

Reading Questions: Aristotle III (*Politics*)

1. What makes an individual a citizen under any kind of constitution? How many citizens are there in a kingship or tyranny?
2. When is the good citizen the same thing as the good person?
3. What are the six main forms of constitution? Along what two dimensions are they defined?
4. Who rules in a democracy according to Aristotle?
5. Why is it better that the multitude have authority rather than the few best people according to Aristotle? Are you persuaded by his argument?
6. Why is the rule of law beneficial according to Aristotle? What are its possible downsides?
7. What type of state must be full of enemies?
8. When is the absolute rule of one person just according to Aristotle?
9. How does Aristotle propose mixing democratic and oligarchic institutions in the polity? Does this arrangement sound familiar?
10. What is the just way to promote the political participation of both the rich and the poor?
11. What is the fundamental principle of democratic constitutions?
12. What are the two components or marks of freedom Aristotle discusses as being aims of democracy? Which of them does he call bad and why?
13. Why is a constitution based on the middle class attractive according to Aristotle? How is it related to Aristotle's conception of virtue?
14. What mistake about justice do those who set up democracies make? What about those who set up oligarchies?