

Ownership, property and belonging: Some lessons to learn from thinkers of antiquity about economics and success.

Catherine Rowett, 16th October 2023

Handout with Greek

1	Plato <i>Republic</i> I, 346a6-c12	
346a6	<p>Ούκοῦν καὶ ὠφελίαν ἐκάστη τούτων ἰδίαν τινὰ ἡμῖν παρέχεται ἀλλ' οὐ κοινήν, οἷον ἰατρικὴ μὲν ὑγίειαν, κυβερνητικὴ δὲ σωτηρίαν ἐν τῷ πλεῖν, καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι οὕτω;</p> <p>Πάνυ γε.</p>	<p>"Doesn't each of these things contribute some distinct advantage to us (not the same in all cases). E.g. medicine contributes health, navigation safe sailing, and so on."</p> <p>"Indeed."</p>
346b1	<p>Ούκοῦν καὶ μισθωτικὴ μισθόν; αὕτη γὰρ αὐτῆς ἢ δύναμις· ἢ τὴν ἰατρικὴν σὺ καὶ τὴν κυβερνητικὴν τὴν αὐτὴν καλεῖς; ἢ ἑάνπερ βούλη ἀκριβῶς διορίζειν, ὥσπερ ὑπέθου, οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον, ἔάν τις κυβερνῶν ὑγιῆς γίγνηται διὰ τὸ συμφέρον αὐτῷ πλεῖν ἐν τῇ θαλάττῃ, ἔνεκα τούτου καλεῖς μᾶλλον αὐτὴν ἰατρικήν;</p> <p>Οὐ δῆτα, ἔφη.</p> <p>Οὐδέ γ', οἶμαι, τὴν μισθωτικὴν, ἔάν ὑγιαίνῃ τις μισθαρνῶν.</p> <p>Οὐ δῆτα.</p> <p>Τί δέ; τὴν ἰατρικὴν μισθαρνητικὴν, ἔάν ἰώμενός τις μισθαρνή;</p>	<p>"And also wage earning contributes wages? That's its strength. Or would you call medicine and navigation the same? Or, given that you want to define things precisely, as you insisted, you wouldn't be more inclined to call navigation medicine just because someone gained health as a result of navigating, being benefited by sailing on the sea?"</p> <p>"No indeed," he said.</p> <p>"Nor I think would you call wage earning medicine, if one got healthy from wage earning."</p> <p>"No indeed."</p> <p>"So would you call medicine wage earning, whenever someone earns a wage while practising medicine?"</p>
346c1	Οὐκ ἔφη.	"No," he said

2	Plato <i>Republic</i> 346e3-347b5	
346e3	<p>Ούκοῦν, ὦ Θρασύμαχε, τοῦτο ἤδη δῆλον, ὅτι οὐδεμία τέχνη οὐδὲ ἀρχὴ τὸ αὐτῇ ὠφέλιμον παρασκευάζει, ἀλλ', ὅπερ πάσαι ἐλέγομεν, τὸ τῷ ἀρχομένῳ καὶ παρασκευάζει καὶ ἐπιτάττει, τὸ ἐκείνου συμφέρον ἡττονος ὄντος σκοποῦσα, ἀλλ' οὐ τὸ τοῦ κρείττονος. διὰ δὴ ταῦτα ἔγωγε, ὦ φίλε Θρασύμαχε, καὶ ἄρτι ἔλεγον μηδένα ἐθέλειν ἐκόντα ἄρχειν καὶ τὰ ἀλλότρια κακὰ μεταχειρίζεσθαι ἀνορθοῦντα,</p>	<p>"Well then, Thrasymachus, this is already clear, that no craft or office brings advantage to itself, but as we said way back when, it provides for prescribes for its subjects, looking out for the advantage of the weaker, not the stronger. It's for this reason, Thrasymachus, that I long ago said that no one seeks office by choice and tries to sort out other people's problems"</p>
347.a.1	<p>ἀλλὰ μισθὸν αἰτεῖν, ὅτι ὁ μέλλων καλῶς τῇ τέχνῃ πράξειν οὐδέποτε αὐτῷ τὸ βέλτιστον πράττει οὐδ' ἐπιτάττει κατὰ τὴν τέχνην ἐπιτάττων, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀρχομένῳ ὧν δὴ ἔνεκα, ὡς ἔοικε, μισθὸν δεῖν ὑπάρχειν τοῖς μέλλουσιν ἐθελήσειν ἄρχειν, ἢ ἀργύριον ἢ τιμὴν, ἢ ζημίαν ἔάν μὴ ἄρχει.</p>	<p>but they ask for a wage, because anyone who is going to carry out their craft well will never do the best for themselves, nor, when they are prescribing in accordance with their craft, will they be prescribing things for themselves, but always for the subject. For this reason we have to provide a wage for those who are going to want to rule,</p>

	<p>Πῶς τοῦτο λέγεις, ὦ Σώκρατες; ἔφη ὁ Γλαύκων· τοὺς μὲν γὰρ δύο μισθοὺς γινώσκω, τὴν δὲ ζημίαν ἤντινα λέγεις καὶ ὡς ἐν μισθοῦ μέρει εἶρηκας, οὐ συνῆκα.</p> <p>Τὸν τῶν βελτίστων ἄρα μισθόν, ἔφην, οὐ συνιῆς, δι' ὃν</p>	<p>whether that is money or honour, or a punishment should they not take up office.”</p> <p>“What’s that you’re saying, Socrates?” Said Glaucon; “I understand the first two kinds of wage, but what’s this punishment you’re talking about, and putting in the place of a wage? I don’t follow that.”</p> <p>“It’s the reward of the best,” I said. “Don’t you understand why</p>
347.b.1	<p>ἄρχουσιν οἱ ἐπιεικέστατοι, ὅταν ἐθέλωσιν ἄρχειν. ἢ οὐκ οἴσθα ὅτι τὸ φιλότιμόν τε καὶ φιλάργυρον εἶναι ὄνειδος λέγεται τε καὶ ἔστιν;</p> <p>Ἔγωγε, ἔφη.</p>	<p>the most suitable people take up office, whenever they choose to take office? Or don’t you realise that being fond of honour or money is despised, and rightly so?”</p> <p>“I do,” he said.</p>

3	Plato Republic 347b6-d2.	
347b6	<p>Διὰ ταῦτα τοῖνυν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, οὔτε χρημάτων ἕνεκα ἐθέλουσιν ἄρχειν οἱ ἀγαθοὶ οὔτε τιμῆς· οὔτε γὰρ φανερώς πραττόμενοι τῆς ἀρχῆς ἕνεκα μισθὸν μισθωτοὶ βούλονται κεικῆσθαι, οὔτε λάθρα αὐτοὶ ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς λαμβάνοντες κλέπται. οὐδ' αὖ τιμῆς ἕνεκα· οὐ γὰρ εἰσὶ φιλότιμοι. δεῖ δὴ</p>	<p>“It’s for this reason,” I said, “that good people don’t want to take up office for the sake of money or honour. And clearly they don’t want to be called mercenary for governing in return for monetary rewards, nor do they want to steal any monetary gains secretly from their privileged position. Nor will they rule for the sake of honour, for they are not honour-seekers.</p>
347.c.1	<p>αὐτοῖς ἀνάγκην προσεῖναι καὶ ζημίαν, εἰ μέλλουσιν ἐθέλουν ἄρχειν – ὅθεν κινδυνεύει τὸ ἐκόντα ἐπὶ τὸ ἄρχειν ἰέναι ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀνάγκην περιμένειν αἰσχροὺν νενομίσθαι – τῆς δὲ ζημίας μεγίστη τὸ ὑπὸ πονηροτέρου ἄρχεσθαι, ἐὰν μὴ αὐτὸς ἐθέλῃ ἄρχειν· ἦν δεισαντές μοι φαίνονται ἄρχειν, ὅταν ἄρχωσιν, οἱ ἐπιεικεῖς, καὶ τότε ἔρχονται ἐπὶ τὸ ἄρχειν οὐχ ὡς ἐπ' ἀγαθόν τι ἰόντες οὐδ' ὡς εὐπαθήσοντες ἐν αὐτῷ, ἀλλ'</p>	<p>So it has to be that there is some punishment for them. That’s the only way they will willingly take office. That’s the origin of the shame that is thought to attend running for office of your own will without waiting till it is obligatory. But the greatest punishment is to be governed by someone worse, if one is unwilling to take office. That, I reckon, is what makes the most suitable people take up office, when they do. Not as if they are heading for something good, or expecting a good experience</p>
347.d.1	<p>ὡς ἐπ' ἀναγκαῖον καὶ οὐκ ἔχοντες ἑαυτῶν βελτίσιον ἐπιτρέψαι οὐδὲ ὁμοίους.</p>	<p>but for something obligatory, and because they have no others like themselves or better to whom they can hand it over.”</p>

4	Plato Republic 416d4-417a1	
416d4	<p>πρῶτον μὲν οὐσίαν κεκτημένον μηδεμίαν μηδένα ἰδίαν, ἂν μὴ πᾶσα ἀνάγκη· ἔπειτα οἴκησιν καὶ ταμιεῖον μηδενὶ εἶναι μηδὲν τοιοῦτον, εἰς δ' οὐ πᾶς ὁ βουλόμενος εἴσεισι· τὰ δ' ἐπιτήδεια, ὅσων δέονται ἄνδρες ἀθληταὶ πολέμου σώφρονές τε καὶ</p>	<p>“First, private property: none of them should own anything of their own, except what is unavoidable. Second, no house or storeroom or anything like that should be provided for any of them that isn’t a place that anyone can go into at will. Third, the rations, such as would be needed by sober and dedicated men trained for war;</p>
416.e.1	<p>ἀνδρεῖοι, ταξαμένους παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων πολιτῶν δέχεσθαι μισθὸν τῆς φυλακῆς τοσοῦτον ὅσον μήτε περιεῖναι αὐτοῖς εἰς</p>	<p>these—sufficient for a year, with no surplus or shortfall— should be provided out of a tax levy on the rest of the citizens, in return for the protection that the</p>

	<p>τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν μῆτε ἐνδεῖν· φοιτῶντας δὲ εἰς συσσίτια ὡσπερ ἔστρατοπεδευμένους κοινῇ ζῆν·</p> <p>χρυσίον δὲ καὶ ἀργύριον εἰπεῖν αὐτοῖς ὅτι θεῖον παρὰ θεῶν αἰεὶ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἔχουσι καὶ οὐδὲν προσδέονται τοῦ ἀνθρωπείου, οὐδὲ ὅσα τὴν ἐκείνου κτήσιν τῇ τοῦ θνητοῦ χρυσοῦ κτήσει συμμειγνύοντας μιαίνειν, διότι πολλὰ καὶ ἀνόσια περὶ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν νόμισμα γέγονεν,</p>	<p>Guardians provide; they'll live a communal life like soldiers, eating together in the refectory.</p> <p>And we'll advise them that they have from the gods all the divine gold and silver that they need, permanently in their own souls, and they have no additional need of the human kind—indeed it is offensive for them to defile the possession of that gold with an admixture of possession of the mortal kind, because many unholy things result from the currency of the hoi polloi,</p>
417a1	τὸ παρ' ἐκείνοις δὲ ἀκήρατον·	but the gold that they do have is not debased.”

5	Plato Republic 417a6-b6	
417a6	ὁπότε δ' αὐτοὶ γῆν τε ἰδίαν καὶ οἰκίας καὶ νομίματα κτήσονται, οἰκονόμοι μὲν καὶ γεωργοὶ ἀντὶ φυλάκων ἔσονται,	“if the Guardians acquire private land, houses and money, they'll become managers and farmers instead of guardians.
417.b.1	δεσπότηαι δ' ἐχθροὶ ἀντὶ συμμάχων τῶν ἄλλων πολιτῶν γενήσονται, μισοῦντες δὲ δὴ καὶ μισοῦμενοι καὶ ἐπιβουλεύοντες καὶ ἐπιβουλεύομενοι διάξουσι πάντα τὸν βίον, πολὺ πλείω καὶ μᾶλλον δεδιότες τοὺς ἔνδον ἢ τοὺς ἔξωθεν πολεμίους, θέοντες ἤδη τότε ἐγγύτατα ὀλέθρου αὐτοὶ τε καὶ ἡ ἄλλη πόλις.	and hostile dictators instead of allies of the people. They'll live their whole life hating and being hated, plotting and targeted by plotters, far more afraid of the enemies at home than of the enemies from outside, and running themselves and the whole city to the verge of ruin immediately.”

6	Plato Republic 419a1-420e3	
419.a.1	Καὶ ὁ Ἀδείμαντος ὑπολαβὼν, Τί οὖν, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκратες, ἀπολογήσῃ, ἐάν τις σε φῆ μὴ πάνυ τι εὐδαίμονας ποιεῖν τούτους τοὺς ἀνδρας, καὶ ταῦτα δι' ἑαυτοῦς, ὧν ἔστι μὲν ἡ πόλις τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, οἱ δὲ μηδὲν ἀπολαύουσιν ἀγαθὸν τῆς πόλεως, οἷον ἄλλοι ἀγρούς τε κεκτημένοι καὶ οἰκίας οἰκοδομοῦμενοι καλὰς καὶ μεγάλας, καὶ ταύταις πρέπουσαν κατασκευὴν κτῶμενοι, καὶ θυσίας θεοῖς ἰδίας θύοντες, καὶ ξενοδοκοῦντες, καὶ δὴ καὶ ἅ νυνδὴ σὺ ἔλεγες, χρυσὸν τε καὶ ἄργυρον κεκτημένοι καὶ πάντα ὅσα νομίζεται τοῖς μέλλουσιν μακαρίους εἶναι; ἀλλ' ἀτεχνῶς, φαίη ἄν, ὡσπερ ἐπίκουροι μισθωτοὶ ἐν	Responding to this, Adeimantus said “What defence will you have if someone says you're not making these men very happy? It's really their city! But they get to reap nothing good from it, unlike the others who own farms and build big beautiful houses, and buy fancy furniture for them, and offer their own privately funded sacrifices to the gods, and welcome guests into their homes, and indeed all the things you just said, having loads of gold and silver possessions and all the things that are considered to be what makes you a lucky person. Not to put too fine a point on it, one might say,
420.a.1	τῇ πόλει φαίνονται καθῆσθαι οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ φρουροῦντες. Ναί, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, καὶ ταῦτά γε ἐπισίτιοι καὶ οὐδὲ μισθὸν πρὸς τοῖς σιτίοις λαμβάνοντες ὡσπερ οἱ ἄλλοι, ὥστε οὐδ' ἂν ἀποδημῆσαι βούλωνται ἰδίᾳ, ἐξέσται αὐτοῖς, οὐδ' ἑταίραις διδόναι, οὐδ' ἀναλίσκειν ἂν ποι βούλωνται ἄλλοσε, οἷα δὴ οἱ εὐδαίμονες δοκοῦντες εἶναι ἀναλίσκουσι. ταῦτα καὶ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα συχνὰ τῆς κατηγορίας ἀπολείπεις.	they're positioned in the city like paid security guards, rather than overseers.” “Yes,” I said, “and in addition, they're paid only in rations, not getting any wages on top like the others do, so they can't go on a private trip if they want to, nor give money to courtesans, nor spend anything on whatever else they wish, such as people who seem to be happy spend their money. You've left these and a load else out of your accusation.”

	Ἄλλ', ἢ δ' ὅς, ἔστω καὶ ταῦτα κατηγορημένα.	"Let these accusations be added too," he said.
420.b.1	Τί οὖν δὴ ἀπολογησόμεθα, φῆς; Ναί. Τὸν αὐτὸν οἶμον, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, πορευόμενοι εὐρήσομεν, ὡς ἐγῶμαι, ἃ λεκτέα. ἐροῦμεν γὰρ ὅτι θαυμαστὸν μὲν ἂν οὐδὲν εἴη εἰ καὶ οὗτοι οὕτως εὐδαιμονέστατοί εἰσιν, οὐ μὴν πρὸς τοῦτο βλέποντες τὴν πόλιν οἰκίζομεν, ὅπως ἔν τι ἡμῖν ἔθνος ἔσται διαφερόντως εὐδαιμον, ἀλλ' ὅπως ὅτι μάλιστα ὅλη ἡ πόλις. ὡθήθημεν γὰρ ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῃ μάλιστα ἂν εὐρεῖν δικαιοσύνην καὶ αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ κάκιστα οἰκουμένην ἀδικίαν,	"How shall we defend ourselves, you say?" "Yes." "I think," said I, "we'll find what should be said by going the same route: we'll say that it wouldn't be surprising if these people were also as happy as can be under these arrangements. But we're not founding the city with that in mind—so that one clan especially happy, but rather so that the whole city is, to the highest degree. For it's in that kind of set up, above all, that we thought we'd find justice, and by contrast injustice in the one most badly managed.
420.c.1	κατιδόντες δὲ κρίναι ἂν ὃ πάλαι ζητοῦμεν. νῦν μὲν οὖν, ὡς οἴομεθα, τὴν εὐδαίμονα πλάττομεν οὐκ ἀπολαβόντες ὀλίγους ἐν αὐτῇ τοιούτους τινὰς τιθέντες, ἀλλ' ὅλην αὐτίκα δὲ τὴν ἐναντίαν σκεψόμεθα.	And by surveying these, we'd be able to discern what we were looking for originally. At the moment, then, as we understand it, we are weaving the happy city, not setting apart some few people like that, but the whole city. Shortly we'll have a look at the opposite situation.
420.c.5	ὥσπερ οὖν ἂν εἰ ἡμᾶς ἀνδριάντα γράφοντας προσελθὼν τις ἔψεγε λέγων ὅτι οὐ τοῖς καλλίστοις τοῦ ζώου τὰ κάλλιστα φάρμακα προστίθεμεν – οἱ γὰρ ὀφθαλμοὶ κάλλιστον ὄν οὐκ ὀστρεῖω ἐναληπιμμένοι εἶεν ἀλλὰ μέλανι – μετρίως ἂν ἐδοκοῦμεν	It's as if we were painting a statue, and someone came up and complained saying that we hadn't put the finest colours on the finest parts of the likeness, the eyes being the finest, and we not having done them with purple but rather with black. It'd be reasonable for us
420.d.1	πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπολογεῖσθαι λέγοντες: "ὦ θαυμάσιε, μὴ οἶου δεῖν ἡμᾶς οὕτω καλοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς γράφειν, ὥστε μηδὲ ὀφθαλμοὺς φαίνεσθαι, μηδ' αὐτὰ τᾶλλα μέρη, ἀλλ' ἄθρει εἰ τὰ προσήκοντα ἐκάστοις ἀποδιδόντες τὸ ὅλον καλὸν ποιῶμεν" καὶ δὴ καὶ νῦν μὴ ἀνάγκαζε ἡμᾶς τοιαύτην εὐδαιμονίαν τοῖς φύλαξι προσάπτειν, ἢ ἐκείνους πᾶν μᾶλλον	to respond in defence of our work by saying "Thanks mate, but don't imagine that we should paint the eyes in such a way that they don't look like eyes, nor any of the other parts. Consider rather whether by painting each part in the appropriate colours, we've made the whole beautiful." So now, don't force us to give a kind of happiness to the guardians that would make them
420.e.1	ἀπεργάσεται ἡ φύλακας.	anything but guardians."

7	Plato Republic 519d1-	
519d1	...καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἀναβάντες ἰκανῶς ἴδωσι, μὴ ἐπιτρέπειν αὐτοῖς ὃ νῦν ἐπιτρέπεται. Τὸ ποῖον δὴ; Τὸ αὐτοῦ, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, καταμένειν καὶ μὴ ἐθέλειν πάλιν καταβαίνειν παρ' ἐκείνους τοὺς δεσμώτας μηδὲ μετέχειν τῶν παρ' ἐκείνοις πόνων τε καὶ τιμῶν, εἴτε φαυλότεραι εἴτε σπουδαιότερα. Ἔπειτ', ἔφη, ἀδικήσομεν αὐτούς, καὶ ποιήσομεν χεῖρον ζῆν, δυνατὸν αὐτοῖς ὄν ἄμεινον;	"...and once they've gone up, and seen enough, we mustn't let them do what they're now allowed to do." "What's that?" "Staying up there and not wanting to go back down to those prisoners, or take part in their toils and honours, no matter how bad or good they are." "Then we'll be doing them an injustice," he said. "We'll be making them live a worse life when they could have had a better one."
519.e.1	Ἐπελάθου, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, πάλιν, ὦ φίλε, ὅτι νόμῳ οὐ τοῦτο μέλει, ὅπως ἔν τι γένος ἐν πόλει	"My friend," I said, "you've forgotten that this is not the concern of our tradition, that one class in the

	διαφερόντως εὖ πράξει, ἀλλ' ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ πόλει τοῦτο μηχανᾶται ἐγγενέσθαι, συναρμόττων τοὺς πολίτας πειθοῖ τε καὶ ἀνάγκῃ, ποιῶν μεταδιδόναι	city should uniquely flourish, but to bring about flourishing in the whole city, uniting the citizens by persuasion and obligation, making them return the
520.a.1	ἀλλήλοις τῆς ὠφελίας ἦν ἂν ἕκαστοι τὸ κοινὸν δυνατοὶ ὧσιν ὠφελεῖν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐμποιῶν τοιούτους ἄνδρας ἐν τῇ πόλει, οὐχ ἵνα ἀφιῆ τρέπεσθαι ὅπῃ ἕκαστος βούλεται, ἀλλ' ἵνα καταχρῆται αὐτὸς αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τὸν σύνδεσμον τῆς πόλεως.	benefit that each can give to the common good. This tradition puts people like this into the city not so that each can go and wander off where they please, but so that it can use them to keep the city bound together."
520.a.5	Ἀληθῆ, ἔφη· ἐπελαθόμεν γάρ.	"True," he said. "We'd forgotten that."

8	Plato <i>Republic</i> 462a9-c8	
462a9	"Ἐχομεν οὖν τι μείζον κακὸν πόλει ἢ ἐκεῖνο ὃ ἂν αὐτὴν διασπᾷ καὶ ποιῆ	"Can we find any worse evil for a city than that which splits the city and makes it
462.b.1	πολλὰς ἀντὶ μιᾶς; ἢ μείζον ἀγαθὸν τοῦ ὃ ἂν συνδῆ τε καὶ ποιῆ μίαν; Οὐκ ἔχομεν. Οὐκοῦν ἢ μὲν ἡδονῆς τε καὶ λύπης κοινωνία συνδεῖ, ὅταν ὅτι μάλιστα πάντες οἱ πολῖται τῶν αὐτῶν γιγνομένων τε καὶ ἀπολλυμένων παραπλησίως χαίρωσι καὶ λυπῶνται; Παντάπασι μὲν οὖν, ἔφη. Ἦ δέ γε τῶν τοιούτων ἰδίωσις διαλύει, ὅταν οἱ μὲν περιχαρεῖς, οἱ δὲ περιχαρεῖς γίνωνται ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς παθήμασι	many instead of one? Or any greater good than that which binds it together and makes it one?" "We can't." "Doesn't the common sharing of pleasure and pain bind it together, whenever pretty well all of the citizens rejoice or grieve equally when the same things occur or are lost?" "Definitely," he said. "But the privatisation of these kinds of things loosens the bonds, when some are in despair and others are overjoyed in response to things that happen
462.c.1	τῆς πόλεως τε καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει; Τί δ' οὐ; Ἄρ' οὖν ἐκ τοῦδε τὸ τοιόνδε γίγνεται, ὅταν μὴ ἅμα φθέγγωνται ἐν τῇ πόλει τὰ τοιάδε ῥήματα, τὸ τε ἐμόν καὶ τὸ οὐκ ἐμόν; καὶ περὶ τοῦ ἄλλοτρίου κατὰ ταῦτά; Κομιδῆ μὲν οὖν. Ἐν ἧτινι δὴ πόλει πλεῖστοι ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ ταῦτά τοῦτο λέγουσι τὸ ἐμόν καὶ τὸ οὐκ ἐμόν, αὕτη ἄριστα διοικεῖται; Πολύ γε.	to the city or those in the city." "Sure." "And this kind of thing happens, don't you think, whenever words like this are not pronounced in unison in the city: the word 'mine' and 'not mine'? And the same for 'someone else's'." "Indeed so." "In any city where the majority say 'mine' about the same thing in the same circumstances, and 'not mine', this city is the best run city." "By far."

9	Aristotle <i>Politics</i> II, 1262b36	
1262b36	Ἐχόμενον δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ἐπισκέψασθαι περὶ τῆς κτήσεως, τίνα τρόπον δεῖ κατασκευάζεσθαι τοῖς μέλλουσι πολιτεύεσθαι τὴν ἀρίστην πολιτείαν, πότερον κοινὴν ἢ μὴ κοινὴν εἶναι τὴν κτῆσιν.	Having dealt with this we need to consider property: how we should equip those who are going to run the best constitution, whether property should be common or not common.

1262b.40	τοῦτο δ' ἂν τις καὶ χωρὶς σκέψαιτο ἀπὸ τῶν περὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας νενομοθετημένων...	We can consider this separately from the provisions for the children and women....
1263a15	ὅλως δὲ τὸ συζῆν καὶ κοινωνεῖν τῶν ἀνθρωπικῶν πάντων χαλεπὸν, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν τοιούτων. δηλοῦσι δ' αἱ τῶν συναποδημῶν κοινωνίαι· σχεδὸν γὰρ οἱ πλεῖστοι διαφέρονται, ἐκ τῶν ἐν ποσὶ καὶ ἐκ μικρῶν προσκρούοντες ἀλλήλοις. ἔτι δὲ τῶν θεραπόντων τούτοις μάλιστα προσκρούομεν	In general living together and sharing is always difficult, in all human affairs, and especially so in these kinds of cases (sc. distributing the fruits of agricultural work). This is evident from cases where people travel abroad together. Pretty well all of them fall out, quarrelling with each other over trivial things that get in the way. Again, in respect of our servants, we get most angry
1263a.20	οἷς πλεῖστα προσχρώμεθα πρὸς τὰς διακονίας τὰς ἐγκυκλίους. τὸ μὲν οὖν κοινὰς εἶναι τὰς κτήσεις ταύτας τε καὶ ἄλλας τοιαύτας ἔχει δυσχερείας· ὃν δὲ νῦν τρόπον ἔχει, ἐπικροσμηθὲν ἔθεσι καὶ τάξει νόμων ὀρθῶν, οὐ μικρὸν ἂν διενέγκαι. ἔξει γὰρ τὸ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων ἀγαθόν·	with those we have to deal with most closely in our daily round. Having property in common comes with these and other similar difficulties. The way things are at present, if somewhat enhanced with some sound ethical and regulatory provisions, has no small advantage. It would bring the advantages of both.
1263a.25	λέγω δὲ τὸ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων τὸ ἐκ τοῦ κοινὰς εἶναι τὰς κτήσεις καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίας. δεῖ γὰρ πῶς μὲν εἶναι κοινὰς, ὅλως δ' ἰδίας. αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιμέλεια διηρημέναι τὰ ἐγκλήματα πρὸς ἀλλήλους οὐ ποιήσουσιν, μᾶλλον δ' ἐπιδώσουσιν ὡς πρὸς ἴδιον ἐκάστου προσεδρεύοντος· δι' ἀρετὴν	By “both” I mean the advantages of both having property in common, and having it private. For it needs to be in a certain sense common, but as a whole private. On the one hand, their attention is dispersed, so they will not pick quarrels with each other, and on the other hand they will increase their productivity because they are each looking after their own private concerns.
1263a.30	δ' ἔσται πρὸς τὸ χρῆσθαι, κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν, κοινὰ τὰ φίλων. ἔστι δὲ καὶ νῦν τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον ἐν ἐνίαις πόλεσιν οὕτως ὑπογεγραμμένον, ὡς οὐκ ὄν ἀδύνατον, καὶ μάλιστα ἐν ταῖς καλῶς οἰκουμέναις τὰ μὲν ἔστι τὰ δὲ γένοιτ' ἂν· ἰδίαν γὰρ ἕκαστος τὴν κτήσιν ἔχων τὰ μὲν χρήσιμα ποιεῖ τοῖς φίλοις, τοῖς δὲ χρῆται	But it will in fact be the case that “friends’ things are common” (as the saying goes), but by reason of virtue. This is not impossible. We find this way of doing things implicit even now in some cities, and especially those that are well governed some have it already and in some it could happen. For while each person has his own property, he makes some useful things available for his friends, and
1263a.35	κοινῶς, οἷον καὶ ἐν Λακεδαίμονι τοῖς τε δούλοις χρῶνται τοῖς ἀλλήλων ὡς εἰπεῖν ἰδίους, ἔτι δ' ἵπποις καὶ κυσίν...	some he uses in common. E.g. in Sparta, they use one another’s slaves as if they were their own, and also their horses and dogs...
1263a40	ἔτι δὲ καὶ πρὸς ἡδονὴν ἀμύθητον ὅσον διαφέρει τὸ νομίζειν ἴδιόν τι.	And again how magical is the delight that comes from thinking that something is one’s own!
1263b.1	μὴ γὰρ οὐ μάτην τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν αὐτὸς ἔχει φιλίαν ἕκαστος, ἀλλ' ἔστι τοῦτο φυσικόν. τὸ δὲ φίλαυτον εἶναι ψέγεται δικαίως· οὐκ ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ φιλεῖν ἑαυτόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ μᾶλλον ἢ δεῖ φιλεῖν, καθάπερ καὶ τὸ φιλοχρήματον, ἐπεὶ φιλοῦσι γε πάντες ὡς εἰπεῖν ἕκαστον τῶν τοιούτων.	It’s not for nothing that each person has a sort of love each for his own self. This is natural. Being selfish is justly disapproved. But that’s loving yourself more than you should. It’s not the same as loving yourself. It’s the same with being a money-lover. Since it’s fair to say all of us love each of these things.
1263b.5	ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ τὸ χαρίσασθαι καὶ βοηθῆσαι φίλοις ἢ ξένοις ἢ ἐταίροις ἡδιστον· ὃ γίνεται τῆς κτήσεως ἰδίας οὔσης.	But actually being kind and helping family, friends and visitors is the most delightful thing. And that depends on property being private.