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Ruling In Turn: Political Rule against Mastery in Aristotle's *Politics*

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ABSTRACT: Aristotle's political theory is often dismissed as undemocratic due to his treatment of natural slavery and women and to his conception of political rule as rule by turns. The second reason presents no less serious challenges than the first for finding democracy in Aristotle's political theory. This article argues that Aristotle's account of ruling in turns hinges on a critique of master rule and an affirmation of political rule, which involves both the rulers and the ruled in the project of ruling. Ruling in turns makes the rule shared, not merely an exchange of opportunities to rule as a despot.

There are two reasons that Aristotle's political theory is often dismissed as undemocratic. First, Aristotle appears to justify natural slavery and the subordination of women.¹ Second, Aristotle conceives of political rule as rule by turns. The first is more regularly invoked and perhaps for that reason has been more successfully opposed in recent scholarship.² But the second reason Aristotle is dismissed is no less damning a charge. I turn to it in this essay to argue that Aristotle's account of ruling by turns is based on a defense of political rule against tyrannical rule; it is not merely an exchange of opportunities to rule as a despot. Aristotle's treatment of ruling by turns, I argue, like his treatment of slavery and women, shows the whole of the *Politics* to be a critique of master rule.

In his post-9/11 treatment of democracy, *Rogues*, Jacques Derrida argued that freedom and equality for Aristotle can only be at work together when equals, who are free by participating in the rule, take turns ruling. Since equals have a shared claim to rule, each one rules "in turn" (*en merei*) or "by turns" (*kata merei*). The Greek word, *to meros*, meaning part, shows that those who are equal have a part or a portion of the rule. Taking turns ruling, equals are never free at the same time and so not equal all at once but only by turns.³ Michael Naas has argued that this ruling by parts cannot be a true sharing of the rule since political authority

cannot be divided.⁴ A fictive difference is introduced by Aristotle between the ruler and the ruled in order to justify among equals the rule of some over others who are equal. This fictive difference is not fundamental, according to Naas, who maintains that it is not a difference that includes the rich and the poor, the different parties with claims to rule. It is no real difference at all because the equals have the same interests. Naas concludes, "Indeed, Aristotle does everything he can to prevent such an alternation."⁵

Following suggestions from Derrida, Naas implies that Aristotle attempts to stave off true democracy, which would include those with different and competing interests, with a mechanism that effectively affirms the rule of some to the detriment of others. In what follows, I offer a contrasting view by showing that political rule is radically different from master rule. Political rule is deliberation which is a shared activity of a plurality and it involves true difference by including all of those who have a stake in the community in order to achieve stability. Strikingly, Aristotle does not explicitly thematize political rule; he discusses it in contrast to master rule, which must be examined first to make this case that political rule and ruling by turns is a truly democratic sharing of the rule.

THE INHUMANITY OF DESPOTIC RULE

Since both the people, who fear being ruled, and the oligarchs, who think their freedom is in ruling others, assume that all rule is despotism, Aristotle needs to distinguish political rule from mastery in order to legitimate it.⁶ He maintains that political rule is not the rule that subjects one's peers for the sake of one's own benefit, but the rule of equals for the shared sake of the rulers and the ruled.

Aristotle responds to those who say that the rule of statesman, king, household manager and master differs only in the number of subjects they rule: "But these claims are not true (*tauta d' ouk estin alēthē*) (*Pol.* 1252a16)."⁷ These kinds of rule differ according to the end for the sake of which the ruler rules. In *Politics* VII.2, Aristotle considers the positions of those who think ruling over one's neighbors is unjust and those who think the law should enable those in power to rule over others like a master. The problem, Aristotle observes, is that "many seem to think that statesmanship is the same as mastership" (1324b32). In *Politics* VII.3, Aristotle explicitly says, "[I]t is wrong to consider that every kind of rule is rule by a master" (1325a27). The difference between rule over free people and rule over slaves is akin to the difference between being free and being a slave (1325a29).⁸

So what is that difference? The slave belongs wholly to the master, who dictates the slave's end while the free person's end is not dictated by another but by the free person (*Pol.* 1254a11). A slave is someone who "despite being human, is by nature not his own but someone else's" (1254a14).⁹ Both sides of this definition need to be addressed. When an individual is someone else's, the one the person

belongs to determines the end of that person. The slave is thereby determined by necessity. Not self-sufficient, the slave is beholden to another who directs the slave's way (1291a10). Restricted to work, the slave does not determine the end that the slave works toward. As in the case of the house-builder, the work is determined by the end. The necessity that confines the slave is compounded since the slave is confined by the necessity of a given end and by the dictation of that work and that end by another for whom the slave exists. The slave does not even judge whether to work to fulfill daily needs since the work is not driven by the slave's own needs but the needs of the master.

By contrast, the free person does determine the end, which is to say, the free person deliberates.¹⁰ As has become well-established, deliberation is not reducible to "means" given the fullness of the Greek phrase, *ta pros ta telē*, which should be translated as "what constitutes or contributes to the end," which Aristotle uses to designate the things over which persons deliberate (*EN* 1112b12–15). No one deliberates over whether to be happy, but each of us considers what kind of life and activity would count as and contribute to happiness. Engaging in such activity, a person is free because the free person sets the end; the free person determines what is required to achieve that end. Aristotle transforms the definition that the democrats give for freedom, *eleutheria*, to do as one likes. In contrast to the slave who cannot do whatever the slave likes, the free person in determining the best end does what the free person likes. If to deliberate is to give oneself the end, which is to be concerned with what counts as happiness through the use of *logos*, and to give oneself the end is what it means to be human, then to be deprived of that work is to be considered inhuman. So it is questionable that one can be a slave "despite being human." If to rule another in every case means to give the other the end, then the ruled are not acting as those who fulfill their humanness do, using *logos* to discern and achieve their end. If there is rule over those who are free and equal, such rule cannot mean giving the ruled their end.

RULING BY TURNS

Aristotle sets up his critique of master rule in order to make the case for political rule. Political rule is accomplished by taking turns ruling (*Pol.* 1279a10). Yet, if citizens take turns ruling, ruling is not deliberation, the activity by which Aristotle defines the citizen unqualifiedly and which shows human beings to be naturally political (1275a22–23; 1275b17–20). While Aristotle defines the citizen as the one who engages in the rule (1275a22, 1275b18–20), if ruling is deliberating and we take turns ruling, then we seem to take turns being human. If ruling is not deliberating, then it is not giving ourselves the end, but it involves some kind of dictation of action and laws to other citizens, which is to say, mastery. Taking turns ruling would still involve concern for the common benefit, but it suggests that a

citizen is not by definition someone who rules, as Aristotle defines the citizen, but only someone who potentially rules. If the citizen only potentially rules, then Aristotle isn't defining the citizen according to her activity, as it seems important for him to do, but by some criteria that makes her potentially a ruler, a position that would show Aristotle to be no different than his modern counterparts in political theory.

But this, I would argue, is not what Aristotle means. While Aristotle has the vocabulary to describe the citizen in terms of a potential or a specific attribute, he insists that activity, not some other criteria or characteristic, makes one a citizen. Admittedly, it does seem that when Aristotle refers to taking turns ruling he skates on the meaning of "rule," using it differently from when he refers to the citizen as one who engages in the rule. In the passages where he writes of taking turns he seems to speak of holding office, while where he considers the definition of the citizen and strategies for preserving regimes, he speaks of involving citizens in the rule by involving them in the deliberative effort of the city that drives it toward its end. A closer consideration of Aristotle's uses of this phrase will clarify the distinction between ruling as office-holding which Aristotle says is characterized by "issuing orders" (IV.15.1299a27) and ruling as deliberative activity.

Aristotle uses these phrases "taking turns" (*en merei*) or "by turns" (*kata merei*) ten times in the *Politics* in direct reference to ruling and being ruled.¹¹ Most of these passages describe communities in which this happens or name common opinion about it (1252a12–17, 1259b4–9, 1279a10). The third passage is most indicative of Aristotle's position. He writes:

That is why reciprocal equality [*to ison to antipeonthos*] preserves city-states, as we said earlier in the *Ethics*, since this must exist even among people who are free and equal. For they cannot all rule [*pantas archein*] at the same time, but each can rule for a year or some other period. As a result they all rule, just as all would be shoemakers and carpenters if they changed places, instead of the same people always being shoemakers and the others always carpenters. But since it is better to have the latter also where a political community is concerned, it is clearly better, where possible, for the same people always to rule. But among those where it is not possible, because all are naturally equal [*to tēn phusin isous einai pantas*], and where it is at the same time just for all to share the benefits or burdens of ruling, it is at least possible to approximate [*mimeitai*] to this if those who are equal take turns [*en merei*] and are similar [*to th' homoious*] when out of office [*exo archēs*]. For they rule [*archousin*] and are ruled [*archontai*] in turn [*kata meros*], just as if they had become other people [*alloi genomenoi*]. It is the same way among those who are ruling; some hold one office, some another. (*Pol.* 1261a29–1261b6)

In the context of his critique of Plato's unity of the *polis*, Aristotle argues in this passage that when the members of the community are equal, all must have

a role in the rule. It might be better if the same people rule, but where the people are equal, it is not just for the same people to always rule; it is just for all who are equal "to share the benefits or burdens of ruling." In this case, those who are equal take turns ruling since they cannot all hold office at the same time. Aristotle's recommendations to legislators for preserving the regime by bringing more and more people into the rule in order to stabilize the regime indicate his commitment to involving those with a claim to equality in the rule of the community. At *Politics* III.17, Aristotle defends the middle constitution because within it more people are capable of ruling and being ruled (1288a10–14), an argument which is continued at *Politics* IV.11 where Aristotle explains that when the community is divided between those capable of ruling and those capable of being ruled what results is master and slave relationships not political life (1295b18–22).

Aristotle rejects the unity that Plato sought by espousing a certain kind of taking turns ruling, arguing that the kind of ruling and taking turns that leads to Plato's notion of unity is not possible when citizens are equal.¹² Taking turns for Plato is only among the philosopher-kings. Ruling is then a determination to the ruled of how they should live. But Aristotle does not conceive of turn-taking in this way because he does not conceive of political rule in this way. Note the position of the equal person when he is not ruling; he is "similar when out of office." Aristotle's phrasing of those who are equal are taking turns (*to en merei tous isous*) is grammatically parallel to those who are similar (*to th' homoious*) so that this passage suggests that those who are taking turns remain similar to one another whether ruling or not.¹³ This reference to ruling as holding an office suggests that Aristotle is not using rule in the sense of the more definitive rule that binds the citizen to the community—deliberative activity. The turn that needs to be taken seems to come because office cannot be shared, but not because deliberative activity cannot be shared among all citizens. The next sentence continues this thought with the treatment of those who rule and are ruled do so as if they become someone else—the ruling and then the ruled, but remaining similar when out of office even as they shift the roles. Even though the rulers become like someone other than they are when ruled, they are still similar when out of office to those who rule.

If rule is reducible to holding office, the citizen would not be similar when out of office. Only if rule involved the activity—deliberating—that makes one a citizen, which Aristotle explains involves one in the rule, can the citizen be understood to be similar when out of office. Ruling by parts, *kata merei*, makes sense of Aristotle's definition of the citizen as ruler only when ruling is deliberating. Since deliberating is the activity of determining the end, the citizen does not give over her activity of determining the end for herself and the community to another just because they are equals. Such a relinquishment would be giving over what makes one free and fully human. Indeed, it would make one a slave.

The ninth passage in which Aristotle references ruling in turns occurs in the context of the defense of political rule that culminates in *Politics* VII.3. Master rule obviously involves no taking turns and is therefore unjust for those who are equal. Aristotle argues that a person should not seek political rule if she does so only because she thinks it is best to have authority over others because such rule is not political (1325a34–35). People think having authority over others is best because it means having “authority over the greatest number of the very noblest actions” (1325a36), and as a result, people do not want to give up the rule. Maintaining the rule without sharing it could only be considered best if we think of “those who use force and commit robbery” as capable of possessing what is best (1325b1).¹⁴ This reference to the tyrant describes one who refuses to share the rule and maintains it only by stealing it from the ruled by force. As an explanation of the impossibility of such a person being noble, Aristotle explains that those who are equal take turns ruling and being ruled (1325b7). In this passage again there is a play between rule in terms of maintaining the office and rule in terms of sharing the opportunity for noble action. The reference to taking turns here distinguishes between the tyrant who hoards the rule acquired by force and the political ruler who is willing to share the rule since that is what political rule is.

In *Politics* VII.14, Aristotle explains that turns must be taken without robbing persons capable of giving themselves their own end the opportunity to do so because “equality consists in giving the same to those who are alike” (1332b25–28). The problem is that those who are ruled consider themselves equal to those who rule and so revolt (1332b29–30). This challenge to the regime occurs when master rule, not political rule, is at work because in such a case, those who are being ruled do not think their best interest is considered. Aristotle responds to these potential revolts by encouraging rulers to include those with claims to rule into the rule. Such inclusion achieves the practical end of better preserving the constitution, but it also achieves the just end of including all those who deliberate over their end, which is to say, those who are already engaged in ruling.¹⁵

Political rule is distinguished not merely by turn-taking (Aristotle dismisses this possibility in *Politics* I.1), nor in the aim of the rule, but in the role the ruled have in ruling. In that same passage in *Politics* VII.14, Aristotle explains that unlike master rule, which the slave does not learn by being ruled, political rule is learned by experiencing it. “For if someone is going to rule well, as the saying goes, he should first have been ruled” (1332b41–1333a2). Aristotle argues that if the turns are taken by those who are younger and those who are older, the younger will learn how to rule as they are being ruled. This turn-taking makes sense if deliberation is something developed by learning from being ruled, but it doesn’t mean that one goes from not engaging in deliberation (being ruled) to engaging (ruling). The difference seems to be in the office of ruling (which is for the old)

and the activity of ruling (which all citizens participate in by deliberating about what is best for the community).

It seems strange to say that one can engage in the activity of ruling by being ruled. Unlike the citizen, the slave does not learn to rule by being ruled by the master because the master dictates the end to the slave who appears incapable of discerning the end. The slave has only the capacity to obey commands not to give them, and the slave cannot develop the capacity to give commands from practicing obeying them. Moreover, the slave is not encouraged to consider the slave’s own ends, but works for the ends of the master. Since political rule is between those who are free and equal, political rule cannot be giving others the end, asking others to obey commands only. Not only does political rule look to the common benefit, but also it functions to educate those ruled in how to rule. We know from Aristotle that we learn through habit. Thus, political rule must involve those who are ruled in the habit of ruling as well. That is what is so distinctive about political rule.

Aristotle’s dual role for the citizen as ruler and ruled is also evident in his treatment of the difference between the virtue of the good citizen and the good person. Aristotle argues that the virtue of these coincides in the good ruler (*ton archonta ton spoudaion*) who has practical wisdom (*phronimon*), which it is not necessary for the citizen (*politēn*) to have (1277a14–16). He seems to distinguish the citizen from the ruler even though he has just defined the citizen as the one who engages in the rule several chapters earlier. Aristotle seems once more to be slipping on the meaning of rule, especially since he returns to this dual capacity of the citizen, to rule and be ruled, in the beginning of the next paragraph. Aristotle acknowledges that “being able to do both [rule and be ruled] well is held to be the virtue of a citizen” (1277a26). Some people think that the ruler and ruled should learn different things, but others think that a citizen shares in the virtues of both. Aristotle argues that the first position is held by those who equate all rule with master rule. When a master rules a slave, the slave does not learn how to become a master by being so ruled. In the case of master rule, the master expressly does not want to know how to be ruled since acting in that way would make the master servile (1277b3–6). By contrast, in political rule, a ruler learns how to rule by being ruled (1277b8–9). Aristotle takes the point further to say that “one cannot rule well without having been ruled” (1277b12–13). This reciprocity between ruling and being ruled such that being ruled leads the ruled to knowing how to rule suggests that there is in being ruled a practice or activity that involves the ruled in ruling. Aristotle concludes:

And whereas the virtues of these are different, a good citizen must have the knowledge and ability both to be ruled and to rule, and this is the virtue of a citizen, to know the rule of free people from both sides. (1277b13–16)

This concluding claim suggests that the virtue of the good person and the good citizen coincides in the citizen when the citizen is ruling. As we have seen, even

when the citizen is being ruled in the cycle of taking turns, the citizen still is in some sense at working in ruling. Making the case difficult for us, Aristotle seems to muddle the point at the end of this chapter when he says that practical wisdom is not the virtue of one who is ruled, rather true opinion is, comparing the ruled to the maker of flutes and the rulers to the flute players whose activity determines what the maker must do in the making of the flute (1277b25–29). The confusion brought about by this final point may actually serve to confirm my point.

Aristotle seems to argue that the citizen, seen from the perspective of the ruled, does not need practical wisdom—only true opinion—to be a good citizen. Since we know for Aristotle that we develop virtue in the activity, if being ruled educates a person to become a ruler, as Aristotle says it does in political rule, being ruled must involve the activity of ruling which requires practical wisdom. Jonathan Lear has made this similar connection between the citizen and practical wisdom when he claims that the citizens are those who determine how to appropriately respond to the concerns of the human condition.¹⁶ Lear explains that there is nothing outside of reason that determines the best way to fulfill being human, which amounts to having reason. We use reason that is within us to determine how best to be those kinds of beings who use reason. This is not a special talent, but the activity that we learn how to do by doing it and by seeing it done in ways that affect us. Of course, the “seeing it done” also requires using reason to understand and learn from another’s engagement in practical reasoning. Being a good citizen is putting to work the capacities that make us human in community with others.

We can understand this passage about the ruled’s relation to practical wisdom accordingly. Practical wisdom would not be needed for the ruled if the citizen were only ever to occupy the position of the ruled. For Aristotle, if the citizen were only ruled, it would be because the citizen had not been ruled long enough to develop the virtue that makes the citizen also a ruler. Citizens do not occupy essential roles (either ruled or ruler), but the influence of political rule on the politically ruled indicates that the rulers bring the ruled into the activity of ruling. As ruled, the citizen has true opinion. True opinion is not a permanent situation of citizens, but what develops into practical wisdom in the practice of ruling.

CONCLUSION

When political rule is defined as deliberation, which is the activity of giving ourselves the end, political rule stands in stark contrast to master rule, which involves giving another her end. In my continued effort to question whether the existence of any *arkhē* annihilates the equality and freedom that characterize political life, I have argued here that Aristotle’s account of ruling in turns hinges on understanding what Aristotle means by political rule since only political rule and not master rule involves both the rulers and the ruled in the project of ruling.

NOTES

An expanded version of this argument can be found in the fifth chapter of my forthcoming book, *Aristotle on the Nature of Community*, due out from Cambridge University Press in 2013. I would like to thank Ryan Drake for his helpful commentary on an earlier version of this paper presented at the Ancient Philosophy Society meeting in San Francisco in 2012.

1. Garnsey writes in *Ideas of Slavery*, “Natural slavery as presented by Aristotle is a battered shipwreck of theory” (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 107; Malcolm Schofield writes, “Aristotle’s views on slavery are an embarrassment to those who otherwise hold his philosophy in high regard. To the modern mind they are morally repugnant,” in “Ideology and Philosophy in Aristotle’s Theory of Slavery,” in *Saving the City: Philosopher-Kings and Other Classical Paradigms* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 115–40, 115; cf. Richard Kraut, *Aristotle: Political Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 277. For the view that Aristotle was not a bad philosopher, but a misled one, see G. E. R. Lloyd, *Aristotle: The Growth and Structure of His Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 264; a culturally-influenced one, see P. A. Brunt, “Aristotle and Slavery,” in *Studies in Greek History and Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 343–88, 345–6; a conservative one, see Ellen Meiksins Wood and Neal Wood, *Class Ideology and Ancient Political Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), 209–57. Cf. Bernard A. O. Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 103–29. Paul Millett takes the contradictions in Aristotle to be evidence of his concern with the practicalities of slavery as understood by fourth-century Athenians in “Aristotle and Slavery in Athens,” *Greece & Rome* 54 (2007): 178–209, 196. However, even Millett thinks Aristotle “tries to explain away” the contradictions to his account that follow from slaves displaying reason, being friends of their masters and surviving freedom from slavery (199).
2. Jill Frank argues that Aristotle makes the case that no slave could be judged by his body or his soul, but by activity, activity that must look more like a citizen’s than a slave’s for the slave to be a good slave, in *Democracy of Distinction: Aristotle and the Work of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 26–30; Mary P. Nichols argues that Aristotle’s treatment of slavery and activity indicates that a slave can be habituated to be otherwise than a slave and so is not essentially a slave in *Citizens and Statesmen: A Study of Aristotle’s Politics* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1992), 23. These readings that challenge the existence of persons who qualify for natural slavery in light of Aristotle’s account of it dates back to Leibniz, “Meditation on the Common Concept of Justice” and “On Natural Law,” in *Political Writings*, 62–4, 78. Cited by A. S. McGrade, “Aristotle’s Place in the History of Natural Rights,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 49 (1996): 803–29, 829. Arlene Saxonhouse has shown that careful reading of Aristotle’s treatment of women suggests that he is mocking those who would think that they alone should rule when others are capable, using references familiar to Greek audiences from Herodotus and Sophocles. In context, the quote from Sophocles’s *Ajax*, “Silence is a woman’s crowning glory,” functions to mock the irrationality of Ajax, not the inability of Tecmessa, his mistress, to deliberate. Saxonhouse, “Aristotle: Defective Males, Hierarchy, and the Limits of Politics,” *Women in the History of Political Thought* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1985), 63–91.

3. Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005), 24.
4. Michael Naas, "Taking Turns in Democracy: Aristotle's Argument for 'Regime Change,'" *Proceedings of the 9th Annual Lewis University Philosophy Conference: Aristotle: The Intersection of Ethics and Politics*, February 19, 2004, p. 13.
5. *Ibid.*, 23.
6. Evidence for the force of this claim can be found in the shift that the introduction of Aristotle's *Politics* to the west accomplished in medieval conceptions of political life. Before the *Politics* was available, the generally accepted Latin view of political rule was that of a master over servants (e.g., Augustine in the *City of God*). But after the *Politics* became widely read, theories of political rule emphasized reason and freedom (e.g., Thomas Aquinas, *In quattuor libros Sententiarum* II, d.44, q.1, a.3). A.S. McGrade marks this transition in "Aristotle's Place in the History of Natural Rights" *The Review of Metaphysics* 49 (1996): 803–29, 809–10.
7. This position stands in contrast not only to Aristotle's peers but also to the view espoused by medieval readers of Aristotle's *Politics*, such as John of Paris, who held that rule was the genus and community the differentia that defined political rule in *On Royal and Papal Power*, chap. 1. Such a view makes rule distinguished only by that which is ruled which John of Paris also recognizes is distinct from other rule because the thing ruled is self-sufficient. Yet though he makes this claim with reference to Aristotle, he fails to see Aristotle's critique of such a view.
8. Mogens Herman Hansen agrees that being free was understood in contrast to being a slave in Plato and Aristotle in "Democratic Freedom and the Concept of Freedom in Plato and Aristotle," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 50 (2010): 1–27, 2, 11. Hansen refers to Demosthenes, who recognizes the association of freedom against slavery as freedom from tyranny when Demosthenes contrasts democratic citizens who wish to be free with traitors who want to rule over their fellow citizens as tyrants. Such traitors must sacrifice the autonomy of the *polis* to an outside power in order for they themselves to become tyrants (4). Hansen argues that Aristotle does not develop an account of freedom as a positive political value, but my argument here that his argument of slavery is an argument against tyranny and in support of political rule suggests otherwise.
9. Consider that belonging wholly to another appears practically impossible for any human being in Aristotle's account of the human. This is one argument to support the view that Aristotle does not think any person would meet the criteria of the natural slave.
10. See Moira Walsh, "Aristotle's Conception of Freedom," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 35 (1997): 495–507.
11. In one passage he refers to one of the ways that electors are selected (by turns) (1318b24), and in another to the way offices can be held (continuously or in turn) in various regimes (1291a38), but neither are about the practice of taking turns ruling and being ruled.
12. At *Republic* 540b, Plato describes ruling in turn as possible because each philosopher contemplates the same thing and so will rule according to the same order. Though

- Naas equates their positions, it is Plato, not Aristotle, who recommends the kind of rule that Naas describes, "It is not that sovereignty is divided or parceled out, but that the artifice of the 'by turns' allows each to rule for the whole, as the whole, for a time, that is, for each to rule in turn absolutely." Naas, "Taking Turns in Democracy," 14, 16.
13. This sentence in the Greek editions is particularly difficult. Newman even marks off this sentence with obelisks to indicate its dubious sense (*Politics of Aristotle* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887]). Herbert Richards changes to *th' homoious* to *anomoious*, translating this passage as "to take turns to govern is an imitation of original inequality and class-distinction." But note that Richards, in changing the Greek, is acknowledging that the Greek as Ross renders it and as the manuscript tradition overwhelmingly finds it suggests that there is a fundamental similarity that remains at work when out of office, not a difference. See Richards, "The Politics," in *Aristotelica* (London: Grant Richards, 1915), 69–95. I am grateful to Matthew Farmer for his assistance in navigating the manuscripts on this matter.
 14. This tendency to hold the rule when it should be shared is the way, according to Saxonhouse, that Aristotle describes the relationship between men and women with reference to Amasis's footbath (*Politics* I.13). This image of the footbath become idol shows that it is only the position that the footbath has been put into now as a god that makes it superior, not anything essential to it. So the male is only superior because he is in the position of rule; he is not inherently superior, and so then ruling. Aristotle has referred to the relation of man to woman as political (*Pol.* 1259b1), which he then tells us leads to an alternation of ruler and ruled (*Pol.* 1259b4–5). The man, however, goes wrong in taking his position of ruler to be necessary, hoarding the rule, and refusing to share, as the analogy to Amasis's footbath suggests. Saxonhouse, "Aristotle," 72. That position of rule, Nichols argues, like the god's relation to the footbath from which it was made, is not rooted in its nature. Nichols, *Citizens and Statesmen*, 30.
 15. Nichols, *Citizens and Statesmen*, 101.
 16. Jonathan Lear, *Open-Minded* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 169.