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**Aristotle**

**The Reality of the World**

**Essential Points**

*Note*: I do not spend much class time on the contrasts drawn early in the chapter between Plato and Aristotle, but refer back to them as they come up in the details of the chapter.

* Logic and knowledge

That logic supplies a nonpsychological criterion for goodness in argument (compare to the Sophists)

Statements are sentences that can be true or false; the functions of subject and predicate

Terms make up statements

Kinds of terms—the categories; the fundamental character of terms for primary substances

Truth as correspondence

The formal character of logic

The square of opposition and the syllogism

Induction as the means to know universal first principles and stop an infinite regress

* The world

The distinction between artifacts and nature-facts; the distinguishing character of nature-facts

The four causes: Material, formal, efficient, and final

The character of teleology; its connection with potentiality and the lawfulness of change

That the natural world is knowable, so there is no reason to demote it to second-class reality status

* First philosophy

Four reasons Aristotle does not accept Plato's account of the Forms

How mathematics is possible without Plato's Forms: Abstraction

Why form is prior even to substance

What kind of form an essence is

The possibility of pure forms, pure actualities

God as final cause of the world; the unmoved mover

* The Soul

That the three levels of soul build on each other

That soul is fundamentally nonsubstantial, but is the form of a living body of a certain sort

Why Aristotle cannot find a material substratum for the activities of *nous,* and concludes that it must have an independent and immortal existence

* The good life

Why precise answers are not available for questions about the best life or the right thing to do in a given circumstance

Why happiness—*eudaemonia*—is not pleasure or honor

Why happiness is *activity*, why it is activity of *soul*, why it is in accord with *reason*, and why it is *excellence* in the performance of that activity

Why, and how, the good life includes pleasure

That a happy life does require modest external goods

What kind of thing a virtue is: A habit or disposition

That the virtues are attained by practice

That virtue lies in a mean between extremes

That the function of reason is to discover the mean for us in a given circumstance

How Aristotle's ethics is not Sophistic relativism, but does involve a kind of objective relativity

That Aristotle assumes we are responsible for our actions unless we can provide an excuse

That legitimate excuses are of two sorts: Ignorance (of facts) and compulsion

That the very best life is a life of contemplation—a life most like the life of God