

Lição 1/a

Visto que vemos que toda cidade é uma certa comunidade existente, e que toda comunidade está instituída em vista de algum bem — pois todos operam todas as coisas em vista daquilo que parece bem —, é manifesto que todas certamente visam a algum bem.

E a mais principal de todas, [visando ao bem] o mais principal de todos, e abarcando todas as outras — ora, esta é a que se chama cidade e comunicação política.

Portanto, todos quantos julgam que o político, o régio, o econômico e o despótico são o mesmo, não falam bem.

Pois julgam que cada um destes difere pela multidão e pela escassez, mas não pela espécie: por exemplo, se está sobre poucos, é um pai de família; se sobre mais, é um econômico; se sobre ainda mais, é um político ou régio — como se em nada diferissem uma grande casa e uma pequena cidade, e o político e o régio; [dizendo que], quando ele mesmo está à frente, é régio; e quando, segundo os discursos da disciplina, tal governante é em parte governante e em parte súdito, é político.

Mas estas coisas não são verdadeiras. E o que se diz ficará manifesto para os que atentam segundo o método próprio do assunto. Pois, assim como nas outras coisas é necessário dividir o composto até o não-composto — pois estas são as mínimas partes do todo —, assim também, considerando aquilo de que a cidade se compõe, veremos, acerca destas coisas, em que cada uma mais difere das outras, e se algo de artificial se pode apreender acerca de cada uma das coisas ditas. Pois, se alguém observar as coisas nascendo desde o princípio, tanto nas outras quanto nestas, é assim que da melhor maneira as contemplará.

É necessário, pois, primeiro combinar os que não podem existir um sem o outro, por exemplo, a fêmea e o macho, em vista da geração; e isto não por escolha, mas, como nos demais animais e nas plantas, por um apetite natural de deixar após si outro semelhante a si mesmo.

E o que governa e o que é súdito [existem] por natureza, em vista da conservação. Pois aquilo que pode prever com a mente é por natureza governante e por natureza senhor; e aquilo que pode executar isto com o corpo é súdito e por natureza servo. Por isso, ao senhor e ao servo convém o mesmo.

Por natureza, pois, distinguem-se a fêmea e o servo. Pois a natureza nada faz como faziam os forjadores de bronze a espada delfica, por pobreza, mas [faz] uma coisa para um só fim. Assim, com efeito, cada um dos instrumentos se realiza da melhor maneira quando serve não a muitas obras, mas a uma só.

Entre os bárbaros, porém, a mulher e o servo têm a mesma ordem.

E a causa é que não têm um governante por natureza, mas se faz uma comunicação entre eles de serva e servo. Por isso dizem os poetas: convém que os gregos governem os bárbaros — como se fossem o mesmo, por natureza, o bárbaro e o servo.

Destas duas comunidades, pois, [surge] primeiro a casa; e com razão disse Hesíodo, poetizando: primeiro a casa, e a mulher, e o boi de arado — pois o boi faz as vezes de servo para os pobres.

A comunidade constituída para cada dia, segundo a natureza, é a casa, que Carondas chama de homosipyos [os do mesmo prato], e Epimênides de Ocres, homokapnos [os do mesmo fumo].

E de várias casas, a primeira comunicação, em vista de um uso não cotidiano, é a aldeia.

E, sobretudo, a aldeia parece ser, segundo a natureza, a vizinhança de casas, cujos membros alguns chamam de irmãos de leite, e filhos, e filhos dos filhos.

Por isso, também no princípio as cidades eram regidas por um rei, e ainda agora [assim são] as nações, pois [se formaram] de gente sujeita a um rei; com efeito, toda casa é regida pelo mais velho. Por isso também as vizinhanças [assim se regem], por causa do parentesco. E isto é o que diz Homero: cada um estabelece leis para os filhos e as esposas — pois habitavam dispersos, e assim [viviam] antigamente.

E por isso todos dizem que os deuses são regidos por um rei, porque também eles mesmos, alguns ainda agora, outros antigamente, eram regidos por um rei. E, assim como os homens assemelham a si mesmos as figuras [dos deuses], assim também [lhes assemelham] as vidas dos deuses.

Postas, pois, estas coisas preliminares, deve-se saber que Aristóteles, neste livro, antepõe um certo proêmio no qual manifesta a intenção desta ciência;

e depois passa a manifestar o que se propõe, em *quoniam autem manifestum ex quibus partibus* etc.

Acerca do primeiro, faz duas coisas:

primeiro, mostra a dignidade da cidade, de que trata a política, a partir de seu fim;

segundo, mostra a comparação da cidade com as outras comunidades, em *quicumque quidem igitur* etc.

And indeed, all of these things fall close to the truth in some way. For in the name of “barbarian” is understood something foreign--and a human being can be called foreign either simply or in relation to another. Simply, indeed, someone seems foreign to the human family [genus] who lacks reason, according to which someone is called human; and therefore, they are named barbarians simply who lack reason either from the blows of the heavens--those cast into intemperate regions, such that they are dulled by the very disposition of the region, as is found with many people--or also because of some evil custom existing in certain lands, by which it comes about that human beings return to irrational and almost brutish ways. But it is clear that from the virtue of reason it follows that men are ruled by what is rationally right [rationabili iure], and that they are exercised in

writing. Hence barbarism is fittingly revealed by this sign: that men either do not use laws or they use them irrationally: and similarly, that among some peoples there is not the exercise of writing. But he is called a foreigner in relation to another who cannot communicate with him. But human beings are most of all born to communicate with each other through discourse: and according to this, those who cannot understand one another's discourse can be called barbarians in relation to each other. But the philosopher is speaking here about those who are barbarians simply speaking.

Then, where he says *this is the cause*, he indicates the cause of the aforementioned error, and says that the cause of it is because among the barbarians there is no natural government. For he said above that a natural governor is the one who is able to foresee with his mind, and the slave is the one who is able to execute with his body. But the barbarians are found for the most part to be hard of body and lacking in mind. And therefore among them there cannot be a natural order of government and subjection. But among them there comes to be a certain union of male and female slaves, that is, they generally make use of male and female slaves. And because there is no natural government among the barbarians, but only among those who abound in mind, because of this the poet says it is fitting that the Greeks who were gifted with wisdom should govern the barbarians: and thus it would be naturally the same to be barbarian and slave. But when the converse happens, what follows is perversion and a lack of order in the world, after the words of Solomon: *I saw slaves on horses, and princes walking like slaves over the earth*.

Then, where he says *ex his quidem igitur etc.*, he determines the household community, which is constituted out of several personal unions. Concerning this he does three things.

First, he shows from what this community is constructed;

second, he shows what it exists for, at: *in omnem quidem igitur, etc.*;

third, he shows how those in this community are named, at: *quos Charondas quidem etc.*

Therefore, he says first that from the two aforementioned personal communities, one of which is for generation, the other for safety, is constituted the first household. For in a household there must be man and woman, master, and slave. And it is thence called the first household, because there is also another communion of persons which is found in a household, namely, of father and son—which is caused by the first. Whence the first two are the primordial [primordiales] ones. And to show this, he references the word of the poet Hesiod, who said that the household has these three: the master who projects [praeeminet] forward, and a woman and an ox for plowing. For in a poor household, an ox takes the place of a servant. For man uses an ox for executing some work, like a servant.

Then, where he says *in omnem quidem igitur, etc.*, he shows what the community of the household is ordered toward. Here one must consider that every human union is for certain acts. Some human acts are daily, such as eating, warming by the fire, and others of this sort. Some, however, are not daily, such as selling, fighting, and others of this sort. Now it is natural for men to unite with each other in both kinds [genera] of work, helping each other. And therefore he says that the household is nothing other than some community according to nature constituted for everyday life, that is, for acts that have to be acted daily. And this is clear, consequently, through the name. For a certain

man named Charondas named those who unite in the household *homostitios*, as if of one dish, because they unite through food. But a certain other named Epimenides, of the nation of Ogres, called them *homocapnos*, as if of one smoke, because they sit at the same fire.

Then, where he says *ex pluribus autem domibus*, etc., he lays out the third community, namely the village.

And first he shows from what this community [is made] and because of what.

Second, he shows that it is natural, at *maxime autem videtur*, etc.

Hence, he first says that the first union which is from several households is called a village: and it is said to be first to set it apart from the second, which is the city. But this community is not constituted for daily life as he said of the household, but is founded for the sake of employment that is not daily. For those who are neighbors do not unite with each other in the daily acts in which those who are of one household unite with each other, such as eating, sitting by the fire, and things of this sort: but they unite with each other in certain exterior acts that are not daily.

Then where he says *maxime autem videtur*, etc., he shows that the community of the village is natural.

And first he shows the proposition through reason.

Second, through a certain sign, at *propter quod et primum*, etc.

Hence, he says first that neighboring households, which is the village, seem to be according to nature most of all. For nothing is more natural among animals than producing [propago] many out of one, and this makes neighboring households. Indeed, some people call those who have neighborly households foster-brothers and children, that is, sons, and children of children, that is, grandchildren, such that we understand that neighboring households of this sort proceed out of this first: that multiplied sons and grandchildren instituted separate households, dwelling close to each other. Whence, since the multiplication of offspring is natural, it follows that the community of the village is natural.

Then, where he says *propter quod et primum*, etc., he clarifies the same thing through a sign.

And first, according to those things which we see in men.

Second, according to those things that were said about the gods, at *et deos autem propter hoc*, etc.

Therefore, he says first that because the village is constituted out of the multiplication of offspring, from this it proceeds that from its beginning [*a principio*], any city is ruled by a king. And up to this time, some peoples have a king, although different cities do not always have different kings. And this is because cities and peoples were instituted by those who were subject to a king. And how this sign corresponds to the aforementioned things he shows by what he says below: because every household is ruled by the one who is oldest, as sons are ruled by the father of the family. And

from this it happens that even the whole neighborhood, which is instituted from blood relation, is ruled on account of kinship by someone who governed in kinship, just as a city is ruled by a king. Whence Homer said that each one institutes laws for his wife and children, just as the king in the city. But therefore, this rule proceeds from the household and the village to cities, because different villages are scattered into separate parts, as in the city. And therefore, of old, men dwelt scattered through villages, not yet gathered together into one city. Thus it is evident that the rule of a king over a city or people proceeds from the rule of the oldest in the household or village.

Then, where he says *et deos autem*, etc., he lays out another sign through what was said about the gods. And he says that because of the aforementioned things, all peoples used to say that their gods were ruled by some king, saying that Jove was the king of the gods. And this, because some men are still ruled by kings, but of old, almost all men were ruled by kings. And this was the first rule, as will be said later. But men, just as they make the appearance of the gods like themselves--that is, their forms--appraising that the gods are in the shape of certain men, so also they make the lives of the gods like their own, that is, their associations, deeming that they are associated in the manner that they see men are associated. Here Aristotle names as gods the substances separated from matter, according to the custom [mos] of the Platonists, created by the one, highest, and only God, to which substances the peoples erroneously annexed both the forms and the associations of men, as the philosopher here says.

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