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## **PLATO ON THE UNITY OF THE POLITICAL ARTS**

### **(STATESMAN 258e-259d)**

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In the Statesman,<sup>1</sup> the Eleatic Visitor argues that the four apparently distinct arts of politics (πολιτική), kingship (βασιλική), slaveholding (δεσποτική), and household-management (οικονομική) are in fact one and the same art.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle rejects this thesis in the second sentence of the Politics (1252a7-18), and spends the rest of Book One trying to substantiate the rejection.<sup>3</sup>

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I thank the students in my Spring 2005 Plato course, and especially Amy and Don Goodman-Wilson, for their reactions to an earlier version of this material.

<sup>1</sup> I cite Robinson's text in Duke et al. 1995, and the translations are mine, although I borrow frequently from Rowe 1995a and occasionally from Waterfield (in Annas and Waterfield 1995).

<sup>2</sup> I do not much like "kingship" for Plato's use of βασιλεία or "politics" for πολιτική, but I use these entrenched renderings for want of better, despite the temptations of "statecraft" and "city-management" for πολιτική.

<sup>3</sup> See also Pol. III 6 1278b30-1279a21, EN VIII 10 1160b22-1161a9, and EE 1241b27-40. There should be no doubt that Aristotle has our passage in his sights at 1252a7-9. Simpson (1998, 16n4) evinces doubt but for no good reason. He suggests that Aristotle might have had Xenophon's Memorabilia III 4 in mind, though Xenophon's Socrates compares the household-manager, chorus-leader, and general. (That the household-manager's knowledge is the same as the politician's is only implied at III 4.6 and III 4.12). Simpson also points to passages in the Politics in which Aristotle opposes

Recent commentators have sided with Aristotle and have judged Plato's argument "more persuasive than strict," "extremely weak," or even "flagrantly invalid."<sup>4</sup> I aim to rehabilitate Plato's argument. After I review the apparent problem in it and consider three inadequate responses, I offer rehabilitation. I do not show that Plato was right and Aristotle wrong. But I do argue that Plato's argument validly achieves what it sets out to achieve, and I clarify what is at issue in the disagreement between Plato and Aristotle.<sup>5</sup>

The argument comes early in the Statesman. The Visitor and young Socrates seek to define the expert politician or statesman (πολιτικός). They first place their target among the knowers (258b2-6), and then, to begin narrowing their search, they distinguish between practical and theoretical knowledge (258b7-e7).

### **T1** 258d4-6

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anonymous thinkers who identify politics and slaveholding or politics and money-making or kingship and slaveholding or household-management and slaveholding, though, of course, nothing suggests that any of these anonymous persons identified the four arts of politics, kingship, slaveholding, and household-management, which is what Aristotle targets at 1252a7-9. Simpson does not mention it, but Aristotle might have also had Lovers 137b-139a in mind, whether Plato or a follower wrote it. On the other hand, a member of the Academy might have written the Lovers to respond to Aristotle's Politics, although it would be a weak response since it fails to engage Aristotle's reasons. (I have no firm views about the authorship of the Lovers, which is generally judged to be spurious but without any knockdown arguments in favor of that judgment.)

<sup>4</sup> In order, Rowe 1995a, ad 258e11; Schofield 2006, 167; and Cooper 1997, 169.

<sup>5</sup> There is not much discussion of this argument in Miller 1980, Rosen 1995, Lane 1998, or the many contributions in Rowe 1995b, although of course several contributors (including Rowe [14-15 with 25], Dixsaut [257], Hirsch [188], and Accattino [203] notice the argument's anticipation of 292e-293a.

Ἄρ' οὖν οὐκ ἀριθμητικὴ μὲν καὶ τινες ἕτεροι ταύτῃ συγγενεῖς τέχναι ψιλὰ τῶν  
 πράξεων εἰσι, τὸ δὲ γινῶναι παρέσχοντο μόνον;

Arithmetic and the other arts akin to it are disengaged from actions  
 and offer only knowing.

**T2** 258d8-e2

Αἱ δέ γε περὶ τεκτονικὴν αὖ καὶ σύμπασαν χειρουργίαν ὥσπερ ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν  
 ἐνούσαν σύμφυτον τὴν ἐπιστήμην κέκτηνται, καὶ συναποτελοῦσαν τὰ γιγνόμενα ὑπ'  
 αὐτῶν σώματα πρότερον οὐκ ὄντα.<sup>6</sup>

The arts concerning building and all manual labor contain knowledge  
 as something that is naturally in actions and that completes the bodies  
 brought into being by them since they did not exist before.

So the obvious question is, is the politician a theoretical knower or a  
 practical knower?

But the Visitor does not ask the obvious question. Instead, he asks,

**T3** 258e8-11

Πότερον οὖν τὸν πολιτικὸν καὶ βασιλέα καὶ δεσπότην καὶ ἔτ' οἰκονόμον θήσομεν ὡς ἐν  
 πάντα ταῦτα προσαγορεύοντες, ἢ τοσαύτας τέχνας αὐτὰς εἶναι φώμεν ὅσαπερ  
 ὀνόματα ἐρρήθη;

Shall we set the expert politician and king and slaveholder and also the  
 household-manager down as one thing though we call them all these

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<sup>6</sup> This text is very much in question, but since nothing of substance for my purposes hangs on the different proposals, I simply follow Robinson without discussion.

things [viz., names], or should we say that the arts themselves are as many as the names they are called by?

So now the Visitor and young Socrates have two tasks. First, they need to determine whether politics, kingship, slaveholding, and household-management name four arts or just one. Second, they need to determine whether politics is among the theoretical or practical arts.

They evidently try to discharge the first task with just three premises. The second and third emerge in very short order.

**T4** 259b7-8

Καὶ μὴν οἰκονόμος γε καὶ δεσπότης ταυτόν.

But a household-manager and a slaveholder are the same thing.

**T5** 259b9-11

Τί δέ; μεγάλης σχήμα οἰκήσεως ἢ μικρᾶς αὐ πόλεως ὄγκος μὲν τι πρὸς ἀρχὴν

διοίσετον;

Οὐδέν.

Well then, will the apparent character of a large household differ at all from the bulk of small city as far as rule is concerned?

Not at all.

There is room for quibbling about what exactly the Visitor and young Socrates agree to here, let alone whether they should so agree. But since the argument is supposed to show that four apparently distinct arts are the same, it would be tidiest to take these premises to be that the arts of

household-management and slaveholding are the same and the arts of household-management and politics are the same. Then, if the first premise identifies the art of kingship with one of the others, the Visitor and young Socrates should be prepared to draw their conclusion that all four arts are one and the same.

Unfortunately, the first premise does not identify kingship with one of the others. Instead, the Visitor and young Socrates say this:

**T6** 259a1-b6

εἴ τῷ τις τῶν δημοσιευόντων ἰατρῶν ἰκανὸς συμβουλευεῖν ἰδιωτεύων αὐτός, ἄρ' οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον αὐτῷ προσαγορευέσθαι τοῦνομα τῆς τέχνης ταύτων ὅπερ ᾧ συμβουλευεῖ;

Ναί.

Τί δ'; ὅστις βασιλεύοντι χώρας ἀνδρὶ παραινεῖν δεινὸς ἰδιώτης ὢν αὐτός, ἄρ' οὐ φήσομεν ἔχειν αὐτὸν τὴν ἐπιστήμην ἣν ἔδει τὸν ἄρχοντα αὐτὸν κεκτηῖσθαι;

Φήσομεν.

Ἀλλὰ μὴν ἢ γε ἀληθινοῦ βασιλέως βασιλική;

Ναί.

Ταύτην δὲ ὁ κεκτημένος οὐκ, ἄντε ἄρχων ἄντε ἰδιώτης ὢν τυγχάνῃ, πάντως κατὰ γε τὴν τέχνην αὐτὴν βασιλικὸς ὀρθῶς προσρηθησεται;

Δίκαιον γοῦν.

If someone who is himself private is able to advise one of the public doctors, mustn't the same art-name be applied to him as to the one he advises?<sup>7</sup>

Yes.

Well, shall we not say that the one who is clever at helping the king of a country, though he is himself a private individual, has the knowledge which the ruler needed to have?

We shall say that.

But the knowledge that belongs to the true king is kingship?

Yes.

And the person who possesses this, whether he happens to rule or to be a private citizen, will be addressed with perfect correctness as an expert in kingship, on account of the art itself?

That is just.

The point here is that just as whether one holds the office of public doctor is irrelevant to whether one has the public doctor's art, so too, whether one is actually a king is irrelevant to whether one has the art of kingship.

This is plainly not enough to deliver the conclusion of the argument. If we read optimistically, we have the following three premises:

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<sup>7</sup> Two readings have been proposed. According to one, the advisor is a doctor in private practice and the advisee is a special public doctor appointed by the Athenian assembly (see Plato, Gorg. 455b and Xenophon, Mem. IV 2.5, with Dodds 1959, ad 455b2 and Skemp 1952, 124n1). Alternatively, the advisor is an amateur who knows medicine and the advisee a publicly recognized doctor (cf. Gorg. 514d-e, with Campbell 1867, ad 259b, pace Dodds 1959, ad 455b2). I have tried to translate neutrally; for my purposes, either will do.

(1P1) One can possess the art of kingship without being a king.

(1P2) The art of household-management = the art of slaveholding.

(1P3) The art of household-management = the art of politics.

From these, the Visitor and young Socrates clearly want to conclude that the arts of politics, kingship, household-management, and slaveholding are the same. The Visitor says,

**T7** 259c1-4

Οὐκοῦν, ὃ νυνδὴ διεσκοπούμεθα, φανερόν ὡς ἐπιστήμη μία περὶ πάντ' ἐστὶ ταῦτα: ταύτην δὲ εἴτε βασιλικὴν εἴτε πολιτικὴν εἴτε οἰκονομικὴν τις ὀνομάζει, μηδὲν αὐτῷ διαφερώμεθα.

Thus, with respect to what we were inquiring into just now, it is plain that there is one science concerning all these things; whether someone names it kingship or politics or household-management, let us not disagree with him at all.

As Cooper (1997, 170n7) says, "It flies in your face that the conclusion does not follow (and never mind whether all or any of the premises are true)."

Recent scholarship offers two ways of covering up this embarrassment. Cooper (1997, 169-170) himself has argued that Plato intentionally gives us a "flagrantly invalid" argument "to place and hold a question mark over" the claim that politics and kingship are the same art. On his view, the identity of expert politics and expert kingship is the central thesis, and "the other two alleged equivalents are brought in solely... as camouflage" (Cooper

1997, 168). Cooper (1997, 168-169) explains, "To any Greek reader the supposition that what a king needs to know is precisely the same thing that a statesman does—a politikos, one who knows how to rule in a polis, a free, self-ruling community—must have been, to put it mildly, a great provocation." The flagrantly invalid argument helps us to place a question-mark over this identification, and thus prepares us for the rest of the dialogue, in which, or so Cooper argues, Plato first over-inflates the expert statesman into a king and then deflates a king into an expert statesman. So, as Cooper explains (1997, 172), "the initial identification of the expert statesman and king really paves the way for a reduction of kingship to statesmanship—not the other way around, as first appears."

I do not think that our argument is supposed to be "flagrantly invalid." I have two general reasons. First, I think that Cooper's Plato is at best confused. This author advances a "great provocation" and yet also designs an invalid argument so that readers will question the great provocation. But is the invalidity really necessary? I would have thought that great provocations bring their own question-marks to the party. Also, Cooper's Plato offers a flagrantly invalid argument so that his readers question its central conclusion, and yet he also takes care to camouflage the central conclusion. But if one were designing a flagrantly invalid argument to make a point, why would one want to add camouflage? I would have thought that

the flagrant do not hide.<sup>8</sup> What is more, Cooper's Plato wants to provoke great skepticism about the identification of the political and the kingly arts though he ultimately means to defend the identity. I understand why he would want to raise questions about one way of understanding the identification, but what does he gain by making the very idea seem like a non-starter? I would have thought that Plato would not want to stack the deck against himself.

But these concerns do not unearth the roots of my disagreement. My second general reason for rejecting Cooper's interpretation is that we can make better sense of the argument than he imagines. It will help if we diagnose the real challenge of the argument a bit differently. Cooper thinks that the provocation is to identify expert kingship and expert politics. That strikes me as the easy part. The hard part is to identify the public arts of kingship and politics, on the one hand, with the private arts of household-management and slaveholding, on the other.

Cooper is of course right that the Greeks saw an enormous gulf between Athenian politics and the Persian king, but the Visitor does not encourage us to think of Athenians and the Great King. When members of the elite talk in Athens about kingship, they might well have the Spartan kings in mind (e.g., *Alc. I* 120e-124a), or merely some possible, ideal kings

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<sup>8</sup> Cooper might mean that Plato wants the invalidity to be flagrant but lets the Visitor hide or even miss the invalidity behind what is to young Socrates or even to himself camouflage (cf. Cooper 1997, 169). There still seems a problem for Plato's aims in this baroque scheme.

(e.g., the Republic). In the Statesman, the Visitor has focused our attention not on ordinary politicians and statesmen but on experts. In the Euthydemus, which similarly focuses on knowledge, Socrates reports to Crito that he and young Cleinias "thought that the politician's art and the kingly art were the same" (291c4-5), and there is no hint that either Cleinias or Crito found this controversial. Nor should it be controversial at least if we are accepting some Socratic assumptions. Whether there is one political ruler or many taking turns, the art political rulers should have is wisdom, and it should benefit the ruled. Of course, in the Statesman, the conversation is being led not by Socrates but by the Eleatic Visitor, and while we might be prepared for an intellectual from Elea to over-unify things, we cannot assume that he has Socratic thoughts in mind. Still, Socrates is hovering nearby, and the Visitor and young Socrates have quickly agreed to focus not on what actual statesmen or politicians do but on the expert.<sup>9</sup>

What Cooper dismisses as mere "camouflage" is the harder part, of identifying the private with the public arts. The Visitor himself hints that this is more difficult when he first raises the question (at **T3**), because he uses "also" (ἔτι) to emphasize whether household-management should be joined to the others. A wider view begins to explain why, since there is in Greek political ideology a strong contrast between those who engage in politics and those who live a quiet life. The latter are ridiculed as "useless," "unmanly,"

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<sup>9</sup> See also Weiss 1995.

"fools," and "nobodies to their friends."<sup>10</sup> Socrates challenges this ideology when he paradoxically characterizes himself as a "busybody" who avoids traditional politics (Plato, Ap. 31c) and when he insists that he is one of few Athenians, if not the only one, to try to engage the true political art (Plato, Gorg. 521d).<sup>11</sup> To say that those who are expert household-managers and slaveholders have the same knowledge as those who are expert kings and statesmen is provocative in just this way.<sup>12</sup>

So let us consider a second response to the Visitor's failed argument. The argument lacks a premise identifying the arts of politics and kingship. Two scholars have independently proposed rectifying this by moving three lines of text.<sup>13</sup> In the manuscripts, the lines come at the very end of our passage, just before the Visitor suggests that the make a second division,

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<sup>10</sup> By, respectively, Pericles, in Thucydides' version of his funeral oration (Thuc. II 40.2), the philosophically withdrawn father's nagging wife in Plato's Republic (549d6), those around that same man's son (550a3), and Zethus, in the fragments of Euripides' Antiope (fr. 187 TGF).

<sup>11</sup> The Gorgias passage is often misunderstood; see Shaw (forthcoming).

<sup>12</sup> See also Meno 71e-73c. And for discussion of the ideas in this paragraph, see Brown 2009.

<sup>13</sup> See Sandbach 1977 and Robinson 1995, 41 with 37n1. Robinson's proposal is enshrined in Duke et al. 1995, and is adopted in Annas and Waterfield's edition. Actually, Sandbach and Robinson propose moving three different lines, but the difference is trivial. According to the line numbers in Duke et al. 1995, they both want to move the Stranger's sentence at 259d4-5. Sandbach would also move the preceding response from young Socrates and locate 259d3-5 immediately after 259b5. Robinson also moves the following response from young Socrates and locates 259d4-6 immediately after 259b6. Sandbach (1977, 51) reasons that Δίκαιον γούν (at 259b6) is an unparalleled and infelicitous response to a question concerning whether something is said ὀρθῶς, since "to say anything ὀρθῶς must be δίκαιον." This seems to me to fear redundancy more than Plato in fact did, and above I consider Robinson's proposal. But nothing philosophically important hinges on this particular difference. Nor does much hinge on the emendations that Sandbach (1977, 51-2) proposes for the would-be-moved text (for which see below).

between two kinds of theoretical knowledge. But the movers, and they include the editors of the new Oxford Classical Texts edition, place these lines between **T6** (the longer first premise) and **T4** (the short second premise). Here are the lines:

**T8** 259d4-6

Τὴν ἄρα πολιτικὴν καὶ πολιτικὸν καὶ βασιλικὴν καὶ βασιλικὸν εἰς ταῦτον ὡς ἔν πάντα ταῦτα συνθήσομεν;<sup>14</sup>

Δῆλον.

So shall we place all these things—the political art, the expert politician, the kingly art, and the expert king—into the same thing as one thing?

Clearly.

Cooper calls the decision to move these lines "a stunning example of editorial hubris and ignorance" (1997, 168n4). Those are not my words, but I tend to agree. There needs to be outstanding reason to move text around: problems had better get solved. Unfortunately, this particular move solves no problem and creates a new one.

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<sup>14</sup> Sandbach (1977, 51-52) suggests two emendations. First, he notes that manuscript T lacks καὶ before πολιτικὸν and βασιλικὸν and suggests bracketing καὶ πολιτικὸν and καὶ βασιλικὸν, since if the archetype lacked καὶ πολιτικὸν and καὶ βασιλικὸν, πολιτικὸν and βασιλικὸν could have crept in from explanatory marginalia (explaining T) and then conjunctions would have been added to "correct" the error in T (explaining B and W). Second, citing conversation with Richard Hackforth, he troubles about ὡς ἔν πάντα ταῦτα since "even if four terms precede it there are in reality only two entities to be identified," and so suggests that "the phrase had been wrongly repeated" from **T3**, "as an explanation of εἰς ταῦτον συνθήσομεν." This is more worrying than there needs to be, as I argue in what follows.

It creates a problem by depriving our passage of its effective conclusion. Recall that the Visitor and young Socrates have two tasks. They reach their conclusion for the first task in **T7**, agreeing that the arts of politics, kingship, household-management, and slaveholding are the same, and then they take up the second task by considering whether this single political art is theoretical or practical knowledge (259c6-d3). To do this, they agree that "any king"—anyone with the single political art that can be called the kingly art—has power that rests not on his (own) hands but on his mind (259c6-9), and so the art of kingship must be theoretical (259c10-d3). This reasoning, even more than the reasoning for the first task, treats the agent who possesses the art as nothing but the art itself, embodied. That is why inferences are made from what the artful king does to the nature of kingship's activities.<sup>15</sup> The completion of the second task also sets up the double conclusion that the apparently various political arts all belong to the category of theoretical arts and are all one and the same art. **T8** states this double conclusion, by concentrating on just politics and kingship: these arts (embodied or not) belong to the same category (they are theoretical knowledge) as one art.<sup>16</sup> If **T8** is moved, there is no clear conclusion to the

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<sup>15</sup> Sandbach's worries about **T8** (see the preceding note) miss the way in which the argument before 259d5 licenses the identification of an artist with his art, in part because Sandbach has committed himself to moving the crucial question in **T8**.

<sup>16</sup> Cooper (1997, 168n4) sees the double conclusion clearly, and Waterfield (in Annas and Waterfield 1995) translates **T6** for the double conclusion but unfortunately misplaces it. Rowe 1995a under-translates *εις ταὐτὸν... συνθήσομεν* in **T6**: "In that case shall we put all these things together—the statesman's knowledge and the statesman, the king's knowledge and the king—as one, and regard them as the same?" (For *εις ταὐτὸν...*

two tasks the Visitor and young Socrates took up before the Visitor introduces a further division within theoretical knowledge.

But perhaps the more serious problem with moving **T8** is that it does not help the Visitor's argument. Notice that **T8** is an inference ( $\alpha\theta\alpha$ ). In its original location, it is clear how it is an inference: **T8** draws together two earlier conclusions into one, just as a person can always validly infer the claim  $p \ \& \ q$  from the claims  $p$  and  $q$ . In its new home, however, what are the grounds in **T6** for **T8**? Let us consider this dilemmatically. Either **T6** gives good grounds for **T8** or it does not. If it does not, then moving **T8** hardly helps the Visitor's cause. Yes, the Visitor now has a premise he needs to infer that the arts of politics, kingship, household-management, and slaveholding are the same, but unfortunately, he infers that premise invalidly. One invalidity has replaced another.

What if, on the other hand, **T6** gives good grounds for **T8**? In this case, paradoxically, we do not need to move **T8** at all. If **T6** warrants the conclusion that the kingly and political arts are the same, then we can give the Visitor this as an implicit premise to get to the conclusion in **T7**.

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$\sigma\nu\nu\theta\eta\sigma\sigma\mu\epsilon\nu$ , Cooper (1997, 168n4) aptly cites 276e2 and the related parallels of 260e6, 263d7-8, 266e9, 281c9-d1.) Rowe's rendering makes **T6** repeat **T5** needlessly, as Cooper (1997, 168n4) notes. Rowe (1995a, ad 259d3-4) pretends otherwise, saying that **T5** established "the identity of kingship and statesmanship" whereas **T6** "confirms the identity of kingship and statesmanship with the knowledge which the true king/statesman will possess" since now it is clear that "kingship/statesmanship is a matter of knowledge only." But this defense misrepresents **T5** and confuses the issue of identifying the arts of kingship and statesmanship (done in **T5**) and identifying the single art of kingship or statesmanship as a theoretical art (only done in **T6**, but actually obscured on Rowe's translation).

Let's consider this our third approach to the argument. If we prefer not to call the argument flagrantly invalid for dubious gain and prefer not to shuffle the text for no gain, then perhaps we should try to extract from **T6** the grounds for an implicit claim that the kingly and political arts are the same. Unfortunately, there are two potential problems with this approach.

First, Cooper (1997, 168n4) argues that it would question-begging for the Visitor to assert the identity of expert kingship and politics as a premise. But let us be clear. The argument so conceived is perfectly valid:

(3P1) Politics = kingship (implicit in **T6**, we are assuming)

(3P2) Household-management = slaveholding (**T4**)

(3P3) Household-management = politics (**T5**)

Thus, (C) Politics = kingship = household-management =  
slaveholding.

Still, one might note that a perfect valid argument schema can be used to beg the question if the real question at issue is not answered by any inference from multiple premises but is only asserted by one of them. Since Cooper thinks that the real question at issue is whether the arts of politics and kingship are the same, he thinks that this particular argument begs the question. But I have already explained why I think this misconstrues the hard part of the argument, which concerns the identity of public and private arts.

But a second problem with this approach is harder to shake. The problem is that we need to extract P1 from **T6**, and I can see no reasonable way of doing that. In **T6**, there is no mention of the expert politician or the art of politics at all.<sup>17</sup>

So I turn now to a fourth approach to the argument. I propose that we take our start from two points. First, as I have suggested, the Visitor is primarily exercised to show that the public and private arts are the same. Second, he is primarily intent on doing this by abstracting from practical considerations, on which the four arts differ, and insisting on theoretical learning, on which the four arts might agree. This explains why he turns immediately from the implicit question of whether the expert statesman is a theoretical or practical knower to the explicit question of whether the arts of politics, kingship, slaveholding, and household-management are the same. If we approach the latter looking for shared theoretical learning, then we will also be answering the former.<sup>18</sup>

As I see it, the argument has four premises. Two are backed by reasoning, and they serve to bridge the gap between the private and the public. One is merely asserted, and the other left implicit. These are the identities of household-management and slaveholding, on the one hand, and of politics and kingship, on the other.

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<sup>17</sup> I am thus confused by Sandbach's (1977, 51) assertion that "the preceding argument [that is, before 259b5] has shown that πολιτικός is equivalent to βασιλικός."

<sup>18</sup> So, too, Campbell 1867, ad 258e.

The first reasoned premise (from **T6**) is that the criterion for possession of the kingly art depends not on acting as king acts but on knowing what a king needs to know. Notice that this premise already encourages the thought that the kingly art at least can be "disengaged from action" and "offer only knowledge" (see **T1**), unlike the practical arts, whose knowledge is naturally embedded in actions (**T2**). We are shifting away from what the king actually does and considering what he needs to know apart from acting in order to act well. The Visitor does not make the roster of such knowledge explicit, but he does suggest the analogy with medicine, which calls to mind old Socratic reasoning. Just as a doctor needs to know the good of the body, the possessor of the political art needs to know the good of the soul. This knowledge can be characterized as justice (cf. Meno 73a), what is good for human beings, and how to produce agreement and friendship among human beings (Alcibiades I, esp. 127a-b). In addition, the Visitor says that a private citizen can possess the knowledge that the expert king needs. So the criterion for possessing a putatively public art can be satisfied in private. Nor is it a stretch to put the point in terms of private and public: the Visitor reaches this conclusion by explicitly considering the relation between a private doctor and public doctor and again between a private individual and king.

The second reasoned premise (from **T5**) is that the number of persons managed cannot be the decisive criterion to distinguish the art of city-

management from the art of household-management since the largest households rival the smallest cities in size.<sup>19</sup> This reasoning moves more quickly, and it seems to miss much. After all, it is not just the number of persons managed but the kinds of persons managed that matter to Aristotle's distinction between household-management and city-management. But the Visitor can afford to move more quickly, since he has already focused attention on the general knowledge an expert must have in order to act well and not the knowledge naturally embedded in the action. He can concede to Aristotle that the actions one takes with a slave or children differ from those one takes with fellow-citizens. He wants to insist, instead, that the general knowledge of what is good for a human being that should guide all such action is the same.<sup>20</sup> Here, I think, is the real root of the disagreement between Plato and Aristotle. For Aristotle, the good for women and slaves is not the same as it is for citizens. The Visitor has certainly not done anything to support the Platonic alternative to this Aristotelian assumption, but if the argument has not achieved everything, it is not exactly achieved nothing, either.

In sum, then, the argument can be laid out as follows:

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<sup>19</sup> With this paragraph, contrast Cooper's (1997, 170n7) reckoning of the premise at **T5**.

<sup>20</sup> If this were not the knowledge essential to the classification, then it would be easy to object that politics, kingship, slaveholding, and household-management differ in empirical knowledge of what exactly needs to be done. The Visitor here is taking the political arts to be theoretical here, though it begs questions against his classification to assume that such a theoretical politics cannot be politics (as is suggested by Rosen 1995, 21, and Lane 1998, 140).

(4P1) Whether you are a king is not relevant to whether you have the kingly art but whether you possess the knowledge the king needs is. **(T6)**

(4P2) Whether you are publicly engaged in some work managing human beings is not relevant to whether you have the art of managing human beings but whether you possess the knowledge a public agent of such management needs is. (implicit generalization from 4P1)

(4P3) Household-management = slaveholding. **(T4)**

(4P4) Politics = kingship (assumed)

(4P5) Whether the number of people managed is large or small is not relevant to whether one has the art of managing people. **(T5)**

(4P6) The difference between being a private individual who knows what a political manager needs to know and manages people and being a publicly engaged citizen who knows what a political manager needs to know and manages people is not significant. (from (4P2) and (4P5))

Thus, (C) Politics = kingship = household-management = slaveholding. (from (4P3), (4P4), and (4P6))

This argument is not flagrantly invalid, and if we take the primary obstacle to the conclusion to be the identity of private and public arts, then the argument begs no questions. There is more to say than this argument says,

of course, and there are reasons to resist the conclusion. But these are not grounds to declare the argument "more persuasive than strict" or "extremely weak," let alone "flagrantly invalid."

One could perhaps lodge a serious objection by pointing to the implicit premise (4P4). Even if this is not the hard part of the conclusion, the identity of the kingly and political arts is surely the principal part of the conclusion as far as the rest of the dialogue is concerned. This is true, and it explains why the Visitor stresses the kingly and political arts when he sums up our whole passage in **T8**. But this point does not show that (4P4) begs the question. What matters is what question this argument is supposed to be answering. I take the burden of the question to be to establish the identity of the public and private arts. This burden is met by general considerations in favor of identifying the public and private arts. Those general considerations also tend to support the identification of the kingly and political arts, since the argument's first reasoned premise gives a remarkably abstract and general conception of the kingly art that the second reasoned premise applies, implicitly, to the arts of politics and household-management. But as far as this argument is concerned, the identity of the kingly and political arts can be hypothesis for further examination, extracted from the conclusion of the argument (in the move from **T7** to **T8**) and considered at great length later in the dialogue.

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