

# “In Countries, Discord”



With Aristotle's *Ethics* and Shakespeare's *Lear*

**What is most necessary for forming a good  
and just society?**

# Aristotle's Elites

“Now, as for what comes from nature, it is clear that it is not present due to us: it is present through certain divine causes for those who are truly fortunate.”

“[A king] would look to what is beneficial, then, not for himself, but for the ruled.”

# *Homonoia* in Politics

“...cities are like-minded whenever people are of the same judgment concerning what is advantageous, choose the same things, and do what has been resolved in common.”

“It results, then, that they fall into civil faction, compelling one another by force and not wishing to do what is just themselves.”

## *Homonoia and Philia*

“But those who wish for the good things for their friends, for their friends’ sake, are friends most of all, since they are disposed in this way in themselves, and not incidentally.”

“For even if this is the same thing for an individual and a city, to secure and preserve the good of the city appears to be something greater and more complete: the good of the individual by himself is certainly desirable enough, but that of a nation and of cities is nobler and more divine.”

## The Lack Thereof in *King Lear*

“Then must we look from his age to receive not alone the imperfections of long-engrafted condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them... We must do something, and i’ th’ heat.”

“love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked ‘twixt son and father.”

# Aristotle's Doubts

“Yet friendships of this sort are likely to be rare, since people of this sort are few.”

“For those in authority seek out neither those who are pleasant and have virtue, nor those who are useful with a view to noble things. Rather, they seek out the witty, when they aim at pleasure, and the clever to do their bidding.”

“The most excellent thing, then, is for the public care to be correct.. it is clear that the public care comes into being through laws, and decent care through serious laws.”

# Shakespeare's Possible Response

## Edmund

“Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed /  
And my invention thrive, Edmund the  
base / Shall top th' legitimate. I grow, I  
prosper.”

“I pant for life. Some good I mean to do /  
Despite of mind own nature.”

## Lear

“Which of you shall we say doth love us  
most, / That we our largest bounty may  
extend / Where nature doth with merit  
challenge.”

## Gloucester

“Unnatural, detested, brutish villain!”

# The Ambiguous Answer

Aristotle

“With this as our beginning, then, let us speak.”

Shakespeare

“The oldest hath borne most; we that are young / shall never see so much nor live so long.”

# Bibliography

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