

Political Theory for Today

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Tradition v. Rationalism

Voegelin, Oakeshott, Hayek, and Others

Edited by Lee Trepanier and Eugene Callahan

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Chapter Eight

Two Concepts of Practical Knowledge in Politics

Oakeshott and MacIntyre in Comparison

Ferenc Hörcher

The rebirth of political philosophy, after its supposed temporary death in the afterwar period, was claimed to have been initiated by the publication of the abstract universalist political philosophy of institutional justice, worked out and spread all over the world by John Rawls.^{1,2} In spite of its popularity, this narrative has a number of problems. From the point of view of a later, post-1990 generation, the famous Harvard philosopher, while popularizing his discipline, made political philosophy surprisingly apolitical: he seems to have taken both the external security and the internal governability of the United States or Europe as virtually unproblematic, and therefore concentrated his philosophical effort on the issue of redistribution and social justice. After the fall of the iron curtain and even more significantly after 9/11, this view of a safe world has been lost, and a rebirth of the concept of *the political*—as conceptualized by such diverse thinkers as Hannah Arendt and Carl Schmitt³—was witnessed, both in real politics and in the philosophy of politics. A further move of this wave of political thought led to a renewed discussion of political realism as it was framed again by rather diverse authors, like Bernard Williams and Raymond Geuss.

This chapter is going to present an alternative approach to politics, relying on two of that group of authors, who offered a challenge to mainstream liberal political philosophy in the Rawlsian fashion: the late Michael Oakeshott (1901–1990) and Alasdair MacIntyre (1929–). The approach of these two rather different philosophers seem to be philosophically quite relevant in our age of political crises. The aim is to analyze and to a certain extent to

compare the two authors' view of politics as practical knowledge—a topic left mainly undiscussed by the mainstream, and very much in the focus of early twentieth-first century discussions of what is labeled as political realism in politics. This chapter will make an effort to understand and assess these political philosophers' view on the practical side of politics. This will be done by looking at their respective views of political life as a practice. In this respect this chapter is interested in what we read in Oakeshott's starting sentence from his essay "Political Discourse"⁴: "Politics may be identified, in the first place, as a practical activity, concerned with making a response to situations of a certain sort: political situations" (70).

The central claim of the chapter is that Oakeshott's and MacIntyre's concept of practice is surprisingly close, although their view of politics and philosophy are rather divergent. This similarity can be understood if we look at the way Aristotle talked about the praxis of politics—with the concept of practical wisdom in its center. Finally, we shall argue, that if Oakeshott's and MacIntyre's views of the practice of politics are relevant, and if they both can be associated with Aristotle's practical philosophy, one can draw the conclusion that perhaps an Aristotelian assessment of political practice is a promising way of handling the challenge of contemporary politics and the contemporary theory of political realism as well. In what follows I will first present Oakeshott's views on the practice of politics (mainly relying on the essays from his middle period, when he was most interested in actual politics), followed by an analysis of MacIntyre's view of practice in connection with politics (mainly relying on his view in and shortly following *After Virtue*), and finally I shall see their views on Aristotle's own notion of political praxis in their respective histories of political (Oakeshott) and ethical (MacIntyre) thought.

THE ROLE OF POLITICS IN OAKESHOTT'S DIFFERENT PERIODS

In one of his remarkable and eccentric books, Maurice Cawling introduces Oakeshott in a very characteristic company: together with Collingwood, Butterfield, and Churchill.⁵ This is, I guess, a very true description of Oakeshott's intellectual milieu. Oakeshott's political philosophy remained infused with history throughout. His first notable book, *Experience and Its Modes*, published in 1933, when he was only thirty-one, is a *tour de force*, unrivaled by contemporaries, but winning a number of critics and the enthusiastic support of some key figures, including Collingwood. Collingwood in fact had an impact on both Oakeshott and MacIntyre, a point which would merit further investigation, but which cannot be elaborated here. Otherwise, the book is clearly kept far away from politics, even if its year of publication (1933) turned out to be vital in European history.

One would be interested to read his contemporary views on European politics, but he seems to be quite cautious on the issue—perhaps based on his assumption that there are much more important engagements in human life than politics. On the other hand, already the young Oakeshott found politics worth studying: he published an influential critical collection on major totalitarian contemporary ideologies in 1939 by the title *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe*.⁶ Politics was, of course, intruding not only into his philosophical, but also into his practical life: besides waging his own intellectual combat with the inhuman political systems on the level of ideologies, Oakeshott had a direct confrontation with them on the battlefields, as well. His experience of being a soldier must have contributed to his lifelong conviction that excellence in certain professional activities (including that of the military personnel) depends much more on practical issues and less on the study of their relevant theories or ideologies.

After retiring as a soldier, he returned to Cambridge to restart his career in academia. With this return Oakeshott scholarship associates his second, more mature period of his intellectual career. His 1946 publication of Hobbes's *Leviathan* with his own succinct Introduction presents him in full professional armour, which does not mean that he would have become the typical Oxbridge professor of the history of philosophy. Although his reading of Hobbes itself varies a lot during his long career,⁷ the novelty of his approach is that he tries to read his great predecessor in the light of a realist account of politics, as opposed to both a rights-based liberal paradigm and the utopian nature of leftist interpretations. His realism in this respect is already connected with the assertion that politics is not about a list of universally valid norms, but a living reality, something that requires experience-based practical knowledge and practical judgment.

Oakeshott, of course, is not simply an empiricist about politics, either. On the contrary his main intellectual lineage remains the small group of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British idealism.⁸ The special flavor of his philosophy is due to this inner tension of it: that he is both aware of the importance of imagination and ideas in all the spheres of human life, while he keeps returning to a description of politics in terms of practical activity and experience. A further difficulty is caused by his special use of the term rationalism in connection with politics. As his famous essay on "Rationalism in politics," first published in 1947, already makes clear, he is genuinely suspicious of efforts to translate politics into theoretical constructions, instead of leaving it rooted in its own ground of human practices. As we shall see below, his criticism is not simply about false claims in political epistemology: it is a severe criticism of political ideologies based on the notion of abstract reason and its role in governing political reality, especially in totalitarian regimes and doctrinaire welfare systems of the postwar period.

Finally, there is a third period in his intellectual life. By his older days he seems to be liberated from the pressure of political urgencies, and returns to a more philosophical account of human nature in his *On Human Conduct* (1975). While undoubtedly the most refined among his works of political philosophy, he is embarking here on constructing ideal types of political association, a bit further not only from actual politics, but also from historical constraints. No doubt, the conclusions of his investigations into the practice of politics resurface here, too, but it seems to be less relevant from our own particular point of view. One should also note, however, that in the very same period he remained interested in a historical contextualization of political thought, as his lectures in the history of political thought show us.⁹ These lectures present the Oakeshott who exercised a major influence on the birth of what came to be called the Cambridge school of the history of political thought, represented by authors as diverse as J. G. A. Pocock, Quentin Skinner, John Dunn, Richard Tuck, and István Hont.

OAKESHOTT'S CONSERVATIVE CRITIQUE OF RATIONALISM IN POLITICS

Oakeshott is a witty author. He likes to envelop his message. His essay "Rationalism in Politics," first published in the opening issue of *Cambridge Journal*, for example, starts with a motto by the unfamous French moralist, the Marquis de Vauvenargues. This unknown friend of Voltaire, labeled by posterity as a modern Stoic, seems to serve Oakeshott's aims rather well—at least the quote by him, which Oakeshott has chosen as an introduction to his breakthrough essay. Maxim 221 of Vauvenargues claims that "great men, by teaching weak minds to think, have put them in the way of error."¹⁰ With this overture Oakeshott presents his case against the intrusion of philosophy into the realm of politics. This is an idea which was quite topical among a certain type of intellectuals in postwar Britain, including Friedrich Hayek, publishing his *Road to Serfdom* in 1944; Karl Popper, publishing his *Open Society and Its Enemies* in 1945; Michael Polányi, giving his *Gifford Lectures on Personal Knowledge* in 1952–1953. One could also associate these works with Orwell's famous dystopia, *1984*, published in 1948. All of them seem to be dictated by the threat imposed on the postwar Western mentality by an undeserved trust in human reason rearranging political settings.

While Hayek, Popper, and Polányi escaped to Britain from the Nazi threat in their Central European home countries, and brought with them their rich cultural heritage from Central Europe, Orwell represented traditional British left-wing thought, and had a firsthand experience of a clash of totalitarian regimes in civil war Spain. Oakeshott represents a specifically British and therefore specifically liberal-conservative perspective in this group. As we

saw, he was associated with Churchill in Cowling's account. Like Churchill, Oakeshott, too, seems to be quite aware of the dangers of a landslide shift within British politics toward the left. The threat was supported by recent events in British political life: not only did Churchill lose the first postwar election, but the Conservative Party, or to open it even wider, the conservative movement, conservative political culture, and in general the conservative understanding of politics itself came under the spell of leftist political voluntarism. Here is part of a list Oakeshott provides for his reader of the recent phenomena which he wants to address: it includes "a self-consciously planned society, the Beveridge Report, the Education Act of 1944, Federalism, Nationalism, Votes for Women, the Catering Wages Act, the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the World State (of H. G. Wells or anyone else)," etc. As is obvious, he provides examples mainly from the political left, as characteristic of their strategy.

It is in this context that we should look at Oakeshott's direct confrontation with what he calls political rationalism. This is the more interesting as not much later, in 1951 he was going to take the chair of Laski—perhaps the most important academic ideologue of the Left—at the London School of Economics and Political Science. This was a symbolic event, which, together with his direct criticism of the trendy political views of the moment, provoked a number of criticisms against him, which seem to have encouraged him to work on the theme with some more continued efforts. These efforts led to the result of publishing a collection of essays under the title *Rationalism in Politics* more than a decade later, in 1962, a work which proved to be of a lasting influence on conservatives in Britain, and fans of British conservatism abroad, and which turned out to be "a major event in contemporary political philosophy."¹¹

Oakeshott concentrates his attack on what he calls the modern type of Rationalism. He is certainly not the first one who criticizes the exaggerated trust in rational calculation in politics: this is a criticism which recalls Burke's attack against the abstract principles of the French revolutionaries.¹² Burke's attack against the philosophers is paralleled here by Oakeshott's identification of the new intellectual character of the Rationalist with Bacon and Descartes (19). He implies that he prefers such eighteenth-century eccentrics as Vauvenargues and Burke, as opposed to the seventeenth-century heroes Bacon and Descartes. If Bacon and Descartes, the supposition of a joint and rather unhappy marriage of scepticism and optimism is rightly identified in the mentality of the rationalist. The reason why it is unhappy is that "of all worlds, the world of politics might seem the least amenable to rationalist treatment—politics, always so deeply veined with both the traditional, the circumstantial and the transitory" (7).

Due to his disbelief in the sustainability of earlier states of affairs and his trust in his own intellectual power, the rationalist behaves like a tyrant,

“exercising an uncontrolled jurisdiction over the circumstances of the case” (8). In order to create, he destructs. He obtains, for example, good laws by deciding “to burn all existing laws and to start afresh” (9).¹³ Oakeshott first abstracts and generalizes the figure he wants to show up, then he describes him with a creative use of metaphors, turning him into a rather weird creature, paradoxically weak in the head. The rationalist gets identified with the engineer, but the implication is that he behaves in fact like a robot, a devastatingly simple hardware whose software is the ideology implanted into his mind by the scientists. This is of course a parody, an overt exaggeration, but any reader coming from the post-Soviet territory identifies this frame of mind very easily with existing figures from his own pre-1990 past. The stupidity of this figure comes from his inability to give up his childish doctrines and identify as politically reasonable¹⁴ simply the preservation of the status quo.

Oakeshott’s text is, once again, witty. In spite of the rhetorical bravuras of his criticism, he also provides a positive vision, described this time by a technique of negative painting. The essay characterizes the rationalist as an “enemy of authority, of prejudice, of the merely traditional, customary or habitual” (6). Now interestingly this is nothing less than a negative description of the virtues and values Oakeshott, the political philosopher, himself appreciates. In other words, already in his criticism of the social engineering of the political rationalist Oakeshott is able to provide a picture of an alternative attitude, which is that of the conservative. Authority, prejudice, tradition, customs, and habits—these are the keywords of the conservative repertoire of politics, in a British conservative key. This is the point where the rationalism essay is connected to another one, entitled “On Being Conservative” and first given as a lecture at the University of Swansea in 1956. Here, Oakeshott again describes the conservative in a negative way: he is the one who is ready “to restrain, to deflate, to pacify and to reconcile; not to stoke the fires of desire, but to damp them down” (432). He explicitly counterposes the conservative with the figure of the rationalist: “a government of this sort injects an ingredient, not of reason (how should we expect that?) but of the irony that is prepared” (433–434). While the ironic conservatism overburdens reason, he rather relies on a reasonable strategy of moderation and raillery.

OAKESHOTT’S DISTINCTION OF THE KNOW-WHAT AND THE KNOW-HOW OF POLITICS

His attack on the rationalist ideology of postwar Britain is connected to Oakeshott’s distinction between political knowledge as a know-what or a know-how, reminding one of Ryle’s distinction of “knowing that” and “knowing how” of whose *Concept of Mind* Oakeshott published a favorable

review.¹⁵ That Oakeshott could have been aware of Ryle’s formulation is proven by his own wording: he refers to a distinction of “*what to do*” and “*how to do it*” (13).¹⁶ Yet his reference is also a denial of the distinction, as far as real activity is concerned: “there is no knowledge which is not ‘know how’” (14). But then what exactly is the point Oakeshott wants to make?

His distinction is a distinction between technical knowledge and practical or traditional knowledge. The first is characterized by these traits: it can be “formulated into rules which are, or may be, deliberately learned, remembered, and, as we say, put into practice.” The main thing is that it is “susceptible of precise formulation” (12). This is important as the opposite type, which is called practical or traditional knowledge by Oakeshott, is characterized the following way: “it exists only in use, is not reflective and (unlike technique) cannot be formulated in rules.” While technique can be learnt from a book, this is not true about practical knowledge: “the method by which it may be shared and becomes common knowledge is not the method of formulated doctrine.”

According to Oakeshott the two sorts of knowledge go hand-in-hand in all concrete human activities. His examples are first of all such practical arts as cookery—at another place he mentions riding the bicycle—and the fine arts, including painting, music, or poetry. He widens it up to include even religion. But for our present purposes the most important thing is that both of these forms of knowledge are involved in political activity as well: “the knowledge involved in political activity is both technical and practical” (13). In other words, “the knowledge involved in political activity is pre-eminently of this dual character” (13).

The connection between this conceptual distinction, which leads to the conclusion that the two sorts of knowledge should and in fact cannot be separated in political activity, and Oakeshott’s critique of rationalism is this: “Rationalism is the assertion that what I have called practical knowledge is not knowledge at all.” The rationalist claims that “there is no knowledge which is not technical knowledge” (in politics, as in other fields of knowledge) (15).¹⁷ This way “the sovereignty of reason” leads to the “sovereignty of technique.”¹⁸ As Oakeshott views it, the dominance of technique is a result of “a decline in the belief in Providence: a beneficent and infallible technique replaced a beneficent and infallible God” (23). From this claim we can see that he construes the exclusive use of science, which might be called scientism as the target of his critical attack.¹⁹ In the end, the opposition between a traditional way of taking part in politics and the rationalist’s own self-indulgent way of getting rid of all the remnants of the past to start a new politics results in breaking down our moral and religious standards, leading to a state of affairs when “we are left only with the dry and gritty residue (of moral ideals) which chokes us as we try to take it down.” This way rationalist politicians succeed “to destroy the only living root of moral behaviour” (41).

It is this state of affairs, the conclusion of the story Oakeshott narrates of the destruction of rationalism, which, as we shall see, will be the starting point for MacIntyre's narrative in *After Virtue* (1981).

THE VIEW OF POLITICS IN THE WORKS OF THE EARLY AND THE MATURE MACINTYRE

MacIntyre comes a generation later than Oakeshott, and from a rather different social background. He was born in Scotland, learned Gaelic from one of his aunts, and through this knowledge and his family's "distant ties to County Donegal, in the North of Ireland" he to a large extent identified himself with the "cultural and political concerns of Ireland."²⁰ MacIntyre emphasizes the impact on him of an Irish professor of Greek, George Thomson, who must have been influential in his choice of joining the British Communist Party.²¹ Irish folk traditions, ancient Greek, modern analytical philosophy,²² Marxist Communism, and Christianity—this is the strange amalgam of which MacIntyre seems to have built his early philosophical identity, "a clumsily patched together collection of fragments."²³

If one imagines a talk between Oakeshott and MacIntyre in the 1950s, an LSE professor of politics with a conservative bent, in his fifties, and a young teacher at one of the early redbrick universities, with a Communist leaning, in his twenties, one would see the opposite poles of the intellectual and political spectrum of mid-twentieth century Britain. But one can stretch this distance even further, pointing out that MacIntyre leaves Britain for America around 1969, a decision which could be hardly imagined in connection with Oakeshott, who describes the United States as the land of Rationalism. Also, one should understand their respective political philosophical stances as really in a sharp contrast with each other: Oakeshott's admiration for a liberal state where laws safeguard individuals to pursue their own happiness seems to be in direct opposition with MacIntyre's Marxist criticism of the ideology of liberal consumerism. However, there is a common denominator: both of them found the moral standards of contemporary society in ruins.

In fact that is going to be the main theme of MacIntyre's breakthrough work, his entry into a mature phase of philosophy, the one mostly associated with his name even today, *After Virtue, A Study in Moral Theory* (1981).²⁴ But this philosophical bestseller was preceded by a historical account of European morality, under the title *A Short History of Ethics: A History of Moral Philosophy from the Homeric Age to the Twentieth Century* (1967). The real reason behind publishing *After Virtue* was that MacIntyre was not satisfied with his own grand narrative in his earlier moral history. He missed exactly such a grand narrative: it presented three different periods with their

own problems, but no account how the three periods related to each other. *After Virtue* provides such a grand narrative.

However before sketching the outlines of this grand narrative, let me refer, here, too, to the motto of the book: "Gus am bris an la." While Oakeshott's motto was in eighteenth-century French, this is Gaelic, meaning: until day breaks, but with the religious meaning of resurrection. It is a linguistic formula which you find on tombstones.²⁵ The book is dedicated "to the memory of my father and his sisters and brothers," which adds to the reader's impression that this is a book of remembrance.

After Virtue is built on the insight that our dominant moral culture is in fact one in ruins. While it promises to provide external standards to help to decide internal moral debates, it is not able to fulfil these expectations. This is, according to the hypothesis of the work, due to the fact that a once thriving moral culture is now disintegrated, leaving behind only disconnected remnants. The original framework was "a context of practical beliefs and of supporting habits of thought, feeling, and action, a context that has since been lost, a context in which moral judgments were understood as governed by impersonal standards justified by a shared conception of the human good" (ix).²⁶ As one can see, what MacIntyre aims at is reminiscent of Oakeshott's own purpose: here again we see a dominant force—this time the project of the Enlightenment, shattering a well-established order of moral standards, leaving behind a wasteland of undigested and haphazard moral evaluations.

What is more, the original is characterized here with a rather similar vocabulary. While, as we saw, Oakeshott's list of what was missing as a result of the destructive activity of the Rationality was authority, prejudice, tradition, customs, and habits, in MacIntyre's case we find on the list of the victims of the failed Enlightenment project "practical beliefs, supporting habits of thought, feeling, and action and right moral judgments." Add to it, that the very same "Prologue" also mentions those critics who claimed that MacIntyre was cherishing an unfounded form of "nostalgia and of idealizing the past," because of his reference to the role played by the tradition of the virtues of that lost moral vocabulary. Comparing these two lists of Oakeshott and MacIntyre of what got lost as a result of modernity's destructive force, one can easily have the impression that these lost ideals are astonishingly similar. This is exactly the issue we would like to tackle in the next section, where we reconstruct MacIntyre's description of the lost understanding of practice and tradition in *After Virtue*—with some reference to some later works. Yet one thing needs to be stressed here. MacIntyre himself dissociates his own position from any kind of "sympathy" "for contemporary conservatism" (xv).²⁷ This is important, if we want to understand the similarities and dissimilarities between the two projects. As we shall see, there are rather important similarities in the two works, but their basic stances either in philosophy or in politics are pretty far from each other.

PRACTICE, THE NARRATIVE UNITY OF LIFE AND TRADITION
IN *AFTER VIRTUE*

Although from the list above we could see that MacIntyre's interest was directed toward practical beliefs and actions as well, the discussion on practice and tradition comes rather late in the book. This is the more astounding if we recall that he identifies as the main aim of the book "to provide an account of the human good purely in social terms, in terms of practices, traditions, and the narrative unity of human lives" (xi). But this late arrival must be due to the fact that *After Virtue* is a pseudo history of moral theory.

Here we do not have a chance to reconstruct this history. For our purposes it is enough to remind us that the author regards the ancient and the medieval context as a social context ordered around the virtues, and the Enlightenment as the period and movement which destroyed this social arrangement. In what follows I will rather concentrate on MacIntyre's notion of practice, and will also refer to its relationship to the narrative unity of life and to tradition.²⁸ Finally I shall say a few words about MacIntyre's interpretation of Jane Austen which will lead us to our last topic, a comparison of Oakeshott's and MacIntyre's reliance and use of Aristotle's practical philosophy.

Let us start with his definition and description of practice. The definition itself is a bit frightening and perhaps too complex.²⁹ We cannot pay full attention to all the details; what we can do is not more than to pick out and make sense of some of the elements which seem to be crucial in this complex definition from our point of view. To make it easier to understand his complex definition, MacIntyre gives a list of practices—including the game of football and chess, architecture, farming, physics, chemistry and biology, the work of the historian, painting and music—a list resembling Oakeshott's list of fields of practical knowledge.³⁰ For us the key issue is that he also adds to this list the "sustaining of human communities—of households, cities, nations" (187–188), with the restriction that this was only the case in the ancient and the Middle Ages, implying, most probably, that modernity destroyed this tradition. This way he claims that the Aristotelian types of human community, and most importantly, cities and nations—i.e., political communities—are to be understood as forms of practice.

A further point he makes is that "a practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules," which seems to contradict Oakeshott's own description of practical knowledge, which is not rule bound. MacIntyre, in this sense, is closer to a Thomistic-scholastic account of practical knowledge, which is always rule bound. In this tradition only standards and accepted rules can guarantee that the judgment about our activity in the context of a practice should not be simply subjectivist or emotivist. Oakeshott's British traditionalist context is much more individualistic, leaving a wider playing

ground to form the appropriate judgment in the particular case, without sinking back into relativism.

After establishing the criterion that a practice involves rules and standards of excellence to judge our activity in its context, a key issue that practices are joint or cooperative ventures with an internal (and external) teleological perspective by their very nature in MacIntyre's account. In other words, football is played to win the game (internally) and to earn a lot (externally), while to play the game of architecture can be "played" in order to build a house (internally) and to win social prestige by it (externally). The case of politics is rather interesting in this respect: if there is an internal good to political activity, it must be serving the common good (internally) and enjoying the feeling to exercise power (externally).

This is most probably again something that opposes Oakeshott's view of politics, where no such internal final aims can be identified. According to his famous definition the activity involved in politics is like sailing in a sea without any well-defined destination:

In political activity, then, men sail a boundless and bottomless sea; there is neither harbour for shelter nor floor for anchorage, neither starting-place nor appointed destination. The enterprise is to keep afloat on an even keel; the sea is both friend and enemy; and the seamanship consists in using the resources of a traditional manner of behaviour in order to make a friend of every hostile occasion.³¹

Besides the above elements of his definition of practice, MacIntyre calls his readers' attention to two further points, both of them temporal. One concerns the temporal dimension of the agent participating in a practice: at the end, the final framework for the individual, to make the particular decision in a given practical situation, is the narrative of his whole life. The other is the temporal dimension of the practice itself: if we want to understand the demand of a practical situation, we have to interpret it taking into account the very history of the practice in question. Let us see MacIntyre's views on these two issues.

The issue of the narrative unity of one's life is brought up already in the analysis of how the practice of painting was exercised in the institution of a guild, for example. The point the author wants to make here is that in a real practice a strong engagement is required, one perhaps, of accepting a form of life in order to express one's real engagement: "it is the painter's living out of a greater or lesser part of his or her life as a painter that is the second kind of good internal to painting" (190). But the issue of narration in connection with the wholeness of one's life is only unbound a bit later. There he adds that he needs to make clear his own conception of selfhood, one "whose unity resides in the unity of a narrative which links birth to life to death as narrative beginning to middle to end" (205). What MacIntyre does here is to question the validity of the founding proposition of behaviorism, according to which

there is a “‘behaviour,’ to be identified prior to and independently of intentions”³² (208).

But neither does he give in here to what could be labeled as intellectualism. It is not reason on its own on which MacIntyre relies—rather, the complex web of cognitive capacities including emotions, fears, expectations, etc. All of them can and usually do play their part in our mental operation of interpreting the action of a person as one, for which he or she might be taken to be responsible. All of them can, however, only make sense if we are able to attribute them a certain narrative function. For as—what Paul Ricoeur called—the hermeneutics of action reveals,³³ our interpretation of actions within the framework of a practice has to take into account their intentions, as part of a larger narrative unit, called the story of the agent’s life. If actions have meaning, they gain this meaning within the context of a conversation. Practices are such (internal and external) conversations, “(f)or conversation . . . is the form of human transactions in general” (211). If actions are conversation, conversations on their part are nothing less than enacted narratives.³⁴

This is reasonable because we all “live out narrative in our lives” and because “we understand our own lives in terms of the narratives that we live out” (212). Consequently, it is right to make sense and judge the actions of others in the form of narratives. This way MacIntyre creates a close connection between physical performance in the context of a practice and the mental interpretations of it in the mind of the agent or of others. Of course this division of a practically embedded action into the physical and the mental itself is only possible as an abstract logical operation, as the nature of a practice is that it lives in the mind of those who participate in it or who look at it from the outside. There is no first-level, mind-independent practice. Therefore the interpretation can easily fit into the wider context of narratives of one’s life.

MacIntyre’s is certainly a very different notion of conversation than the one Oakeshott relies on. Just to refresh: Oakeshott’s concept of conversation is to identify the *differentia specifica* of the form of self-expression and knowledge of the world of the civilized human being. He claims: “As civilized human beings, we are the inheritors, neither of an inquiry about ourselves and the world, nor of an accumulating body of information, but of a conversation, begun in the primeval forests and extended and made more articulate in the course of centuries. It is a conversation which goes on both in public and within each of ourselves.”³⁵

When we argue that there is a genuine similarity between the two models, it is in the sense that both attribute a conversational character to human practices (including politics). Although this is a very vague comparison so far, and we cannot substantiate it, as in fact it is only on that level of generalization that the comparison holds, it seems to be remarkable, that both of

them rely on this term of conversation in their investigation of practical human activity.

Let us finish this short overview of MacIntyre’s *After Virtue* on practice with the second temporal dimension of practice: with his notion of tradition. Now this is among the most often discussed aspects of MacIntyre’s Aristotelian revolution. This is perhaps because it does not sound particularly Aristotelian, I mean the idea that practice itself has a temporal dimension: “To enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded us in the practice.” Well, does it not sound like Burke, discussing the contract between the dead, the present generation, and the unborn?³⁶

It is perhaps the most striking of the main features of MacIntyre’s revolutionary Aristotelianism. But it is also quite logical, if I am what I am due to the fact that I belong to this and that community (my role has a meaning within its special context, the given practice), and further if I am what I am in the narrative unity of my life, then my community, too, needs to have its own narrative identity. “I am a citizen of this or that city, a member of this or that guild or profession; I belong to this clan, that tribe, this nation. Hence what is good for me has to be the good for one who inhabits these roles. As such, I inherit from the past of my family, my city, my tribe, my nation, a variety of debts, inheritances, rightful expectations and obligations. These constitute the given of my life, my moral starting point” (220). These historical vistas of the communities the individual is part of, when unveiled, help individuals to find their way in their lifelong quest. Certainly this sense of tradition is still not unproblematic. As he himself admits, he had to work hard after the publication of *After Virtue* to defend his position as far as the relativism is concerned which a reliance on traditions invites. But it is something that sounds quite sympathetic not only to conservatives but also to those readers who can and are ready to recognize their own earlier, similar experiences.

It is in this context that for MacIntyre the relevance of the local community will grow high. After all, it is not the huge, impersonal, or constructed social spaces—like the metropolitan areas of postmodernism geographically, or the impersonal modern state symbolically—but rather the local contexts which can be supposed to have the power to form one’s personal identity. Local belonging is much more important, he claims, than the loyalty expected on the state level. In the much later “Prologue” he gives the following summary of the connection between his own concept of tradition, practice, and local community: “When recurrently the tradition of the virtues is regenerated, it is always in everyday life, it is always through the engagement by plain persons in a variety of practices, including those of making and sustaining families and households, schools, clinics, and local forms of political community” (xv).

As we can see, MacIntyre's description of this ideal is closely associated with the British notion of common sense (as was the case with ordinary language philosophy), embodied here by "plain persons" and a reference to everyday life, and certainly his glorifying of the local is closely connected to the cooperation element involved in his notion of practice. The fact that in this quote again we proceed from families to local communities is a proof of its Aristotelian inspiration, to which we turn as the last topic of the present chapter, in comparison with Oakeshott's own supposed and certainly much more reserved form of Aristotelianism.

MACINTYRE'S AND OAKESHOTT'S ARISTOTLE

There is nothing new in the claim that MacIntyre's notion of practice is a logical conclusion of his smoothly developed Aristotelian inclinations. By the time he came to publish *After Virtue*, he was ready to admit his Aristotelianism. In the chapter where he introduced the notion of practice, he openly refers to the Aristotelian sources of his ideas.³⁷ He enlists there three acclaimed similarities between his position and that of the philosopher. Of them, the conceptual distinctions made or the view of pleasure and enjoyment is not as important as the third point for us. The third one is about the continuity of explanation and evaluation, something which modern social sciences directly deny, as MacIntyre admits, because of their basic supposition that facts and values need to be distinguished. MacIntyre's example is historical: if you want to describe the fate of a city, you cannot avoid to talk about the virtues or the lack of virtues of its leaders.

In the historical explanation, the historian starts out from an evaluation of the virtue of the particular leader and then explains what happened in connection with that evaluation. When MacIntyre takes on board the Aristotelian view of the continuity of evaluation and explanation, he proves to be determined to take a consistent Aristotelian position, without deserting contemporary reality. This is obvious from the fact that the question Nietzsche or Aristotle returns in the structure of the book (see chapter 9 and chapter 18, the half and the finish of the text), and that he includes a chapter on "The Virtues of Athens" and one on "Aristotle's Account of the Virtues."

From our point of view, the interesting part of the chapter ("Aristotle's Account of the Virtues," 146–165) is when MacIntyre comes to talk about Aristotle's notion of *phronēsis* (practical wisdom or cleverness).³⁸ He describes its general meaning after the aristocratic use of the term was given up the following way: "It comes to mean more generally someone who knows how to exercise judgment in particular cases" (154). While he keeps emphasizing that it is an intellectual virtue, he also stresses its connection with the virtues of character. The distinction is illustrated by the fact that the intellec-

tual virtues are teachable, while the virtues of character are habituated. While in the first case, "systematic instruction" works, in the second case we learn it by doing it. So far it seems to contradict Oakeshott's own dichotomy, where practical knowledge behaves like in MacIntyre's Aristotle the virtues of character do.

However, the interesting point is that MacIntyre's main point is not the conceptual distinction, rather he wants to emphasize that "these two kinds of moral education are intimately related" (154). Therefore, "According to Aristotle then excellence of character and intelligence cannot be separated" (154). In other words there is no practical knowledge without the virtues of character. As he quotes Aristotle: "it is clear that a man cannot have practical intelligence unless he is good" (1144a37, quoted 155).

Now this is much closer to Oakeshott's own point, I guess, who, if we remember, also emphasized that the two sorts of knowledge do not exclude each other, but on the contrary, they should actually supplement each other. There is a further point, however, which again dissociates MacIntyre's Aristotle from Oakeshott, "the notion of the political community as a common project" (156). One of the most important problems of the modern state for Oakeshott is that it wants to force its citizens to act together in a way which he finds not only offending but also against the best interest of the community, too. As he sees it, its plurality is an important virtue of our present-day civil society, and it would be against this plurality if human aspirations got homogenized and subordinated to the voluntary will of the state. In this respect Oakeshott returns to two ideal types of the state, based on the medieval distinction between *societas* and *universitas*. He seems to favor the one based on the ideal of *societas*: "joined not in seeking a common substantive satisfaction, but in virtue of their understanding and acknowledgement of the conditions of the practice concerned and of the relationships it entails."³⁹ However, *societas* is not yet a state. To turn it into a state, what is required is that customs and manners should crystallize into formal laws with normative power, and a system of laws which arranges their hierarchy and mutual relationships. "A *universitas*, in contrast, is a corporate undertaking (such as a partnership, guild, or school) established to achieve a particular end."⁴⁰

In this respect, therefore, there seems to be a wide divide between Oakeshott and the communitarian aspect of the Aristotelianism of MacIntyre. But then, in what sense can we detect Aristotelian elements in Oakeshott's own views on practical knowledge in politics? Let us start out from a side note. In his essay Oakeshott mentions the Funeral Oration of Pericles by Thucydides (13). This famous oratorical performance is a good occasion for him to formulate and illustrate his view that technique and practical knowledge go hand-in-hand in politics. He writes, "To be a politician and to refuse the guidance of technical knowledge is, for Pericles, a piece of folly. And yet the main theme of the Funeral Oration is not the value of technique in politics,

but the value of practical and traditional knowledge" (13).⁴¹ Now obviously, Oakeshott's claim is like the one made above by MacIntyre about the two, prudence and virtues of character, going together. But perhaps the more interesting thing is that he takes as his example of the two sorts of knowledge joining each other in Pericles, the charismatic leader of the Golden Age of Athenian democracy, "the first citizen of Athens." This is the more telling as Pericles is the example used by Aristotle, too, when he talks about the virtue of *phronēsis* (practical wisdom). In the famous VI. chapter of the *Nicomachean Ethics* he states: "The remaining possibility is for practical wisdom to be a true state involving reason, a practical one. . . . That is why we think Pericles and people of that sort to be practically wise—because they have a theoretical grasp on what is good for themselves and for human beings, and we think household managers and politicians are like that" (NE 1140b).

Certainly, Aristotle's point is not that Pericles was a hero of speculation, and not one of action. Rather he wants to show us that even if the key to his political success had a lot to do with Pericles's virtues of character, we should be convinced that he had that sort of practical knowledge, which, according to Aristotle, is the key to this worldly success. Or more precisely, Pericles's virtues of character presuppose his practical intelligence.

Now, of course, Thucydides is not Aristotle; their views of history and politics are rather far away from each other. While the first is closer to a political realist, Aristotle has an element of the philosopher, who was by the way taught by Plato, in order to keep some of his ideals.

On the other hand, Thucydides seems to be a reliable source of information about Pericles, and his view of him coincides with that of Aristotle. This might be caused by the similarities of the two in their views of human character-formation and practical knowledge in politics. As his monographer claims, "Aristotle is similar to Thucydides in a number of respects," and her first example is that "Aristotle separates virtue into an intellectual part (wisdom, prudence) and a moral one (self-control)."⁴² Among the further overlaps she also mentions that "Aristotle appears to come close to Thucydides when he argues that the universal is only a guideline and that questions of what is advantageous are never fixed" (NE 1104a3–5). She also adds, however, that this "does not mean that Aristotle is a moral relativist."⁴³

As these common features of their respective views prove, in fact Thucydides and Aristotle give a surprisingly similar account of Pericles's virtues, including prudence. If that is granted, Oakeshott's reference to technique and traditional practical knowledge can be taken as an Aristotelian element—after all, it was Aristotle who famously classified the virtues, claiming a priority among them for *phronēsis* but also claiming its necessary combinations with the virtues of character.⁴⁴ If Oakeshott keeps emphasizing the practical (as he also calls it, traditional) dimension in politics, he does not want to deny the significance of technique. The interesting shift between him

and Aristotle is, however, that while in Aristotle the distinction (and coincidence) is between prudence and the moral virtues, with Oakeshott it is between technique, or technical knowledge (roughly the equivalent of Aristotelian *technē*), and practical or traditional knowledge. The point, however, is that neither Aristotle nor Oakeshott can be taken as an anti-intellectualist, due to the fact that they keep the rational element and the habitual together in their analyses. MacIntyre, in this respect, remained closer to Aristotle, even if in his account of Pericles he relied on Isocrates' praise of him "as excelling all other citizens in being *sōphrōn* and *dikaios* and *sophos*."⁴⁵

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, this chapter argued that neither Oakeshott nor MacIntyre belonged to the mainstream of twentieth-century political thought, as they both, for rather different reasons, were critical of the a-political political philosophy practiced by John Rawls. In different ways, they were also quite critical of the main character traits of the sociopolitical conditions of their own age. Yet they both seem to become more and more relevant today, partly because they—perhaps not with similar engagement—seem to partake in an intellectual heritage of a great tradition, labeled here as Aristotelianism, and that is once again attracting attention. Their common intellectual pedigree may sound the more unexpected, given the fact that in the political spectrum they represent rather divergent, in fact different, directions.

Their discussion of practical knowledge in politics is claimed here to illustrate the point. When Oakeshott distinguishes technical knowledge and practical (or traditional) knowledge, his message is in fact to call our attention to the relevance of prudence in politics, as a rational faculty, responsible to help the individual to make good practical judgments in particular situations and to act according to these judgments—without rules to follow, often without conceptualizing the results of her deliberation.⁴⁶ Instead of rules, however, there are habits and customs, established ways of doing things and traditions that can help agents. For him, institutions and the laws, too, will have a major role in calming down and domesticating human agency in a social context—leading to his own concept of conversation.

MacIntyre, on the other hand, constructed another vision of practical knowledge in politics by establishing his framing concept of practice, which determines the elbow room of the agent in particular situations, most importantly by convincing her to cooperate with fellow practitioners, and to identify with the internal goods of the practice on an existential level. In order to achieve such an identification, MacIntyre introduces two more concepts: first, the narrative unity of one's life as the ultimate limit of stretching one's identity in replying to the challenges of the moment. Second, he, too, refers

to tradition as the temporal dimension of the community which is involved in the given practice, referring in particular to local communities in the field of political practice.

In other words he requires from his agent not only an accommodation to the expectations of the present participants of a given practice (for example, of members of a fishing crew), but also to try to understand (with Oakeshott's word) the intimations of past generations: the traditions they left on us (*trado* in Latin, which points at the Roman law background of the concept). As both Oakeshott and MacIntyre relied on the concept of tradition in acquiring political knowledge, both of them had to confront the accusation of relativism. In this respect their answers were totally different: while Oakeshott did not rely in his argumentation on natural law, but relied rather on conventional wisdom and the voice of civilization and the rule of law to exclude inhuman practices, MacIntyre is ready to include a reference to natural law, in his later, Thomistic-Aristotelian writings.

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NOTES

1. This chapter owes a lot to earlier (2009) discussions and recent email exchange with Prof. MacIntyre. No need to say how much it was inspiring. However, the present author needs to take full responsibility of it, as I did not suggest the path advised by Prof. MacIntyre to work out the theme. About Oakeshott I had an exchange with Prof. Timothy Fuller, for which the present author wants to express his gratitude, but once again, the responsibility is fully mine. Finally, I am grateful to Catherine Zuckert, whose support in this case as always, has been a great help, and who herself participated in the collaborative effort coedited by the present author together with Péter Lautner, entitled "The Politics of Aristotle: Reconstructions and Reinterpretations" and published in the *Hungarian Philosophical Review*, Vol. 57, No. 4, 2013. I would also like to express thanks for the copyediting of this chapter to Mss Andrea Robotka, from the Institute of Philosophy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
2. Peter Laslett, *Introduction to Philosophy, Politics and Society*, Peter Laslett and W. G. Ruciman, eds. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956), vii.
3. See Hannah Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, Jerome Kohn, ed. (New York: Schocken Books, 2005); and Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political, Expanded Edition (1932)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
4. Michael Oakeshott, "Political Discourse," in *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1962/1991), 70–96.
5. See Maurice Cowling, *Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England*, Vol. 1, Chapter III, "Recessions" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Cowling, also a historian, and also one who was fascinated by politics, also published a book by the title *The Nature and Limits of Political Science* in 1963. This book is avowedly inspired by Oakeshott's own criticism of scientific methods used in making sense of politics.
6. Michael Oakeshott, *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939).
7. For a collection of his different essays on Hobbes, see his *Hobbes on Civil Association* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1975).

8. For a good description of Oakeshott and British Idealism, see David Boucher, "Oakeshott in the Context of British Idealism," *Podoksik* 2012: 247–273; and "The Victim of Thought: The Idealist Inheritance," in *A Companion to Michael Oakeshott*, Paul Franco and Leslie Marsh, eds. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 2012), 47–69. For a criticism of this contextualization, see the entry on Oakeshott in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*: Terry Nardin, "Michael Oakeshott" (Winter 2016 Edition, Edward N. Zalta, ed. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/oakeshott/>. Accessed November 28, 2017).

9. A posthumous publication of his lectures during the late 1960s: Michael Oakeshott, *Lectures in the History of Political Thought*, Terry Nardin and Luke O'Sullivan, eds. (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2006).

10. Marquis of Vauvenargues Luc de Clapiers, *The Reflections and Maxims of Luc de Clapiers Marquis of Vauvenargues*. F. G. Stevens, trans. (London: Humphrey Milford, 1940), (71). Oakeshott, characteristically, used the French original form of the quote.

11. Timothy Fuller, "Foreword," in Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1991), xiii–xxii.

12. Burke is referred to in this essay in the context of his reference to a "partnership between the present and the past" (28).

13. This remark is attributed by Oakeshott to Voltaire, but he gives as a further reference Plato. If you put together these two names, you will soon see Oakeshott's constructed opponent.

14. Oakeshott's use of the term *rationality* suggests that it could be counterposed by reasonability, a more modest term, which does not claim universal validity.

15. While Ryle's *Concept of Mind* came out in 1949, two years later than Oakeshott's *Rationalism* essay, Ryle's conceptual distinction was published already in his 1946 paper "Knowing How and Knowing That." Oakeshott's review of Ryle's *Concept of Mind* came out under the title "Body and Mind" in the *Spectator* 184 (1950): 20, 22. Years later he warmly introduced Ryle (LSE Oakeshott Archives, box 1/3, undated) who delivered the annual LSE August Comte Memorial Lecture on April 26, 1962, entitled "A Rational Animal." For a very early comparison of Oakeshott and Ryle, see John D. Mabbott, "Review of Rationalism in Politics," *Mind* 72/288 (1963): 609–611. For a more recent one, see Leslie Marsh, "Ryle and Oakeshott on the 'Knowing-How/Knowing-That' Distinction," in *The Meaning of Michael Oakeshott's Conservatism*, Corey Abel, ed. (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2010), 143–160.

16. One can argue that there is a difference between knowing that and knowing what. Yet I think the parallel still holds—after all, the conceptual pair is in both versions know(ing) how.

17. In the discourse generated by Ryle, the distinction of the two kinds of knowledge leads to the distinction of two approaches of knowledge, that of intellectualism and anti-intellectualism. Oakeshott's Rationalism overlaps, although it is not to be identified with Ryle's description of the mistaken position of intellectualism.

18. It is here that Oakeshott gets closest to the criticism of an overwhelming technology in modernity by Heidegger. See his *The Question Concerning Technology* (*Die Frage nach der Technik*), first published in 1954, but a part of it already presented in a lecture in 1949.

19. Cf. Hayek's criticism of an ideological use of science, in Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Counter-Revolution of Science, Studies on the Abuse of Reason* (New York: Free Press, 1952).

20. Christopher Stephen Lutz, "Alasdair Chalmers MacIntyre (1929–)," Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/mac-over/>. Accessed November 28, 2017.

21. "An Interview with Giovanna Borradori," in *The MacIntyre Reader*, Kelvin Knight, ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 255–266.

22. MacIntyre claims: "During the first twenty years of my philosophical career—from 1951 to 1971 when I had just emigrated to the United States—a good deal of what I did and thought was in the style of analytic philosophy" (Ibid., 259).

23. Ibid., 257.

24. MacIntyre's career is divided into three separate periods, based on his own self-reflections on his own intellectual development: the early years (1949–1971), the interim period (1971–1977), and the mature phase (1977–). See Lutz, based on "An Interview for Cogito," in *The MacIntyre Reader* (267–275). In 1971 he published *Against the Self-Images of the Age*, and in 1977 he "began to write the final draft of *After Virtue*" (268).

25. Apparently the same expression is behind the fourth stanza of *For the Fallen* by Robert Laurence Binyon (1914), commemorating English soldiers falling in the early months of WWI.

26. I use the third edition of *After Virtue* (2007). The quotation is from the new part of the third edition, entitled: "Prologue. After Virtue after a Quarter of a Century" (ix–xvi).

27. One should also add that he very much dislikes and denies the stamp of communitarianism on him.

28. As MacIntyre puts it: "There are no less than three stages in the logical development of the concept which have to be identified in order, if the core conception of a virtue is to be understood, and each of these stages has its own conceptual background. The first stage requires a background account of what I shall call a practice, the second an account of what I have already characterized as the narrative order of a single human life and the third an account a good deal fuller than I have given up to now of what constitutes a moral tradition" (*After Virtue*, Third Edition [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007], 186).

29. "By a 'practice' I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended" (Ibid., 187).

30. One should also add that it is revealing about his own self-perception that instead of starting with some complicated explanation, MacIntyre finds it more urgent to offer a few examples of what he regards as practice, in accordance with his description.

31. Oakeshott, "Political Education," 61.

32. He adds that such a method is absolutely excluded in the case of political behavior, where intentions are all important. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 208.

33. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as An Other* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

34. I am presenting both conversations in particular then and human actions in general as enacted narratives. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 211.

35. Michael Oakeshott, *The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind: An Essay* (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1959), 11.

36. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France, The Works of the Right Honorable Edmund Burke, III* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1866), 359: "a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born."

37. "There are at least three ways in which the account that I have given is clearly Aristotelian" (MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 197).

38. For the famous Aristotelian classification of forms of knowledge as craft knowledge (*technē*), scientific knowledge (*epistēmē*), practical wisdom (*phronēsis*), theoretical wisdom (*sophia*), and understanding (*nous*), see Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1999), NE 1139b15.

39. Oakeshott, "On Human Conduct," 88.

40. Terry Nardin, "Michael Oakeshott."

41. Oakeshott's reference is to 2.40. There we find the following claim: "Instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all. Again, in our enterprises we present the singular spectacle of daring and deliberation, each carried to its highest point, and both united in the same persons." (Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 2.40 [London: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1910], available at Perseus, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0200%3Abook%3D2%3Achapter%3D40>. Accessed November 28, 2017.

42. Aristotle, NE 1103a20

43. Mary Frances Williams, *Ethics in Thucydides: The Ancient Simplicity* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998), 67.

44. For a further encounter or conversation between Oakeshott and Aristotle, and once again in connection with Pericles, see his essay "Political Discourse" in *Rationalism in Politics* (70–98, 78–80).

45. Being *sōphrōn* means having the virtue of *sophrosunē*, in the sense of concentrating on the common good.

46. For an explicit formulation which includes a reference to prudence see his *Introduction to Leviathan*: "Two things more belong to experience; the fruits of experience. The first is History, which is the ordered register of past experiences. The second is prudence, which is the power to anticipate experience by means of the recollection of what has gone before" (Oakeshott, "*Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*," 241).