

The Family In Aristotle¹

In memoriam J. A. Doull

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Introduction

The principal sources for Aristotle's account of the family are *Politics* I and II and *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII.² In *Politics* I, the *oikos* (family, household) is defined as that specific form of *koinwnia* (community, association) which integrates individuals into a common life that enables them to become, as members of an *oikos*, members of a *polis* (political community, city-state) as well. In *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, the family is defined as that specific form of *philia* (love, friendship) that forms the basis of kinship (*suggenikê*) rooted in parental love (*patrikê*), which in turn rests upon the good will (*eunoia*) of spousal *philia*. In the spousal relationship, the natural origins of society and political community are overcome and the ethical foundation of human life, for both individual and community, is obtained in the rule of reason. Taken together, the *Politics* and *Ethics* define the family as a form of community based on a form of friendship (*philia*), the principle of which is self-love (*philautia*). Spousal *philia* is the true basis of the family in the *Ethics*, and this is true of the *Politics* as well, where the *oikos* is specified as the *koinwnia* of husband and wife. It is from this standpoint that Aristotle regards the family primarily as an ethical institution that invests natural ties of kinship and affection with meaning and value.

¹ This paper is in aid of a monograph on the family in Plato and Aristotle as a fundamentally spiritual institution that transcends its natural origins and has for its end the same activity on which rests the good of the state, namely, the acquisition of a practical virtue necessary to the contemplative life. It draws on two conference papers, 'To *koinon* and to *idion* as principles of the family in Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*' (1997 meeting of the Classical Association of Canada, St. John's, NF), and 'Meros *polews*: Aristotle's study of the *oikos* in *Politics* I' (1998 meeting of the Atlantic Classical Association, Sackville, NB).

² Reference in Stephanus pages to the *Republic* are to J. Burnet, ed., *Platonis Res Publica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1902); reference in Bekker pages to the *Politics* and *Ethics* are to A. Dreizehnter, *Aristoteles' Politik* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970) and I. Bywater, *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* (Oxford 1894; rep. 1970.) Translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated. Secondary literature is cited by author and title abbreviation, with full documentation provided in the bibliography. Principal commentaries consulted are those of Jowett (1885), Susemihl and Hicks (1894), Newman (1902) and Saunders (1995).

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Aristotelian scholars have generally paid insufficient attention to the logic that identifies the nature of the spousal relationship as constituting the rational basis of the Aristotelian *oikos* and, thereby, of the *polis* as well. In particular, they have failed to differentiate sufficiently between the physical relationship of male and female on the one hand, and the social relationship of husband and wife on the other, tending rather to conflate the two.³ Consequently, they have underestimated the equalisation of the natural inequality of male and female in a spousal relationship based on a mutual rational virtue that transcends the natural association rooted in sexual instinct and forms the basis of the free and equal partnership of husband and wife.⁴ The *oikos* appears in most accounts as natural both in origin and end, thereby justifying Aristotle's claim that the *polis* is natural, with the transition from an animal existence to a rational life taking place only in the *polis*. The main contention of this argument is that this transition from natural immediacy to human rationality (what has been called 'the transivity of naturalness principle') first takes place in the spousal relationship. For this reason, the family can be said to form the natural foundation of political life and yet also be treated as a 'political' relationship.

That Aristotle views the family as essentially a rational institution, and that he obtained this view most directly from Plato, is demonstrated by his criticism of Plato's view of the

³ "The family is formed by nature out of the two smallest natural unions, of husband and wife, and of master and slave, solely for the support and propagation of life." Susemihl and Hicks *PA* 98. "From his observation of this process of growth of the polis out of the erotic union of male and female, Aristotle concludes that the polis exists by nature" (Booth *PH* 209, for whom "the family is a purer image of the natural order than is politics," 212.) For Mulgan, Aristotle's *oikos* is defined by its dogmatic entrenchment in those natural differences that it fails to transcend. "Initially he derives the naturalness of the household from the supposed fact that the rule of husband over wife and of master over slave accord with innate natural characteristics in human beings. We can now see that he offers no convincing empirical evidence for the existence of these innate characteristics. Instead his belief in them seems to depend on the assumption that the household itself must be natural. Because the household meets what to Aristotle are essential human needs, its relationships must be founded on natural differences, even if these are not readily discoverable by empirical observation" *APT* 46-47. "The continuation of the human species requires two primitive forms of interpersonal relation, that between male and female for the purpose of reproduction and that between master and slave for survival. Hence the most primitive social unit is that constituted by individuals bearing those relations to one another, viz., the household (*oikia*)...Households and villages are thus natural forms of association in that they develop in response to certain human needs." Taylor *P* 236. As with Saunders, the transition from the physical to the rational aspect of human 'nature' (i.e. the operation of the 'transivity of naturalness principle' Miller *NJR* 42, Saunders *AP* 68) is generally thought to take place in the transition from *oikos* to *polis*: "Man is an 'animal' naturally fitted to live in a *polis* (1253a2-3); he has a 'natural' impulse (1253a29-30) towards that kind of association. This impulse generates partly instinctive and partly calculated choices and actions over a long period of history; it thus constitutes an inner source of change and development from primitive beginnings (the 'pairings', household, village) into ... the *polis*. This is the complete and developed form of association, in that it is 'self-sufficient'...; it caters for all man's needs (not merely physical ones), and so enables him to fulfil his nature as a man" *AP* 62. See also Miller *NJR* 40-45 for further discussion of the teleological assumptions implied in the 'transivity principle of naturalness'.

⁴ "If the household is natural, so too must be the inferior status of women" Mulgan *APT* 45. "In some respects, Aristotle's treatment of the position of women is more culpable than his more commonly castigated justification of slavery." *APT* 46. "The first stage in this process of growth [of the *polis*] is the union of male and female, and this coupled with the joining of master and slave, form the household, an association for the 'satisfaction of daily recurrent wants'. Slave and wife, then, are subject to the rule of the master of the house...The difference between the woman and the slave is emphasized here, though the reason for this is left obscure." Booth *PH* 209.

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family (chiefly as it appears in the *Republic*) in *Politics* II. Plato's *Republic* discloses how the unity of the state depends on the unity of the family by undoing the popular assumption that family and state are independently grounded in opposed principles, the state in what is common according to reason, *to koinon*, the family in what is private according to nature, *to idion*.⁵ *To koinon* is there presented as the sole principle of all forms of *koinwnia*: state, family, individual and soul; *to idion* appears as the principle of division, strife and self-destruction in states, souls, individuals and families. Aristotle chiefly criticizes Plato's logic by which the unity of the state is made dependent on the unity of the family; yet, his criticism is more a reappraisal of Plato's position than a mere rejection of it. That Aristotle would preserve the private household in its independence as the fundamental unit of political *koinwnia* (*Politics* I, 1253b1) is not simply a rejection of Plato's overreaching idealism in favor of an empirical return to the historical independence of the *oikos* from the *polis*. The Aristotelian *oikos* does not exist apart in a natural independence from the *polis*, and its preservation in *Politics* I is precisely as part of the larger unfolding of the rational life of the *polis*. It is only in Aristotle's view of the common good of the *polis* (*to koinon*) as a synthesis of private interests (*ta idia*) that the *oikos* is preserved in its integrity as essential to the *polis*. That is a logic more easily derived from the Platonic reduction of family and state to *to koinon* as a single unifying principle than from their historical independence, popularly regarded as based on the contrariety of *to idion* and *to koinon*.

Aristotle's teaching on the family has found much less favour in studies of women in classical antiquity than Plato's teaching, which appears 'enlightened' by comparison.⁶ The relationships that constitute Aristotle's household, and form the basis of what he considers a moral and just society, may appear to us unquestionably immoral and unjust, based as they are on slavery, patriarchy and chauvinism. If we disagree with Aristotle, it is likely because we do not regard our humanity as ultimately subject to the natural limitations of sex, age, and function. The limit of Aristotle's humanism is that it is not

⁵ Doull sees it inversely: "that the state depends primarily on the good Plato brings into view by a dialectic which undoes the hypotheses that it rests on the family or on the wealth and independence of a military-political class," *HCHV* 9, n.9. What makes Doull's remark of interest is that it is not based on the errant view that the family is opposed to the state as a natural institution grounded in biological ties. He criticizes Plato for having a limited grasp of the Hellenic family as a religious institution: 'Plato had perceived rightly that the Hellenic family, which had its independent relation to the gods and could expect an unqualified attachment from its members, was the final impediment and threat to the formation of a political community which should know and be obedient to the good and a just ordering of human interests to it....What Plato would evade as destructive of any stable peace in human affairs, namely that there should be two equal and opposed relations to the highest good, occurred in fact among the Greeks, being indeed the essential structure of Hellenic institutions' (*COCI* 127).

⁶ "Under the scrutiny of feminist theory Aristotle has emerged in the last decade as one of the founders and major exponents of the misogynist strain dominating much of the Western intellectual tradition" Saxonhouse, *FPU* 202. For examples of the common opinion favouring Plato the 'revolutionary profeminist' as against Aristotle the 'traditional misogynist', see Fantham, Foley, Kampen, Pomeroy, and Shapiro, *WCW* 122; Blundell, *WAG* 181-87. See also Mulgan, "[Aristotle's] attitude toward the role and status of women reflects, as we would expect, the attitudes prevalent in his own society...Though he usually parades his differences from Plato, he gives very little attention to Plato's radical suggestion that women should be politically and socially equal ... made possible by ... his abolition of the household. Aristotle, by supporting the retention of the household on the grounds of the value of personal family relationships and private property, is thereby committed to opposing the equality of women" *APT* 44-45.

unconditional. It is a reasoned account of human nature and social development based partly on theory, partly on observation. He inquires into whether all humanity possesses the same rational nature and virtue, and finds it an unjustifiable doctrine. Our differences in human potential are provided by nature; we are born neither free nor autonomous. Our freedom and happiness is conditional upon our joining together properly according to our specific function as parts that form a natural whole. The natural path by which we must fulfil our human potential is by way of the association of male and female, master and slave, parent and child. Unlike animals governed by mere instinct, however, we must ultimately realise our human nature by living together within institutions based on the exercise of the specifically human faculty of reason. Other societies, which do not follow nature's lead, never attain to that degree of rational freedom and virtue that is possible for the human.

Of greatest interest is the pivotal role that Aristotle gives to the spousal relationship in his account of the development of family and state. In Aristotle's view, the social basis of political and ethical life is the free and relatively egalitarian relationship of husband and wife as partners in a common life founded on the cultivation and enjoyment of virtue. While this may fall short of a more radical assertion of the freedom and dignity of the human to be found in Christian and subsequent thinking, it remains the most important and enduring assertion in antiquity of the conditional freedom and dignity of women (and men) as forming the basis of a truly human society.

I. *Meros Polews: The Family In Politics I.*

Aristotle's argument in *Politics I* presents the *oikos* as that species of *koinwnia* (common life, community, association, relationship) necessary to constitute a *polis*.⁷ In chapter one, we learn that the *oikos* is a different species of *koinwnia* from that of the *polis*. Yet, they are both forms of *koinwnia*, and the *polis* is the most complete form of *koinwnia*, containing the different and less complete forms of *koinwnia*, including that of the *oikos*, within itself. Plato, says Aristotle, does not understand that political community is of a different kind than domestic community: that the *polis* is not just a large *oikos*. *Oikos* and *polis* are distinct forms of *koinwnia*; yet, not wholly distinct. To study the *polis*, we should examine the elements of which it is composed, the lesser forms of *koinwnia* out of which the most complete form of *koinwnia* evolves.

⁷ A *polis* is a species of community, other species being the household, the village, and the nation. The various kinds are defined by the different forms of rule or subordination (*archê*) which govern the activities of their members. The rule of master over slave, of the patriarch over wife and children, and of monarch over subjects are different forms of rule from political rule, which we saw to be a) exercised over free and equal subjects (1255b20) and b) exercised with a view to promoting the common interest (1279a16-21). So a *polis* is by definition a community of individuals who participate in the government of the community.' Taylor *P* 243. Cf. Booth on Aristotle's definition of *polis* and *oikos* as species of the genus *koinwnia* in *Pol I: PHCAP* 216-7; also Salomon: 'l'Etat est une certaine espe\ce de communauté (*koinwnia tina* [citing *Pol* 1252a1]' (*CBAP* 177). Again, the Aristotelian reduction of family and state to a single genus of *koinwnia*, while it preserves the family, appears closer to their Platonic reduction to a single form of *koinwnia* than to their historical independence as separate and even fundamentally opposed.

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Chapter two studies the origin of the *polis* in the *oikos*, and that of the *oikos* in two distinct relations that occur naturally among individuals: the *koinwnia* of male and female, and the *koinwnia* of master and slave. The *oikos* arises from these relations among individuals; the *polis* arises out of relations among *oikoi*. The *polis* is, therefore, "by nature prior to the *oikos* and to the individual", just as the body as a whole is prior to its individual members. Chapter three proposes that, since "every *polis* is composed out of *oikoi*" (*pasa gar sugkeitai polis ex oikiwn* 3.1253b2), it belongs to the study of the *polis* to make a study of the elements which make up the *oikos*: the relation of master and slave, husband and wife, and parent and child. This study is completed in the final chapters of book one, chapters twelve and thirteen.

Chapters four through eleven examines the nature of *oikonomia* or household management. Under this heading, he refines his views on slavery in chapters four through eight, then, in chapters nine through eleven, considers the acquisition of wealth. At the end of book one, Aristotle sums up in a single phrase the principal assumption that underlies his study of the *oikos* in *Politics* I: "every *oikos* is part of a *polis*" (*oikia men pasa meros polews* 13.1260b13).

A. Defining the oikos.

(i) Greek *oikos* and non-Greek household.

We learn from chapters one and two that not every state is a *polis*, nor every household an *oikos*. Greek societies are true political societies because they are *polis*-societies composed of *oikoi*. Conversely, they are societies composed of *oikoi* because the *oikoi* belong to *poleis*. Non-Greeks (*barbaroi*) live in non-*polis* societies composed of households that are not true *oikoi*.

It is natural for Aristotle to make his point by comparing the ways of Greeks and non-Greeks or *barbaroi* (2.1252a34-b9). About the *barbaroi*, he remarks in book seven that they are "intelligent and inventive, but wanting in spirit, and therefore always in a state of subjection and slavery" (Jowett *BWA Pol* VII.1327b20-30). Intellect is not wanting in the *barbaroi*; rather, it is their apparent failure to realize the good of intellect that Aristotle finds slavish. Hellene and barbarian were, of course, ethnic or cultural distinctions, based on language and custom.

The principal difference between the Greek *polis* and non-Greek society is that one is slave, the other free. Non-Greek societies do not recognize the distinction between free and slave. Non-Greek wives are treated as slaves. This failure to distinguish properly between free and slave means that the non-Greek household is an association of male and female slaves. Non-Greek societies are slave states composed of slave-households. Greek societies are based on the distinction between free and slave. Greek wives are not regarded as slaves, and thus Greek *oikoi* are associations of free men and women. The Greek *polis* is a free society made up of *oikoi*. The *oikos* is a *koinwnia* of free

individuals. By virtue of which element, then, is the *oikos* free?

(ii) *Koinwnia* of male and female: *genêsis* (reproduction).

The Greek *oikos* originates in two associations that occur naturally among individuals: the *koinwnia* of male and female, and the *koinwnia* of master and slave (2.1252a24-34).

It is a matter of natural necessity, not of choice (*anagkê ... ouk ek proairesews* 1252a26-31), that one exists as male or female and desires union with the opposite sex to reproduce another like one's self. The *koinwnia* of male and female is common to all living things: plants, animals and human beings. It is common also to both Greek and non-Greek households. There is neither free nor slave in these unions: the distinction between the Greek *oikos* and the non-Greek slave household has not yet appeared.

The *koinwnia* of male and female is not of itself an *oikos*. The species of *koinwnia* that is the *oikos* has its origin only partly in this natural desire of individuals to reproduce through one another that is common to all living things. Specific to the *oikos* as a species of *koinwnia* is the distinction of free and unfree, which is lacking in the relationship between individuals who unite to reproduce, whether plant, animal or human. The *oikos* is a *koinwnia* of free individuals. This distinction of free and unfree appears among human individuals not in their association as male and female, but in their association as master and slave.

(iii) *Koinwnia* of master slave: *swtêria* (survival).

Like male and female, the *koinwnia* of master and slave is natural and necessary; not a matter of convention, or of choice: like male and female, the existence of one presupposes the co-existence of the other. But unlike male and female, master and slave is a distinctively human association. While the union of male and female is common to all living things, the association of master and slave is natural only to the human. An ox might be a poor man's slave, but this is to substitute an animal for a man. The natural slave must possess a rational nature, which distinguishes the human as a species of animal (2.1252b9-15).

The association of master and slave is first likened to the association of soul and body. In the individual, the body is the natural slave of the soul (5.1254b15-22). In his final reflection on the relation of ruler and ruled (*archon, archomenon*) at the end of book one, Aristotle decides that master and slave is really more like that between the rational and irrational (co-rational?) elements within the human soul. In natural slavery, both parties must possess the capacity for reason, but differently. What Aristotle emphasises is that the slave qua slave must share in the rational principle, and possess the virtue of it, if the slave is to be able to carry out the command of reason.

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Conventional slavery confuses the slave and the free; slavery is just only when it is an association of the naturally ruling and the naturally ruled, for the benefit of their mutual *soteria*. Whatever we think of it, Aristotle's position is clear: the institution of slavery is the natural and necessary basis of a free society. It is also just, in the sense that it rests on the natural capacities for a rational life on the part of both ruler and ruled, master and slave. As for our own confidence that human freedom is so immediately in our possession that we should consider slavery as the very evil by which we are deprived of it, Aristotle might well gaze upon us with all the wonder that Ferdinand draws from Miranda, who says of him, " I might call him a thing divine, for nothing natural I ever saw so noble." (*Tempest* I. ii. ll. 419-20)

(iv) *Koinwnia* of free male and female: *pasa hemera* (daily life).

Out of these two *koinwniai* (man and woman, master and slave), first is the *oikos*. ...The *oikos* is the *koinwnia* naturally constituted with respect to daily life (1252b9-14).

The *oikos* is compounded of these two associations: male and female (*thêlu, arren*), master and slave (*despotês, doulos*). Neither of these associations constitutes an *oikos*, nor is an *oikos* merely any composite of the two. It would not be an *oikos*, for instance, if a free man were to beget his children by female slaves. The confusion of the association of male and female with that of master and slave confounds the generation of the *oikos*. The *oikos* does not arise in non-Greek society, which confuses women and slaves. Such confusion gives rise, not to the *oikos*, but to the *koinwnia* of male and female slaves (*hê koinwnia doulês kai doulou* 1252b6).⁸ The slave household is not an *oikos*. The *oikos* is that species of *koinoina* which properly combines these two different kinds of *koinwnia* among individuals in such a way as to constitute a single new form of *koinwnia*. The *oikos* is the *teleios ek doulwn kai eleutherwn* (1253b4), the completion that arises of the union of the slave and the free. It is principally the *koinwnia* of free men and women, who share the rational capacity for ruling themselves and their slaves, that constitutes the *oikos*.

The *koinwnia* of male and female provides for *genesis*; that of master and slave for *soteria*. The *oikos* is the species of *koinwnia* that contains these lesser ends within the more comprehensive end of providing for *pasa hemera*, for the daily needs of its members. The members of the *oikos* share common names, such as *homosipuoî*, 'of the same cupboard,' and *homokapoi*, 'of the same manger'. The basic needs of individuals are ephemeral, but the *oikos* is not. It is precisely the life of the *oikos* that frees individuals of an ephemeral existence and unites them in a common life that transcends

⁸ "The naturally ruling element lacking among non-Greeks (*barbaroi*) is one rational enough to distinguish the natural roles of women and slave...; hence non-Greek authorities (heads of households? kings?) are effectively, by stunted development, themselves slaves" Saunders 65.

it.⁹

(v) *Koinwnia* of *oikoi*: *oikos* as *meros polews*.

*proteron de tēi phusei polis ē oikia kai hekastos hēmōn
estin. to gar holon proteron anankaion einai tou merous*

By nature the *polis* is prior to the *oikos* and to each of us as individuals. For the whole is necessarily prior to the part.
(1253a19-20)

Just as the *polis* is a *koinwnia* of *oikoi* in virtue of its difference from the *oikos* as a species of *koinwnia*, so is the *oikos* a *koinwnia* of individuals in virtue of its difference from the more elementary forms of *koinwnia* that exist among individuals. The *oikos*, as the *koinwnia* of free male and female is the first *koinwnia* to arise out of the *koinwnia* of male and female, master and slave. The *oikos* naturally gives rise to the village (*kwmê*), a colony of separate *oikoi* born of a single *oikos* (*apoikia oikias*). The *kwmê* is the first species of *koinwnia* to aim at something more than our daily life, for what appears in the *kwmê* is the first form of government, modeled on the patriarchal household. The *polis* arises out of a *koinwnia* of *kwmai*. The distinction between a patriarchal community and a *polis* is that the *polis* is a unity of *oikoi* that are not related by ties of blood and marriage. The *kwmê* dissolves into the *polis*, since the patriarch must be replaced by the statesman as the head of government. The basic unit of the *polis* therefore remains the *oikos*. The *polis* is a *koinwnia* of independent *oikoi*, whose various ties of kinship are politically irrelevant. Ultimately, then, the life of the *oikos* gives rise to the *polis*. The *polis* has its origin in the *oikos*, but the *oikos* has its end in the *polis*. The *oikos* has a specific end of its own, but it has also an end beyond itself. This is no more than to say that all citizens

⁹ Saunders translates the logic of Aristotle's argument into a historical development that provides a useful illustration of the development taken beyond physical want, and as pointing to the further development of the spousal relationship in *EN*. "[T]he household was formed 'from these two associations' (i.e. man/woman, master/slave). Now when 'from' (*ek*) is used in [chapters] 4 and 5 of the later emergence of the village and state, it is clear that the associations 'from' which they were formed existed antecedently. Aristotle may then have envisaged a genuinely historical pre-household period in which a man might have ... either or both of a woman (or several) 'for breeding', and a slave (or several) 'for preservation'; and that he operated these two associations more or less independently, perhaps only occasionally... When however he combines the associations he has a household (he is an *oikonomikon* animal, 'fit for a household: *EE* 1242a23), in which a much wider and more constant range of cooperative activities than breeding and preservation can be pursued; and that ...is the point of the 'needs of every day' ... In the household, these two associations and their two purposes are obviously not overtaken or replaced. As *EN* 1162a17-22 explains, human beings live together not just for procreation, which we share with animals ..., but for the purposes of life. Breeding and preservation are the basis for the household's enlarged range of activity, which enables them to be achieved in greater security and comfort; and security and comfort are steps on the way to happiness ... Life in an early household may nevertheless have been rather grim. *EE* 1242a19-b2 and *EN* 1160b22-1162a33 explore the varieties of justice and friendship that exist within households as Aristotle knew them much later, in the economic, social, and ethical context of the state--and that would make a considerable difference. At any rate, in the household of his day he saw 'the origins and founts of friendship, of a constitution (*politeia*: perhaps citizenship?), and of justice (*EE* 1252a40-b12 ...)" *AP* 65-66.

of a *polis* must be members of separate *oikoi*, and that the head of every *oikos* must be a citizen of a *polis*.

B. Analysing the oikos.

(i) Species of rule within the *oikos*.

Chapter three specifies the relationships that constitute the parts of an *oikos*: master and slave, husband and wife, parent and child. (Aristotle, of course, is explicitly patriarchal and chauvinist: he speaks of *despotikê*, *patrikê* and *gamikê*). At this point the *koinwnia* of the free male and female which constitutes the basis of the *oikos* is identified as the relationship of husband and wife (*posis, allochos*).

In chapter twelve, Aristotle categorises these relationships as different species of rule (*archê*), each composed of two elements, the natural ruler (*archon*) and the naturally ruled (*archomenon*).

The relationship of master to slave is despotic, since it is a matter of ownership. The master owns the slave; the slave is the property of the master. The relationship of parent to child is monarchic, since both parties are free, but one is morally subject to the other by right of natural affection (*philia*) and seniority. The relationship of husband to wife is essentially political, with the exception that it is natural for the husband always to hold office, never the wife. The main point, however, is that husband and wife are not only free, like their children, but also, unlike their children, equal. To put it yet another way: as male and female, the woman is subject to the man as his natural inferior; as husband and wife, they are equal.

It is the free and equal relationship of husband and wife that constitutes the *oikos* as *meros polews*. Within itself, as a patriarchal household, the *oikos* is monarchic, just as the earliest form of government is patriarchal monarchy. But it is not the monarchic character of patriarchal rule that gives rise to a political community of free citizens. Rather, it is only when that is superseded and a political order is established on another basis than that of patriarchy, that the *polis* appears as a community of *oikoi* not unified by ties of kinship. The root of political *koinwnia* is the *koinwnia* of the free man and woman that constitutes the basis of the *oikos*. It is the free and relatively egalitarian relationship between husband and wife in the *oikos* that is the origin and basis of political society.¹⁰

(ii) Species of virtue within the *oikos*.

¹⁰ "[The woman] is nearer to being the natural equal of her husband in rationality and deliberative power than she is to being as sharply different from him as would be implied by the kingly and aristocratic models... Her deliberative faculty requires consultation, argument, and persuasion...; to that extent, she has to be treated as one statesman treats another. Aristotle saw advantage in this continuity between domestic and political practice; for he regarded those virtues practised in the home as the 'origins and founts' of those practised in the state itself [citing *EN* 1160b22 ff.]" Saunders *AP* 96-97

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Chapter thirteen presents the *oikos* as concerned principally with the cultivation of virtue. It is, like the *polis*, an ethical or spiritual institution.

Clearly, therefore, *oikonomia* is more concerned with persons than with the acquisition of material possessions, and more with their acquisition of virtue than with their materialistic acquisition of what we call wealth, and more with the free persons [of a household] than with its slaves (13.1259b18-21).

The transition from economic to ethical life takes place in the intervening chapters of four to eleven, which, for the sake of expediency, we skipped over. The main point of that discussion is that, while the *oikos* is the species of *koinwnia* established with a view to daily life, the true end of economic life is not material gain. Private property is justified by Aristotle not for the sake of amassing wealth, but for the sake of acquiring virtue.¹¹ A study of the *oikos* as an ethical institution would take us to the account of the friendship of virtue between husband and wife in *N.E.* VIII 7-12. Here, the ethical life of the *oikos* is of concern only to the extent that it is the source of civic virtue required of citizens. It is precisely as the species of *koinwnia* in which individuals acquire virtue that the *oikos* overlaps with the *polis*. It is here, finally, in the ethical life of the family, that we understand in the deepest sense why every *polis* must be composed of *oikoi*, and that every *oikos* must be part of a *polis*.

For since every *oikos* is part of a *polis*, and these [relationships of husband and wife, parent and child] are parts of an *oikos*, and the virtue of the parts must look to the virtue of the whole, it is necessary that both wives and children be educated with the *politeia* in mind, if the excellence (*spoudaios*) of wives and that of children makes any difference with regard to the excellence of the *polis*. Necessarily, it does make a difference, since wives are half of the free citizens, and from children are generated the community of citizens (13.1260b13-20).

The virtue of slaves, wives, husbands, and children accords with their rational nature that suits them to their specific role in the appropriate relationship of ruler and ruled. The *archon* in all these relationships is the patriarchal head of the household: he must possess the rational nature in full to perform his function as master, husband and father. His wife, their children and slaves, are all *archomena*. Slaves are rational but unable to deliberate; the rational nature of children is immature. The wife and mistress of the household has the rational nature of a female: she is able to deliberate, but lacks sovereignty (*akuron*1260a13). The virtues of husband and wife are complementary: the exercise of his active virtue requires that she exercise her passive virtue, and vice-versa. It is, like the other relationships that constitute the *oikos* of master and slave, parent and child,

¹¹ "Aristotle distinguishes between acquisition which is justified and should properly be a concern of the head of the household and acquisition which should be avoided." Mulgan *APT* 48. Miller emphasizes that Aristotle's dictum, "'private ownership, common use' implies that property owners ought to put their property to virtuous uses, thereby benefitting others" *NJR* 330. Aristotle's concept of private property is discussed below in conjunction with his criticism of Plato.

mutually beneficial. Though still a relationship of unequals, their relationship has a greater degree of reciprocity than the others, since it assumes a woman's capacity for friendship with her husband. Without the possibility of virtuous friendship between husband and wife, the life of the *oikos* could not give rise to that of the *polis*. For without the friendship of his wife, the patriarch could not exercise his specific virtue as head of the household for self-government, which the *polis* assumes present in its active citizenry, the patriarchal heads of *oikoi*, who rule their households by virtue of their full capacity for deliberation.

When we look to the nature of the *philia* that has risen out of the natural inequality of male and female natures and virtues, we see in it the true ground of their relationship as husband and wife, as one in which all share equally the common good of their unity. It is only when we look to this unified aspect of what is shared--and what is shared is happiness, the good of each that is realised in its completion through the other--that we can come to see the family for what it is really. The *oikos* then appears as an unity in which each belongs to all, and all belong to each. In this view, the family is the practical form in which the happiness of individual members is realised in common with others. That is what is most distinctive about Aristotle's view of the family: that it is the good, not of one, but equally of all. That this is the case comes more fully into view in the *Ethics* where the family is studied as a species of *philia*.¹²

II. Spousal *Philia*: The Family In *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII.¹³

(i) *Philia* and *philanthropeia*.

According to the *Ethics*, 'every *philia* exists in a *koinwnia*' (*en koinwnia men oun pasa philia estin* 12.1161b11). The species of *philia* which depend upon the *oikos* can easily be separated from non-familial relations as originating in a common parental *philia*.

One might distinguish [among the forms of *philia*] that of kindred and that of friends.... There appears to be many kinds of friendship of kindred, but they all depend on their derivation from parental friendship (*pasa ek*

¹² "Characterizing the household as a place of inequality and affection, Aristotle seems to be contradicting his claim in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that persons who are separated by some wide gap in virtue cannot be friends (1158b33-35, 1159a5). And if household members cannot be friends, then the household cannot be a model for the best regime, for "friendship seems to hold cities together, and legislators seem to concern themselves seriously with friendship more than with justice" (1155a22-24). But, although it is true that family members are not ordinarily complete and enduring friends in the way that those who are "equal and similar" in virtue can be (*NE* 1159b2-4), they can be friends of a lesser sort ... Moreover, Aristotle opens the possibility that family members can be complete friends if the party of lesser virtue loves the party of greater virtue to such an extent as to compensate for inferiority: 'This above all is the way for unequals ... to be friends, since this is the way for them to be equalized' (1159b1-2)." Swanson *PPA* 27-28.

¹³ A thoughtful treatment of the spousal relationship as a form of "character friendship" can be found in Cooper *AF*.

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tês patrikês); for parents love their children as being something of themselves, and children love their parents as being something that comes from them (12.1161b12-19).

For Aristotle (as with Plato), the family is not simply a natural community rooted in blood-ties. It is not the biological tie per se that is significant, but the bond of natural affection that invests the blood-tie with ethical significance. It is this *spiritual investment* of natural ties of blood and affection that is the nexus of familial relationships, which are here regarded as various forms of *philia* developed out of parental *philia*. Perhaps what is most important about Aristotle's account of the family in the *Ethics* is simply that it is considered as a species of *philia*.¹⁴ That *philia* is properly regarded as a spiritual principle is made clear at the beginning of *EN VIII* by his observation of how it gives rise to *philanthropia*.

Aristotle's account of *philia* begins with a set of general observations, among which is his observation that *philia* appears as a natural unifying principle in families and societies, both animal and human.

[*Philia*] seems to arise by nature (*phusei*) within the begetter in relation to the begotten and within the begotten in relation to the begetter, not only among humans but also among birds and most animals, and among those of the same *ethnos* (nation, ethnicity) in relation to one another, and especially among humans, whence we praise *philanthropoi* (1.1155a17-21).

Philia here appears as a kind of instinctual bond, which most particularly binds parent and child, and more generally unites members of the same species. It is a sort of 'species love' by which we instinctively bond to others as our own, as those to whom we belong as members of one *koinwnia*, rather than another. The human species shares this 'species love' with other animal species, but it is observed by Aristotle to exist especially among humans, where it manifests itself in that universal love of humanity for which we praise a few individuals as *philanthropoi*.

Aristotle's casual observation of familial affection alongside humanitarianism might suggest that familial love is the principle of philanthropy. But while the particularity of the parental tie is more universal in its appearance and thus cause for considering *philia* a natural principle, it is the more general love of the human race, which more rarely occurs

¹⁴ "That households are natural also does not mean that human beings establish them simply by instinct, without exercising judgement or choice. Nature, after all, includes human nature, and thus the ability to discriminate. Marriage is the work or result of friendship, and 'friendship is the [intentional] choice of living together" (Pol 1280b36-39)" Swanson *PPA* 26. Compare Saxonhouse's favourable estimation of Aristotle's view of the family, limited by her emphatic insistence on the continued presence of natural hierarchy. "The value of the family for Aristotle is not that it brings about subordination, but that it provides the orderly community of love and friendship, the natural hierarchy whose stability offers the preconditions for the pursuit of virtue. Though the family may not always conform perfectly to the rule of superior over inferior, it appears to order itself naturally, to be founded on a natural hierarchy that the city composed of supposed equals can only pretend to approximate." *WHPT* 85.

in individuals, that is defined as most specific to the human species. 'Species love' in two of its forms, then, is common to all genera of animal: in a most general way what unites us as 'birds of a feather'; in the most particular way, what unites us as parent and child. Philanthropy, however, is specific only to human beings, where it is praised by most as the love of all attained by the few, as a kind of heroic virtue. What distinguishes philanthropy from mere social instinct is that it involves the rational element of self-consciousness by which alone one can love others in their generic identity as members of the same species. Philanthropy, the form of *philia* most specific to the human species as the *philia* of the species *anthrwpōs*, is a love or friendship grounded in the rational apprehension of the principle unifying the species. Philanthropy is the love of the human qua human, i.e. rational animal. In our reason abides our humanity, our capacity for philanthropy, as for instance, when Socrates confesses to Euthyphro that, 'I am afraid that my *philanthrwpia* makes the Athenians think that I pour out to anybody anything I have to say, not only without charging a fee but even glad to reward anyone who is willing to listen.' (Grube, *Euthyphro* 3d)

In every other creature, and in our own animal nature, 'species love' appears merely as the natural bond of affection that exists immediately, without the conscious mediation of knowledge and will, of deliberation and choice that are the foundation of ethical life. But we are that species of animal whose distinguishing feature is the rational faculty by which we are capable of a life higher than that of the natural and necessary, of the ethical life of ends freely chosen and pursued. Only among ourselves, and here more rarely than not, there appears in our specifically human capacity for philanthropy, the more complete manifestation of *philia* as the rational and universal principle of unity among the species, which, as the object of rational deliberation and choice, is most fully revealed as an ethical principle. It is precisely in this sense that the *casual* association of familial love and philanthropy is to be understood as *causal* as well: philanthropy is the fullest realisation of that 'species love' which is first present in us, as in all animals, as the bond of affection between parent and child.

This account of *philia* and *philanthrwpia* at the beginning of *EN VIII* serves to disclose that *philia* resides in the human species as an ethical principle, and prepares us for the ultimate disclosure in *EN IX* that human *philia*, the rational and self-conscious love of others that takes the form of *eunoia* or good will, springs from *philautia*, the love of self, the practice of *eunoia* towards one's self as one's own other. In light of this disclosure, philanthropy appears as the purely formal love of self at the level of one's species identity.

(ii) The origin of parental love in *philautia*.

Philautia, the species of *philia* proper to the individual, is the ground of all other forms of human *philia*, including the forms of 'species love'. If the most formal expression of *philautia* is philanthropy, its most immediate expression is in the natural bond of parent and child. Self-love first appears in the immediate, natural and mutual recognition of 'you in I' and 'I in you', that occurs spontaneously between parent and child.

Parents, then, love their children as themselves for being from themselves they form, by their separate existence, a sort of 'other selves' (*heteroi autoi*), while children love their parents as those from whom they are born (12.1161b27-30).

Implicit in the human infant's inarticulate love of its parent is the fully articulated love of the human parent for its child. As an expression of *philautia*, the *philia* that binds parent and child is both instinctive and spiritual. It is at once the instinctive expression of a rational self-conscious life, though that is not so available to view from the side of the infant as it is from the side of the parent. The parent's love for the child as its own actualises the child's love of self in the first degree in the love of its parent as its own. The love of self is actualised first as the love of other. From beginning to end in our spiritual development, love of self and love of other are inseparable: love of self always requires the mediation of love of other. One cannot love one's self simply; even the love of self is as other.

For they say that one must love most one's dearest friend, and one's dearest friend is one who, when he wills what is good for his friend, wills it for his friend's sake, even if no one will know. But the same things belongs to one's relationship with one's self, along with everything else by which a friend is defined. For as we said all these marks of friendship extend to others from one's relation to one's self... For all these marks would belong principally to one's relation to one's self: for one is above all a friend to one's self; indeed, one ought to love one's self above all (*EN* IX 1168b5-10).

It lies within the complexity of the inner society of self to develop outwardly into external societies, the most immediate of which is the family. The family in the *Ethics* is precisely a society of self-relations: the love of others as one's own other selves. In this sense, it is most profoundly spiritual, arising from the principle of self-relation, which is the characteristic power of the faculty of reason that other *zwa* do not share.

(iii) The ethical basis of the family in spousal *philia*.

The instinctive and spontaneous love between human and parent offspring is the natural beginning of a spiritual motion within the human soul towards its self-actualisation, which ultimately takes the form of the friendship of goodness.¹⁵ The full development of love of self from familial affection to moral friendship requires moral education and habituation in virtue by parents and teachers. Moral education is a mutual

¹⁵ Cf. Cooper, "The central and basic kind of friendship, then, is friendship of character. Such friendships exist when two persons, having spent enough time together to know one another's character and to trust one another (1156b25-29), come to love one another because of their good human qualities: Aristotle's word for 'love' here is *stergein*, a word which is used most often to apply to a mother's love for her children and other such close family attachments. Each, loving the other for his own good qualities of character, wishes for him whatever is good, for his own sake..." *AF* 308.

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concern of family and state insofar as its end is two-fold: to raise obedient children that will in turn become good parents and good citizens. But this might be said equally of Plato's community of guardians, who are precisely by definition good children, good parents and good citizens. What they are not, in an Aristotelian sense at least, are good individuals or good selves. There is *philia* in Plato's community of guardians, but there is no *philautia*. For Plato, all forms of community, that of the soul, the family and the state, must be founded on the love of the good, on *philosophia*. For Aristotle, *philautia*, the love of self, is the creative principle of all forms of community: of soul, family, and state.

Therefore, there is not present in the Platonic household, the generic family of the guardians, the practical good of self-realisation that forms the *ethos* of the family in Aristotle. It is in this sense of being the object of what Aristotle calls *praktikos nous*, of soul aiming at the practical end of self-sufficiency, that Aristotle brings forth the relation of husband and wife as the practical good of family life.

There seems to be a friendship between man and woman by nature. For the human being by nature is more disposed to live in pairs than in the polis, insomuch as the household is prior in time and more necessary than the polis, and the creation of children is more common with other animals. Among other animals, the community extends only this far [to the creation of children], but for the human being, living together is not only for the sake of reproduction, but also for various aspects of their lives. Immediately, the work is divided, and there is one task for men and another for women. So they assist one another, putting their individual talents into the common good. On account of these things, there seems to be both usefulness and pleasure in this sort of friendship. This friendship also exists in accordance with virtue, if they are both good. For there is a virtue of each, and they are pleased by this It seems that children are a bond, wherefore marriages without children dissolve more quickly. For children are a common good for both and what is common holds them both together (12.1162a16-29 Saxonhouse *WHPT* 84).

For Plato, the purpose of family life is to create a unified body of citizens in the state. That is not the end of family life for Aristotle. The consummate relationship of the family for Aristotle is not that of parent and offspring; husbands and wives do not exist for the sake of raising children; rather, the rearing of children belongs to the consummate familial relationship of husband and wife. The basis of the family is the spousal *philia* of husband and wife, their love for one another and their children, as their 'other selves'.

Now (1) parents know their offspring better than their children know that they are their children, and (2) the originator feels his offspring to be his own more than the offspring do their begetter; for the product belongs to the producer (e.g. a tooth or hair or anything else to him whose it is), but the producer does not belong to the product, or belongs in a less degree. And (3) the length of time produces the same result; parents love their children as soon as these are born, but children love their parents only

after time has elapsed and they have acquired understanding or the power of discrimination by the senses. From these considerations it is also plain why mothers love more than fathers do (12.1161b19-27 Ross *BWA*).

As in the *Politics*, so in the *Ethics*, it is the spousal relationship, rather than the parental relationship, that is the true foundation of family life for Aristotle, and precisely insofar as the family is an ethical--and in this sense, spiritual, as well--community of persons who will each other's good as their own. In contrast, it is always the parental relationship that is foremost in Plato's mind, the relationship of filial obedience to parental authority that in the *Laws* he calls "the most sacred of obligations" (717-718; 729). This paternal and hierarchical relation is no less sacred or honorable for Aristotle. It is, he tells us, "more honourable to sustain the authors of our being even before ourselves; and honour too one should give to one's parents as one does to the gods." But, he adds, "not any and every honour" (IX 2 1165a21-25). The relationship of parent and child, though essential to the family, is still not paramount. What is paramount, in Aristotle's view of the family, is not the strictly "royal" hierarchical relationship of parent and child, but the more egalitarian, "constitutional" friendship of husband and wife. Whereby, "how a man ought to live with his wife, and generally how a friend ought to live with a friend, is manifestly nothing other than to inquire how it would be just" (VIII 12.1162a29-31).

(iv) *Eunoia* as the substance of spousal *philia*.

Spousal *philia* assumes the natural difference and inequality of male and female, and by its very nature is an equalisation of that difference.

There is another kind of friendship, that involving the inequality of superior and inferior, such as a father has with his son, and adults with youths generally, as well as that which a husband has with his wife, and every ruler with the ruled. And these also differ from each other; for a parent does not have the same friendship with its child as a ruler has with the ruled, nor does a husband have the same friendship with his wife as a wife has with her husband. For the virtue and the function (*erga*) of each of these differ, as do the reasons that they love; therefore, their loves and their friendships differ as well. For the same thing does not come from one to the other, nor should they seek it.... Love must be proportional in all friendships involving inequality ...for when the love exists in accordance with worthiness, then equality exists in a way, which is thought to belong to friendship. (7.1158b11-28)

Spousal *philia* equalises the hierarchical inequality of a superior active male virtue and an inferior passive female virtue. Each requires the other to complete itself. Their friendship arises from their difference, preserving it in the different roles men and women are to play in the household; at the same time, their friendship transcends their difference and grounds it in an unity prior to the differences themselves. Male and female virtue are

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complementary parts of a single whole, which is nothing other than the *philia* that equalises their difference and holds them together.

Spousal *philia*, the love and friendship of husband and wife, is a form of the friendship of goodness that is grounded in *eunoia*; it is the actual state of willing the good of another. The good willed in this friendship is the good of the friendship itself: it is the mutuality of goodness, the possession of it and the recognition of it, in one's self and in the other (*EN IX 5*). What happens here is a kind of imitation of the friendship that the divine principle has with itself, the divine *nous* which contemplates the goodness of all things in contemplating the goodness of itself. That perfect self-relation of the first principle is most nearly approximated among human beings in the community of souls that are nearly identical in their goodness- the friendship of the good.

The friendship of *eunoia* in which the good of the individual is most fully realised is what brings both family and state into being. It is this *praktikos agathos*, present within the human soul as its desired end, that moves individuals to form families, families to form cities, and cities to form friendships of virtue which make possible the life of contemplation. But the life of contemplation on which the good of the city, the family, and the individual depends is not a life available to all (*EN X 8*). Rather, the highest human activity is limited to the fewest number; and even among the few, the highest human activity remains incomplete. And it just this incompleteness which necessitates the return from the contemplative life of the few good men to the active life of the city, and thus to the life of the family, which is the basis of the city, and to the relationship of husband and wife, which is the basis of the family (*EN X 9*). The friendship of husband and wife is itself a form of that same practical good whose ultimate manifestation is the contemplative life, the pure self-related activity of the soul as a thinking being. What husband and wife share in common is precisely their sharing in common, their community, their friendship. It is the presence of friendship in the family, the presence of love, of self-love manifest as love of other, that is the essence of the family.

Family, state, and individual are for Plato analogous forms of unity; the principle of unity, however, remains outside that which it unifies. The Platonic good is present for Aristotle as the moving end or *telos* in the soul; it is incompletely actualised in the life of family and state, and even in the friendship of contemplatives. Family, state, and individual possess in themselves their unifying principle of self-relation, self-actualisation; in terms of the *Ethics*, they express *philautia* in different species of *philiae*. It is more difficult to say where one species of *philia* ends and another begins, since in truth they pass over into one another. The individual is the basic unit of the *oikos*; the *oikos* is the basic unit of the *polis*; the *polis* is a *koinwnia* of *oikoi*; the *oikos* a *koinwnia* of individuals. The *oikos* itself is based on the *koinwnia* of husband and wife, and the substance of that *koinwnia* is spousal *philia*: the familial form of the love of self that resides in the love of other. It is from this standpoint, then, that Aristotle criticizes Plato's view of the family in the *Republic*.

III. Aristotle's Criticism Of Plato's View Of The Family In *Politics* II.

In a previous study of the family in the *Republic* (summarised below), I argued that Plato regards *to koinon* as the sole principle of all forms of *koinwnia*: state, family, individual and soul; *to idion* appears as the principle of division, strife and self-destruction in states, souls, individuals and families.¹⁶ That argument is continued here in the form of the thesis that Aristotle's criticism of the *Republic* is more a reappraisal of Plato's position, than a mere rejection of it. Aristotle is indebted to Plato for having broken down the popular assumption that family and state are independently grounded in opposed principles, the state in what is common, *to koinon*, the family in what is private, *to idion*. In Aristotle's view, however, the common good of the *polis* (*to koinon*) is itself a *synthesis* of private interests (*ta idia*), so that the integrity of the *oikos* as a private institution is essential to the common life of the *polis*. The logic of Aristotle's position is more easily derived from the Platonic reduction of family and state to *to koinon* as a single unifying principle than from their historical independence, popularly regarded as based on the contrariety of *to idion* and *to koinon*.

For Aristotle, the problem is not so much, as commonly thought, that Plato is willing to destroy the family to create an ideal state, as that he is willing to destroy the state to create an ideal family.¹⁷ Concerning the purpose of Aristotle's criticism of Plato, two

¹⁶ Provencal *MNM* argues that *Resp.* involves an implicit critique of the Hellenic *oikos* as degenerating from a principally religious association of communal membership (based on *to koinon*) into a merely conventional institution of private ownership (based on *to idion*). What first drew my attention to the need for clarification of Plato's view of the family was the prevailing ambiguity in scholarship concerning the paradoxical status of the family in *Resp.*: that the (private) *oikos* should be abolished as the source of political *stasis* by way of instituting a (communal) *oikos* as the source of political unity. The clearest admission of scholarly perplexity has been made recently by Halliwell (*PR5* 20. For further evidence and discussion, see citations in n.18, below.) *MNM* resolves the paradox by attending to the logic evolving several stages of the *oikos* in *Resp.*: the idyllic *oikos* of the 'city of pigs' and the degenerate *oikoi* of wealth and poverty in the 'city of luxuries' (book II); the restored (private) *oikos* of the artisans and the ideal (communal) *oikos* (community of wives and children) of the guardians in the 'city of the blessed' (book V). The paradoxical status of the family as source of both political unity and strife is resolved by clarifying that it is the *degenerate oikoi* of wealth and poverty that must be abolished in order to restore the (purged) *oikos* as a private institution (among the lower class of artisans), which enables and necessitates the communal *oikos* as public institution among the ruling class of guardians.

¹⁷ Doull sets the Aristotelian relationship of *oikos* and *polis* in Aristotle within a complex dialectic of the underlying relationship of the practical and theoretical relations of the soul to the world and the divine principle. On the one hand he argues that, *contra* Plato, "Aristotle is true to the Hellenic tradition in dividing family from state, in finding in both a human freedom stabilized against immediate reduction to an absolute theoretic freedom" (*COCI* 127). "Of the practical Aristotle is able to say that it is its own end, is free in its labour to conform the world of its particular interests to its freedom, especially through the common work of domestic and political institutions" (*COCI* 147). On the other hand, he appears not to allow that in Aristotle the opposition of family and state, of private and public interest, is overcome in the practical life of these institutions, but only in a theoretical attitude which transcends them: "natural individuality has its rational good in the family, which if it be called the natural community as against the state is among Greeks a free community [citing *Pol* I, 13]. The individual belongs to both communities, but in relation to them is exposed to a profound division in himself. In this division appears the limit of practical freedom, where it confronts a necessity in which the individual can only find himself free by returning to a theoretical attitude" [citing *EN* X, 8] (*COCI* 148).

points require clarification.¹⁸ First, that Aristotle is making a two-fold response to a two-fold proposal by Plato to replace the private household with a communal family: (i) insofar as Plato (a) abolishes the private household (b) as exemplifying the evil of private interest (*to idion*), (c) he is taken to destroy the family in order to preserve the state; (ii) insofar as Plato (a) converts the ruling class of the state into a family, (b) as exemplifying the good of the common interest (*to koinon*), (c) he is taken to destroy the state in order to create a family. Second, that the principle target of Aristotle's criticism is the principle aim of Plato's argument, namely, the conversion of the state into a communal family; Plato's proposal to abolish the private household as a political evil is a secondary concern as the means necessary to the end of converting the state into a family.

A. Plato's view of the relation of family and state in the Republic.

Contrary to common opinion, Plato does not regard private interest (*to idion*) as the principle of the family.¹⁹ His abolition of the private household in the *Republic* follows from his view that the true principle of the family is the same sense of community (*to koinon*) that unifies the state. What he condemns is the degeneration of family life into private interest, the corruption of *to koinon* by *to idion*, which he represents in the corrupt *oikoi* of wealth and poverty in the city of luxuries. His true view of the family as a private household is envisioned in the city of pigs as the original form of *koinwnia*, grounded in a communal sense of belonging, *to koinon*. The institution of the *koinwnia* of wives and children in the ideal state, the city of the blessed, is a rationalization of the Hellenic *oikos*, purged of its tendency to degenerate into self-interest in the Hellenic cities of luxuries, and idealizing its Arcadian sense of community. This rationalization of the family in the *koinwnia* of wives and children serves to complete the integration of the individual into the common life of the state. To prefer the family as belonging to *to idion*, over the state as belonging to *to koinon*, is characterized as *idiosis* (462b8). While Plato does abolish the corrupted private household as exemplifying *to idion*, that is to be seen within the larger context of restoring the family in its eidetic or idealized, communal form as exemplifying *to koinon*. Though it extends only to the ruling class of Guardians, the force of Plato's *koinwnia* of wives and children is effectively to unify the state by converting it into a family.

¹⁸ For summaries of the debate on the fairness and accuracy of Aristotle's criticism of Plato, see Mayhew *ACPC* 231-2; Simpson *ACSCW* 99 n.1; Stalley *ACPR* 182-3. Simpson and Stalley are useful for relating the existing controversy through Saunders (*AP*) back to Bornemann's polemic against Aristotle as misunderstanding or misrepresenting Plato's argument at every turn (*AUPPT* 113, 120, 128, 135, 137, 139, 145, 150), and to the more profound objections of Proclus (*Kroll II*). For evidence of ambiguity (of varying degrees) about the primary purpose of Aristotle's criticism, see Irwin *ADPP* 218-21; Mulgan *APT* 38-9; Saunders *AP* 107, 112; Saxonhouse *FPU* 203-4, 212-13; Stalley *ACSCW* 184, 186. Ambiguity about Aristotle's criticism corresponds to an ambiguity about Plato's proposal: see Barker *GPT* 262, 267; Bloom *RP* 385-6; Grube 271; Halliwell *PR5* 20; Nettleship *LRP* 177; Saxonhouse *WHPT* 47.

¹⁹ For evidence that Plato is commonly viewed (negatively) as regarding *to idion* as the principle of the family, see Adam *RP* 292; Annas *IPR* 178-9; Benardete *SSS* 119; Bloom *RP* 386-7; Barker *GPT* 252, 262; Grube *PT* 270; Halliwell *PR5* 20; Lacey *FCG* 82, 177-8; Lee *PR* 48; Murphy *IPR* 76; Nettleship *LRP* 179-80.

PROVENCAL: THE FAMILY IN ARISTOTLE

The key to Plato's argument is the analogy of state (*polis*) and individual (*anthrōpos*) at 462c-d, by which we are to measure the *koinwnia* of wives and children.²⁰ Plato's individual is described as a *koinwnia* of body and soul, in which the soul unifies the body by way of its ruling element, reason. As such, the individual has the same tripartite constitution as the soul and state. The application of the analogy to the *koinwnia* of wives and children reveals that the structure of the family is analogous to that of state, soul and individual. The unifying principle of the family is the same rational element which unifies the state, the individual as a composite of soul and body, and the soul. For Plato, state, family, individual and soul are analogous in structure and in principle one. The principle of reason which looks to the Good (so far as it can be known) unifies and orders the soul as a composite of reason, spirit and appetites; unifies and orders the individual as a composite of soul and bodily members; unifies and orders relations among individual members of a family; unifies and orders relations among the members of the ruling class of guardians in the state, and by their rule also the classes of the state.

B. Aristotle's criticism of the Republic in Politics II.²¹

Politics II basically criticizes four premises of Plato's argument for the *koinwnia* of wives and children:²² ch.2 criticizes the premise that the unity of the family is good for the state ; ch.3 criticizes the premise that the state attains the unity of the family when all say 'mine' and 'not mine' unanimously; ch. 4 criticizes the premise that the *koinwnia* of wives and children would actually convert the state into a family; ch.5 criticizes the premise that the abolition of the private household would prevent family and state from degenerating into division and strife.

(i) Chapter 2: the unity of family and state.

In Chapter 2, Aristotle begins straightway by criticizing the Platonic logic by which the state, family and individual are collapsed into a single form of unity:

'Moreover it is clear that as the *polis* proceeds and becomes one (*mia*), it will be less a *polis*: for a *polis* is a certain multitude (*plēthos*) in its nature, and as it becomes one it will change from a *polis* to more of an *oikos*, and then from an *oikos* to more of an individual (*anthrōpos*). For we would say that the *oikos* is more of a unity (*mia*) than the *polis*, and the individual (*to hen*) more than the *oikos*. Consequently, even if someone were able to do this, it ought not to be done. For it will undo the state' (1261a16-22).

²⁰ Provencal *WLLS* argues that an 'organic interpretation' of the analogy obfuscates its teaching that reason, the ruling principle of soul and state, rules also in the individual and family as the source of order and unity. The intent of this paper is to demonstrate that Aristotle also understood this to be Plato's teaching and made it the focus of his critique in *Pol* II.

²¹ For a thorough and minute discussion of all points raised by Aristotle's argument, see Mayhew *ACPR*.

²² Newman *PA* 229; Saunders *AP* 107-8; Simpson *ACSC* 100-3; Stalley *ACPR* 183-4; Susemihl and Hicks *PA* 102-4, 216.

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Aristotle agrees that unity is necessary to the state, but argues that the state is by nature a plurality in a way that the family is not (ch.5 1263b29-31), so that the whole premise of Plato's argument that the most completely unified state is best (*to mian einai tēn polin hws ariston on hoti malista pasan* 1261a15-16) is a fundamental error.

Political *koinwnia* requires a diversity that is excluded from the Platonic concept of unity (*ex hwn de dei hen genesthai, eidei diapherei* 1261a29-30).²³ In particular, Aristotle

²³ For philological comment on the difficulties of Aristotle's meaning, see Newman *PA* 230, 233-4; Saunders *AP* 107-10; Susemihl and Hicks *PA* 217-18. Simpson appraises the problem in relation to the objections of Bornemann and Proclus (*ACSC* 103-6). Bornemann complains that 'Aristoteles habe den Platon vollig misßverstanden', (*AUPPT* 128, esp. n.1), citing Proclus at Kroll II, 361 l. 29 – 362 l.2. Neither Bornemann nor Simpson show sufficient interest in the principle of Proclus' objection. This oversight is especially unfortunate for Simpson, who rightly refers the question of the kind of unity Plato intends to his own analogy of state and individual (*R.* 462c-d) only to find that the analogy fails to explain anything: 'how one is it possible for a city to be? To answer that something needs to be said about the difference between a city and a single human being, why the oneness that fits a city is not the same as the oneness that fits an individual, and why, nevertheless, it makes sense to set up the oneness of the individual as the sort of oneness that the city should aim at. None of this Socrates does. Therefore his supposition is inadequate in the way Aristotle says it is' (*ACSC* 105). The argument of Provençal *WLLS* is that this tendency to dismiss the analogy of state and individual as 'intractably obscure' (Halliwell *PR5* 172-3) is the result of an 'organic interpretation' that misunderstands the basis of the analogy. Properly understood to represent the individual as having the same tripartite structure as the state, Simpson's questions no longer arise, since state and individual are structurally analogous, with self-conscious reason (*lo/goj*) as the unifying and ordering principle in each. Where Proclus earlier treats directly of the analogy (Kroll II, 361 ll.1-13), he misrepresents it as referring to the division of labor as the elements of political unity, which is irrelevant to Aristotle's criticism here. But at the point referred to by Bornemann (Kroll II, 362), he makes reference to it again and there clearly articulates the teleological nature of that unity which the analogy of state and individual in fact teaches to be the good of the state:

to de malista hen touto estin to sunechon to swma, eite logos heis phusikos eite kai psuchē tis, di' hēn hen to swma estin, kai tauta ek pollwn hon. ditton oun to hen, ê to hulikon ê to telikon. kai epei henizein thelei tēn polin, ouch ws eis to hulikon autēn hen katagwn mêchanatai tēn henwsin, all' eis to telikon kai auto to agathon, di' ho kai aph' hou pasin hē henwsis (Kroll II, 362, 8-14).

The difference between *to hulikon* and *to telikon* ('l'un matiere', 'l'un cause finale' Festugiere *CR* 319) for Proclus is that between the limbs per se and as parts of a body unified by the soul and governed by its reason, so that (citing the example of the *Phaedo*) if Socrates remains in prison, it is because he has decided that is best (Kroll II, 363). But I disagree with Proclus that Aristotle does not understand Plato's political unity to be teleological. I think he does, and that the argument that exists between them here with respect

mentions the distinction of ruler and ruled, and how the principle of reciprocity is the salvation of states (*to ison to antipeponthos swizei tas poleis* 1261a30-31). The reciprocity of ruler and ruled preserves the difference that exists in the state as an unity of equally independent households (*eleutherois kai isois* 126a31-32). I take this to be a criticism of the Platonic exclusion of *to idion* from *to koinon*.²⁴ It is not numerical plurality so much as the plurality of private interests that Aristotle would preserve as the necessary basis of political community. For Aristotle, *to koinon* presupposes *ta idia*. Political *koinwnia* requires not the mathematical unity of similar interests (*homoioi*), but the synthetic unity of different kinds of interests (*eidei diapherontes*) (1261a24-25). As the criticisms of the subsequent chapters make clear, Aristotle's problem with Plato is that he thinks of *harmonia* as *homonoia*, of unity of association as unanimity of mind, where there is no distinction between self and other, mine and not mine. Yet, for Aristotle, this is precisely the kind of difference of which political *koinwnia* is composed.

(ii) Chapter 3: the unanimity of 'all' saying 'mine.'

Chapter 3 criticizes the premise that unanimity is signified by 'all' saying 'mine' and 'not mine' in unison.²⁵ Aristotle notes that "all" (*pantes*) can be meant distributively (*hws hekastos*) and collectively (*ouch hws hekastos* 1261b20-30).²⁶ The different senses of 'all' distinguished by Aristotle would seem to render the different senses of 'mine' distinguished by Plato, of ownership and membership.²⁷ Spoken distributively, 'mine' would refer to *to idion*, 'that which belongs to me as an individual'; spoken collectively, 'mine' would refer to *to koinon*, 'that to which I belong as a member'. The distributive sense of 'mine' expressing *to idion* is used in the city of luxuries, giving rise to the cacophony of 'mine' and 'not mine' among private, competitive *oikoi*, signifying civic

to the unity of the state has in it at its deepest level Aristotle's critique of how Plato conceives of unity as a relation to good and of the Good as a principle of unity (see also Doull *COCI* 142-9).

²⁴ 'There is a clear implication here that the distinctness of the citizens should be eroded. Aristotle has good reason for objecting to this; on his view the community that constitutes the city is valuable precisely because it is a community of distinct individuals'. Stalley *ACPR* 191. Mayhew *ACPR* explores at tremendous length what would constitute a plurality necessary to the formation of political community, devoting considerable attention to a practical consideration of the wide diversity of occupations required to maintain a state of self-sufficiency. I believe that Aristotle's principal concern is to preserve the diversity of political opinion represented by the plurality of independent *oikoi* grounded in the desire of every *oikos* to attain a state of self-sufficiency as a necessary condition of acquiring virtue and obtaining happiness. In the most practical consideration, for instance, the primary civic responsibility of defending the walls of one's city at the possible expense of one's own life and family involves the conflict of interest that is at the very heart of political life, the principle of which is the administration of justice, i.e. the mediation of one's own good and that of the common good embodied in a political constitution.

²⁵ Simpson clarifies that Aristotle's criticizes the saying as a 'sign' not as 'means' (*ACSC* 107), thus answering Bornemann and Proclus (n.9, 108).

²⁶ Simpson *ACSC* 109; Saunders *PA* 111. Mayhew *ACPC* makes a brilliant study of this chapter in light of Cooper *PACF*. Bornemann accuses Aristotle of taking Plato literally 'in sophistischer Weise' (*AUPT* 135).

²⁷ My account stands apart in its interpretation of Aristotle's distributive and collective meanings of 'all' as corresponding to Plato's distinction between the possessive 'mine' signifying ownership and the corporate 'mine' signifying membership. For an account of the distinct senses of 'mine' in Plato, see Provencal *MNM*.

strife. The collective sense of ‘mine’ expressing *to koinon* is used by the guardians in the ‘city of the blessed’, giving rise to the harmony of ‘mine’ and ‘not mine’ in the *koinwnia* of wives and children, signifying political unity. It would be better, though impossible, remarks Aristotle, for Plato to say that political unity would be signified by all saying ‘mine’ distributively, expressing individual agreement on *to idion*; for collective agreement on *to koinon* would not signify unanimity (*ouden homonoêtikon* 1261b31-32). It is a telling remark, drawing attention to a fundamental difference in their accounts of the origin of political life.

Plato’s account of the origin of political *koinwnia* generates the ‘city of pigs’, where private *oikoi* would co-exist peaceably, but do so by virtue of the hypothetical absence of *to idion*. The principle of the Arcadian state, which has not developed beyond the life of the *oikos*, is *to koinon*; *to idion* infects the *oikos* only from without, by the human impulse toward *pleonexia* that generates the need for government in the ‘city of luxuries’, which the *oikos* is helpless to contain and by which it is corrupted. Plato hypothesizes a pre-political unity prior to the very plurality and division of private interests among *oikoi* out of which Aristotle generates the polis in *Politics* I. For Plato, the aim of government is to purge private interest, *to idion*, as far as possible from the unity of *to koinon*; for Aristotle, it is to reconcile private interests and to integrate them as far as possible into the unity of *to koinon*. But Aristotle’s disagreement with Plato is itself a direct result of re-thinking Plato’s concept of *to koinon*.

What does Aristotle really mean when he suggests that it would be better, though impossible, if ‘all’ individually agreed in saying ‘mine’, meaning ‘what is my own’? ‘What is my own’ for Aristotle is not primarily a matter of ownership and autonomy, but of membership and responsibility. His preference for the distributive use of ‘mine’ suggests that he has found in Plato’s contraries of *to koinon* and *to idion* a complementary sense of each in the other: *to idion* implies *to koinon*; *to koinon* requires *to idion*. His criticism of the collective use of ‘mine’ targets the aporia that arises from Plato’s conception of *to koinon* as exclusive, rather than inclusive, of *to idion*. A *koinwnia* based solely on a collective sense of ‘mine’ would actually fail to produce in its members a sense of social responsibility, of moral obligation to others inherent to membership: “for that which is common to most happens to be of least concern” (1261b34). Social responsibility requires also a distributive sense of ‘mine’, since “people care especially about their own interests, much less about common concerns, except insofar as they coincide with the individual:” *twn gar idiwn malista phrontizousin, twn de koinwn hêtton ê hoson hekastwi epiballei* (1261b34-35). By ‘their own interests,’ *ta idia*, Aristotle must here mean ‘that which is in our care and for which we are responsible.’ Aristotle is not criticizing Plato’s failure to recognize the modern liberal’s right as an individual to property and autonomy.²⁸ Rather, he criticizes Plato’s failure to recognize the impossibility of generating a sense of collective responsibility of ‘all’ toward ‘all’ except from a sense of individual responsibility of each toward his own. “Each citizen has a thousand sons and none are his own, but chances are that one is no more a son than another, so that all will mean little to him equally” (1261b38-1262a1). The problem with everyone having the same social obligation is that none will feel

²⁸ Gill *GT* 57; Irwin *ADPP* 216; 222-24; Nussbaum *SSPU* n.60 434; Miller *NJR*.309-331.

individually obliged to fulfill it. It will not be the particular concern of anyone. The justification for building on *to idion* is that it is necessary for that very sense of moral obligation and social responsibility that Plato would attribute solely to *to koinon*. But, Aristotle argues, moral sensibility is a matter of feeling personally responsible toward others. Without *to idion*, it is impossible to generate the unity of *to koinon*. The problem with the *koinwnia* of wives of children is that it excludes the basis on which individuals normally feel a sense of obligation toward others:

for the same man one addresses as his son, another as his brother, and another as his cousin or as some other kinsman, a relation either by blood or by marriage, first as an in-law by his own marriage, or as an in-law by other marriages in his family, and in addition to these, another addresses him as member of the phratry, another as member of the tribe. For it is better to be someone's cousin (*idion anepsyion*), than anyone's son (1262a9-14).

(iii) Chapter 4: the *koinwnia* of wives and children.

The criticism in Chapter 4 of the *koinwnia* of wives and children as a means of attaining unity in the state starts from common ground: the origin of moral responsibility in the family as a religious institution. The argument between Aristotle and Plato occurs within this Hellenic experience of the family as grounded, not in sex and race, but in religion. In this Hellenic tradition, ties of blood and affection, which might seem primary to some today as the basis of human relationships, were of little or no account in themselves, as the ancient Greek custom of infanticide attests. Ties of blood and affection were invested with significance only through religious rites and rituals such as the *amphidromia*. It is first on religious grounds, then, that Aristotle rejects Plato's translation of sanctity and morality from particular ties of blood and marriage to generic ties of kinship in the *koinwnia* of wives and children. But Aristotle is no mere conservative defender of religious tradition.²⁹ What he upholds in the sanctity of blood-ties is the preservation of the private and particular as essential to the full development of *koinwnia*. The severance of particular ties would only produce moral apathy, a diluted sense of fellowship (1262b17-22). For Aristotle, it is only insofar as *to idion* and *to koinon* stand in a complementary relation to one another in the family that individuals

²⁹ "Pace Mayhew *et. al.* "I do not think Aristotle believes the holy (in the religious sense) is a legitimate moral concept. He believes, however, that most citizens do; and he believes the fact that they do, combined with the communism of women and children of the *Republic* would diminish the unity of the city." *ACPR* 65. His solution to the problems he perceives in attributing religious piety to Aristotle is just as problematic. That incest was not regarded as an act of religious impiety by Aristotle seems incredible and goes against the obvious sense of his criticism of Plato. Plato himself was thoroughly skeptical about traditional piety, yet he preserved the virtue of piety in a purified form as the form of justice that governed the relationship between the human and divine, as one can gather from the *Euthyphro* and *Republic* V. That the family was primarily a religious rather than natural institution was the sound and influential teaching of Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City*. For evidence of the view that ordinarily all forms of *koinwnia* were principally religious see Bremmer *GR*; Burkert *GR*; Lacey *FCG*; Pantel and Zaidman *RAGC*. For the domestic religious ritual of *amphidromia*, see Golden *CCCA* 101-104; 143.

develop their moral sense of obligation to others, their sense of membership and *koinwnia*. ‘For there are two principles, which especially cause people to love and feel concern – *to te idion kai to agapêton* (1262b22-23)’. So we come to Aristotle’s deepest reflection on the error of Plato’s argument, his failure to grasp the true nature of the love of one’s own.³⁰

(iv) Chapter 5: the abolition of private property.

Aristotle’s criticism of the abolition of private property in Chapter 5 addresses Plato’s attempt to eradicate *to idion*, the love of one’s own, in the sense of ownership and selfishness. By doing so, Aristotle argues, he would also eradicate the very principle of moral and social responsibility: the love of self that is fundamental to the love of other.³¹

It is not the right of ownership that Aristotle defends; rather, private property is defended as necessary to the development of individual moral virtue, which is necessary to the well-being of the state.³² ‘In a certain way, property should be common (*koinas*), but in general, private (*idias*). For where the responsibilities are distributed, people will not make accusations against each other, but will more freely give of themselves, as the steady concern of each for what is their own (*hws pros idion hekastou prosedreuontos*). But for the sake of virtue, property shall be, in respect of its use, the proverbial “common things of friends” ’ (1263a26-30).

³⁰ Cf. Mayhew *ACPC* 237-8. *Pol* 1262b22-4 has received considerable attention in light of Aristotle’s account of civic friendship in *EN*. Mayhew (*ACPC* 239) here has Cooper in mind. Cooper contends that Aristotle criticizes Plato for believing that the ‘only effective civic friendship...will be one resulting from the extension to the whole ruling group of just those family ties which in other, historical, cities serve to compromise it’ (n.15 *PACV* 233; cf. Mayhew, n.13 *ACPC* 237). From *Pol* 1280 b 36-38, Cooper extracts what he takes to be Aristotle’s own view of how the family forms the psychological basis of civic friendship. ‘The members of my family are my people, and any good enjoyed by any of them is shared in also by me, because as members of a family what affects them affects the family, and I too am a member of that. Civic friendship is just an extension to a whole city of the kinds of psychological bonds that tie together a family and make possible this immediate participation by each family-member in the good of the others. Civic friendship makes the citizens in some important respects like a large extended family...’ (*PACV* 236). Annas criticizes this view of civic friendship as a psychological extension of familial ties as too Platonic for Aristotle (*CJC* 244). Irwin, however, argues that civic friendship must at least proximate personal friendship (*GPA* 88, 91, 93, 95; *ADPP* 224). Debilitating this discussion is the common assumption that family ties are viewed by Plato and Aristotle as biological (Mayhew n.14 *ACPC* 237; Cooper n.15 *PACV* 233; Annas *CJC* 244), which neglects evidence that Plato and Aristotle view them as ordinarily religious and essentially spiritual. Cooper actually derives his definition of civic friendship from *Pol* 1280 b 36-38, which lists ‘connections by marriage, brotherhoods, religious festivals...’ (*PACV* 232; cited by Annas *CJC* 242, 244). One might ask on what basis might ties of blood and marriage be united with religious and business partnerships? Despite this oversight, Cooper’s account of civic friendship in Aristotle articulates a spiritual (i.e. moral and psychological) sense of domestic and civic ties that is close to how family ties are viewed by Plato and Aristotle (see also Irwin *ADPP* 220).

³¹ Irwin *ADPP* 224, *GPA* 91; Salomon *CBAP* 187; Saunders *AP* 119; Saxonhouse *FPU* 215; Stalley *ACPR* 195.

³² Miller’s consideration of whether ‘property rights’ in a Lockean liberal sense can be found in Aristotle’s concept of private property involves the observation that “He is not defending a system of unqualified privatization.” *NJR* 321.

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Aristotle's defense of private property and the love of one's own is not as the basis of an independent individuality, but as the basis of personal responsibility towards one's self and others. The love of one's own originates in the love of self. As we know from the *Ethics* (IX 4-9), self-love is the root of moral relations, beginning with one's own obligation to one's self, to will what is good for one's self, for one's own sake.³³ The moral sense of responsibility toward 'my own' arises precisely from this primary relation to one's self as one's own other. *To idion* is primarily the principle of self-relation, a relationship inherently moral and social, and the very basis of morality and sociability. *To idion* is really the simplest and most primary form of *to koinon*, and as such is the very basis of community, *koinwnia*. All forms of *koinwnia* spring from this self-obligation to seek self-fulfillment in the good life, which is a life of doing good to others.

Moreover, to regard a thing as one's own (*idion*) makes all the difference in one's enjoyment of it; for not without reason does each self love itself (*tên pros hauton autos echei philian hekastos*), but this is natural (*phusikon*) Even more, the greatest pleasure lies in the act of lending a hand or doing good to friends, strangers or companions, which occurs when property is private (*idia*). But these do not go along with making the *polis* too much of a unity (1263a40-1263b7).

The source of the evils which Plato would purge from the polis by the abolition of private life would be better treated by the education of private individuals. For while the proper love of self creates community, the improper love of self destroys it (*to mallon ê dei philein* 1263b2-5; *dia tên mochthrian* 1263b22).

Conclusion

Aristotle had already learned from Plato that the family was essentially a form of community grounded in the human capacity for rational virtue rather than a natural association grounded in the immediacy of sexual instinct and biological blood-ties. His disagreement with Plato had to do with the relationship between the principle of unity and that which it unified. For Plato, the principle of unity, the good, lies outside that which it unifies, in such a way that it requires that individuals and private households seek to transcend their particularity in order to participate in the universality of a higher good. For Aristotle, the good is present in human nature in such a way as to give rise to a natural impulse (*hormê*) to form associations that are at first grounded in the immediacy of natural desire (*orexia*) and necessity (*anagkê*), so that it can be said that the family exists by nature (*phusis*). But a closer examination of the generation of the *oikos* (and the presence of the 'transivity of naturalness') brings to light that its natural principle is not such as to reside in the externality and expediency of sexuality and slavery, but in the ethical friendship of husband wife. As such, it should be clear that, while the *oikos* (and thus the *polis*) must originate in natural necessity, that is not its moving principle. The moving principle in both *oikos* and *polis* is the Platonic good, but that as present in, rather

³³³³³³ Two recent studies from SUNY on Aristotle's philosophy of personal and political friendship are Stern-Gillet *APFI* and Schollmeier *APPF*

than to, the institutions themselves. The Platonic good is present in the Aristotelian family and political community in the form of the cultivation and enjoyment of goodness or excellence, by way of virtuous friendships that obtain happiness in the life of the state, family and the individual. The natural impulse to form ethical associations lies within the nature of the human soul as essentially rational in its powers of self-actualisation. As such, the family is essentially a spiritual institution, having for its true end the realisation of the ethical life of virtue and happiness. The Aristotelian family, then, is closer to the Homeric *oikos* of Odysseus and Penelope and the classical *oikos* of Sophocles' *Antigone* founded in religious piety and ancestral cult than the degenerate materialist *oikoi* censured in both the Platonic and Aristotelian accounts of family and private property.

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