one of the two commodities Aristotle mentions in his discussion of the territory of the ideal polis (*Pol* VII.5 1327a8).

<sup>2</sup>Works by Aristotle on dissections appear in all three detailed lists of his works from antiquity and later. Following Düring's (1957) numbering system, they are as follows: in Diogenes Laertius nos. 103 and 104; in Hesychius nos. 93 and 94; in Ptolemy al-Garib no. 48. Works on medicine are: in Diogenes Laertius no. 110; Hesychius nos. 98 and 167; Ptolemy al-Garib no. 99. Works on medicine are also mentioned in *Vita Marciana* and *Vita Lascaris*.

<sup>3</sup>Ross (1995: 3) cites views of Speusippus' on Plato's theories with which Aristotle disagreed; W. Jaeger (1962: 111) goes further, claiming that "Speusippus had himself declared the theory of Ideas untenable during Plato's own lifetime, and had also abandoned the Ideal numbers suggested by Plato in his last period; he differed from him in other fundamental particulars as well." Aristotle criticizes Speusippus' views on the Forms, identifying him by name (*Met Z.2* 1028b21, A.7 1072b30) or his positions (A.9 992a32, M.6 1080b15, 8 1083a20, 9 1085a33).

<sup>4</sup>That Aristotle's son was with Herpyllis is also asserted in *Vita Hesychii* and in Suda, among others, and accepted by Ross (1995: 3) and Lloyd (1968: 8); but there are doubts. Düring, (1957: 262–7), citing a sentence in an Arabic version of Aristotle's will that is missing from the Greek text and other testimony, says that, if we accept this sentence "we must conclude that N[ichomachus] was Aristotle's legitimate son in his marriage with Pythias" (p. 261). J. Barnes (1995: 3) takes the same position.

<sup>5</sup>Comments on the relation between Aristotle and Alexander (and Philip) can be found in the biographical tradition of late antiquity (see Düring 1957: 284–8), but most scholars consider them an unreliable source.

<sup>6</sup>There is diversity of scholarly opinion about many matters relating to Aristotle's school. Despite ancient testimony (see Düring 1957: 404–11) that Aristotle established a school, Düring (pp. 460–1) argues that Aristotle did not found a school like Plato's Academy, and that the peripatetic school was established after his death. Barnes (1982: 5) also doubts that Aristotle established a formal school in the Lyceum; Ackrill (1981: 4) claims that he did. On *peripatos* and the name of Aristotle's school, Diogenes Laertius gives two different accounts, and there are additional ones in the biographical tradition (see Düring, 1957: 405–11). Allan (1978: 5) also rejects the idea that the name of Aristotle's school had anything to do with Aristotle lecturing while walking. As to Aristotle's library, while ancient testimony (see Düring, 1957: 337–8) supports the existence of it in Aristotle's school, Düring himself (p. 338) concludes that, while Aristotle owned many books, he kept them at his house. For a more detailed discussion on Aristotle's school, see J. Lynch (1972).

<sup>7</sup>According to Düring (1957: 459), "at the age of seventeen he [Aristotle] came as a stranger to Athens. He was looked upon as a stranger throughout his life."

<sup>8</sup>For a discussion of the parallel lives of Aristotle and Demosthenes and their respective views on rights and democracy, see Fred D. Miller, Jr., in G. Anagnostopoulos (ed.), *Law and Rights in the Ancient Greek Tradition*, Supplementary Volume of *Philosophical Inquiry* (Athens, 2006), pp. 27–60.

<sup>9</sup>"Our forefathers in the most remote ages have handed down to their posterity a tradition, in the form of myth, that these bodies are gods and that the divine encloses the whole of nature. The rest of the tradition has been added later in mythical form with a view of the persuasion of the multitude and to its utilitarian expediency; they say these gods are in the form of men . . . But if one were to separate the first point from these additions and take it alone – that they thought the first substance to be gods, one must regard this as an inspired utterance."

<sup>10</sup>See the accounts of Justin Martyr, Gregorius Nazianzenus, Procopius, and Eustathius about the connection between Aristotle's death and his inability to explain the tides of Euripus in Düring (1957: 347).

<sup>11</sup>Düring (p. 462) reaches conclusions similar to Jaeger's: "Aristotle left Athens in the middle of a political turmoil and died the same year, a lonely man. He had few real friends and numerous enemies."

<sup>12</sup>I would like to thank Gerasimos Santas and Andreas Anagnostopoulos for helpful comments and suggestions.

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