

something's virtue is relative to its own proper function [we must consider the function of each part].

THE VIRTUOUS PERSON HAS CORRECT DECISION

2

These are three [capacities] in the soul—perception, understanding, desire—that control action and truth.

Of these three perception clearly originates no action, since beasts have perception, but no share in action.

As assertion and denial are to thought, so pursuit and avoidance are to desire. Now virtue of character is a state that decides; and decision is a deliberative desire. If, then, the decision is excellent, the reason must be true and the desire correct, so that what reason states is what desire pursues.

This, then, is thought and truth concerned with action. By contrast, when thought is concerned with study, not with action or production, its good or bad state consists [simply] in being true or false. For truth is the function of whatever thinks; but the function of what thinks about action is truth agreeing with correct desire.

Now the origin—the source, not the goal, of the movement—is decision, and the origin of decision is desire, and reason that aims at some goal. Hence decision requires understanding and thought, and also a state of character, since doing well or badly in action requires both intellect and character.

Thought by itself, however, moves nothing; what moves us is thought aiming at some goal and concerned with action. For this is the sort of thought that also originates productive thought; for every producer in his production aims at some [further] goal, and the unconditional goal is not the product, which is only the [conditional] goal of some [production], and aims at some [further] goal. [The unconditional goal is] what we achieve in action, since doing well in action is the goal.

Now desire is for the goal. Hence decision is either understanding combined with desire or desire combined with thought; and what originates movement in this way is a human being.

We do not decide to do what is already past; no one decides, e.g. to have sacked Troy. For neither do we deliberate about what is past, but only about what will be and admits [of being or not being]; and what is past does not admit of not having happened. Hence

Agathon is correct to say 'Of this alone even a god is deprived—to make what is all over to have never happened.'¹²

Hence the function of each of the understanding parts is truth; and so the virtue of each part will be the state that makes that part grasp the truth most of all.

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

3

Then let us begin over again, and discuss these states of the soul. Let us say, then, that there are five states in which the soul grasps the truth in its affirmation or denials. These are craft, scientific knowledge, intelligence, wisdom and understanding; for belief and supposition admit of being false.

What science is is evident from the following, if we must speak exactly and not be guided by [mere] similarities.

For we all suppose that what we know scientifically does not even admit of being otherwise; and whenever what admits of being otherwise escapes observation, we do not notice whether it is or is not, [and hence we do not know about it]. Hence, what is known scientifically is by necessity. Hence it is everlasting; for the things that are by unqualified necessity are all everlasting, and everlasting things are ingenerable and indestructible.

Further, every science seems to be teachable, and what is scientifically knowable is learnable. But all teaching is from what is already known, as we also say in the *Analytics*; for some teaching is through induction, some by deductive inference, [which both require previous knowledge].

Induction [reaches] the principle, i.e., the universal, while deductive inference proceeds from the universal. Hence deductive inference has principles from which it proceeds, but which are not themselves [reached] by deductive inference. Hence they are [reached] by induction.

Scientific knowledge, then, is a demonstrative state, and has all the other features that in the *Analytics* we add to the definition. For someone has scientific knowledge when he has the appropriate sort of confi-

12. [Agathon was a fifth-century B.C. Athenian poet.]

dence, and the principles are known to him; for if they are not better known to him than the conclusion, he will have scientific knowledge only coincidentally. So much for a definition of scientific knowledge.

INTELLIGENCE

5

1140a To grasp what intelligence is we should first study the sort of people we call intelligent.

It seems proper, then, to an intelligent person to be able to deliberate finely about what is good and beneficial for himself, not about some restricted area—e.g. about what promotes health or strength—but about what promotes living well as a whole [without restriction].

A sign of this is the fact that we call people intelligent about some [restricted area] whenever they calculate well to promote some excellent end, in an area where there is no craft. Hence where [living well] as a whole is concerned, the deliberative person will also be intelligent.

Now no one deliberates about what cannot be otherwise or about what cannot be achieved by his action. Hence, if science is associated with demonstration, but there is no demonstration of anything whose origin can be otherwise, since every such thing can itself be otherwise; and if we cannot deliberate about what is by necessity; it follows that intelligence is neither a science nor a craft. It is not a science, because what is done in action can be otherwise; and it is not a craft, because action and production belong to different kinds.

The remaining possibility, then, is that intelligence is a state grasping the truth, associated with reason, and concerned with action about what is good or bad for a human being.

For production has its end beyond it; but action does not, since its end is doing well itself, [and doing well is the concern of intelligence].

Hence Pericles¹³ and such people are the ones whom we regard as intelligent, because they are able to study what is good for themselves and for human

13. [Pericles (c. 495–429 B.C.), the eminent Athenian statesman, was renowned for his incorruptible character and the wisdom of his politics. He was a staunch defender of democracy and a patron of the arts.]

beings; and we think that household managers and politicians are such people.

This is also how we come to give temperance (*sōphrosunē*) its name, because we think that it preserves intelligence, (*sōzousan tēn phronēsin*). This is the sort of supposition that it preserves.

For the sort of supposition that is corrupted and perverted by what is pleasant or painful is not every sort—not, e.g., the supposition that the triangle does or does not have two right angles—but a supposition about what is done in action.

For the origin of what is done in action is the goal it aims at; and if pleasure or pain has corrupted someone, the origin cannot appear to him. Hence it will not be apparent that this must be the goal and cause of all his choice and action; for vice corrupts the origin.

Hence [since intelligence is what temperance preserves, and what temperance preserves is a true supposition about action], intelligence must be a state grasping the truth, associated with reason, and concerned with action about human goods.

Moreover, there is virtue [or vice in the use] of craft, but not in intelligence. Further, in a craft, someone who makes errors voluntarily is more choiceworthy; but with intelligence, as with the virtues, the reverse is true. Clearly, then, intelligence is a virtue, not craft-knowledge.

There are two parts of the soul that have reason. Intelligence is a virtue of one of them, of the part that has belief; for belief is concerned, as intelligence is, with what admits of being otherwise.

Moreover, it is not only a state associated with reason. A sign of this is the fact that such a state is forgotten, but intelligence is not.

UNDERSTANDING

6

Scientific knowledge is supposition about universals, things that are by necessity. Further, everything demonstrable and every science have principles, since scientific knowledge involves reason.

Hence there can be neither scientific knowledge or craft-knowledge nor intelligence about the principles of what is scientifically known. For what is scientifically known is demonstrable, [but the principles are not]; and craft and intelligence are about what

admits of being otherwise. Nor is wisdom [exclusively] about principles; for it is proper to the wise person to have a demonstration of some things.

[The states of the soul] by which we always grasp the truth and never make mistakes, about what can or cannot be otherwise, are scientific knowledge, intelligence, wisdom and understanding. But none of the first three—intelligence, scientific knowledge, wisdom—is possible about principles. The remaining possibility, then, is that we have understanding about principles.

WISDOM

7

10 We ascribe wisdom in crafts to the people who have the most exact [expertise] in the crafts, e.g. we call Pheidias a wise sculptor and Polycleitus a wise portrait-maker, signifying only that wisdom is excellence in a craft. But we also think some people are wise in general, not wise in some [restricted] area, or in some
15 other [specific] way, as Homer says in the *Margites*: 'The gods did not make him a digger or a ploughman or wise in anything.' Clearly, then, wisdom is the most exact [form] of scientific knowledge.

Hence the wise person must not only know what is derived from the origins of a science, but also grasp the truth about the origins. Therefore wisdom is understanding and scientific knowledge; it is scientific knowledge of the most honourable things that has received [understanding as] its coping-stone.

20 For it would be absurd for someone to think that political science or intelligence is the most excellent science, when the best thing in the universe is not a human being [and the most excellent science must be of the best things].

Moreover, what is good and healthy for human beings and for fish is not the same, but what is white or straight is always the same. Hence everyone would say that the content of wisdom is always the same, but the content of intelligence is not. For the agent
25 they would call intelligent is the one who studies well each question about his own [good], and he is the one to whom they would entrust such questions. Hence intelligence is also ascribed to some of the beasts, whenever they are evidently capable of forethought about their own life.

This also makes it evident that wisdom is not the

same as political science. For if people are to say that [political science] about what is beneficial to themselves [as human beings] counts as wisdom,³⁰ there will be many types of wisdom [corresponding to the different species of animals]. For if there is no one medical science about all beings, there is no one [science] about the good of all animals, but a different [science] about each specific good. [Hence there will be many types of wisdom, contrary to our assumption that it has the best objects].

And it does not matter if human beings are the best among the animals. For there are other beings of a far more divine nature than human beings; e.g., the most evident are the beings composing the universe.

1141b

What we have said makes it clear that wisdom is both scientific knowledge and understanding about what is by nature most honourable. That is why people say that Anaxagoras¹⁴ or Thales¹⁵ or that sort of
5 person is wise, but not intelligent, when they see that he is ignorant of what benefits himself. And so they say that what he knows is extraordinary, amazing, difficult and divine, but useless, because it is not human goods that he looks for.

INTELLIGENCE COMPARED WITH THE OTHER VIRTUES OF THOUGHT

Intelligence, by contrast, is about human concerns,¹⁰ about what is open to deliberation. For we say that deliberating well is the function of the intelligent person more than anyone else; but no one deliberates about what cannot be otherwise, or about what lacks a goal that is a good achievable in action. The unconditionally good deliberator is the one whose aim expresses rational calculation in pursuit of the best good for a human being that is achievable in action.

14. [Anaxagoras (c. 500–428 B.C.) was a Greek philosopher who considered the world-order to have been produced by reason. His association with Pericles as teacher and friend led to his being brought to trial by Pericles' opponents on a charge of impiety. He was found guilty by the Athenian jury, but he escaped and retired to Ionia.]

15. [Thales (c. 636–546 B.C.) is traditionally considered the first of the Greek philosophers. According to legend, he fell into a well while gazing at the stars. He is credited, however, with predicting a solar eclipse and introducing geometry to the Greeks.]

15 Nor is intelligence about universals only. It must also come to know particulars, since it is concerned with action and action is about particulars. Hence in other areas also some people who lack knowledge but have experience are better in action than some with knowledge. For someone who knows that light meats
20 are digestible and healthy, but not which sorts of meats are light, will not produce health; the one who knows that bird meats are healthy will be better at producing health. And since intelligence is concerned with action, it must possess both [the universal and the particular knowledge] or the [particular] more [than the universal]. Here too, however, [as in medicine] there is a ruling [science].

INTELLIGENCE CONCERNS BOTH THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COMMUNITY

8

Political science and intelligence are the same state, but their being is not the same.

One part of intelligence about the city is the ruling
25 part; this is legislative science.

The part concerned with particulars [often] monopolizes the name 'political science' that [properly] applies to both parts in common. This part is concerned with action and deliberation, since [it is concerned with decrees and] the decree is to be acted on as the last thing [reached in deliberation]. Hence these people are the only ones who are said to be politically active; for these are the only ones who practise [politics] in the way that handcraftsmen practise [their craft].

30 Now likewise intelligence concerned with the individual himself seems most of all to be counted as intelligence; and this [part of intelligence often] monopolizes the name 'intelligence' that [properly] applies [to all parts] in common. Of the other parts one is household science, another legislative, another political, one part of which is deliberative and another judicial.

In fact knowledge of what is [good] for oneself is one species [of intelligence]. But there is much difference [in opinions] about it.

1142a Someone who knows about himself, and spends his time on his own concerns, seems to be intelligent, while politicians seem to be too active. Hence Euripides says, 'Surely I cannot be intelligent, when I could
5 have been inactive, numbered among all the many

in the army, and have had an equal share. . . . For those who go too far and are too active. . . .'

For people seek what is good for themselves, and suppose that this [inactivity] is the action required [to achieve their good]. Hence this belief has led to the view that these are the intelligent people.

Presumably, however, one's own welfare requires 10 household management and a political system.

Moreover, [another reason for the difference of opinion is this]: it is unclear, and should be examined, how one must manage one's own affairs.

A sign of what has been said [about the unclarity of what intelligence requires] is the fact that whereas young people become accomplished in geometry and mathematics, and wise within these limits, intelligent young people do not seem to be found. The reason is that intelligence is concerned with particulars as well as universals, and particulars become known from experience, but a young person lacks experience, 15 since some length of time is needed to produce it.

Indeed [to understand the difficulty and importance of experience] we might consider why a boy can become accomplished in mathematics, but not in wisdom or natural science. Surely it is because mathematical objects are reached through abstraction, whereas the principles in these other cases are reached from experience. Young people, then, [lacking experience], have no real conviction in these 20 other sciences, but only say the words, whereas the nature of mathematical objects is clear to them.

Moreover [intelligence is difficult because it is deliberative and] deliberation may be in error about either the universal or the particular. For [we may wrongly suppose] either that all sorts of heavy water are bad or that this water is heavy.

Intelligence is evidently not scientific knowledge; 25 for, as we said, it concerns the last thing [i.e., the particular], since this is what is done in action. Hence it is opposed to understanding. For understanding is about the [first] terms, [those] that have no account of them; but intelligence is about the last thing, an object of perception, not of scientific knowledge.

This is not the perception of proper objects, but the sort by which we perceive that the last among mathematical objects is a triangle; for it will stop here too. This is another species [of perception than 30 perception of proper objects]; but it is still perception more than intelligence is.