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**The Compatibility of Democracy and the Human Condition:
The Quest for Objective Values**

Vince Ambrose
Honor Program: Thesis Paper

Since the unprecedented emergence of political thought that arose from the ancient Greek world, our most prominent political philosophers from Plato to Thomas Hobbes, as well as our contemporary theorists, have addressed the question of rule. This question encompasses multiple arena's concerning the proper system of rule, such as who should rule, how many people should be involved in this ruling process, how one may acquire a position of ruling power, and chiefly, what qualities and characteristics are the administrators of government to be endowed with in order to establish a government attentive to the good of the people, both rulers and the ruled. The answers to these questions have a fundamental precondition however, as certain philosophic assumptions regarding the nature of human beings themselves are the very foundation from which such everlasting political theories on governance originate. In other words, wisdom of the organized political community, especially focused on proper governance of the whole society, is bound in the way we view ourselves as human beings and the relationship with others around us. Therefore, in order to be wise in constructing a concept of the best form of government, it is absolutely necessary that there be a clear, established understanding of how human beings may live harmoniously based on the parameters of human nature.

The tradition of political thought has been blessed with great minds that seek wisdom of the state, and although debatable, I argue that the most comprehensive authorities in the western tradition of political philosophy that specifically address the applicability of rule by democracy in relation to the nature of human beings include Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas Hobbes. Of course, there are many other theorists that certainly deserve recognition in regard to their dedications to this very issue within the discipline of political philosophy, yet for the sake of this short work, these few

mentioned previously will serve as the our models for approaching both classical and modern approaches to the issue at hand. Indeed, classical political theorists such as Plato and Aristotle present us with a description of human nature quite different from modern thinkers such as Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, for their different interpretations of the human essence dictate the possibilities of government capable of incorporating even the most rudimentary democratic elements. Both the ancient and modern eras birthed political theorists dedicated to the notion that democracy was a lowly, near unrealistic form of government, and when put into action, it is usually by “the force of arms or because those on the opposing side are frightened into exile” (Steinberger 283). Nor do either the ancient or modern thinkers deny that human beings are driven to act through motivators that we call emotion, our “appetite of things belonging to the body” must be regulated (if ones description of human nature allows for it) in order for the collective good to be achieved, whether it be through the establishment of a social contract or by natural inclination (Aquinas 235). However, when assessing the probability that certain governmental forms may operate more soundly than others, we must take into account the fact that distinguished definitions of our nature allow for certain forms to be considered plausible or not, and it is our responsibility to decide for ourselves whether or not the individual and the society can be seen as a unit, or will their tension ultimately drive us into a state of tyranny or even anarchy. Using the models of both classical and modern thinkers, primarily Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas Hobbes, we may begin to tackle the central themes such as who should rule, the operations of this rule, what facilitates superior performance in governance, and human ends sought that lend to interpretations concerning who should act as the rightful sovereign.

The classic notion of human nature articulated by early Greek political philosophers Plato and Aristotle are much more optimistic in regard to their capacity to build bridges between individual and collective interests, which is the central aim of all democracies; to aggregate individual preferences into accommodating public policies (Arrow 11). In Aristotle's *Politics*, he defines human beings as *zoon politikon*, the political animal, but in order to understand how he arrives at this conclusion, we must first visit the preface to the *Politics*; a treatise entitled *Nicomachean Ethics* (Steinberger 378). The relationship of the two works lies in Aristotle's acceptance of Plato's theory known as the anthropological principle, which basically explains that any given society is a composite of its individuals. Plato sees no inherent conflict between the individuals in society, for he argues the very opposite; that the individual is a microcosm of the society and the society then, is the macrocosm of the individual (Steinberger 189). This seemingly Hericlitean duality of necessary opposites opens the door for Aristotle's later formulations (Wheelwright 66). Aristotle acknowledges the fundamental form we all share as human beings, who naturally seek *eudaimonia*, or "happiness, well-being, and human flourishing" made possible only by an environment conducive to the attainment of virtue devoid of selfish excess or deficiency (Aristotle 116). This for Aristotle is what he constantly refers to as "the good that has the most authority of all and encompasses all other aims highest" (Steinberger 377). By this rationale, it may be inferred that the only way to delve into our full potentialities as rational animals is by coming together and forming a *polis*, for the sake of cultivating the arts, science, and education. The political community must precede primary social units, due to our nature inclining us to assimilate ourselves and begin to exchange ideas, as well as form institutions and organize ourselves based on the pursuit of this Good. This requires a high degree of social and

political organization, which is largely dependant on the individuals composing the given society, putting great emphasis on the understanding Plato's anthropological principle as the blueprint for achieving such a society based on common goods, inherently attentive to its needs as a populace. Therefore, the development of the *polis* or state for the ancients is a natural phenomenon formed out of an innate inclination to seek the Good and abandon the life of the "clanless, lawless, and homeless," unlike the Hobbsian view that will be presented in the subsequent pages (Steinberger 378). In the words of Aristotle himself "Man is the best animal when united with law and justice in a *polis*; but he is the worst animal when isolated," for one must be "a beast or a god" to live apart from community (Steinberger 379). Yet if *eudemonia* is made possible by the attainment of intellectual virtues that enable us to "live as ideally as possible," one may and should ask, "how does Aristotle come to defend his reasoning that happiness does exist as such (Steinberger 384)?"

One of the main distinctions to be made concerning the nature of human beings from the ancient and modern eras that cannot be overlooked lies in the manner by which happiness is defined. Our definitions of happiness can most typically serve as legitimate outlines to the ends we seek as human beings, demanding certain lifestyles on this earth. In book one of his *Ethics*, Aristotle makes it apparent that he is a teleological thinker who strongly believes that all things that exist aim at some Good or "final cause," and the highest or best goods are those that are sought for the sake of themselves (Aristotle 8). He does posit, in consistency with the Greek tradition, that virtue is acquired by habit and not by nature. Yet he provides a canvass in which human nature may utilize the acquisition of virtue toward an end not bound in personal security or measured in utility, but human flourishing seeking the ultimate good of happiness (Aristotle 20). The birth of

the *polis* has monumental importance for Aristotle, as it directs us toward the highest goods attainable, the ultimate final cause or *telos* if you will. By examining that which brings us genuine happiness, he explains that genuine human flourishing lies in the recognition of our most defining and integral quality, the intellect (Aristotle 17). Intellectual powers such as reason and logic belong to human beings alone; it is the employment and constant refinement of these capabilities that allow for excellence in our endeavors. In other words, the use of our intellectual faculties produces excellent doing, and according to Aristotle, it is doing something well through the habituation of virtuous conduct that brings us happiness and general well being (Aristotle 17). Doing something excellently is certainly something all human beings take pleasure in, yet we are individuals in regard to particulars such as skill, and if moral self-governing virtues are attained through habit then we must conclude that one's level of skill in regard to political matters should be acknowledged and given the sufficient, proportionate recognition in relation to the weight of governing responsibilities to be dispersed.

In the most ideal sense, if the society be composed of individuals thriving on virtue and intellectual development, the ability to govern oneself comes effortlessly, making collective decision making a simple, almost natural task. However, it is a sensible fact that we do not live in a utopian setting where all humans seek such positive ends for the Chief Good, for Aristotle knew this as well, and without any effort toward creating an environment where people may attain virtue through interaction in the state we are left with the questions presented in the introduction addressing the proper form of rule.

After bringing light to Aristotle's beliefs on human nature and the ends we seek, we may now begin to understand why democracy was, and still is a very dangerous

undertaking. Aristotle ranks democracy as a lowly form of government where the many rule in the interest of themselves, as he feels that a mixed government or *politeia* is the best form (Steinberger 403). Aristotle reasons that this mixed government is the best possible form, as he pictures a community which provides an environment conducive to the attainment of virtue by the citizenry (courage, moderation, justice, wisdom, ect...), therefore making participation in social affairs fruitful and most of all, collectively beneficial (401). A mixed constitution for Aristotle hinges on the presence of virtuous beings, and it is the amount of virtue in the citizenry should match the governing authority distributed in the community (401). As stated earlier, through works such as the *Metaphysics* and the *Ethics*, Aristotle is able to concoct such a view of “bestness” or “well-fittedness” that leaves us begging several questions regarding the practical application of democracy. Why do we otherwise assume that everyone should have an equal say in the governing of the state? Are we to totally disregard the truth that some are more apt to do certain things better than others, or are we going to carry around this naive sentiment that even the most unknowledgeable or despicable souls should have a hand in government strictly based on their citizenry alone? Aristotle’s notion was that the amount of virtue present in the *demos* should be largely commensurate with the measure of governing responsibility distributed amongst them. This may serve as a direct refutation to the ill-founded notion that we are all by virtue of citizenship, deserving of a role as practitioners of civil order.

Aristotle does maintain that we naturally seek the communal life and seems to be leaving open the idea that we do have the ability to realize the destructive nature of our passions and correct them through the healthy development or rather, purification of the intellect. This literally implies we are not fated to be isolated individuals, chained to

fear, insecurity, and material wants (lower goods), but are capable of enlightening ourselves by seeking higher goods through the habitual exercising of virtue. Many may ask unfortunately, “What *is* virtue, and once again Aristotle provides a sound definition. Virtues, according to Aristotle in Book II of the *Ethics*, are dispositions such as; a state of self-mastery or temperance, to exercise deliberate choice, to be guided by reason, to avoid excess and deficiency, and a disposition to do what “the man of practical wisdom would do” (Aristotle 27). They are not feelings or frameworks, and it is important to note that ethical considerations, being of a moral and therefore immeasurable nature, cannot be discussed in exacting terms like temporal things. Yet the role of ethics in politics is outright intrinsic, for if ethical concerns are not woven into the threads of political life and we are dominated by our personal passions with utter disregard for the degenerative effects of excess liberty, we fall victim to the fatal flaw of the democratic man and lace the political sphere with the seeds of tyranny (290). Relative to this idea, the notion that each individual should have an equal hand in government is, as Aristotle said “absurd” (Steinberger 401). Democracy must and can only be checked by the measure of self-governing qualities in the citizenry, not through contractual agreement, making it apparent that harsh diversity of personal interests combined with the absence of self-governing virtues makes the quest for basic homogeneity of ideas seem impossible.

When championed with the reigns of rule, Plato most eloquently describes the behavior of the *demos* during his discussion of the five typologies of governmental regimes and their corresponding “soul types”. The will of the *demos* is essentially unknowable, as a “docile mob” of interests will perpetually conflict and drive the state into total anarchy (Steinberger 288). Plato describes democracy as excessive in “the account of license it gives to its citizens, as it stretches to the point where beasts maintain

rights over human beings, magnificently highlighting what can become an extreme disregard for the lives of our fellow people (Steinberger 284). Democracy for Plato was better only than tyranny, as he very much saw democracy as a chaotic rabble of self-serving liberty gluttons that, if left the responsibility of direct governance, are bound to “breed faction, civil war, and most importantly, extreme fear and distrust in the community” (Clinton Lecture). In his *Republic*, there is a magnificent passage in which Plato describes the lavish, fickle democratic man who is in a perpetual state of attempting to pacify his appetitive desires. In Book VIII of the republic, in his description of the life of the democratic man, Plato writes:

“And so he lives on, yielding day by day to the desire at hand. Sometimes he drinks heavily while listening to the flute; at other times, he drinks only water and is on a diet; sometimes he goes in for physical training; at other times, he’s idle and neglects everything; and sometimes he even occupies himself with what he takes to be philosophy. He often engages in politics, leaping up from his seat and saying and doing whatever comes into his mind. If he happens to admire soldiers, he’s carried in that direction, if money making, in that one. There’s neither order nor necessity in his life, but he calls it pleasant, free, and blessedly happy, and he follows it for as long as he lives” (286).

If we no longer share a compassionate, dependant relationship with one another whereby we may look to the citizens as well as the rulers of the state to make efforts toward the betterment of all its inhabitants, we have no basis for trust and are doomed to the near prophetic warnings of French theorist Alexis de Toqueville. In his argument that is specifically addressed toward citizens of a democratic America, which he so succinctly titled “Democracy in America,” Toqueville coined the phrase “the tyranny of the

majority.” He describes a society composed of artificial trust and “narrowly self-interested individuals, disarticulated from the saving constraints and nurture of overlapping associations of social life.”

English political philosopher and theorist Thomas Hobbes, notably the most influential political thinker of the modern age, provides for us a profoundly different testimony of human nature that fatally places the individual and society on the same track, heading straight for one another. Jean Bethke-Elshtain, author of “Democracy on Trial” correctly describes Hobbes central theme that as “a society could be run on a single principle: recognition that human beings are isolated monads driven by appetite and aversion” (106). In Hobbes greatest work entitled “Leviathan,” the Aristotelian notions explicated previously are impossible regarding the proper placement of rule and order of government based on the human condition. First and foremost, Hobbes does not agree that human beings come together out of an innate drive for the fulfillment of being only attainable in a society in which one acquires virtue of the mind, as well as the body. He feels that we are by nature driven to live out of fear of the bad that could harm us, mainly of a violent death at the hands of others, rather than the good that could benefit us (Wootton 142). Out of the assumptions of personal insecurity, we would observe others and assume they too are viewing you with the same fearful attitude. Therefore the object of insecurity is other people, logically demanding that to solve the problem is to somehow remove the object of insecurity. For Hobbes, personal insecurity compounded with inordinate material passions pit us against one another for space, power, and resources, and the only way to bring us out of this animalistic, isolated “state of nature” is to give up our individual rights to an absolute sovereign power in a conventional

contract with the other inhabitants of the state (Wootton 169-72) Hence, the emergence of the social contract.

As previously stated, the notion that human beings are isolated automatons violates all principles purported by Aristotle in his theory of *zoon politikon*, for the Hobbsian state, or “artificial man” does not strive for objective goods based on ethical truths, but is founded upon the ultimate will of the one unitary sovereign whose only duty is to preserve the lives of the people against one another and foreign invasion at all costs (Wootton 124). This ultimate will does not incorporate the philosophical ideals of right and wrong nor justice and injustice, but rather prevents the human degradation of the state back into its disorderly chaotic nature where life is described as “mean, nasty, brutish, and short” (Clinton Lecture). Again, beings destined to be governed by their passions by conditions of nature will lead to anger, revenge, self-interest, and ultimately to the idea that societal efforts are altogether a different endeavor. Hobbes provides us with six reasons why we cannot live socially by instinct. The first few were mentioned briefly; a hunger for power, isolationism or the ability to separate ourselves, and the constant comparing of ourselves to others in regard to “who is better” (Wootton 188). The rest include pride or vainglory, excess leisure, and the lack of a common power to make all agreements enforceable (Wootton 188). Though he goes on to explain each of these impediments on social harmony in greater detail, but the acknowledgment to be made here lies in realizing that the possibility of democratic institutions for Hobbes is actually an impossibility, as our very condition propels us into a narrow realm of coexistence where Aristotle’s mention of the good is destroyed by Hobbes grim picture of human limitation.

As one may obviously observe, Hobbes is no idealist, nor does he hold the belief that erecting a system implementing slight democratic elements, or any form of rule that would impede on the will of the sovereign by allowing for a multitude of wills, would be a good idea. For Hobbes, a divided sovereign is the absolutely worst setting for orderly, effective government. As a matter of fact, all this questioning of the good or ideal forms of government is not necessary, as Hobbes would probably argue that we are babbling about something out of the reach of human potentiality. In other words, are we even able to live together peacefully amidst extreme diversity of both thought and appearance under the modern assumptions that we are pitted against one another by nature, inclined to seek our own personal goods (which are lower than those higher goods spoke of in antiquity) at the sake of those who possess it? Human passions, or the “interior beginnings of voluntary motions” dominate our thinking, yet for Hobbes there are no objective standards by which the desires or aversions may be judged (140). The notion of absolute values for Hobbes is nonsense, as he is a strict relativist (which is largely an outcropping of his metaphysical assertion that everything in being is matter in motion) that feels subjective judgment are all we as humans are capable of when discerning matters we claim to have universal qualities. If this is so, and the only way to control ourselves from murdering one another out of insecurity and material gain is by adopting an absolute sovereign (which ends political philosophy). Once we demand an Arrovian dictator, or sovereign with limitless authority, required out of the absence of self-governing principles, we can surely scrap any effort put towards pondering the meanings of justice, virtue, and any other considerations that follow there from and accept a Hobbsian political philosophy as well as its bleak assumptions regarding human nature.

Now that we have illuminated the Aristotelian and Hobbsian theories on human nature, we may look at the two comparatively, if at all possible, and discuss more direct applications of such theories to two specific areas of inquiry. First, I feel it necessary to consult the works of contemporary political philosopher Mortimer J. Adler, specifically his book entitled “The Ten Philosophical Mistakes,” wherein Adler directly addresses the issue of human society and its origin as well as harshly criticizes Hobbes (as well as Rousseau) in their fabrication of “the state of nature.” Adler first attacks the notion that, historically, this fiction called the state of nature could have ever existed. Basically, Adler argues that due to the dependent nature of the human infant and therefore the primacy of the family, a social unit in which we enter into out of a natural *need*, human beings have never existed in such a hypothetical state of isolation (170). “The second myth” says Adler in regard to this state of nature, “inseparable from the first, is the fiction that human beings, dissatisfied with the precariousness and brutality of living in a state of nature, decided to put up with it no longer and to agree upon certain conventions and rules for living together under some form of government that replaced anarchy and eliminated their isolation and autonomy” (170). Adler tells us that we can avoid the mythical creation of the social contract if we acknowledge that both a conventional as well as a natural origin theory is plausible, and not “a flat disjunction- an either-or-but-not-both” (171). Political theorists who adhere to the state of nature assumption seem to fail to notice the Aristotelian notion that a society can be both natural and conventional, and this is due to the may the modern and postmodern theorists fail to notice the dualistic interpretation of the word “nature” found in the writings of the classicists. In seeing the multitude of ways that human beings organize themselves all over the world, especially in regard to the vast differences ranging between societal or governmental structures,

such “state of nature advocates” wished to refrain from calling the human society natural. Unlike social and gregarious creatures like certain insects, human beings are not “hard-wired” instinctually in such a rigid manner whatsoever, and it cannot be said that we are genetically bound to setting up such “relatively permanent domestic groups,” so in thinking about that basic social unit that even Rousseau allowed for calling natural, the family, we must recognize that natural need that emerges from infancy (173). Further, we can observe the various ways in which human beings share different family traditions, structures, contributions to society, and so on. So then, it is not a kind of physically and intrinsically determined natural drive in the extreme sense of the insects mentioned previously, yet, due to this natural need discussed, we must regard the human society in its most primitive origin as natural and conventional (Adler 173). Adler then admits of the possibility of the state of nature, but then upon this admission, finds error in that which follows from its acceptance. He asks, “Why, then, did human beings depart” from this state of nature - it was not through any innate instinct, so again, these primary units of society came together out of a natural need. Here we acknowledge a difference in the ends sought in regard to these natural needs. In other words, natural needs for what? In the case of the former, the natural need was for the survival of the basic unit, for means of self preservation. Yet, when we think about the greater coming together of families, clans, or tribes, we acknowledge a need that surpasses the need for survival. It is here that Adler adds, “The state of civil society came into existence to satisfy man’s natural need for the conditions requisite for achieving a morally good human life - *not just to live, but to live well* (174).

Let us now assume that Hobbes was incorrect in his assumption that the only viable sovereign is an undivided one where ethics are subordinate to the positive law of

the state and we are compelled by nature to the bleak ends of absolute sovereignty, ending political philosophy. Instead let us hypothesize that, by virtue of our nature, we can erect governments incorporating democratic elements as Aristotle claimed. The present day “liberal democracy” we claim to enjoy runs on a mechanism that attempts to aggregate individual preferences into public policy, yet it operates under the Hobbsian assumption of what Kenneth Arrow names “the individualistic assumptions” (61).

Drawing into account these questions that have surfaced throughout our history, let us now attempt to draw such considerations into a discussion concerning a more contemporary model of democracy, as does Kenneth Arrow in assessing the American democracy. In Kenneth Arrow’s book entitled “Social Choice and Individual Values,” he directly addresses the feasibility of a democratic voting system that successfully turns these individual interests and passions into democratic decisions in the American system. Through mathematical equations modeled after the geometrical method that orders his work into propositions, axioms, definitions, proofs, and theorems, Arrow comes to the logical conclusion that a mechanism for aggregating individual preference ordering into public policy at all times is no more possible than the construction of a fool proof market mechanism (116). This conclusion was arrived at for several reasons. First it is assumed that voters are rational actors that, when asserting our worldviews through a voting scheme, think syllogistically, meaning that if we prefer X to Y and Y to Z, then we prefer X to Z, which arrow simplifies as xPz (Arrow 3). This has come under some scrutiny though, as it has been debated that voters do not always act “rationally” in this concrete transitive sense, and rather certain preferences are dictated by other forces. Anthony Downs for example, argues that this other force lies in the authority of our present feelings, which are all together latent, fickle, and in flux (Arrow 119).

I however posit the possibility of another outside force that gets misinterpreted as a flaw of rationality, which bears a diagnosis advantageous to helping solve this problem. Yes, we do vary on our abilities as human beings to control our emotions through the works of reason as Aristotle noted, yet I feel one of the biggest obstacles to the creation of policy responsive to a heap of diverse, individual interests is that many of these interest often conflict unnoticeably by the voter. I say this because, no matter the individuated instance in which voter preferences are said to violate the condition of transitivity, we first must embrace an ambitious, contemplative disposition toward fundamental political ideals such as justice, liberty, temperance, and so on. Furthermore, we must acknowledge the relationship between our societal demands and how they reflect our personal passions, and constantly question if the institutionalizing of such passions is in the interest of the common good. How can a people be confident that those systems of rule which come to fashion legislation, whether they are operated by lot or by means of appointment, are doing so in the interest of those ruled and not for the sake of selfish appetite, vain glory, or by unreasonable conclusions? The truth of the matter is that we may never know the intentions of our political actors, yet we may observe their actions and discuss whether or not the course of their actions is just. The amount of virtue embedded in the ruling body may only be measured to the extent which it is observed, and it is here where I find myself most intrigued when observing the present day American “democratic system.” How can we as a population of people with a minimal yet fundamental role in government, accurately analyze the measure of virtue in the ruling class if we are largely ignorant of the concepts of justice and virtue, the very intellectual tools one needs in order to make such a judgment.

In Plato's *Apology*, Socrates makes a similar argument to the one considered in the former paragraph. The *Apology* is often used rightly as a defense of the philosophical life to the democratic life. Being a potter, poet, or politician is nothing more than a career option, yet the practice of philosophy is a necessity, especially in a democratic *polis* (Plato 56). When called into duty to administer our political ideologies, the pure truth is that we are often deeply ignorant of the dimensions of justice as they carry over into the decisions of political actors as well as the ensuing political outcomes, nor do we spend much time contemplating the nature of justice in this regard, in both theoretical and practical scenarios. Even if we cannot agree on what the Good may be, we must inquire its nature together, giving us a firm understanding of the political plateau on which we claim to stand. We therefore contribute to the transitive outcomes of our preference orderings in reference to Arrow. Socrates, basing his argument on the assumption that no one seeks evil injustice willingly, it is that evil may appear to be good in the eyes of the relativist, and of course they are deeply mistaken, not necessarily "irrational" (Plato 57). The attack on the relativist position follows that we all desire happiness and the good to live well, yet there must be an objective standard by which we can recognize happiness and without knowledge of that which constitutes the Good, we are trapped in a self-stultifying situation. In short, through the recognition of our own ignorance, known as Socratic wisdom, we may then initiate a hunt for objective, absolute values outside of those purely subjective personal preferences.

A search for objective values is exactly what Kenneth Arrow finds himself suggesting toward the end of his book. To arrive at this conclusion, we first must examine the other conditions aside from transitivity that he imposes in his attempt to construct a foolproof voting machine. The other four conditions are independence, free-

domain (or the ability to produce any possible preference orderings from the feasible set), non-dictatorship, and non-imposition, and it is the compatibility of these that denies the possibility of dictatorial outcomes in the voting process (Arrow 22-33). Nonetheless, it is shown that these conditions do conflict. The most crucial contradiction is the idea that if all preference orderings are considered to be possible, and free-domain is exercised, we allow for the integration irrational preference orderings on to the democratic stage. Such irrational orderings produce “double-peaked” preference orderings, or rather orderings that place extreme ideological opposites as the voters primary and secondary choices. Such choices are founded in individual interest may intentionally or unintentionally disintegrate a system that attempts to represent democracy devoid of any tainted or illegitimate influences (Arrow 75-6). Why do we wish to allow for preference orderings that lend to separatism? If we could limit free-domain, which does entail the sacrifice of individual freedoms that are bound to spur philosophical debate, aggregating individual preferences into collective democratic decisions would surely be made easier. By dismissing these irrational or game oriented preference orderings, the democratic social process might be able to shake the possibility of dictatorial outcomes, as well as the integration of rule that embodies virtue and common ends, not cold, calculative probability tactics (it should be noted that occasional instances of intransitive voting could be the result of strong dislike for one of the optional candidates or policies).

However did we go from Platonic, Aristotelian, and Hobbsian explications on human nature and governmental prospects based on this nature, as well as our responsibilities as “democratic citizens” to Arrow’s comments on a sound voting mechanism in a liberal democracy you may ask? Well, at first they may seem to lack any relationship worthy of extended discussion, however the work of Kenneth Arrow falls

directly on the divide between the Aristotelian and Hobbsian theories on human nature and its foreshadowing of the creation of the state. What Kenneth Arrow is really striving for here is what classical political philosophy views as an objective good. Aristotle's notion of *zoon politikon*, if taken to be true, demands that we not only seek each other out of natural inclinations, but we need to realize our substantial natures as human beings, stop praising diversity for the sake of itself, and look to establish a more unified, homogenous society. A more homogenous society bound to communal collectivity will always enjoy a greater level of political harmony than a fragmented one, full of Hobbsian isolates. I feel that Arrow's deductive findings are reasonable, however we wouldn't need formal theorists had we no belief in a serious conflict between the society and the individual. Here is where Arrow specifically notes that there may be such a thing as collective or universal goods.

A citizenry ill-equipped to deal with such politically relevant questions is doomed to individual interpretations and public opinion, will be compelled to enshrine any amount of political knowledge heard as truth without discerning its principles, and thus is left in a state so devoid of anything that could be called homogeneity that the idea of orderly rule by democracy seems impossible. When we "observe the actions" in the political realm, we are not observing our elected politicians engaging in dialectic reasoned discourse, instead we see a watered down version of the Sophistic movement that arose during the democratic phase of Athens (Wheelwright 237). In consideration to our present political ideology seemingly founded on a quite modern perspective on human nature, I would argue that it is to the benefit of those in power to continue to force feed this imaginary notion that we are indeed a democracy to a sea of people either highly displaced from political involvement out of a willing disdain or apathy, or by lack

of an environment where time may be aptly devoted to such an undertaking outside of ones struggle with the necessary demands of the day. Most Americans, and I do see the generality in such a comment, are highly disassociated from the mindset that values political knowledge over the attainment of lower goods, and therefore are unequipped to bear the responsibility of making judgments on legislation full of pandering and rhetoric, let alone setting aside their personal endeavors and wishes in light of the collective good, which I argue is readily observable in all facets of societal life. Still, if the citizenry is content with its level of responsibility in government, there will be no need to go looking for it, as it is thought to already be in ones possession. Good speech giving however, and good ruling are two different occupations, leaving only one plausible, non-violent means to bring those who have only seen the shadows into the light to know the originals, and that is only done through a life of contemplation (Steinberger 262-63).

But just as answers seem to breed more questions, one must ask, would the United States Government be interested in attempting to compose our present day society of people scampering about, intimately concerned with the actions of politicians, as well as these questions of justice and of good? As shockingly contradictory as it may sound to many citizens of this country, I would claim that a highly politically educated citizenry is a threat to a growing tradition of political pandering and sophistry, and could quite possibly the last thing being promoted as a civic duty in the United States.

It is my belief that while the American citizen may be well on their way to an extreme loss of liberty in the light of an obsessive race for it, but it is important not to confuse human nature by means of how people *have become* in contrast to our innate framework, as we must repeatedly bring this into question once we feel we have postulated a solid theory on something as pivotal as human nature. Therefore, as I lightly

community regardless of our geographic location, academic endeavors, social status, and most importantly, regardless of our particular qualities as human beings (Aristotle 4). I am discontent with the Hobbsian and Rousseauian presumptions of essential human inclination, as a good friend of mine once stated, so wisely and yet simply stated, “if we agree that everything begins in the mind, then it is here that we deal with our problems.”

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