

# Chapter 2

## Cosmópolis or Koinópolis?

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### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss similarities and differences between Aristotle and the ancient Stoics, relevant for approaching old and new concepts of *cosmópolis*.<sup>1</sup> The text is part of a more comprehensive work in progress that compares Aristotle's ethico-political thinking with that of the Stoics.<sup>2</sup>

Stoicism typically gets credit for the concept of “cosmópolis”. The Stoic influence reflects, according to some, the imperial and universal ambitions of the Hellenistic era. Conversely, many see Aristotle's ethics and politics as clearly pre-cosmopolitan, i.e. conventional; ethnocentric, excluding foreigners, women, manual workers and

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<sup>1</sup>Discussions about the nature and relevance of cosmopolitanism have been running intensively over the last decades (e.g. Brown and Held 2010; Brock and Brighouse 2005; Appiah 2006; Beck 2006; Benhabib 2008; Delanty 2009; Harvey 2009; Kleingeld 2012; Lourme 2012; Zarka 2014). Papastephanou (2013) criticises some of these for focusing too much on descriptive and cultural aspects and too little on normative and ethical, as if cosmopolitanism consisted merely in acquiring a modern or postmodern, urban multicultural identity and attitude, relativising moral and political standards and cultural conventions, disdaining local ways and mores and cutting or “de-privileging” local loyalties and bonds. I sympathise with Papastephanou's critique, but this chapter will not intervene in this discussion directly.

<sup>2</sup>The Stoics came to dominate philosophy during the Hellenistic period (from 323 to 31 BC), after the death of both Aristotle (384–322 BC) and Alexander the Great (356–323 BC). It is unfortunate (and unfair) that we know ancient Cynicism and Stoicism only through fragmentary or secondary sources, doxographies and contemporary critics and opponents. Still, the differences between the schools depicted by these mediators and critics are important. Having worked on Aristotle for years (Eikeland 1997, 1998, 2008a, b), I will inevitably interpret other schools through Aristotelian coloured glasses. Space restrictions and selective use of source material and secondary literature make this chapter more like a prelude to the comprehensive argument.

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“natural slaves” from full citizenship; and bound to the size, form and culture of his contemporary Greek city-states, unable even to register the approaching doom of these city-states entailed in Alexander’s contemporary military campaigns and imperial ambitions. The picture is more complex, however. As I indicate, some Aristotelian ideas involve a potential for conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism.

Concerning the genealogy, the Cynics, who apparently coined the concept “*cosmópolis*”, were older than both Aristotle and Alexander. The founder of Stoicism, Zeno of Citium in Cyprus (334–262 BC), started teaching philosophy more than 20 years after Alexander’s death. The philosophers who influenced Alexander’s presumed “universalism” and “cosmopolitanism” were not the Stoics. The idea of a *cosmópolis* appeared decades before Alexander’s campaigns. The concept could not simply have been a *post factum* reflection of his ambitions and conquests. Empires, like the Persian, already existed as dominant and threatening powers.<sup>3</sup>

Certainly, there are reasons why Aristotle’s philosophy appears pre-cosmopolitan, since, according to some interpretations, he left basic principles of ethics – the virtues (*aretai*) – outside the realm of reasoning or *lógos* and relegated them to conventionality and habit as “given”.<sup>4</sup> Also, his suggested specific measures and provisions for the design of city-states seem parochial and dated. As active *epistémai*, Aristotle’s ethics and politics are deliberative (not deductive). As such, they may not contain much critical potential. However, I challenge (Eikeland 2008a) conventional interpretations, by reading Aristotle’s ethics and politics as interconnected with the *Topica*, his mostly neglected, underrated, and misunderstood work on dialectics. Also, unlike current neo-Aristotelians, I read his dialectical theoretical and practical philosophy interconnectedly, not separately. There are underutilised potentials in Aristotle for an alternative, more productive and adequate conceptualisation of ethico-political ambitions similar to those of Cynic-Stoic cosmopolitanism. Explicating these aspects of his philosophy makes differences between Cynic and Stoic concepts more salient. Hopefully, this also shows how Aristotle – despite core differences – was more in line with the Cynics than with the Stoics.

Elaborating on similarities, differences and potentials is important for theorising *cosmópolis* or the *koinópolis* as we may call the Aristotelian version of *cosmópolis*.<sup>5</sup> Such theorisation can also prove relevant to current discussions about cosmopoli-

<sup>3</sup>The Greeks considered such empires non-political, even antipolitical (Aristotle, Pol1313a34-1314a29), and perceived the enormous Persian Empire mostly as a giant *oikos*, or household, with a *despótēs*, or, in political terms, a tyrant, on top (Llewellyn-Jones 2013:49). The Persian Empire was multi-ethnic but it was not a model for political ideas about *cosmópolis*. Neither was the *cosmópolis* identical to the *oikouménē* or known, inhabited world.

<sup>4</sup>Bernstein (1986:71–72/110–111) questions both Aristotle and Gadamer about what kind of discourse is appropriate when questions about the validity of basic norms (or universals) are raised and how modernity has removed their given, traditional character, supposed to be implied by Aristotle.

<sup>5</sup>The concept *koinópolis* is introduced and explained in Eikeland (1997:182–224, 387 and 400, and 2008a: 327–342, 370–371, 413, 422, 426, 434–447, 476, 489, 491, 497, 501). *Koinópolis* is not used in Greek, but *koinopoliteía* is; it signifies “commonwealth” or in German *Gemeinwesen*. The

tanism and “*Bildung*”, or character formation, and for practical objectives connected to informal and non-formal organisational learning, personal mastery, etc. (Eikeland 2008a). Based on the *Corpus Aristotelicum* and on how ancient sources present differences between Cynic, Stoic and Peripatetic philosophy, I aim to elicit Aristotelian ethico-political thinking related to cosmopolitanism and to discuss some methodological principles and challenges inherent to different philosophical approaches.

Elsewhere (Eikeland 1997, 1998, 2008a, b) I reached conclusions similar to Schofield’s (1999: 58, 97, 150) concerning the Stoics. He claims that Zeno’s cosmópolis is a projection of the Stoic philosophy circle. The community of wise individuals is the model for the ideal constitution, suggested even by Diogenes Laertius (IV.15) when claiming that Socrates’ follower, Antisthénês (446–366 BC), laid the practical foundations for the Cynic-Stoic constitution (*politeía*) through *personal* traits. As Schofield formulates it (1999:150):

My guess is that Zeno thought that in a sense the informal community of teachers and students he presided over (...) in the Painted Stoa did itself constitute an attempt at forming a “city of virtue”.

My own claim – *quod demonstrari debet* – is that while Schofield’s conjecture may be hard to defend concerning the Stoics, Plato and Aristotle did work with the idealised relationships of the philosophical practice in their communities as a political standard and yardstick.<sup>6</sup> I believe this is the key to understanding how philosophy or wisdom as activity (*sophía and phrónêsis*) – not philosophers as conventional kings (*pace* Plato) – could provide political standards for citizenship. The perspective is indicated by Aristotle in stating that living in the company of good people is like training for virtue (*áskêsis tis tês aretês*) where people become constantly better (*beltfious gínesthai*) by activating their friendship and correcting each other (EN1100b20, 1159b3-7, 1165a29, 1165b13-23, 1169b28-1170a12, 1172a8-14).<sup>7</sup> The question is what constituted these communities and their internal relationships in the thinking of the Cynics, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, respectively. What was their constitution (*politeía*)? Although their main criteria of design were superficially the same, i.e. reason and virtue, the philosophy schools came up with quite different answers to political challenges. These standards were universal, however, not merely Greek, indicating that they served a function similar to the Cynic cosmópolis.

Neither the Stoic cosmópolis nor the Aristotelian *koinópolis* is separate and independent from their respective general approaches to philosophy. Their respective “formulas” are integrated. They serve universal purposes specific and internal to their respective philosophies. Though this may be obvious concerning Stoicism, it needs to be shown in the case of Aristotle. To accomplish this, several aspects of

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point here is to pursue the comparison between this and the Cynic and Stoic concepts of cosmópolis.

<sup>6</sup>Richter (2011:63) too emphasises continuities between the political philosophy of Aristotle and the Stoics.

<sup>7</sup>In fact, I believe this represents Plato’s somewhat mystical “seventh constitution” (*hebdomê politeía*) in the *Statesman* (303B).

these schools of thought, e.g. their different concepts of reason and, consequently, argumentative strategies, dialectics and reasoning, their different concepts of virtue, the nature of soul and mind, the role of emotions and the nature of and preconditions for “happiness” (*eudaimonía*), must be discussed. Such differences position the cosmópolis and *koinópolis* quite differently in relation to local traditions, habits, opinions, etc. Hence, the difference is *not* that Aristotle was local, conventional and “pre-cosmopolitan” while the Stoics were universal, nonconventional and cosmopolitan. Neither of them was conventional. Both promoted nonconventional, universal claims. Their way of relating the local and the universal is significantly different, but, I claim, the Aristotelian version is stronger in that it secures the universal, the particular, and their unity better than the Stoic version does.

Despite appearances, ancient cosmopolitanism was not primarily concerned with a transnational or supranational “world” state, government or apparatus nor with the paraphernalia of cultural urbanism in any modern sense. Nor did it simply mean abandoning local norms and values in favour of some kind of apolitical “natural life” outside any local *pólis*. Still, the philosophical cosmópolis was not a figment of the imagination. It was real, though non-local in a double sense. It was different from any historical, local city-state, wherever located and whatever size, since the cosmópolis was not located anywhere in particular, neither temporally nor spatially.

However, all this is stated here indicatively and inconclusively. Suggestions, outlines and sketches are, for reasons of space, only preliminary indicators of directions. In what follows, I discuss, nevertheless, in more detail a conflation that operates in discussions about ancient cosmopolitanism owing to the lack of analytical distinction between the “social” and the “political”, and differences in Aristotelian and Stoic concepts of politics and law. These are all important for understanding the contents and differences between the Stoic cosmópolis and my suggested Aristotelian *koinópolis*. First, let me outline the philosophical background that frames ancient cosmopolitanism.

## 2.2 Ancient Cosmopolitanism: The Background

Ancient sources, e.g. Cicero (106–43 BC) (*Tusc.V.xxxvii.108*), Musonius Rufus (30–108 AD) (*That Exile Is No Evil*, in Nickel 1994, 451), Plutarch (46–120 AD) (*De Exilio* 600F–601A) and Epictetus (55–135 AD) (I.iv.6, III.xxiv.60–70), claim that Socrates (470–399 BC) considered himself a cosmopolitan (*kósmios/mundanum*). Socrates certainly *could* have called himself a *kosmopolítês*, judging from ways of thinking and acting ascribed to him by his contemporaries like Xenophon in *Memorabilia* (IV.iv.19–25) and Plato in the *Republic* (500E, 590A–592B. Cf. *Timaios* 90A, *Laws* 715E–717A). However, in Roman times, both non-Stoics such as Cicero and Plutarch, and Stoics like Seneca and Epictetus, saw themselves as *kosmioi* or *kosmopolitai*. They all claimed that the same, divine laws have validity for everyone (*hoi autoi nómoi pásin*), with a justice (*dikê*) used by everyone in

relation to everyone else *as citizens* (polítas). There is no longer any natural fatherland (phúsei gár ouk ésti patrís) (Plutarch, *De Exilio*, 600E–601B).<sup>8</sup>

Ethical and political tensions introduced by Socratic philosophy were discussed in terms of what is ethically, politically, technically, epistemically and similarly *good* and *bad* (agathos versus kakos/phaulos/ponêros), i.e. as tensions between knowledge and ignorance (gnôsis/epistêmê versus áгноia, amathía, etc.) and between skill, competence or excellence and incompetence (empeiría/aretê/tékhnhê versus apeiría, amathía, agnôsis, kakía) in different fields.<sup>9</sup> The main impact of Socratic philosophy, however – for some subversive and for others edifying – was the theorisation of nonconventional, if not *post*-conventional, excellence or virtue (aretê) and its individual, relational and institutional preconditions and ramifications in ethics and politics.

Definitions of virtue – its “what it is” (tò tí estin, tò tí ên einai) – were controversial, as most of Plato’s dialogues attest. According to Aristotle (EN1120a6, cf. 1106a14–26, 1107a8, MM1185a39), however, the basic general meaning of aretê is what makes any “thing” or activity work at its best (áristos). According to Zeno of Citium, aretê is the perfection of anything in general (DL VII.90, 94). We may think of virtue as acquired skill, competence or excellence, in any field. Yet, increasingly, in ancient philosophy virtue meant acquired *ethical* and *political* excellence, *distinguished from* technical perfection. All the Socratics considered achievement of virtue and performance of virtuous acts something for which we deserve personal praise and, correspondingly, personal blame for their absence or neglect. Acquiring virtue and performing virtuously are not merely given by nature without effort, or products of external, circumstantial causes (like eye colour, weather conditions, etc.). Like achieving and maintaining physical fitness, attaining virtue and performing virtuously are *up to us*. Our personal will and intentional effort are required. Consequently, at least to an extent, we are personally responsible for their acquisition and performance (Cicero, *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, 13–19, etc.).

More broadly, then, the philosophers struggled with normative *dimensions of validity* – i.e. distinctions between true and false, right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust, useful and harmful, beautiful and ugly, praise and blame, etc. – and their application to ethics, politics, knowledge, acquired experience (empeiría), and

<sup>8</sup> Every land is fatherland to me (pasa gê moi patrís), Philo Judaeus (20 BC–45 AD) writes (*Quod Omnis*, 145).

<sup>9</sup> The causes and role of reason (nous, lógos), pleasure (hêdonê), nature (phúsis), habit/*habitus*/character (êthos/héxis/êthos), exercise/practice/habituation (áskêsis/melêtê/ethismós), teaching (didaskalía) and learning (máthêsis) and written and unwritten, natural (phusikós), conventional (nomikós) and positive rule or law (nómos/thesmós) were also discussed (DL II.31–33, VI.8, VI.10–11, VI.11, VI.12). In light of later tradition, these distinctions are often interpreted moralistically, as merely moral (as arbitrary “values” or opinions) *rather than* cognitive. For both Socrates and the Stoics, however, moral errors were mainly cognitive and hardly separated. Although both moral and cognitive errors and insufficiencies may be within our own power and responsibility to control or influence and hence justified as objects of praise and blame, sorting morally evil intentions from cognitive incompetence and inability (lack of knowledge, inexperience, stupidity) is a continuous challenge.

every local habit and skill (DL VI.8, DL VI.10–12). What *is* ethical and political aretê? What is the nature and role of reason (nous/lógos)? How do these relate and apply to conventional daily life, ways of doing things, opinions, attitudes, customs, traditions and external, causal nature or fate?

Academics, Peripatetics, and Stoics all found the nonconventional standard of virtue and the ultimate good in nature as its perfection (*perfectio naturae*) (Cicero, *Academica*, I.v.19–20). Nothing contrary to nature is noble, as Aristotle maintains (Pol1325b9–10). The question is, however, what this “nature” (phúsis) could mean. It was not identical to the extraneously reified and material “nature” of the philosophy of nature or modern science, with its “laws of nature”. Nor was it merely a-conventional; independent from, external and prior to culture and civilisation; and the abandonment of all culture, civilisation and conventions.

### 2.3 Cynic Cosmópolis

The earliest known, explicit pursuers of cosmopolitanism were the Cynics, issuing directly from the circle of Socrates’ immediate followers in the late fifth century BC.<sup>10</sup> The Cynic philosopher Diogenes<sup>11</sup> – an older contemporary of Aristotle – was the first to claim explicitly to be a citizen of the world, a kosmopolítês (DL, VI.63). He is considered among the first to uphold a form of cosmópolis as a normative standard of measurement for judging local conditions, by declaring “the only true (or correct) commonwealth (or constitution) to be the universal one (mónên te orthên politeian einai tèn en kósmô)” (DL, VI.72). Accordingly, he did not see local city-states as truly political or constitutional. Diogenes did not identify with any local community or household and was deprived of a fatherland (ápolis, áoikos, patrídos esteréménos) (DL VI.38). He adopted a highly unconventional lifestyle, spectacularly breaking and provocatively challenging as unnatural, most of the local and conventional opinions and rules of conduct and decency in Athens and other city-states (DL VI.71).<sup>12</sup> The Cynics strongly influenced the early Stoics. The founder of Stoicism, Zeno of Citium, was an apprentice of several philosophical

<sup>10</sup>This ancient school of philosophy is different from modern so-called cynicism, however. The ancient Cynics were “self-sacrificial”, i.e. willing to sacrifice *themselves* through their personal lifestyle, for ideas and standards from philosophical ethics. The modern cynics are willing to sacrifice *others* for arbitrarily chosen causes, whether grand political designs or selfish interests.

<sup>11</sup>Diogenes (404–323 BC) was an exile from Sinope on the southern coast of the Black Sea. This status as a stranger to all local conditions and circumstances – at home nowhere but able to adapt anywhere (DL VI.12, 22, 49) – seems to have been important for his self-perception as a philosopher (DL VI.49, VI.30, 36). It became important for later Stoics too.

<sup>12</sup>Diogenes roamed the city-states searching with a torch in broad daylight for “a man” (ánthrôpon zêtô, DL VI.41, 27, 32, 60), presumably a “true man” or a “true citizen” of the only “true” commonwealth or city, i.e. another kosmopolítês like himself. Diogenes Laertius (V.17) ascribes similar sayings to Aristotle.

schools and individuals. Chief among the Cynic influences on Zeno was that of the “third-generation” Cynic philosopher, Crates of Thebes (365–285 BC) – who, like his teacher Diogenes, claimed to be a cosmopolitan (DL VI.93, 98).

Besides cosmopolitanism, the Cynics and the early Stoics shared a disdain for emotions (*tò apathés*) and pleasure (*hêdonê*) (DL VI.2–3, 15); an elevated arrogance and condescending scorn towards conventional values, customs and opinions (DL VI.42–43, 47, 71, 83, 104); and a contempt for conventional status and authorities (DL VI.38, 72, 92, 104). The Cynics even considered disrepute (*adoxía*) and toiling labour (*pónos*) good things (DL VI.11). Both Cynics and Stoics searched for “virtue” (*aretê*), construed virtue as natural (*kata phúsin*) (DL VI.71, VII.128, AD 11b) and thought that, as a standard of excellence, virtue was *not* conventional. However, virtue was attainable *through* reason and careful practical training (DL VI.24, 27, 43, 70–71), not through abandoning reason and civilisation.

Both Cynics and Stoics thought of virtue as an inalienable weapon, *sufficient* in itself for “happiness” and protected by walls of impregnable reasoning (DL VI.11–13, VII.40, Philo, *Quod Omnis*, 151–152, Cicero, *De Legibus*, I.xxiv.62). They considered virtue the same for women and men and esteemed honesty above family ties and local loyalties (DL VI.12, VII.120).<sup>13</sup> Nobility belongs *only* to the virtuous, not to any traditionally established social groups (DL VI.10–11). By definition, virtuous, wise individuals are friends of each other and of the gods and, by sharing reason (*lógos*), belong to the community of the gods (DL VI.37, 51, 72). The wise individual does nothing wrong (*anamártêtos*).

Finally, to the Cynics, whatever is *between* virtue and vice, like wealth, health, looks, fame, pedigree, social status, local traditions, fate, strokes of good or bad luck, pleasure and pain, and even life and death, is totally indifferent for virtue or happiness. They are externalities which we cannot fully control or be personally responsible for. As such, they are intermediates of no ethical concern. This view is important for understanding the context and the gradually emerging difference between Cynicism and Stoicism (DL VII.160, 165). Mainstream Stoics modified and finally abandoned this view about the intermediates being completely indifferent. For the Cynics, however, such intermediates constituted dimensions of diversity that did not make any ethical difference, nor did they influence “happiness” (DL VI.105). Making the intermediates indifferent sets you free from fate *qua* external determination. The radical trivialisation and relativisation of everything outside the categories of ethical virtue and vice also contribute much to understanding the indecencies of the Cynics as practical demonstrations that such intermediates really did not matter when judging the character or *êthos* of an individual. It emphasised that a ravaged beggar or “barbarian” slave could be morally virtuous and ethically far superior to any opulent Greek king or “nobleman”, who often was an utterly vicious slave of his passions and other worldly interests and forces. These are all

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<sup>13</sup> Aristotle held similar views. The proverbial *amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas* paraphrases Aristotle’s remark in EN1096a11–17.

fourth-century Cynic opinions, elaborated further in the third by early Stoics like Zeno, Cleanthes of Assos (331–232 BC) and Chrysippus of Soli (280–207 BC).<sup>14</sup>

A major difference, however, between Cynics and early Stoics was the antitheoretical attitude and claim of the Cynics that the acquisition of virtue was primarily practical (tôn ergôn) (DL VI.11). Accordingly, the Cynics, like the deviant early Stoic, Ariston of Chios, paid close attention to ethics – i.e. to practical character formation (êthos) – but did not care much about natural philosophy and logic, declaring “dialectical reasonings” (dialektikoi lógoi) to be useless artefacts resembling spiderwebs (DL VI.73, 103, 160–163, Cicero, *De Legibus* I.xiii.38). Although lógos was needed (DL.VI.24), Cynicism was mainly a way of life – a practice – and was nicknamed a shortcut to virtue (súntomos ep’aretên hodós) (VI.103–104, VII.121). The mainstream Stoics, however, emphasised theory, doctrine, and formal reasoning in order to attune themselves to the more elevated “lógos” they perceived as a comprehensive and rational law permeating the cosmos. The Stoics were Socratic in emphasising the epistemic aspects of virtue. For both the Cynics and Aristotle, however, virtue was not primarily epistêmê in this narrow sense but skill, competence or “know-how”. The Stoics, reconnecting to Presocratic natural philosophy, derived their ethics more or less deductively, directly from natural philosophy (DL VII.40). Pradeau (2015) emphasises this strand within ancient cosmopolitical thinking from the Presocratic philosophers of nature, via Plato, to the Stoics in their common effort to harmonise the individual, the city, and the universe. The Cynics could hardly have shared this view, however, since they consciously neglected formal logic and the philosophy of nature as unimportant. In fact, these strands constitute a fault line between the Cynics and Aristotle on the one hand emphasising practice and ethics, and the line of continuity drawn by Pradeau on the other hand, where ethics and the philosophy of nature are mixed or even conflated.

With some exceptions, the Socratic philosophical schools were not antipolitical or apolitical. The Cynic Antisthénês, referring to non-local standards, claimed that the wise “will take part in politics (politeúsesthai), not in accordance with the established, conventional laws but in accordance with the law of virtue” (DL VI.11, 104). This displays the tension, not only between Cynicism and local customs but, more generally, between Socratic philosophy and conventionality as such. Antisthénês claimed that city-states unable to distinguish the ethically bad from the ethically good were doomed (DL VI.5–6, cf. Aristotle, Rh1360a23–32, EN1126a12–13). Like Socrates, who paradoxically claimed to be one of very few practising politics in democratic Athens (Plato’s *Gorgias*, 521D), Diogenes claimed his art to be “governing men” (anthrôpôn arkhein) (VI.74, VI.29, Philo *Quod Omnis*, 123), indicating that philosophical practice, in itself and at its core, was considered political, in fact,

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<sup>14</sup>It is important, however, to remember that the early Stoics in the third century BC differed decisively from later Stoics, ranging from Panaetius (180–110 BC) and Posidonios (135–51 BC) to Seneca (4–65 AD), Musonius Rufus (20–101 AD), Epictetus (55–135 AD) and Marcus Aurelius (121–180 AD), on points central to this discussion. The Anti-Stoic Plutarch, or Cicero, both belonging to a Platonic-Aristotelian tradition, differed much less from their approximately contemporary Stoics like Seneca and Epictetus, than Plato and Aristotle differed from early Stoics.



the epitome of politics. At least nominally, the Cynics sought ethico-political nobility (*kalokagathía*) like Plato and Aristotle (DL VI.27, Epictetus III.xxii, 69) and praised freedom (*eleuthería*) and frankness or freedom of speech (*parrhêsía*), above all else (DL VI.69, 71).

For Aristotle (Pol1294a11-12, 1290b1-20, Rh1366a3-7), the standard of measurement (*hóros*) in an aristocracy is *virtue*, while in a democracy it is *freedom*, presumably *true* virtue and *true* freedom. Aristotle, however, criticises ancient democracies for misunderstanding what freedom is (Pol1310a26-35, 1318b39-1319a2). The philosophical conception of freedom was no *laissez-faire*, letting everyone act arbitrarily, at will, without knowledge and understanding. True freedom is having the authority to act independently or autonomously (*exousían auto-pragías*), not being pushed, pulled, seduced, or subdued by other individuals or circumstantial forces. For the Cynics and Stoics, only the wise are free (DL VII.121–122). Bad men are slaves of emotions and determined by social, economic, psychological, biological efficient causes and other extraneous, situational, material, and circumstantial forces. Hence, not every inclination or voluntary preference reflects autonomy, competence, or freedom. Nor are nobility, liberty, and liberation formal designations or statuses, transferable by inheritance or achievable by ritual proclamations. Only real, personal knowledge or competence renders its carriers or performers free, since freedom and autonomy require competent and conscious adjustment to the general nature of the case and to current circumstances. Ancient democracy, in Aristotle’s terminology (Pol1319a1-2, 1317a40-b17), was based on the “negative” concept of freedom as the simple removal of external restrictions, but it did nothing to promote, individually or collectively, the virtue needed by everyone to become “masters of living”. Mastery and living in freedom require knowledge of and skill in handling certain “things” (*pragmata*) (Eikeland 2008a :198–202). In Stoic terms, it was an art (*ars vivendi*) requiring personal practice, knowledge, effort, and will. Negative freedom was a necessary precondition for the development of this art, but not sufficient.

The early Socratics differed in their conceptualisations of the relationship between the public citizen relations of the *pólis* and the private, complementary, and role-based relations of the *oikos* or household. Still, their philosophical solution was not generally to restrict formal, negative freedom for citizens, although this is where Aristotle and the Stoics agree and differ from Plato and Socrates. The latter two did not recognise any difference of principle between a small *pólis* and a large household. According to Aristotle, however, assimilating or conflating a *pólis* and a household conceptually and practically would destroy the *pólis* by redefining citizens from free individuals to subordinated, heteronomous servants, slaves, and subjects in an authoritarian, hierarchical household constitution (*oikos*) (Pol1274a16-18, 1328b14-15). Philosophy’s ambition and project was to unite true freedom (true democracy) and true virtue (true aristocracy) in a community of constitutionally ordered citizenry (*politeía*). Epictetus (III.xxii.24, III.xxii.67) claims that Diogenes considered himself a political scout or avant-garde (*katáskopos*) through his personal lifestyle, exploring the “city of the wise” (*pólis sophôn*) before

others and providing practical personal testimony among his contemporaries as a messenger from this latent or emergent city.

## 2.4 Stoic Paradoxes: An Outline of Differences Between Aristotle and the Stoics

Cicero (*De Finibus* III.ii.5, III.iii.10, III.xii.41, IV.iv.8, IV.v.13; *De Legibus* I.xiii.38) claims that the differences between the early schools of Academics, Peripatetics, and Stoics are terminological. Zeno invented new *terms* but did not discover new ideas (*rerum*). Hence, in substance, they all agreed. There are, however, many differences, hardly as superficial as Cicero claims. Most have a bearing on how the cosmópolis is conceptualised. Delving critically into them is part of explaining how an Aristotelian koinópolis can safeguard cosmopolitan ambitions and intentions better than the Stoic conceptualisation.

The Stoics are famous for formulating their philosophy in paradoxes, i.e. claiming as true provocative assertions that apparently contradict prevailing common opinions. Before them, one of Socrates' strategies was to put forward paradoxical and thought-provoking claims to his interlocutors.<sup>15</sup> Generally, the Cynic and Stoic strategy of paradoxical argumentation consisted in attempting to prove that something widely accepted as "good" in some sense, rightfully belonged only to the wise and virtuous, i.e. to the knowledgeable. Their starting point is the commonsensical distinction between real, true, or perfect representatives of any category and incomplete or fake particulars, the realisation that not every glimmering thing is gold. The Socratic turn in philosophy based itself on the perceived difference between real wisdom (sophía) and fake pretenders like the sophists (Aristotle, SE165 a 20–25).

Aristotle discusses parádoxa – assertions contradicting éndoxa or prevalent opinions – as part of a conversational approach in the *Topica* (104a11-12, 104b18-28). Although he considers it right to include paradoxical statements made by presumably wise individuals as theses or hypotheses in critical dialectical exchanges (APo72a6-25), he is not fond of using paradox as an argumentative strategy. Revealing impasses or aporias may promote further inquiry. Catching people purposely in perplexity or stalemates over paradoxes is a sophistical and rhetorical technique, however (Top111b32-112a15, SR165b15, 172b29-173a32, 174b12-18, EN1146a22-30, Rh1399a35-39). Aristotle is irritated with people purposely defending paradoxical statements.<sup>16</sup> The paradoxical strategy was part of the Cynic and early Stoic contempt (kataphrónêsis, oligôría) towards everything conventional.

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<sup>15</sup>Cf. the "proto-Stoic" Socratic strategy in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (III.ix.10–11) claiming that only those who know how to govern are real kings, not those who happen to find themselves on a throne.

<sup>16</sup>Such as the later Stoic opinion that the wise will be happy even on the torture rack (EN1095b31-1096a4).

Posing paradoxical theses against local customs and opinions was deliberately provocative, confrontational and antithetic, springing from an arrogant and condescending attitude of firm belief in the stupidity of conventions and reasoning as a fortified stronghold of truth.

Aristotle generally recommends a different approach in serious dialogical encounters, not *contradicting* common opinions directly (*paradoxa*) but moving critically *through* common opinions (*dià éndoxôn*); playing out; distinguishing and exploring ambivalences, inner tensions and contradictions; proving them right in certain senses but not in others; and solving or dissolving paradoxes. This strategy was not confrontational but critically dialogical or dialectical, working from within the habitual, and based on an initial confidence in the experience (*empeiría*) of everyday practitioners (Eikeland 1997:224–237; 2008a:205–270).<sup>17</sup> Aristotle recommends dealing with posed paradoxes by developing and extracting definitions in this way (Metaph.1012a18–24, 1012b5–9). Within Stoicism, Panaetius (185–110 BC) arrived at a final settlement with what he considered arrogant and confrontational Cynic residues in Stoicism. He explicitly endorsed the Aristotelian *mésôn* or middle (*modestia/mediocritas*), bringing with it revisions of several other early Stoic dogmas (Eikeland 1997:467–470). Other school differences concerned the nature and role of dialectics (formal and deductive *versus* informally inductive), the nature of virtue (discontinuous *versus* continuous, knowledge *versus* skill), the nature of soul and mind (unitary *versus* diverse), the nature and role of emotions (eradicate mental perturbations *versus* cultivate psychological powers) and the nature of and preconditions for happiness (virtue alone *versus* virtuous practice combined with other goods).

A paradox posed by the Stoics was the claim that only the wise is dialectic (*dialektikôn mónon einai tòn sophón*) (DLVII.83). Only educated people already knowledgeable of logical rules could really argue; hence, only the wise is dialectic. The general Stoic emphasis on theory made them more didactic and their concept of dialectic more formal and deductive. The Stoics neglected the inductive, topical part of dialectic (*ars inveniendi*), while they followed the Peripatetics in the deductive part (*ars disserendi*) (Cicero's *Topica*, I.6, XIV.56–57 and *De Finibus*, IV.iv.8–10). The Stoics tended to reduce dialectic to the application of formal rules of inference (Eikeland 1997:415–447). Aristotle thinks differently about dialectic, which is directly relevant to the conceptualisation of *koinópolis* and universalism. Dialectic was *not* merely the application of formal rules of inference. Aristotle *introduced* the term *lógos logikós* to distinguish formally correct juggling with words as sophisticated, from serious dialectic (Eikeland 2008a:236 and 244). For Aristotle, dialectic was not something only the wise could legitimately engage in, nor was it juggling with words, however formally correct. The common principles of dialectic or what Aristotle called *tà koiná* – inductive, deductive, informal, and formal aspects – are

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<sup>17</sup> Its primary aim was to develop habits into virtue practically, starting with prevalent opinions (*éndoxa*) within experienced communities of practice and how members talk about their expertise and experiences (*legómena*), critically examining how things appear (*phainómena*), sorting different meanings of words (*posakhôs légetai*), examining the different opinions and meanings (*tàs doxas exetazein*), arguing *pro et contra* to make solutions (*lúseis*) emerge.

all always already in use by everyone, significantly for how we should theorise universalism. Most users are neither aware of them nor able to articulate them clearly (SE172a21-b4). In Greek both ancient and modern, the expression τὰ κοινά – literally, the commons – means common or public affairs *res publicae* in Latin and forms the basis for the Aristotelian *koinópolis*.

This, again, reflects another difference between Aristotle and early Stoics. For Aristotle, there is an important distinction between continuous and discontinuous dimensions or entities. There are either few or many apples in a bucket but there is more or less water, not few or many. The amount of apples is discontinuous, the amount of water continuous. Like water, for Aristotle, powers or potentials, practices, habits, skills, and virtues – including *dialectic* itself – were continuous. Hence, there are and must be subconscious seeds of all the virtues inchoately present in everyday practices, which can and should be cultivated, developed, and extracted. This was an important premise for his thinking about ethical perfection as hitting the middle (of a target) (τὸ μέσον) (EN1106a26-29, EE1220b21-27). Hence, we can be more or less competent and knowledgeable, not just either competent or not. We can even miss our target in different directions, by either exaggerating or under-achieving and understating.

For the Stoics, however, the field of virtue and knowledge was discontinuous. Virtue and knowledge were separate, like apples, sharply defined and segregated from all forms of insufficiency and error. As with a mathematically defined straight line, there are only two categories, straight or crooked and right or wrong. Even minimal aberrations are wrong or crooked. Hence, all errors were equal – another famous paradoxical statement (DL VII.120–121), related to the Cynic assertion that anything between virtue and vice is indifferent (DL VII.127). The early Stoics apparently exacerbated the dichotomy, however. With only two mutually exclusive relevant categories and no continuity or degrees, no more or less, it did not matter *how* wrong you were. Accordingly, there is no “more or less” concerning virtue and, one would think, hardly any ethically indifferent intermediates. Either you are a wise individual, perfect in virtue and knowledge or a fool who fails. Whether you drown in shallow water (close to perfection) or in deep water (far from perfection) is indifferent, and so it is with virtue and vice. Whether you are almost perfect, or a serious sinner, is indifferent. Consequently, according to opponents, the concept of progress or improvement (*prokopê/progressio*) became impossible to understand.

The Stoics used much effort defending, explaining, and modifying this dogma over the centuries.<sup>18</sup> Ultimately, Panaetius and his contemporary Stoics abandoned it (Eikeland 1997:467–470). Posidonius’ (135–51 BC) “proof” that virtue is real by reference to the progress (*prokopê*) made by the pre-Stoic Socrates, Antisthénês and Diogenes indicates how the dichotomous perfectionism of the older Stoics tended to make virtue merely theoretical and progress impossible (DL VII.91). It also indicates that Socrates and the early Cynics did not share this kind of perfectionism (DL VI.64). According to the Peripatetics, there were *not* only indifferent things between

<sup>18</sup>With more space, discussing the Stoic concept of *oikeiôsis* and their modifications of the intermediates into preferables and non-preferables would be appropriate. Cf. Bees (2004).

vices and virtues of the soul. Although not part of the virtues themselves, external (wealth) and bodily goods (health) count as instruments to be used for bad or good purposes and supporting “happiness”. Progress or improvement is also *between* vice and virtue. This is *not* indifferent but *essential* for the Aristotelian koinópolis as a way (hodós) forward or upward (DLVII.127, Cicero, *Academica*, I.v.20).

Virtue was mainly knowledge (epistêmê) for the Stoics. They did not recognise any ontological distinction between soul (psukhê/animus) and mind (nous/mens), important for Plato and Aristotle. The Stoic soul was unitary and cognitive. According to their doctrine, cognitively based virtue was the only real good, sufficient for happiness. Aristotle emphasised that happiness or eudaimonía consisted of activities of virtuous practice. Both Cynics and Stoics also recommended apatheía or a lack of emotions. The Stoics were radical cognitivists. They argued that emotions were disturbed thinking (perturbationes), binding people to externalities. They should be eradicated by means of correct and clear thinking. For Aristotle, however, emotions were semi-rational motivational forces of the soul (psukhê), ontologically different from thoughts of the mind (nous). Although he saw uncultivated emotions as obstacles to clear thinking and to ethically good judgement, emotions should not be eradicated. They should be cultivated to support the search for knowledge, competence, and ethico-political virtue. According to the Peripatetics, emotions were motivators. Eliminating them was like removing the motor moving us. All the formally correct and convincing arguments in the world in support of loving your parents would never alone be able to make you actually love your parents, as Plutarch points out (*De Virtute Morali*, 445 B–446 D). Something different from argumentation is required.

The Stoics also based their epistemology on perceptual impressions (Inwood 1985). Despite an apparent similar empiricism in Aristotle, his understanding of knowledge and its generation was practically based (Eikeland 1997, 2008a). Finally, the Stoics were determinists concerning everything external including our own bodies. We cannot control external things, which constitute a world of deterministic causality and unfreedom. How we take things, however, depends on us, i.e. how we evaluate and judge what we perceive. This was the realm of (inner) freedom and personal responsibility. Zeno’s successor Cleanthes appears to have used a simile of a dog tied to a horse and cart to illustrate the human condition (Long and Sedley, 62A). The dog following willingly is free. The resisting dog is unfree. Aristotle’s thinking about continuous potentials and activities gave space for a different, more dynamic approach, illustrated by Alexander of Aphrodisias (fl. 200 AD) in his *De Fato*.

## 2.5 Neither Greek Nor Jew: The Unity of Mankind?

Plutarch’s summary in *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute* (329A-B, 342A-B) of Zeno’s work *Politeía* has served as a basis for connecting the Stoics and Alexander, crediting this connection with first introducing an unqualified idea of “the unity of

mankind”, putting aside the division between “Greek” and “Barbarian”, and for identifying this with cosmopolitanism.<sup>19</sup> Plutarch (329B–D) claims that Alexander realised Zeno’s dream of a well-ordered philosopher’s commonwealth (eunomías philosophou kaí politeías) by asking everyone to consider the whole inhabited world (hê oikouménê) as their fatherland.

Yet, for chronological reasons, Alexander’s empire could not have been a realisation of the *Stoic* cosmópolis. The philosophers closest to Alexander were Cynics and Peripatetics. He knew both Diogenes and Aristotle (DL V.4–5, VI.32, 38, 60, 68). In Plutarch’s narrative, Aristotle counsels Alexander to treat non-Greek peoples in despotic ways as if they were animals or plants (329B). However, Aristotle’s discussion of relations to foreign peoples and states in *Politics* (1323a14–1328a22) indicates the opposite. He criticises Plato for recommending harshness towards strangers (1328a9–11). Aristotle himself writes:

it is not right to be cruel against anybody, and men of great-souled nature (hoi megalósuk-hoi) are not fierce except towards wrongdoers (adikountas).

Ethical error and injustice exist within all peoples. Aristotle finds the same diversity concerning suitedness for virtue and political life among the Greeks as between different non-Greek peoples (1327b33–34).

Nevertheless, Plutarch reintroduces a philosophical distinction in order to qualify the empire’s universalism. Alexander did not extend citizenship to everyone. He wanted “world citizenship” to be the privilege of “the good” (tous agathous), while “the wicked” (tous ponêrouís) were to be excluded, as if Alexander intended to make his empire consist of philosophically virtuous individuals regardless of ethnicity. The change as reported by Plutarch might seem more “cosmetic” than cosmic, however.<sup>20</sup> To Plutarch, the intention was to start defining “a Greek” not by Greek language, clothes, manners, food, etc. but by ethical virtue (aretê) regardless of any ethnic characteristics, i.e. to let “good people” qualify as “Greek”. In the same way, ethnicity should no longer define “Barbarian” but simply ethical “badness” (kakía).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Plutarch writes: “the much-admired *Republic* (Politeía) of Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect (haíresis), may be summed up in this one main principle: that all the inhabitants of this world of ours should not live differentiated by their respective rules of justice into separate cities and communities, but that we should consider all men to be of one community and one polity (allà pántas anthrôpous hêgómetha dêmôtas kaí polítas), and that we should have a common life and an order common to us all (heis dê bíos ê kaí kósmos), even as a herd that feeds together and shares the pasturage of a common field (hôsper agélês sunnómou nomô koinô suntrephoménês). This Zeno wrote, giving shape to a dream or, as it were, shadowy picture of a well-ordered and philosophic commonwealth (eunomías philosophou kaí politeías)” Schofield (1999:104–111) dismisses Plutarch’s summary as a replication of Zeno’s *Politeía* and interprets it as Plutarch’s own dream. Bees (2011:311–327), on the other hand, sees Plutarch’s summary as «*zweifelloos authentisch*».

<sup>20</sup>Schofield (1999:107) writes, “few today, (...), believe that Alexander was any sort of philosopher or that his campaigns were conceived in the hope of instituting a single community of all good men everywhere”. This is probable, but does not exclude influence on Alexander by any philosophical ideas.

<sup>21</sup>Strabo (64 BC–24 AD) (*Geography* I.4.9) ascribes the same story to Eratosthénês of Cyrene (276–194 BC), this time simply replacing the terms “Greek” and “Barbarian” with “virtuous” and

The story echoes Antisthénês' warning that communities unable to distinguish the ethically good from the bad would be doomed, and his recommendations to count all wickedness foreign (*tà ponêrà nóimize pánta xeniká*) and everything between vice and virtue – i.e. all kinds of merely ethnic differences – indifferent.

## 2.6 Concepts of Unity, Sociality, Politics and Law

When searching ancient sources for cosmopolitanism, (1) the socially amiable attitude of solidarity and care for humanity and all human beings<sup>22</sup> must be distinguished from (2) the exclusivist Cynic and Stoic cosmopolitanism. Ancient cosmopolitanism is not reducible to asserting the social nature of man plus a philanthropic attitude reaching out to all human beings. Both the Cynics and the early Stoics restricted true citizenship – i.e. membership in the cosmópolis – to the wise, even to the never erring, perfectly wise individuals (DL VII.33).<sup>23</sup> Aristotle expressed similar sounding ideas about both the social nature of man and citizenship, which still turned out very differently within his philosophical approach.

Aristotle recognises a universal and natural mutual affection and friendliness within species, *particularly* among human beings (EN1155a19-22), a community (*koinóníá*) and a kind of justice (*díkaión ti*), reaching beyond any local *pólis* (EE1242a26-28). To him (Pol1278b20-22, EN1169b17-21, MM1210a4), human beings also desire each other's company and living together even without direct interdependence. Universal philanthropy is praiseworthy, he writes. Philanthropy is not necessarily cosmopolitanism, however. The late Stoic Hierocles' (fl. second century AD) famous but unoriginal argument about expanding concentric circles of ethical concern (Ramelli: 2009:91 ff.), sometimes invoked as cosmopolitanism, also concerns philanthropy and the *social* nature of man, hardly politics or cosmopolitics. Hierocles is strictly conventional, placing his universal philanthropic concern fully inside given social roles. Philosophical-political cosmopolitanism transcends such roles, however. Although the Stoics may have thought differently, it is not *qua* players of specific but indifferent social roles that Cynics qualify as members of the cosmópolis. It is *qua* being *more* than restricted and indifferent roles, systemically defined within the local *pólis* or *oikos*, as Aristotle indicates.

Aristotle (EN1161a31-b10) points out that there can be no friendship with a slave *qua* slave, any more than there can be friendship with inanimate things. A slave is some master's living tool. The slave role is conventional and socially or systemically defined, however, although Aristotle, Plato, and the Stoics all

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“bad”, respectively, without redefining “Greek” and “Barbarian”. As Strabo writes, there are many bad Greeks and many virtuous Barbarians.

<sup>22</sup>Described by Epictetus (I.10–15, 19, 20–21, II.15–16, 22), Cicero (*De Finibus* II.xiv.45, III. xix.62–66, IV.vii.16–17, V.xxiii.64–68, *De Officiis*, I.54) and many others

<sup>23</sup>Philo Judaeus writes (Leg.All.III.1–3), “virtue is a city-state peculiar to the wise (*pólis oikeía tón sophôn hē aretê*)”.

considered some people as “slaves” or “servants” by nature, due to their soul’s condition. Still, Aristotle distinguished this from “conventional slavery” in which anyone arbitrarily could become the legal property of somebody else by force or decree (Pol1255a4-6). Hence, there *can* be friendship with a slave *qua* human being, i.e. outside the conventional role, as far as she/he can communicate and share in law (nómos) and contract (sunthêkê), i.e. to the extent that she/he masters lógos. For Aristotle, friendship and justice are coextensive with some sort of community and equality, and this does exist among all human beings as such. The question is what kind of community or equality among all human beings the thinking of Aristotle allows for, besides biological species membership.

Concerning concepts of politics and law, Plutarch’s summary (329B) raises crucial questions:

that we should have a common life and an order common to us all, even as a herd grazing together and nurtured by a common law.

Schofield (1999:104–108) alludes to “legislation” and discusses “the image of the people as a herd *and of the king as herdsman*”, concluding that, although widespread in Greek literature, this imagery “does not reflect a Stoic view of kingship or statesmanship”. Plutarch’s summary, however, mentions neither “kingship”, “statesmanship” nor “legislation”, only what appears pre-given as a “common law”. Furthermore, Schofield (p. 109) declares himself “unable to find in texts representing the early Stoics any subsequent use of kósmos in the sense of an ordering of society”. Finally, although he refers to Aristotle’s discussion in *Historia Animalium* Book I.1, Schofield fails to take into account its most crucial distinction.

The definitions of “politics” differed between Socrates and Plato, who did not see any principal difference between a small pólis and a large oikos, and Aristotle, who emphasised this difference. This is reflected in the *Republic* (590C-591A) where Plato envisaged an ideal city-state where only the rulers are good and wise, while the others are not *but still citizens*. Both Aristotle and the Stoics had objections but differed among themselves as well. In *Historia Animalium*, Book I.1 (487b34-488b30, EN1162a17-29, EE1242a23-b1, Pol1328a25-28), Aristotle discusses different ways of life and conduct among different animals. Some are solitary (monadiká) and others gregarious (agelaia) living in herds. Schofield, however, misses the crucial difference between kinds of gregarious animals. Gregarious animals are either scattered (sporadiká) or political (politiká). Scattered herd animals flock together but live mostly parallel lives in “crowds” without division of labour and cooperative interaction. They are *social* but not political since they hardly cooperate in solving tasks. Only those for whom there exists a common task are political. This is not so for all gregarious animals (HA488a8-10). Aristotle lists human beings, bees, and ants as political. Chimpanzees and dolphins are political *mammals*. Gregarious animals are not necessarily political, however. The discussion in *Historia Animalium* points out:

The only animal, which is deliberative, is man. Many animals have the power of memory and can be taught; but no other animal but man can recollect.



This marks a transition to human beings as lógos users, distinguishing us as political to a greater degree than other species (EE1242a23-b2). Aristotle writes in *Politics* (1253a7-18) that:

why man is a political animal in a greater measure than any bee or any gregarious animal is clear. (...) man alone of the animals possesses speech (lógos). The mere voice, it is true, can indicate pain and pleasure, and therefore is possessed by the other animals as well. (...) But speech is designed to indicate the advantageous and the harmful, and therefore also the right and the wrong; for it is the special property of man in distinction from the other animals that he alone has perception of good and bad and right and wrong and the other (dimensions of validity, OE), and it is a partnership in these things that makes a household and a city-state.

Hence, there are several fundamental reasons – pertaining to the peculiarly human function (tò ídion érgon tou anthrôpou, EN1097b22-1098a17) – why, not merely Greeks, but human beings, as such, are *political* animals. Humans cooperate in solving tasks within a division of labour. Lógos enables them to distinguish within the previously mentioned normative dimensions of validity, to deliberate and to recollect. Shared access to these dimensions constitutes human, political and household communities.

Even the everyday, pre-theoretical Greek concept of “politics” (politikós) entails a cosmopolitan impulse.<sup>24</sup> Generally, the political in ancient Greece concerned citizens or politai, that is, full members of a pólis. Since there are many non-political ways of being social, indicated, for example, by Aristotle’s distinction between oikos and pólis, this implies more. There are even different ways of being political. Ancient politics was emphatically *not* reducible to what modern politics has become: a fight – mostly without physical violence – for power in an organisational system or “machinery”, public or private. Politics concerned the relations between individual or groups of citizens and their handling of common tasks (tà koiná or *res publicae*). Arendt (1958:23f) warned against conflating the social with the political, reducing politics to sociality, the way mediaeval translations of politikós to *socialis* in Latin invited.

The meaning of pólis was non-local from the start. Talking about Athens or other pólis, the ancients talked about the community members (Athênai = Athenians) who formed the citizenship, not the city’s buildings or location. According to Aristotle, a pólis was not even identical to its specific members. It was more “de-ethnified”. The pólis was the citizens united in a community (koinônía politikê), i.e. the *form* of their citizenship and body politic. The city-states or polis differed according to what kind of community they constituted. The relations and responsibilities allotted between different citizens and groups of citizens constituted different constitutions or politeia. The pólis is a community (koinônía) of a certain *kind*. Its practical identity and unity over time lie neither in location nor in specific members but in its working *form* and constitution (politeía) as a certain organisation (taxis tis) and a way of life (bíos tis), i.e. in certain practical patterns of relationships –

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<sup>24</sup> See Finley (1983) for a discussion of the concept of politics in Greece and Rome. Cf. Eikeland (2008b).

a certain concord (homónoia) (EN1167b3-4) – among its members and their activities. Only a lógos community and mastery can provide full practical and theoretical access to the pólis.<sup>25</sup>

Aristotle points out in his *Politics* (1252a1-b31) that the pólis is one among several kinds of community (koinónía), different in form and purpose. It is the most advanced form, encompassing the others (EN1160a8-30, 1162a16-33, EE1241b25). Historically, there are lower-level partnerships, formed from necessity and for safety by interdependent individuals naturally forming a household (oikía). Several households form a village. Ultimately, several villages may become a pólis but not merely by growing in size or letting time pass without conscious effort or cultivation. The pólis is not only the final stage in a temporal development. Temporally later *in* nature, it is still prior *by* nature – i.e. logically or conceptually *by* human lógos nature – to each of us individually and to households and villages (Pol1252b28-1253a40). This is why there is an impulse (hormé) among all human beings to form political partnerships and why political relations somehow function as a preset télos – an immanent standard and “gravitational” attractor – within all the temporally prior partnerships. Understanding the exact nature of this teleological predetermination of human sociality is crucial.

Both Aristotle (Pol1253a30-40, 1280b11-13) and the Stoics connect the pólis intimately with law (nómos), meaning customary regularity or rule more than either written promulgated positive law or scientific law of nature. For Aristotle, regulation by law as a mutual covenant (sunthékê) is one pólis criterion. Justice *is* political (hê dê dikaiosúnê politikón), he writes (Pol1253a38-39, EN1134a25-1135a5). Why? In pre-political or extra-political non-human nature outside community and communication, there is no justice, as we know it. Someone or something always consumes everybody and everything else without mercy! Noncommunicating nature is not fair or just. Living scattered in a state of apolitical nature is unnatural among human beings, however. As lógos users, we never did (*contra* Hobbes). Only divine beings and lower animals might do without the pólis (Pol1253a27-29). Human beings become the worst kind of animal if stripped of virtue, law, and justice (1253a32-40), which are all intrinsic to the pólis. There is no justice outside the communal mutuality of lógos users, and lógos users are political, i.e. tend to form póleis. Political relations are intrinsic to the nature of lógos and vice versa. Hence, justice, as such, gradually enters the world with the emergence of lógos, pólis, and political relations. Lawless states were known, of course. Plato (*Laws*, 715A–D) refused calling a city-state caught in internal strife a proper pólis. Being lawless, it was not a politeía but a stasioteía or a “factioned deadlock”. A politeía is by definition ruled by laws. What kind of pólis, political relations, and laws are we talking about here?

As indicated in Eikeland (2008a:413–422), several concepts of “politics” are at play in Aristotle. He distinguishes between (1) politics as found “empirically”, surveying contemporary extant societies; (2) politics as it should be, dealing with

<sup>25</sup> Pol1274b39, 1275a7, 1276a18-b15, 1295b1, cf. 1278b9-12, 1279a26-27, 1280b30, Metaph1016b6-16

everyday matters; and (3) what he calls true and primary politics or the truly political. These are not clearly separate in practice. The first form suffers from all kinds of insufficiencies, since, as Aristotle claims, people engage mostly for private and egotistical purposes (EN1141a21-b1, EE1216a23-27). The second sets standards for everyday politics: negotiations, exchanges, covenants or contracts, and common decisions. It is the appropriate field for rhetoric and phrónêsis (EE1242b22-1243a34, Pol1274a16-18, 1328b14-15, Rh1359b19, 1360a34-42). True politics, however, contains and articulates ultimate standards for how lógos users must relate in order to realise the ultimate purpose of the pólis and politics. These standards provide preconditions for the development of virtue and virtuous activity (EE1215b3-4, 1216a23-27, 1248b38-1249b25, Pol1260a15-18, 1280b5-11, 1288b27, 1289a7. Cf. Pol1288b10-1289a25, EN1102a7-8).

Justice *is* political, and “true justice” is only possible when “good citizens” are also “good human beings”. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1134a-25-1135a5), Aristotle writes interchangeably and simultaneously about absolute or unmodified justice and political justice, as if they are identical. The unmodified and political standard of justice is defined as what counts between free and equal individuals (eleuthérôn kai ísôn) living a communal life (koinônôn bíou) and not between unfree unequals without community. Law (nómos) *naturally* regulates relations among free and equal individuals (1134b15) who rotate being rulers and ruled, not, however, among unequal members of an oikos where everyone is confined to a niche role and task. In true politics, individuals step out of systemically defined niche roles. True law regulating true politics springs from virtue (EN1130b23-29). It is not merely “positive law” as an arbitrary covenant (sunthêkê) or decision (psêphisma) (Pol1292a5-37) or, worse, an arbitrary tyrannical promulgation. Truly, virtuously lawful, political relations inhere in lógos use among free and equal individuals.<sup>26</sup>

After asserting that he is simultaneously searching for absolute and political justice, Aristotle states that *political* justice is of two kinds, one natural (phusikón) and another conventional (nomikón) (EN1134b18-1135a5, MM1194b30-1195a7). Judging from his *Politics* and *Rhetoric*, this entails that absolute or unmodified justice is natural justice, while conventional justice corresponds to rules and covenants specific to different local constitutions (EN1135a4, 1133a29-32). In the *Rhetoric* (1368b7-11, 1373b1-29, 1375a24-b9), he takes for granted that law (nómos) is *either* particular (ídios) and usually written *or* common (koinós), unwritten, universal and natural (katà phúsín) (EN1162b22-23). He ends the discussions in the *Nicomachean Ethics* by stating cryptically that although what is natural for human beings (*qua* human beings) can be modified by habituation and training – strikingly distinguishing this from physical laws of external nature (EN1103a14-b25) – only one form of constitution (políteía) is natural everywhere, namely, the best (hê aristê). In the *Politics*, he indicates that only under this primary and best constitution, providing the same kind of life (tôn autôn bíon) for individuals, city-states and human beings generally (Pol1325b31-32), will the goodness of a human being

<sup>26</sup> See Eikeland (2008a) for how the concept of praxis fits into the scheme of primary (prôtê) politics in Aristotle.

stated absolutely (haplós) (1276b30-36) and the goodness of a citizen relative to the current constitution be the same (Pol1277a12-14, 1278b1-5, 1293b3-7, 1333a11-16, cf. Pol1310a35). Under such conditions only will even the education of a good ruler, a good citizen, and a good human being be identical (Pol1288a38-b2, 1333a1-16). In general, an education for virtue makes the individual a good human being in an unmodified sense (haplós) and simultaneously prepares individuals for serving the community (prós tò koinón) (EN1130b25-29).

Accordingly, Aristotle speaks explicitly about laws of virtues like courage, temperance, gentleness (EN1129b19-26, MM1193b4-6, Prot62a) and reminiscent of the natural, unwritten, and common laws (koinoi nomoi) alluded to in the *Rhetoric* (Eikeland 2008a:196–205, 316–324). Common laws are according to nature (katà phúsin) and make themselves felt even without communication or agreement about them. So do the virtues as practice internal standards and attractors of performance. Natural laws of virtue must be cultivated. Differently from laws of external and mindless nature, habituation and training can modify them, but they do not thwart natural impulses (hormais) like some arbitrary external command (EN1180a19-24, Prot64a). They spring as lógos from nous (mind, reflective thinking) and phrónēsis (considerate, practical wisdom). According to *Politics* (1287a11-b5, EN1134a35-b8), this kind of laws is like nous without passion and desire, securing – like virtue – that its regulations hit the middle (mésōn) (of the target). Hence, they are not scientific laws of external nature, nor do they represent uncivilised nature, nor are they “positive law” arbitrarily promulgated by some socially sovereign power. We develop them *through* habituation (ethismós, éthos, héxis) by our own efforts *into* virtuous character (éthos) *within* civilisation, indeed *as* cultivation (therapeía) and *as* civilisation, appropriately rendered into Modern Greek as politismós. Their development is the civilising process or *formation* (*Bildung*, paideía). To Aristotle (EN1152a30-34, Pr949a28-32, Rh1370a3-10), the nature of habit and virtue represents our *second* nature (deutera phúsis) or a *different kind* of nature (tis hetéra phúsis) (Prot.23b). Habits and virtues are cultivated and developed from *within* practices, in accordance with what distinguishes human nature, as an *Aufhebung* or advance on and suspension of precivilised, unhuman nature outside any kind of pólis.

Both Cynics and Stoics also defined a true city-state (pólis) as law abiding and urbane or “civilised” (asteíon) as opposed to being ágroikos or rustic and wild (AD 11k, cf. Pol1253a36, 1328a11). The Stoics counted “bad individuals” deprived of law *according to nature*, not only as fools and slaves but also as *exiles*, presumably from the cosmópolis (AD11j). Neither did the Cynic lifestyle romanticise life without pólis or civilisation. It showed that conventionality was irrelevant for virtue and happiness. Diogenes claimed it was impossible to live as citizens (politeúesthai) without law (khōris nomou), again, not conventional laws but laws of virtue (DL VI.72, AD11d).<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup>The internal connection between law and city is repeated and emphasised many places, e.g. by Cicero, *De Finibus* III.xix.64, III.xx.66–67, III.xxi.73; *De Natura Deorum* I.xli.116, II.xxxi.78–79, II.lix.148–149, II.lxiii.154, III.xv.38, III.xxxv.85; *De Re Publica* I.xxv.39–40, I.xxxii.49; and *De Legibus* I.v.17 ff., I.vii. 23, I.xv.42–xix.52, II.iv.8–10.

The sources do not contain or suggest elaborate Cynic or Stoic political theory as in Aristotle, however. Still, we often find Stoic statements about the universally communal and political nature of man (DL VII.121–123, AD 6, 11b, 11m, Cicero, *De Legibus* I.x.28–30, I.xii.33–xiii.35, Epictetus, II.ix.3–5). Marcus Aurelius (5.16) writes:

Community (*koinônía*) is the good of a reasoning being. For it was proven long ago that we are born for community.

Epictetus (II.v.26) asks what is a human being and answers:

A part of a *pólis*; first of the one which is made up of gods and men, and then of that which is said to be very close to the other, the *pólis* that is a small copy of the universal.

Clearly, the Stoics somehow looked at the cosmos as an elevated *pólis* (Cicero, *De Finibus* IV.iii.7). The exact meaning of this is not equally clear, however. Why is the cosmópolis more truly a *pólis*? What did the Stoics mean by “*kósmos*” and “*pólis*”?

Diogenes Laertius writes (VII.137–138) that the Stoic term “*kósmos*” meant either (1) God himself, (2) the orderly arrangement (*hê diakosmêsis*) of the heavenly bodies or (3) the combination of both the system constituted by gods and men and all things created for their sake. Since reason pervades every part of the cosmos, as the soul does in us, the cosmos is alive, rational and intelligent (DL VII.142), almost identical to God (DL VII.135, 147), and administered by reason and providence (VII.138). Although the system of gods and men alludes to it, Diogenes Laertius (VII.137–157) does not mention a cosmópolis.

Which properties of the cosmos could make it into a *pólis*? Arius Didymus (fl. 30 BC) writes in *Epitome of Stoic Ethics* (11j) that the Stoics used “*pólis*” in three ways:

With regard to the dwelling place (*oikêtêrion*), with regard to the composite made of men (*tò sústêma tôn anthrôpôn*), and thirdly with regard to both of these.

The *first* meaning seems to indicate the urban physical localities, further emphasised by Cleanthes (AD 11j) as “*an arrangement for dwelling in a place*”. These were aspects *excluded* by Aristotle from the definition of a *pólis*. The *second* emphasises a system of human beings (*anthrôpôn*), without privileging the wise or even citizens only as members. Although only the cosmópolis was a true city for the Stoics, with only wise individuals as citizens, this is not mentioned. Elsewhere, however (LS 67L, from Eusebius, Praep.Ev 15.15.3–5), Arius says more. After repeating the two meanings,

one as a habitation (*oikêtêrion*) and two as a structure of its inhabitants along with its citizens (*ek tôn enoikóúntôn sún tois polítais sústêma*),

he *compares* the cosmos to a city, claiming that it is *as if* (*hoiônei*) it is a city of gods and men,

so the world is *like a city* (*ho kósmos hoiônei pólis estîn*) consisting of gods and men with the gods as rulers and men as their subjects.

Finally, he provides a justification:

(Gods and men) are members of a community because of their participation in reason, which is natural law.

Both here and in Cicero (*De Finibus* III.xix.64, III.xx.66–67, *De Natura Deorum* I.xxv.71–xxvi.74, *De Legibus*, I.xxiii.61), the kósmos is said to *resemble* a city (*quasi/hoiōnei*). Schofield (1999:59–63) uses Dio Chrysostom’s (40–120 AD) explanation in his *Borysthenitic Discourse* 36 (18–32) as a decisive reliable source for Stoic thinking about the pólis. Even Dio (36:29–31) writes that the Stoics talk about the cosmos as pólis *metaphorically* (pólei proseikázousi), in order to harmonise human beings with the divine and to

embrace in a single term everything endowed with reason, finding in reason the only sure and indissoluble foundation for fellowship and justice.

The Cynic intermediates are not only indifferent and insufficient but diverse and relative. Dio claims, however, the universe cannot *literally* be a city. That would contradict both it being an organisation of human beings (sústēma anthrōpôn) and the universe as a living being. The metaphor is still appropriate because the universe is *also* – as the pólis – an ordered multitude orderly administered. Marcus Aurelius (4.4) provides an inference that further illuminates similarities between pólis and kósmos according to the Stoics:

If mind is common to us (ei tò noeròn hēmin koinón), so also is reason (ho lógos) in virtue of which we are rational (logikós). If that is so, the reason, which prescribes what is and what is not to be done (ho prostaktikós lógos), is also common. If that is so, law (ho nómos) is also common. If that is so, we are citizens (politaí esmen). If that is so, we partake in a kind of political system (politeúmatós tínos). If that is so, the universe is as it were (hōsaneī) a city. For what other common political system (koinou politeúmatos) will anyone say the whole race of men partakes in? From where else then, than from this same common city-state, come thinking itself, reasoning, and lawfulness?

Without interpreting or going meticulously into its presuppositions or internal validity, the inference confirms, *first* of all, that it is *as if* (hōsaneī) the universe is a pólis or *kind of* political system. The cosmos is not *really* a pólis. It may be a metaphor for the Stoics but still provides the standard for evaluating imperfect cities, however. Dio (36:18) claims that most people use words without knowing their real meaning. Everybody uses words, as “man”, but only the educated know their real meaning and the thing itself (tò pragma). The same goes for a word like pólis, which Dio defines to be a number of human beings, dwelling in the same place, governed by law. His emphasis (36:20) is again on reason and law:

For just as that person is not even a man who does not also possess the attribute of reason, so that community is not even a city which lacks obedience to law. And it could never be obedient to law (nómimos) if it is foolish and disorderly (áphrôn kai ákosmos ousa).

In spite of Schofield’s (1999:109) self-declared inability to find “any subsequent use of kósmos in the sense of an ordering of society”, Dio (36:13, 20) clearly measures local cities as being either orderly or disorderly using the terms kósmos and ákosmos to characterise them. A small city orderly governed (katà kósmon oikousa) is

better than a disorderly and lawless big one (*megálê akósmôs kai anómôs oikêtai*).<sup>28</sup> Apparently, even a small city has to be well ordered (*kosmios*) in order to count as a true city, mirroring the big one.

According to the inference above, true law, defining what it is to be a true *pólis*, springs from reason (*lógos*) and rationality (*tò logikón*), which springs from the mind (*tò noerón*) which pervades the universe as common to all human beings. The universal *lógos* with its laws pervades and rules everyone and everything. Among humans, the *pólis* institution is the most law abiding. Since the cosmos is even more law abiding, however, it becomes *as if* the cosmos is the truest city. Nonconventional law according to nature *is* correct reasoning (AD 11d). Only the wise reason correctly. Only by becoming wise, then, will human beings be able to attune themselves to the cosmos and thereby become citizens of the laws that make the cosmos into a kind of political system (*politeumatōs tinos*). The wise individual was no less perfect than Zeus himself, according to Chrysippus (DL VII.119, AD 11g, Nickel 2008, 628). However, no living individual was fully and really wise.

## 2.7 Preliminary Conclusions

As already stated, the discussion does not end here. Both Aristotle and the Stoics thought of the *pólis* and political relations as by definition lawlike. Human beings living outside a *pólis* were considered *ágroikos* and uncivilised. The Stoics had a tendency to conflate ethico-political laws with laws of external nature, however, and to reduce the political merely to the law abiding. The political was much more complex and relational for Aristotle. With the Stoics, Aristotle's distinctions between external laws of nature, habituated second nature, and laws expressing the nature of different virtues seem to have disappeared. Laws of external nature, laws of reason, and laws of virtue seem conflated (DL VII.87–89). In addition, the laws of the Stoics regulate everything deterministically, apart from the evaluation of impressions. Although both Aristotle and the Stoics emphasised how the participation of human beings in *lógos* separates them from other animals, their concepts of *lógos* differed. Certainly, this tentative comparison requires detail and further development. Yet, the discussion suggests that the Stoics were metaphysical monists (DL VII.61), deductive and deterministic (apart from a certain inner freedom), with laws regulating everything. Their idea of political unity or solidarity, whether for the wise alone or universally, is substantial and “mechanical” in Durkheimian terms (1933), making Plutarch's summary of Zeno plausible. The heuristic indicates Aristotle's *koinópolis* common to all *lógos* users, as a non-local alternative to the Stoic

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<sup>28</sup>With a different emphasis, Aristotle writes in *Politics* (1326a8-b26, cf. 1286b20-23) that the greatest *pólis* is not the one covering the largest area, the wealthiest, the one containing the most people, the one having the strongest military or anything of the sort. A *pólis* has a function (*érgon*) to perform: living well (*eu zên*) and doing it good, promoting virtue. The greatest state, or condition, is the one who performs this function best.

cosmopolis and as an “inner” or “submerged” figure in his thinking. It remains to make it more explicit and drive the argument home, in a different context, however.

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