

# Aristotle

1 Plato has left the first comprehensive philosophical system we could find, with the existence of contra-  
2 dictions and inconsistencies. The main problem is the relationship of forms and objects. Plato degrades  
3 the world of experience as appearances and exalts forms as real and permanent, and bridges them by an  
4 unprecisely defined conception of matter, which causes difficulties. This dualism, separation and hierarchy  
5 can be found in nearly all aspects of Platonic philosophy and often becomes trouble-maker. Besides, the  
6 mythical elements referred by Plato must be reconsidered. Turning to mythology and popular religions  
7 for help is an indication of ignorance. The task of reconstructing the system falls to Aristotle (384 BC-322  
8 BC), a pupil of Plato with independent mind.

9 In Aristotles system, the dualism between forms and matter is retained, but he rejects the transcen-  
10 dence of forms and the fake of matter. Forms and matter are not separated, but combined and result in  
11 objects, which move and change under the control of forms. Thus, the world of experience is not illusion,  
12 but a real world of forms and matter. Hence, Aristotles theories keep a close relationship with experience,  
13 which prepare basis for the rise of sciences.

## 14 1 Philosophy and the Sciences

15 Aristotle accepts the teleological theory of Plato that the universe is an ideal world, a harmony system of  
16 eternal forms. These are the essences and causes and purposes of things. Forms make things what they  
17 are and control their moving and changing. However, forms are not detached from the world of experience,  
18 but a part of it. The sensible world is not illusion, but a reality for us to study and understand. Thus,  
19 to study forms, we must start from world of material and our knowledge, hence, is based on experience.  
20 Starting from experience and the particular, we rise to principles and the general. To Aristotle, knowledge  
21 is not about an ideal world of transcendence, but our sensible world. It is not merely a pile of facts, but to  
22 investigate their reasons or causes, and why they cannot be otherwise than what they are. To gain genuine  
23 knowledge, we should devote ourselves to the world of experience, to observe the world and investigate  
24 it. Here, what we call sciences today gain their positions in the system of knowledge for the first time.

25 Thus, Aristotle drags knowledge to experience, make it become the study of sensible world. To rise

from facts to principles of generality, there must be certain methods. So there is logic, the science of the way to gain genuine knowledge, which is used in all sciences. Here the word science means knowledge of any kind, originating from the Latin word *scire*, which means know. By logic, we rise from particular objects to general principles, and develop theories. Thus, there are theoretical sciences, which includes mathematics, physics, biology, psychology and first philosophy or metaphysics. Besides, knowledge should also include the concern of human self, of human behaviour and institutions. This part of knowledge is as patterns or guides of human conduct and needs to be put into practice to make sense. Thus, there are practical sciences, namely ethics and politics. Furthermore, there are sciences about the creation of beauty, the productive sciences. Aristotles *Poetics* is an investigation of this sphere, which is now called aesthetics.

Aristotles classification of sciences is of great historical meaning. Before him, all knowledge is called philosophy vaguely as the love of wisdom in all its forms, and we artificially break up philosophical systems of prior times for the convenience of study. We are so accustomed to thinking of different subjects that we ignore the fact that this system of classification is artificial and is the result of human intelligence. The classification of knowledge is so influential that for centuries, it boosts the development of different sciences and it is still indicated in the curriculums of schools and colleges now, although there is a tendency of development of multidisciplinary subjects. We can justly study Aristotles system following his classification, but we may omit mathematics, for Aristotle makes no original contribution in it, and most details of his natural sciences, for they are already antiquated.

## 2 Logic

The creation of logic is one of the most important achievements of Aristotle. If Aristotle had no contributions in other fields, he would still become one of the greatest scholars in history by the construction of a detailed and delicate system of logic. It is true that certain basis of logic has been prepared by pioneer philosophers, like dialectic of Zeno, the arguments of Sophists, the Socratic method of conceptions and the dialectic of Plato, but Aristotle is the first philosopher who deals with valid forms of reasoning and make it a special discipline; and thus becomes the founder of logic, which keeps its influence until today.

To Aristotle, logic is the science of the methods of gaining genuine knowledge. It is the very first science that one should familiarize with before proceeding to the study of other sciences, since it is a tool to be used in the scientific investigations of every sphere of knowledge. The principles of logical thinking are necessary instruments for avoiding mistakes and finding truths.

The theme of logic is the analysis of the form and content of thought, of the process by which genuine knowledge is reached, and of the way of thinking correctly. The final aim of logic is to discover knowledge,

58 which is characterized by strict necessity, or in his own words, something which cannot be other than it  
59 is. A scientific demonstration of certain knowledge is composed of two parts: firstly it is the case and  
60 secondly it cannot be otherwise. In this process, one must rise from the particular to the universal, from  
61 conditions to causes. This is the process of inference, which is composed of propositions. By figuring out  
62 the relations of propositions and arranging them in proper orders, there are demonstrations, which lead  
63 to truth.

64 Hence, demonstrations, the process of elaborating the derivative propositions from original truths,  
65 become a concern of logic. Aristotles demonstrations take the form of a syllogism or series of syllogisms,  
66 which is proposed as basic form of all demonstrations and deductions. A syllogism is composed of three  
67 propositions: the major premise, the minor premise and a conclusion deduced from premises. Here is a  
68 famous example of syllogism that is often quoted for certain reasons:

69 *Major premise: All men are mortal.*

70 *Minor premise: Socrates is a man.*

71 *Conclusion: Socrates is mortal.*

72 For Aristotle, syllogism is the basic form that all demonstrations of knowledge of certainty can be  
73 reduced to. A valid demonstration is composed of valid syllogisms, in each of which the premises must be  
74 correct and the conclusion must be depended on its premises. Premises need to be proved to be correct,  
75 namely they must ground themselves on other premises. This process cannot go forever. It finally ends  
76 with self-evident propositions, or axioms, the principles of absolute certainty, but cannot be proved and  
77 do not require proofs. Or in Aristotles own words, "A basic truth is one which has no propositions prior  
78 to it".

79 Thus, the whole system of knowledge is based on axioms and constructed by deduction of syllogism.  
80 Then what is the origin of axioms? Here Aristotle intermingles idealistic doctrines and scientific spirit.  
81 It is idealistic, for basic truths are inherent in human reason, the highest part of the soul. It is scientific,  
82 for basic truths must be brought into consciousness by experience. So the process of cognition is that,  
83 axioms hidden in human reason are explicated and exemplified by experience, then deductive knowledge  
84 would be possible following the law of syllogism. Experience is necessary in cognition, but it must ground  
85 itself on a prior basis, the human reason, or it would be a yield of probability. Hence, both induction and  
86 deduction have their own functions, and empiricism and rationalism are united.

### 87 **3 Theory of Categories**

88 Logic concerns the way of gaining genuine knowledge of certainty, namely the way of thinking correctly.  
89 Obviously, thinking makes sense only when it is of something. We must thinking of certain being. So the

90 transition from logic to metaphysics is inevitable, and theory of categories is the bridge.

91 Categories are fundamental and indivisible units of thinking, and the basic feature of being. They  
92 are the predicates that must be used in thinking of something. It is impossible to think about certain  
93 reality or existence without putting it under certain categories. Aristotle gives a list of ten categories:  
94 substance (what it is), quality (how it is constituted), quantity (how large it is), relation (how related),  
95 space (where it is), time (when it is), position (what postures it assumes), state (the condition it is in),  
96 activity (what it does), passivity (what it suffers).

97 A little bit explanation shall be made about the first category, substance, for it is the key concept in  
98 Aristotelian metaphysics. It is prior to other categories, or in his own words, a substance is that which is  
99 neither predicable of a subject nor present in a subject. This abstruse expression means that a substance  
100 is independent of other categories, while the latter must depend on the substance.

## 101 4 Metaphysics

102 Aristotle defines first philosophy, or metaphysics as a science which investigates the nature of being. To  
103 Plato, it is the universal forms, the *Ideas* of permanence and transcendence, which he separates above  
104 the sensible world. But Aristotle rejects this account of substance, and provides seven arguments: (1)  
105 *Ideas* are merely abstractions and cannot account for concrete objects; (2) they are eternal, and thus  
106 are unable to explain the change of concrete things; (3) they are posterior to particular things, and thus  
107 cannot explain them; (4) *Ideas* are unnecessary reduplication of objects instead of their explanations; (5)  
108 by saying individual is the copy of certain *Idea*, our understanding of the individual is not increased; (6)  
109 for the relation between certain individual and its *Idea*, there shall be an ideal relation, the *Idea* of the  
110 relation, and thus it becomes an argument of circular; (7) the separation of *Ideas* and objects goes against  
111 the unity of particulars. Criticisms (1)-(4) point out that *Ideas* are not adequate to explain objects, while  
112 (5)-(7) criticizing the relation between ideas and objects.

113 So what is the nature of being? Aristotles answer is substance. A substance is an individual object,  
114 composed of matter and form. To Aristotle, forms cannot exist independently as Plato proposed, and  
115 matter itself is not adequate for the existence of objects since it is disordered and purposeless. Forms and  
116 matter must combine together to compose objects. Form is responsible for the universal qualities shared  
117 by things of the same type, while matter confers uniqueness and particularity of certain object. Form  
118 and matter are two inseparable aspects of a substance and are both real.

119 Both forms and matter are eternal. They are two basic principle of substances. However, matter  
120 may combine with different forms. Matter combines with a series of forms, one after another, and thus  
121 transformations take place. This also means that form is the essence of substances. It is the form that

122 confers the substance essential qualities of the class to which it belongs and makes what it is. So, a single  
123 substance is composed of two inseparable elements, matter and form. They are equally real, but the latter  
124 is more essential.

125 Transformation takes place when matter combine with different forms one after another. So trans-  
126 formation is qualitative. When something transforms into other things of different type, there is only  
127 qualitative change. In this process, substance develops itself into different stages. The earlier stages are  
128 potentialities and the latter ones are actualities. This relation is relative. For example, an acorn is the  
129 potentiality of an oak, which is the actuality of the acorn. The oak can also be the potentiality of an oak  
130 table. So transformation is such a process in which the potentiality becomes actuality, and in which the  
131 form of a substance is exchanged into another.

132 One more thing, obviously the process of transformation follows certain rules or patterns. This is  
133 especially true for the life cycles of species. What determines the directions of transformations? Aristotles  
134 answer is form. Form knows it is in the substance and causes it to transform to realize an end, the purpose  
135 of form. It drives and controls the development of the substance, and determines its final stage. This is  
136 further explained based on Aristotelian four causes.

137 Aristotle use the term cause to designate any condition required by the occurrence of something.  
138 There are four kinds of causes. The first one is the material cause, which is the relatively crude and  
139 undifferentiated stuff, of which the substance in question is composed. The second one is the formal  
140 cause. It is the form which certain substance is going to embrace. The third one is the moving cause,  
141 which drives the thing in question to come into being. It is the active agent which produces things as its  
142 effect. The fourth one is the end or purpose. It is that for the sake of which a thing is made.

143 Everything can be explained by all four causes, no matter whether it is natural or artificial, and this  
144 is especially obvious for artworks. Taking a sculpture of stone for example, its material cause is the stone  
145 going to be carved; formal cause, the design of the sculpture desired by the artist; moving cause, the  
146 endeavor of the sculptor and his tools; purpose, the complete sculpture which is identically same with  
147 the design of the artist. Based on the four causes, a stone is turned into a statue. However, to natural  
148 processes, things are a little different. The material cause of the substance in question corresponds to  
149 its matter, while the other three are attributed to its form. Form is the purposive force that drives the  
150 process of change (moving cause) and it foresees and desires its final production (formal cause). When  
151 the process is completed, its production is dependent on its form (purpose). So form knows its purpose  
152 and desires it, and is the motive power of motion. Hence there are only two essential causes of change,  
153 of occurrence and perish of substances, form and matter. Since they are eternal, change is also eternal,  
154 following unchangeable patterns.

155 Based on previous argument, it seems that form completely controls the change or motion of substance.  
156 Form is perfect, so things of the same class should be perfect and completely the same, which is obviously  
157 fake. How should this be explained? Aristotle attributes the imperfection of objects to matter. Matter  
158 has its own power. It is not a compliant slave, but offers resistance to the form, resulting in the differences  
159 of things which belong to one type.

160 Overall, individual objects or substances are true being. A substance is composed of two eternal and  
161 inseparable elements: form and matter. The former determines what it is and confers it universal qualities  
162 of the type to which it belongs, while the latter is responsible for uniqueness. Matter can combine with  
163 different forms and thus, transformation between different substances takes place and it is qualitative.  
164 This process is also purposive. It is directed and driven by the form, which knows and desires its purpose  
165 and provides motive power. But matter provides resistance, which makes the results of transformation  
166 imperfect, different from what form proposes.

## 167 5 Theology

168 The causes of motion or change are forms and matter. Since they are both eternal, motion is eternal.  
169 For a given motion, it is produced by another motion. This motion again is produced by a third motion.  
170 This regress cannot be continued forever and it should be ended at the first cause of all series of motion,  
171 the first mover or the God. God is unmoved and permanent, for if it was of motion, it would be moved  
172 or changed by something else, and this goes against with the definition of God. By regress, any motion  
173 must be traced back to the process that the unmoved God makes something move. Hence God induces all  
174 motion without being moved. This is done because God is the final purpose of everything that occurs; he  
175 is the highest good that everything desires. So God is the unifying and directing principle of the world,  
176 the goal towards which all things strive, and the purpose of every substance.

177 God is unmoved, thus it is pure form, for where there is matter, there is motion and change. He is the  
178 exception to the doctrine that form and matter are inseparable. He is the final goal of complete actuality  
179 and has no potentiality.

180 The purpose of human is reason or thinking, the highest part of the soul, which is ascribed to God.  
181 Thus, God is pure reason. Then, what does God think of? To God, the only thing that is worthy to  
182 think of is himself. So God is thought-thinking-thought. He is the one who thinks about himself, and his  
183 thinking is a thinking on thinking. He is both the subject and the object of knowledge. Gods thinking  
184 is different from that of human. Humans thinking is deductive, from premise to conclusion. To God,  
185 it is entirely intuitive. He knows all at once by a single flash of insight. He contemplates the essence of  
186 everything and completely understand all things at once. As pure reason, God has no emotions; he has

187 no pain or passion and is supremely happy. He is everything that a philosopher longs to be.

188 Overall, Aristotles metaphysics finally rises itself to the study of the first mover or God, and thus is  
189 bridged to theology through teleology. To Aristotle, every substance has its purpose. Motion takes place  
190 because the objects desire to do so. So the universe is dynamic and purposive, driving by its goal, instead  
191 of being passive and mechanical, driving by probability. Besides, he emphasizes change in qualitative level  
192 by the combination of matter with a series of eternal forms. Aristotle is confident with his teleological  
193 doctrines and put them in the study of natural sciences. He declares that something is impossible because  
194 it goes against with his metaphysics.

## 195 6 Physics

196 Aristotelian physics, the science of bodies and motion, is characterized by its antagonism to mechanistic  
197 theories. He rejects explain the universe in quantitative term by motion and arrangement of atoms  
198 as atomists has done, but understands it qualitatively and more dynamically, as if it is an organism,  
199 consisting with his teleological metaphysics.

200 Space is defined as the limit between a surrounded and surrounding body. The existence of space  
201 is dependent on body. Where there is no body, there is no space. Thus, the empty space proposed by  
202 atomists is denied. Furthermore, whatever is not be bounded by other body, is not in space. So infinite  
203 space bounded by nothing is impossible. Thus, the world is finite; and it does not move as a whole, but  
204 its parts suffers change. God, the first mover is not in the world, for it does not move. So he is outside  
205 the world of bodies, and is not in space.

206 By the term motion, Aristotle designates change of all sorts, defining it as the realization of the possi-  
207 ble under his framework of teleological metaphysics. There are in total four kinds of motion: substantial  
208 (origin and decay); quantitative (change in the size of a body by addition and subtraction); qualitative  
209 (transformation of one thing into another); local (change of place). Aristotle understands nature quali-  
210 tatively. There are absolute qualitative change in objects. Elements can transform from one to another,  
211 and their mixture produces substances of new qualities.

212 The universe is eternal. In its center there is earth. Around it, in concentric layers, are water, air,  
213 fire, celestial sphere composed of ether, the sun, the moon, the outermost sphere of fixed stars. The God  
214 encompasses outside the fixed stars and causes its motion, which results in the motion in other spheres  
215 one after another.

## 216 7 Biology

217 Aristotles biology, like his physics, rejects quantitative, mechanical and casual conceptions of nature, but  
218 subordinates to qualitative, dynamic and teleological explanations. Form is dynamic and purposive force  
219 who desires its end. It is also the soul of organism. The body is an instrument while its soul is the user,  
220 moving it and determining its structure. Body and soul constitute an indivisible unity, but soul is the  
221 prior, controlling and guiding principle of the whole. That is, the realization of the whole is prior to its  
222 parts. To understand organisms, parts must be related to the whole.

223 Where there is life, there is soul. The souls constitute a hierarchy, from plant soul whose function is of  
224 nutrition, growth and reproduction; to animal soul, which governs senses, instincts, emotions and lusts;  
225 to the highest reason soul, which is responsible for thinking and other additional functions. Three kinds  
226 of souls correspond to different organisms, from the lowest plants, to animals, and finally, human. Soul  
227 must combine with its body and no soul could exist alone. The union of soul and its body is specific, *i.e.*  
228 a human soul cannot dwell on the body of a horse and *versa vice*.

## 229 8 Psychology

230 Human is the final goal of nature. His soul resembles the plant soul in vital functions and the animal  
231 soul in the faculties of perceptions, but is distinguished by the possession of reason. Sense perception is  
232 a change produced in the soul by perceived things, mediated by sense organs. Different senses perceive  
233 qualities of things and meet in the heart, the organ of common sense, who combines qualities furnished by  
234 special senses and provides a total picture of the thing perceived. The common sense also has the power  
235 of memory and associative thinking.

236 Except functions of growth and perception, human soul also possesses the power of thinking the  
237 universal and necessary essences of things, the faculties of gaining conceptions. That is the reason. We  
238 apprehend sensible objects by perception, and grasp conceptions, the essences of things, by reason. Reason  
239 is, potentially, whatever it can conceive or think, and actually, conceptions.

240 Aristotle further divides reason as two parts: the passive and the creative. In passive reason concepts  
241 are potential, and the creative reason brings them real or actual. The passive and creative reason is a  
242 reflection of the dualism of form and matter in psychology. Passive reason is the matter on which creative  
243 reason acts, resulting in conceptions, the direct cognition of essences of things. So in reasoning process,  
244 conceptual thoughts hide in passive reason, and are found and actualized by creative reason.

245 Perceptions are connected with body and perish with it. Passive reason, since it is operates semi-  
246 manufactured concepts, is also perishable. Creative reason, however, exists prior to perceptions and



passive reason, and is absolutely immaterial, immortal and imperishable. It is not bound to a body, but a spark of divine mind. To some extent, it can be identified with the God, the final purpose.

## 9 Ethics

Aristotelian ethics is based on his metaphysics and psychology, attempting to give a definite answer to the question of highest good. Every human action has its end or purpose, which can be means to a higher purpose. Keep this deduction and finally, we must end at a final purpose, an ultimate principle of good for whose sake all other good is valuable and to be sought. It is the highest good, the first principle of human action, the meaning and purpose of life.

So what is the highest good? For certain substance, its highest good is moving towards its purpose and realizing it. Its purpose is the realization of its specific nature, which distinguishes itself from other things. So, the highest good is the actualization of the peculiar essences of things. For plants, the highest good is growth; for animals, it is perception; then, what is the highest good for human? The highest good of man is not merely the existence of body or sensuous feeling, but a life of reason, which distinguishes man from non-living things, plants and animals. Hence, the highest good for human is the complete and habitual exercise of reason, the essence of human.

Reason is in the soul of human. However, the soul also has irrational parts. In order to realize the highest good, reason should cooperate the other parts of the soul. Different parts of the soul must act correctly as a whole and the body must function properly. Besides, environmental conditions are necessary to the realization of the highest good. Neither a child or slave can attain the ethical goal. Poverty, sickness, misfortune, *etc.*, may interfere the attainment.

So, a virtuous soul is well ordered with a correct relationship between its reason and other irrational parts. In this condition, reason is the dominant role of human and provides ground for virtue. The perfect action of reason constitutes intellectual efficiency, or dianoetic virtue, the virtue of wisdom, insight and knowledge. The perfect action of irrational soul, the emotional-impulsive functions constitutes moral virtue, like courage, temperance, *etc.* For all actions, there is a moral virtue. These virtues constitute a rational attitude toward real life, toward danger, anger, fear, desire, *etc.* This attitude is seeking the mean of two extremes, the excess and the deficiency. For example, courage is the mean between cowardice and foolhardiness, and modesty is between bashfulness and shamelessness. The doctrine of mean is not universal. To certain feelings and actions, whether they are good or bad is dependent on quantity. There are still others that are totally bad, like envy, theft and murder.

What is good or bad is different to different individuals and under different circumstances. The determination of goodness or badness is essentially conducted by reason, and practically by the right-

279 minded man, whose soul is well ordered and virtuous. He is the measure and standard of things. He finds  
280 truth of every case and judges everything correctly.

281 There are other two points about the practice of virtue. Morality does not consist in a single action,  
282 but in the expression of a stable character of will. Furthermore, it is voluntary action. It is conscious and  
283 freely chosen. Aristotle concludes his ideas in the following definition:

284 *Virtue is a disposition, or habit, involving deliberate decision or choice, consisting in a mean that is*  
285 *relative to ourselves, the meaning being determined by reason, or as a prudent man would determine it.*

286 Hence, the highest good for man is actualization of reason, that is, self-realization. It is not selfish  
287 individualism, but altruistic spirit. Self-realization is done when a man loves and gratifies his supreme  
288 part, the true self, that is, his rational soul. This requires being moved by a motive of nobleness, and  
289 promoting interests of others and serving his country. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, he wrote:

290 *The virtuous man will act often in the interest of his friends and of his country, and if need be, will*  
291 *even die for them. He will surrender money, honour, and all the goods for which the world contends,*  
292 *reserving only nobleness for himself, as he would rather enjoy an intense pleasure for a short time than*  
293 *a moderate pleasure long, and would rather live one year nobly than many years indifferently, and would*  
294 *rather perform one noble and lofty action than many poor actions.*

295 So, to reach the ethical goal, one needs to do good to others, since man is a social being and is disposed  
296 to live together. The virtue implying to social relations is justice, for it promotes interests of another,  
297 whether he is a ruler or an ordinary people. The only difference between justice and virtue is that, justice  
298 is considered under the relations among people, while virtue designates a state of man.

299 Pleasure is the necessary and immediate consequence of virtuous activity, but is not its purpose. It is  
300 something added, and is the symbol of the completion of action of virtue. The more pleasant, the more  
301 perfect the activity would be. Pleasure are bound with life, since pleasure is impossible without activity,  
302 and activity is perfected by pleasure. True pleasure is determined by virtuous man. His judgement on  
303 what is pleasant is the only reliable standard. People who have never tasted true pleasure may mistakenly  
304 make it the satisfaction of bodily desires, but on ethical problems, man of virtue is the only measure.

305 The most pleasure activity is speculation, whose form is contemplation. It is the practice of reason, the  
306 immortal, supreme and divine part of human. Reason is the highest part of human being, and following  
307 it is the most virtuous, and thus, the most pleasant.

308 Hence, our discussion focuses on theory of ethics. The purpose or highest good of life is the realization  
309 of reason, which distinguishes human from other things. The dominance of reason confers human virtue,  
310 and thus, he becomes the fair measure of things. He determines meanings of things correctly and behaves  
311 virtuously. His action is altruistic, accompanied with true pleasure. However, learning these ethical

312 theories is not enough to guarantee morality, which is against to Socrates belief that one cannot become  
313 evil as long as he knows the true meaning of virtue. In addition to knowledge of virtue, we need to  
314 endeavor to possess and exercise it. Knowledge of virtue may be enough to stimulate certain talents, but  
315 for the majority people, more is needed. Moral action is fostered by a moral environment. To guarantee  
316 morality with highest possibility, one should receive a right inclination to virtue in his early days, and this  
317 requires a virtuous society, which is based on virtuous laws and government. Laws and government are  
318 required to lead the state to virtue, for most people are motivated by necessity and the fear of punishment  
319 rather than by reason and nobleness.

320 Thus, the task of human institution is to elevate its people to virtue, to reach the goal of human life.  
321 This is done by providing a social environment of morality and employing punishment and other legal  
322 devices. Hence, Aristotelian ethics is crowned with politics, the science of human institutions. In fact,  
323 ethics and politics are never divorced in Aristotles system. The moral goal of life is promoted in political  
324 means.

## 325 10 Politics

326 Man is a social being, who can realize his final goal only in society and the state. The state originated  
327 from families and small communities, but is prior in terms of significance and worth, consisting with the  
328 doctrine that the whole is prior to its parts. The purpose of society is to produce citizens of virtue and  
329 of pleasure, while to individual, the realization of ethical goal requires participation of social life.

330 The constitution of the state must be adapted to the character and requirement of people. It would  
331 be just for the state to confer its people equal right in so far as they are equal, and to confer unequal  
332 right in so far as they are unequal. Here equal means the same in all aspects, including personal capacity,  
333 qualifications, birth, freedom, *etc.*. Since citizens are different in these aspects, they should be treated  
334 differently in accordance with this inequality. So, as for public affairs of government, participators need  
335 to be qualified, and this is based on standards including capacity, education and social position. This is  
336 an aristocracy, the best form of government.

## 337 11 Summary

338 In all possible standards that could be used to judge a scholar, Aristotle deserves the title of master of  
339 those who know. His breadth of learning, originality and influence give him a special position in the  
340 history of thoughts. Aristotelian system embraces nearly all aspects of knowledge, reaches most of them  
341 with his genius and arranges them into a comprehensive system, which is so huge that merely its existence

342 is amazing enough. In the history of any subject, Aristotle is always a necessary chapter. For centuries,  
343 nearly all advances of knowledge started with the examination of Aristotelian doctrines. He is the peak  
344 of Greek philosophy.