Contents

Introduction

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In his preface to *Action, Contemplation, and Happiness*, C. D. C. Reeve describes the art of interpreting Aristotle—and the same holds true in the case of Plato—as one "of assemblage," i.e., an art "of selecting supporting texts in such a way that collectively they all but interpret themselves, ideally leaving nothing to believe except the view in whose defense they are mustered."[1] Reeve coins the term "art of assemblage" to name the interpretive art he has been practicing since the first pages of his first book, *Philosopher-Kings*,[2] and which has indeed become his academic signature, namely, *holism*. For he believes that the safest and most fruitful way to interpret Plato's and Aristotle's texts is to test our interpretations against the background of the whole conceptual framework of their authors. Moreover, as Reeve explains also in his *Action, Contemplation, and Happiness*,[3] there are no gaps, though many nodes, in the paths he traces in their philosophies, as here from Aristotle's theory of the transmission of form and the role of *pneuma* to contemplation and happiness, or from Aristotle's biology to his political science. In contrast to the nowadays beloved technique of discovering everywhere inconsistencies within Aristotle's or Plato's corpus, Reeve insists that the twists and turns of their notions, terms, and perspectives allow us to draw a unitary picture and to appreciate their views as "a single uninterrupted line of thought."[4] In other words, it seems that his method flirts with a sort of coherentism and that it aspires to nothing less than the elimination or the maximal reduction of interpretive violence.

Evidently, as Reeve himself hastens to add in a gesture of self-deprecation rather than of genuine ambivalence, this method appears to be quite naïve and to

1. Reeve (2012, ix).

2. Reeve (1988, xi–xiii). Providentially, *Philosopher-Kings* opens with a quotation from Derrida, who has famously argued that the first pages of Husserl's *Logical Investigations* foreshadow his whole work.

3. Reeve (2012, ix–x).

4. Reeve (*Aristotle: Politics*, 1998, xiii).

ignore, if nothing else, all lessons learned from hermeneutics in the last centuries. Reeve's art of assemblage, however, is anything but naïve.[5] For it requires a deep familiarity with the texts of Plato and Aristotle and a profound understanding of the philosophical ideas expressed through them, and, importantly, it has produced philosophically insightful and—very often—characteristically provocative interpretations. Reeve's scholarship is not the kind that can be characterized as "footnotes to Plato" or as a sort of paraphrasis. This holism sometimes presents challenges for the readers of Reeve's monographs too: sometimes they encounter problems in identifying the thread of his analysis, or they are left guessing whether he agrees or disagrees with concurrent interpretations. Certain critics complain that he overlooks or silences underlying philosophical tensions that resist his holistic approach. And yet, the thread of the analysis—though not exposed in advance as a ready guide—becomes visible step-by-step for those willing to follow the path, while the pertinent state-of-the-art literature is always present even if not always explicitly so. Reeve readily recognizes his real debts to other scholars but has little interest in highlighting pseudo-disputes or in creating strawman claims; scholarly debates *du jour* are often left out intentionally, as something to be sacrificed, so to speak, for the sake of presenting Plato's and Aristotle's views as a single, whole philosophical argument. Reeve's art of assemblage is, at the end of the day, an art of interpretive humility: no interpretation wins, only Plato's and Aristotle's texts themselves do, for they block our arbitrariness and stimulate ever new interpretations. This interpretive stance is in perfect harmony with Reeve being the most prolific and devoted translator of Aristotle's texts in the twenty-first century, as his translations in the *New Hackett Aristotle Series* and in *Aristotle Complete Works* fully confirm. For translating, too, is an art of humility.

Be that as it may. Judging from the results, Reeve's holism has been highly successful: it has left its mark on how we are reading Plato's and Aristotle's metaphysics

5. As is well-known, "assemblage" is the standard English translation of the widely used concept of *agencement*, introduced by G. Deleuze and F. Guattari in their *Mille Plateaux*. Though Reeve's use of the term neither originates from nor echoes their views, he would probably accept as much: "We will call an assemblage every constellation of singularities and traits deducted from the flow—selected, organized, stratified—in such a way as to converge (consistency) artificially and naturally; an assemblage, in this sense, is a veritable invention" (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 506).

and practical philosophy. Few people of his generation had such an impact on the reception of Plato and Aristotle by younger scholars. His brief Autobiography and the complete list of his publications with which this volume concludes tell a personal and, at the same time, strictly academic story of how the art of assemblage has been conceived, practiced, and cultivated.

In this volume, we bring together scholars whose work is inspired by and/or engages with Reeve's art of assemblage, whether this is via the many excellent and widely used translations he produced, the thought-provoking philosophical views he has put before us, or the dear conversations he had with them over wine and dinners. The range of topics discussed effectively reflects the breadth of Reeve's own work. Let us here briefly introduce each of the chapters.

Richard Kraut opens Part I of the volume on Plato by arguing, in Chapter 1, that we can learn valuable political lessons from Plato's proposal that philosophers should rule. He does so by turning to book VIII of the *Republic*, where Plato provides a description of the process by which the ideal city declines and gives rise to a series of other political systems: first, a regime like Sparta (a "timocracy") arises; second, an oligarchy, ruled by the wealthy; third, a democracy (dominated by the poor); and, finally, the rule of one man, a tyrant. A striking feature of this narrative is its assertion that democracy has an inherent weakness that tends to lead to tyranny. That is because the abundance of freedom prized by democrats creates problems for which a tyrant provides a solution. The poor look to a strong man as an ally in their battle against the rich. Kraut's chapter examines the background assumptions on which Plato relies for postulating this repetitive pattern of history. Among them are the pervasiveness of class conflict, the attractions of *having power* over others, and the widespread belief that justice has no intrinsic value. However, it is not inevitable that we will be ruled badly: there is a science of politics through which rulers can learn how power is to be used. And philosophy has a role to play in their education.

In Chapter 2, Katja Maria Vogt argues that Plato's *Hippias Minor* lays out an account of lying. She identifies five conditions that must be met for a speaker to tell a lie and then shows why, according to Socrates, Odysseus is a better liar than Achilles: Odysseus has a greater power to deceive based on his greater knowledge

and, moreover, he is deliberate and intentional about his lies. On her reconstruction, Plato and today's theorizers about lying both share an interest in assertion, but Plato's proposal also differs importantly from premises that are widely held today. According to Plato, liars *know* that what they assert is false, while today it is widely held that liars *believe* that what they assert is false. Moreover, Plato does not conceive of the relevant knowledge as knowing a proposition; he conceives of it as expertise in a field of study (such that an expert in arithmetic can lie about arithmetic). Another difference concerns which ethical questions are taken to be at issue. Modern debates focus on the wrongness of lying. For Plato, there is also the question of *who is the better liar.* Though this consideration does not figure in today's debates, the idea is familiar; witness the assessment that someone is a "terrible liar." The *Hippias Minor* thus asks whether someone is better by being a better liar. The example of Odysseus—masterful liar and survivor of myriad dangers—illustrates why this question has pull.

In Chapter 3, Christopher Bobonich argues that Plato's metaphysics of causation gives rise to an ethical principle that has substantial affinities with deontological views. Specifically, Bobonich shows how Socrates' conclusion in *Republic* Book 1 that a just person when acting justly never harms anyone—which Bobonich calls the "No Harm Principle" and which conflicts with the common ancient Greek view that it is just to help one's friends and harm one's enemies—is metaphysically grounded in Plato's fundamental metaphysical principle about causation, namely, that the cause of F must itself be F (which Bobonich calls Plato's "Like to Like Causation" principle). On this view, Plato thus provides a unique case in which a perfectly general metaphysical principle has significant and specific normative consequences for ethical actions.

Jessica Moss, in Chapter 4, turns to Plato's notion of *pistis*. One of her central questions is what we can learn about the second cognitive level on the *Republic*'s Divided Line—the superior kind of *doxa*—from the fact that Plato labels it with a term not usually used for belief, but instead for trust: *pistis*. Through a study of the use of *pistis* and its cognate verb and adjective in Plato and in his predecessors, Moss argues that *pistis* is belief that consists in trust in an informant's testimony. She then shows that this account licenses us to lean heavily on *Republic* X's use of *pistis* to illuminate *pistis* on the Divided Line. Plato has in mind trust in the reports

and commands of experts—including, most importantly, the expert philosophical rulers of the good city or soul. On her account, Plato chooses *pistis* as his label for the superior form of *doxa* on the Divided Line because he wants to show that those who lack knowledge are not limited to contact with images and shadows and therefore not doomed to murky, unstable beliefs with minimal hold on truth. Instead, by putting our trust in the right kind of testimony, we can become acquainted with the truest things available in the sensible realm and thereby come to have beliefs that are as stable, true, and clear as *doxai* can be.

In Chapter 5, Pierre Destrée discerns a paradox at the heart of Plato's indictment of poetry: at the very moment when Socrates proclaims that poetry must be cast out once and for all, he presumes that Glaucon—and, by extension, any other citizen of Athens—can nonetheless continue to frequent the theater and take pleasure in poetry recitals and dramatic performances. This paradox gives rise to three questions. First, what might compel Plato to concede, at least in real cities, that all citizens can continue to listen to poetry? Second, what exactly is this "drug" or "counter-charm" that enables them to delight in poetry without succumbing to the moral and psychological dangers Plato so vehemently warns against? And third, if all poetry indeed stirs the soul with passionate pleasure, what kind of pleasure is such listening meant to awaken in these citizens? Destrée concludes that Plato does not propose that we renounce poetry definitely; instead, he urges us to enjoy it differently.

Gail Fine, in Chapter 6, explores the final ranking in Plato's *Philebus* of the constituents of the good human life, focusing on the question of whether, and if so where, truth ranks and on how "truth" should be understood. In the *Philebus*, Plato initially defends a ranking of human goods according to which reason rank more highly than pleasure, and a third thing more highly than reason, but later works out this tripartite ranking in terms of *five* different classes, namely, pleasure, reason, and three *ideai*, which are "measure," "proportion," and "truth." Fine defends a version of the "simple solution" of how Plato gets from three to five constituents—according to which the three *ideai* are to be taken as one and that as such, they rank above reason, which ranks above pleasure—by showing that the *idea* of truth is explicitly ranked third, after measure and proportionality, *alongside* reason, with which, however, it is not identical.

In Chapter 7, Karen Margrethe Nielsen takes us from Plato to Aristotle in Part II of our volume. She seeks to identify the continuities and discontinuities between Plato's and Aristotle's conception of craft—particularly, statecraft. Beginning with *Hippias Minor* and *Republic* 1, she explores the Socratic puzzle about expertise as a capacity for opposites, drawing a distinction between the nature of a craft and the ways in which it is poorly or badly practiced by individual practitioners. She then turns to Aristotle to examine his notion of political science (*politikê*) as a ruling science in light of his response to these puzzles. This analysis involves a close examination of the relationship between craft knowledge and practical wisdom (*phronêsis*), understood as the intellectual virtue that enables us to comprehend the human good, grasp the truth about action, and legislate well.

Michael Ferejohn, in Chapter 8, offers an interpretative framework that contextualizes Aristotle's characterization of the four types of definition and their role in scientific inquiry as presented in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* II.8–10 by paying especially close attention to Aristotle's own examples. In doing so, Ferejohn challenges David Charles' "three-stage" view of scientific inquiry and specifically his claim that, according to Aristotle, an inquirer cannot address the question of whether something exists unless she already has some idea of what it would be like if it did exist. On Ferejohn's account, Aristotle actually endorses the opposite view, namely, that an inquirer cannot address the question of what something is until she has already ascertained that it exists. In addition, Ferejohn formulates an alternative, *four*-stage interpretation of scientific inquiry that inverts Charles' sequencing of his first two stages.

In Chapter 9, Klaus Corcilius argues that pop-up entities are a pervasive, important, and largely neglected category of Aristotle's ontology. Pop-up entities are entities that "sometimes are and [sometimes] are not without coming to be or passing away." They include substantial forms of hylomorphic compounds, points, shapes, and other states of hylomorphic compounds, but also virtues, perceptual and noetic states, and unmoved movers of episodes of self-motion. Corcilius argues that Aristotle regards all pop-up entities as physically real, while regarding some of them as causally efficacious. Moreover, on Corcilius' account, Aristotle thinks of them as incomposites that exist—whenever they exist—in actuality. Aristotle assigns them important tasks, such as accounting for the causal efficacy of

mental acts, but much more importantly, he thinks of them as the features that make sublunary nature intelligible in the first place.

In Chapter 10, Mary Louise Gill turns to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Z, where Aristotle argues that whatever succeeds as primary substance must satisfy various criteria, including the essence criterion—defended in Z.6—according to which primary things and their essence are one and the same. Whereas many scholars have examined the sort of sameness at issue—whether that of identity or something less—Gill approaches the problem from a different direction and argues that the relational tie between the essence of a primary thing and that thing is predicative: the essence belongs (*huparchei*) to the subject. In order to defend this reading, Gill discusses Aristotle's modes of *kath' hauto* (in virtue of itself) and accidental predication in *Posterior Analytics* I.4 and contends that the essence of a primary thing exhausts what that thing is *kath' hauto*, and so the subject and its essence are one and the same: identical. They are the same because the content of the subject and predicate is the same, though the relation between them is predicative. In addition, Gill also argues that Aristotle's Z.6 thesis relies on Platonic self-predication (another disputed topic) and that one reason why he ignores his own candidates for primary substance in Z.6 and treats Platonic forms as sample primary things is that reliance. A second reason is that in Z.4–6, Aristotle treats the essence criterion from a *logikos* perspective, which Gill takes to be an approach that examines linguistic issues. The chapter goes through Z.6 and ends with the puzzle Aristotle ends with: What is the status of Socrates? Is he the same as his essence or not?

In Chapter 11, James Allen closely examines a passage in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (I.2, 1358a2–35) that promises to throw light on an early phase in Aristotle's thinking about argument. The object of the passage is to draw a distinction between two kinds of syllogism and a corresponding distinction between two kinds of enthymeme. Using ideas of Friedrich Solmsen as its point of departure, Allen takes the distinction to be based on a difference between two methods of inventing arguments, each method giving rise to a corresponding kind of syllogism or enthymeme. Arguments of one kind, which are especially proper to dialectic and to Aristotle's version of the rhetorical art, are discovered with the aid of the so-called *topoi*, which belong to no special subject matter and are catalogued in the *Topics* and—in brief and with the needs of the orator in view—in the *Rhetoric*.

Dialecticians and orators invent arguments of the other type by setting out from true or plausible propositions that belong to specialized substantive disciplines, from which in effect they borrow them. Allen concludes by defending—as an attractive but speculative hypothesis—Solmsen's suggestion that arguments of the second type were the objects reflection upon which sets in train the development in Aristotle's thinking that led him eventually to formulate the mature syllogistic theory of the *Prior Analytics*.

In Chapter 12, T. H. Irwin turns to the practice of writers on Aristotle's ethics to appeal to Aristotle's *Protrepticus*—itself mostly extracted from Iamblichus' *Protrepticus*—as a source of illustrations or comparisons and argues that we are in fact not justified in treating Iamblichus as a reliable source of Aristotelian doctrine. On Irwin's account, if we cite passages from Iamblichus as texts of Aristotle, we accept the optimistic view that Iamblichus either quotes Aristotle directly or at least provides an accurate paraphrase of Aristotle's doctrine in Aristotle's terms. However, if this optimistic view is false, anyone who considers the *Protrepticus* on an equal footing with the Corpus may be relying on a misleadingly large evidential basis. In order to determine Iamblichus' reliability as a source for Aristotle, Irwin argues that our decision on this question should be guided partly by the sections of Iamblichus' work that includes excerpts from Plato: for in these sections, in contrast to the section on Aristotle, we can compare Iamblichus with surviving texts. However, as Irwin demonstrates, such a comparison yields mixed results. Iamblichus' excerpts from Plato in chapters 13–19 follow the Platonic text closely enough to support an optimistic conclusion about his reliability as a source for Aristotle's work. In his excerpts from Plato in chapter 5, however, Iamblichus often alters the Platonic text in order to make his own protreptic points clear. Because of this, Irwin concludes that we cannot reasonably assume that he never alters Aristotle for the same reason, and indeed, some passages in the chapters from Aristotle suggest that he may have altered the text. Accordingly, we are *not* justified in treating Iamblichus as a reliable source of Aristotelian doctrine; we cannot reliably separate the contribution of Aristotle from the contribution of Iamblichus.