

A History of Philosophy

13 Aristotle's Epistemology and the Human Soul

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Last time we completed what we needed to do with Aristotle's metaphysics and took a quick initial look at his epistemology, looking at the various pieces of work that make up what he, what was referred to as the organon and the logic. And then turning to what he does in the posterior analytics, which is about our knowledge of first principles. Keep in mind what he's after.

And in book one of the posterior analytics, the segment that you have of book one, I think it comes through fairly clearly. That is to say, what he's after is the development of a science of first principles. The first principles have to do with the essences, the forms, along with other causes that are involved.

Now, the conception that he has is that what we need is to develop from the first principles of a science a chain of deductive inferences. So that the logical structure of any body of theoretical knowledge, get that, the logical structure of any theoretical system, of any science, is that of a deductive system. Okay, a deductive system.

You sometimes hear it said that the Greeks thought of science as deductive. Well, Aristotle did. That is to say, if you can know certain universal principles, you can make all sorts of inferences about particulars, which should be no problem.

However, as he points out, while the deductions about particulars are demonstrable, that is to say, they can be logically deduced, you can demonstrate them, what they are, logically. Proof. The first principles, if they are truly first principles, are not demonstrated or deduced from other principles.

And plainly, any chain of deductive inferences has to go back to first principles, which are so first as to be indemonstrable. And I suppose the classic example is Euclidean geometry, with which he was quite familiar. That is to say, a geometrical system which begins with certain axioms.

Euclid had five basic axioms. In modern times, we call them postulates. We don't think they're axiomatic.

We simply lay them down as postulates. But the ancients saw them as axiomatic, that is to say, self-evident truths. Couldn't possibly be false.

So, that's the conception of science that he has, and frankly, even in modern times, that has been the conception of a body of theoretical knowledge, a theoretical system of science, way through into the 1950s, you see. When the revolution in

philosophy of science, associated with Thomas Kuhn's book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, drew our attention to studies in the history of science, which make it plain that, in actual fact, science doesn't function like that historically. It's one thing to say how science ought to be; it's another thing to say how it does work.

It doesn't seem to work that way. But this was a model adopted from the ancients that was transmitted later. In modern times, with the rise of empirical science, it was taken that the first principles were empirical generalisations.

Empirical generalisations which serve as hypotheses, the most general hypotheses. And so in modern philosophy of science, they talked of the hypothetical deductive approach. Hypothetically, there's your first principle, then deductions.

Well, that's Aristotle, except that he doesn't think it begins with a hypothesis. He doesn't think it begins with an empirical generalisation. Because hypotheses are not certain.

Empirical generalisations are not certain. You can falsify any empirical generalisation with one counterexample. It only takes one counterexample to falsify an empirical generalisation.

And you'll find in that opening section of the *posterior analytics* that Aristotle points out the problem that we have in getting these indemonstrable first principles. Without them, we either have an infinite regress back to some prior principle, then to some prior principle, then to some prior principle, ad nauseam. You see? An infinite regress does not ground first principles with any certainty.

Alternatively, you can get a circular argument. A depends on B, depends on C, depends on D, depends on A. Beautiful circle. Mutually supportive.

But therefore without certainty. And what he's after is something which is indisputable. That's certain.

That must be true. And we must know it. It's the ideal of knowledge that the Greeks had.

You see? So how can we know these first principles? The problem is the problem of knowing indemonstrable first principles. And what he proposes is a conception known as induction. A procedure, rather, of induction.

But be careful because it's not the kind of inductive reasoning that we're acquainted with in modern times. Aristotle does this in his *Organon*. Around 1600, Francis Bacon wrote a work in Latin called the *Novum Organum*, which means the *New Organon*.

In which he repudiated Aristotle's logic and Aristotle's notion of induction. And proposed a new one. Experimental.

Which is essentially the modern conception of induction. So while they are known by the same name, they are very, very different things. About all they have in common is that they begin with experience.

But the processes are vastly different. And vastly different because they're after different things. What Bacon was after, and we'll see this as we get to Francis Bacon later on, what Bacon was after was simply uniformities in nature.

Uniformly functioning causal laws. If you like efficient causes. And obviously Aristotle is not after that.

What he's after is essences. Those forms that are imminent within particulars. How do we get to know them? You see.

Now, as I said last time, it's not by dialectic. Because dialectic leaves the world of particulars behind, turns its back on it, and contemplates simply dialectically possible essences. Analyzing and critiquing to see if they withstand dialectical criticism and scrutiny.

Well Aristotle isn't after some transcendent essences, but essences that are embodied in the world of particulars, so you can't turn your back on particulars. But how do you get them out of the particulars? That's the question. Well, the process that he proposes begins with sensations.

Sensations. And he talks a little bit more about this later on in his psychology, *De anima* on the soul, than he does in the *Posterior Analytics*. But his view is that in sensation, in sensation, what the physical senses, what they apprehend is the form of a particular thing without its material.

Now, that's not very strange when you figure that the matter couldn't possibly get into your eye. The matter of this marker couldn't possibly get into your ear. You see.

The matter remains intact. But what the senses apprehend is the form. Shape.

Smell. Color. Without the material that has the shape, smell, and color.

Okay? Now, what we have then is a vast barrage of sensations of that sort, coming through the five senses. In addition to the five senses, he takes it that there is an additional sense that he calls the *sensus communis*. And I give you the Latin term that's used in discussing it because the English translation would obviously be common sense.

But it ain't common sense in our sense of common sense, not in the common sense sense of common sense. The *sensus communis* is sort of a unifying sense that correlates and integrates the various senses. So that I have this sensory capacity with regard to this marker of coordinating the smell, color, shape, feel, and touch.

All at once. And seeing it as having to do with one object. *Sensus communis*.

An integrating sensory capacity. Okay? Now, obviously, we need something like that. We would say, I suppose, that the central nervous system does it.

The brain does it. Well, he's a little before the days of brain science. So he has a *sensus communis*.

But this multiplicity of sensations is, as it were, retained in the mind. There's a memory recalling, retaining, accumulating sensations. And this process of accumulating sensations leads us to taking all of these sensations of a particular class or species of things and finding that we think of them as one kind of experience.

Yes. So I really have had experience with ink markers. I've had experience with books.

I've had experience with college students. Okay? Quite an experience. But that experience is an organized experience in the sense that I have classified this accumulation of sensations processed through into the memory.

So I recognize that there are various classes of experience, various kinds of experience. And my experience of, for instance, the human species is therefore one such organized experience. You see? You could say that someone is a person of experience.

That's an interesting phrase. Of experience. Later on in the development of modern empiricism, experience is said to consist of sensations.

Not Aristotle. An experience is the product of sensations. A unified, classified experience of a whole species.

And within that unified, classified experience, we can readily see what seems to apply to that class as a general rule. Now, the phrase general rule is not his. But the idea is his.

We readily recognize what, as a general rule, is true of all members of a class. Until we apprehend that general principle, sort of intuitively. That is to say, we don't have to go through any inferential process to get at it.

A person of experience recognizes immediately what the general principle is at work, what the general rule is in this case. That is to say, recognizes what is universal to the whole class. What is the essence of the species?

So Aristotle's process of induction is a process of cumulative experience, classified and organized, leading to an intuitive recognition of the form of the species. Now, do you follow that? Okay, now I want to pin it down to the text. Because this is crucial to the whole of Aristotelian epistemology from here on through the entire Middle Ages.

You see? He's saying we learn to abstract the form from the particulars of species. The form is considered, mentally, in abstraction from, detached from. So we know it as an abstract idea.

You see? An abstract idea. Not an empirical generalization, but an abstract universal idea. Yeah.

Now, take a look at page 296. And, in fact, just a flashback, if you would, to the beginning of the posterior analytics on 287. Just pick it up there.

287. Where the book begins, all instruction given or received by way of argument or demonstration proceeds from preexistent knowledge. That is to say, from some first principle that's known.

He's not talking of preexisting in the sense of something that is innate, like Plato's innate ideas. Okay. How we get it is another question.

He says later on in that paragraph that the syllogism assumes an audience that accepts its premises. Induction exhibiting the universal implicit in the particular. Induction exhibits, shows us, the universal implicit in the particular.

So what he's after then is knowledge of first principles from which syllogistic reasoning can proceed. Knowledge of first principles that comes by induction. Okay.

Now, he talks about that and the inadequacy of other approaches to first principles. And then in book two, where our selection begins on 294, he picks it up and comes more directly at what he's after. Look at 295, second column, the paragraph that ends halfway down.

To know a thing's nature is to know the reason why it is. This is equally true insofar as they're said without qualification to be, as opposed to being possessed of some attribute. Insofar as they're said to be possessed of some attribute, such as equal to two right angles, or greater or less.

So he wants to get at the nature of the thing. Now, at the top of 296, first column, he asks whether the developed states of knowledge are not innate, though at first unnoticed, which was Plato's view. And his response, it's strange if we possess them from birth, for it means that we possess apprehensions more accurate than demonstration and fail to notice them.

Can you know something if you don't know it? Do you know something if you don't know that you know it? He thinks not. He thinks not. So if it's not innate, on the one hand, it's not just cumulative experience, generalization on the other hand, what is it? And about two-fifths of the way down that column, he says, we must possess a capacity of some sort, but not such as to rank higher in accuracy than developed states.

So then, we don't have innate knowledge, but we have a capacity for knowing these natures, these forms. A capacity. Now, a capacity, of course, is a potential.

And in his psychology, he talks of that as potential intellect. Potential intellect. This capacity is, in itself, passive.

So it becomes known as passive intellect. And that's the starting place. What does it mean to say that a young child who hasn't learned to think is a rational being? It means it has potential intellect.

A potency that hasn't yet been developed. Capacity that hasn't been developed. Hasn't been actualized.

So, what we have at the beginning, then, is potential intellect. Now, how does this potential get actualized? You see? How does the potential get actualized? How does passive intellect get to be active, or, if you like, actual intellect? The potential becomes actual, the passive becomes active. What's involved in that? And that's what he spells out in what follows.

Notice, halfway down that first column on 286, an obvious characteristic of all animals, they possess a congenital, discriminative capacity called sense perception. Discriminative? Yes, they're able to discriminate one object from another, discriminate one kind of thing from another. How else does a dog know its way home? How else does a dog recognize what's a dog in order to chase it? How does it know its master, mistress? You see? There's a discriminative capacity.

Perception, sense perception, is a discriminating process. Within the whole booming, buzzing confusion of what's going on out there, attention focuses and selects something for observation. Now, all animals have that sort of capacity.

But though sense perception is innate, native, natural, in all animals, in some, the sense perception persists. In others, it doesn't. Animals in which the impression persists have either no knowledge at all outside of the act of perceiving, or no knowledge of objects of which no impression persists, in which this persistence does not come.

They have no knowledge. Big pun. But on the other hand, animals in which it does come into being, this persistence, they retain the sense impression.

And when that persistence is frequently repeated, a further distinction arises between those that, out of the persistent sense impression, develop a power of systematizing and those that do not. So, in addition to the memory, you have to go further to a systematized, organized experience. And there he has in mind the sort of classification he develops of genera and species.

What role does communication have in this? Did he see that as an essential tool from one step to another? No, he doesn't seem to think here that communication is essential. He doesn't mention it in this context. However, it's pretty obvious, and I think he recognizes this in some other places, that the language of the community provides us with the names, be they conventional or be they onomatopoeic, with the names that assist in both the recall of the experience and the organization of the experience.

Now, I don't think of anywhere he actually develops that. Because we don't get a developed philosophy of language in terms of its function in thinking. Really, until, I would say, the 17th and 18th century.

So, a couple of thousand years to wait for that one. You get some anticipations of philosophy of language in Plato, Augustine, and so forth, and other aspects of it. But, no, his focus is upon ideas, concepts, rather than words.

The focus on words, in relationship to universals, really belongs to the nominalists in the Middle Ages, who tell us that there are no universal ideas, no universal forms. There are only words, names, that function for whole classes. So, they come into focus initially there.

But in terms of communication, not until later on. Okay, so we get to this organized experience. Notice how he talks of this at the bottom of 296.

Out of sense perception comes memory. Out of frequently repeated memories of the same thing, experience. A number of memories constitute a single experience.

From experience, again, that is, from the universal, now stabilized in its entirety within the soul. The one beside the many, which is a single identity within them all. The one is a single identity.

From this experience, stabilized in the soul, originates the skill of the craftsman. Yes, he knows the essential kind of thing that he's trying to make. The knowledge of the man of science, who knows the nature of the things he's dealing with.

Skill in the sphere of coming to be, science in the sphere of being. We conclude that these states of knowledge are neither innate, in an already determinate form, nor developed from higher states of knowledge, but from sense perception. It is like, and look at this figure of speech, it's like a route in battle, stopped by first one man making a stand, then another, until the original formation has been restored.

The soul is so constituted as to be capable of that process. That's the capacity. The capacity that the soul has, the potential that it has, as passive intellect, is to say to the whole flux of sensations and memories that build up into a cumulative experience, whoa, stop there! Let me look at you.

You see? And it's in reflecting on that experience that you intuitively recognize what is the general rule that runs through it all. What's the essential nature of the thing? What are human beings? Why, rational animals. Of course.

Social animals. Of course. You see? So it's an intuitive recognition.

Well, that is what he comes back to again and again. Notice in the second column on 296, the last paragraph begins talking about primary premises known by induction. There's the word.

And at the top of 297 in the third line, he uses the term intuition. Intuition apprehends the primary premises. And if you read straight on into the metaphysics, which is where you began reading Aristotle, notice what he says.

All men by nature desire to know. An indication of this is the delight we take in our senses, not only with a view to action, but even when we're not going to do anything, we prefer seeing something else. The reason is that most of the senses make us know and bring to light many differences between things.

By nature, animals are born with the faculty of sensation, and from sensation, memory is produced. Then, at the bottom of that column, from memory, experience is produced. Several memories finally produce the capacity for a single experience.

Experience is pretty much like science and art, but really, science and art come through experience. The reason is that experience is knowledge of individuals, art of

universals, and, of course, science, knowledge of universals. So this is the detailing of that theory of knowledge with which the metaphysics begins.

How do you know the forms? This is it. Any questions? Comments? Reruns? David? I was wondering, the person who would argue for empirical generalizations, would he deviate from Aristotle's process at the point of organizing experience? Yeah. Empirical generalization involves the first two; perhaps it involves the third.

It certainly involves accumulating a number of experiences and looking for similarities. The difficulty is that when you have simple similarities, you're not quite sure whether they're accidental or essential. And it's not until you have a broad, extensive, unified experience and are really on top of it at home with that experience, as we say, that you intuitively begin to see what it is that's essential.

Your two-leggedness is such that if you lose one, you don't lose being a human being, even though it's a similarity among all humans. Okay. Do you think you have that fairly well? Notice that if we are talking of theories of knowledge, different kinds of epistemology, we have so far met at least three different kinds.

Okay. We've met the kind of empiricism that thinks that knowledge is nothing but accumulating sense observations and making generalizations and whatever can be derived from that. You've got, secondly, the kind of rationalism that thinks of certain knowledge as innate.

We're born with it. Plato. And now we have a third kind.

Hmm. A third kind. Aristotle's.

Where the mind contributes to knowledge. Sure. It contributes laws of thought and categories of thought that correspond with laws of being and categories of being.

Isn't it? So that its thinking processes correlate with the nature of reality to begin with. It brings a capacity to organize, to structure. You see? And through that capacity to organize and structure, it's able to get at the unchanging truth about the nature of things.

So what are you going to call this? Well, in the later version, Immanuel Kant's version of something like it, it gets to be called rational empiricism. It combines the two. Some writers simply call it moderate empiricism.

Moderate is distinct from complete empiricism or extreme or radical empiricism. Moderate empiricism. Empirical because the initial source is in sense perception.

But it takes more than sense perceptions to make knowledge. Okay. So we have those three theories of knowledge.

And of course, over against those three, you still have a fourth view that has emerged. The skepticism of some of the sophists, like Gorgias. Okay.

And of course, that typology in more developed forms persists to this day. Really does. Four basic approaches to epistemology.

Okay. Well, I'm ready then to move from epistemology to Aristotle's ethics. Are you? Seeing no objections.

Ah, one at the back. Jason? Sorry, Tim. Yeah.

Does Aristotle say at some point where we can actually... Yeah, that's a good question because it's in a way the question we asked of Plato. You see, in Plato, dialectic leads to the intuitive recognition of the universal. Right? So that the conclusion to a dialectic is not, therefore it follows that, but simply, oh, I see.

You see, that's the language of intuition. Direct awareness. And you feel with Plato's dialogues and the dialectic that's been going on, as if, however clear the conclusion is to Plato, some smarter aleck might come along around the next corner with another difficult question.

You see. It's like any debate. You begin to feel that the outcome of the debate depends on who's the smartest aleck.

You see. Well, if there is that problem with intuition in Plato, you're suggesting there is a similar problem in Aristotle. When do we have enough experience organised in the right way to be able to draw a conclusion with certainty? Do we ever have enough? You see.

Do we ever have enough? If one of the criticisms of empirical generalisations is that they can never be complete enough to be certain, some more are coming tomorrow. You see. Well, couldn't the same thing be said about Aristotle? That his cumulative experience of that class of things is such that maybe he hasn't gotten at the essence in totality, or with complete certainty.

You see. So what's going on in this is questions about the quest for certainty. Whether that quest for intuitive certainty is a beginning for subsequent logical certainty.

Whether that quest is ever going to be satisfied fully. Is it an ill-conceived quest? Is it asking something of our capacity for knowledge, which our capacity for knowledge

does not have? You see. And that is what has led in... It's that kind of question that has led in modern times to criticism of this general approach known as foundationalism, where you get certain indubitable first principles and try to deduce things from that.

You see. In other words, the geometrical model. You see.

Is that a proper way to go about establishing knowledge, making sure of it? Are there other alternatives to foundationalism? You see. Where the main alternative is often known as coherentism, where various beliefs are mutually supportive, so that you come out with, if you like, justified belief. And in the 20th century, knowledge has come to be defined not as certainty, but simply as justified belief.

You claim to know when you have sufficient justification for affirming that you have a rational belief. Well, that's been the direction that epistemology has taken, but this quest for certainty is with us all the time. I was reading this morning about the way in which the quest for certainty was involved in the Counter-Reformation, in the development of Renaissance scepticism, you see, and in the development of early modern science.

It's the perennial issue. The sceptic thinks the alternatives are certainty or scepticism. You can't live like a skeptic.

You have to assume certain things when you cross the street. And yet if you cannot get theoretical certainty, then what? Well, there must be a third alternative. Yes, sir.

And it's that third alternative which epistemology is now trying to define. All right, to Aristotle's ethics then. And we've seen enough of the way in which ethics develops among the Greeks to expect that Aristotle's ethics are going to be related to his conception of the human soul.

And indeed, that's the case. Aristotle, like his predecessors, has the same term, the same word for soul as for life. So he ascribes soul, therefore, to all living things.

Which simply means he's saying they're all living things. But he's sort of a biological vitalist. For whom life is a distinct kind of force or entity other than matter.

You see? It has certain functions that matter, but it doesn't have. And so it's possible to talk of a hierarchy of souls. The vegetative soul.

The vegetative soul, which sometimes he calls the nutritive soul, because nutrition is one of its functions. Reproduction is another. You see? Vegetative life reproduces itself.

So the vegetative soul. There is the locomotive soul. Not talking of railroad engines.

But simply of the kind of life that's able to move physically. There is the sensitive soul. With capacity for sensation.

Therefore has appetites. So that the sensitive soul sometimes becomes known as the appetitive soul. And to top it all, there is the rational soul.

You see, and that's simply saying that there are some things that simply have vegetative capacities. Others, in addition, have locomotive capacities. Others, in addition, have sensitive capacities.

And others, in addition, have rational capacities. We have them all. You see? So, soul or life embraces all of these.

And what distinguishes the human species is that of all the living things that Aristotle knows of, we alone have a rational soul. Now, notice that I use the word capacity. Capacities to function in certain ways.

Everything has its proper function. The process of growth, in the process of growth, the capacity develops. The potential is actualized.

The soul, then, as the essential nature, the form of a human person, has an actual existence from the very beginning of human development. An actual existence as a vegetative kind of thing, nutritive, so forth. It gains, yeah, during pregnancy, the actuality of locomotion.

You see? And it has the capacity for the rest. Potential. The sensitive capacities get actualized along the way.

And, subsequently, the rational capacities depend on the development of the sensitive capacities. And we tend, of course, to try and monitor those developments in terms of brain development. Development of the central nervous system, so forth.

But brain development primarily. Aristotle is thinking of the growth of the living being, actualizing the potential of the soul. Now, of these, it is the rational soul, if anything.

Which has the capacity for immortality. Capacity for immortality. Because it's in abstract thought, in detachment from physical things.

That we're able to think and experience independently of the ongoing experiences of physical things. You see? Because it's in abstract thinking that we think in abstraction from the physical things. The mind, the rational soul, grasps eternal essences, forms.

You see? So if there's any aspect of this which has capacity for disembodied existence, it's going to be the rational soul. And Aristotle isn't very clear as to just what he thinks beyond that about immortality. There are some passages in which he seems to talk of that individuality continuing after death.

Others in which he seems to say that it emerges back into some sort of mind, capital M, that reminds us of Anaxagoras. Mind, noose. Now, that's the soul.

But it is on the basis of the nature of the soul that the good is defined. It's that way because Aristotle has a teleological metaphysic. Everything in nature is end-oriented and has a final cause.

The growth process of every living thing has its final cause. That final cause, that essential natural end, is the natural good that the process would normally actualize. And so the supreme good for human beings reflects the native capacity of the rational soul.

So he introduces, then, the notion of a supreme good. The notion of a supreme good, sometimes called the highest good. Sometimes graced later with the Latin term *summum bonum*.

This is where the term originates. And he points out that by virtue of this teleology, the *summum bonum*, the good, must be intrinsically good, not instrumentally good only. Now that distinction is fairly familiar.

An instrumental good is one that's good for something else. The coins I have in my pocket are good simply for what you can do with them, which isn't much these days. Five cents, you can't even get a Xerox for that.

But an intrinsic good is something which is good in and of itself. The supreme good is good in and of itself by virtue of the nature of the rational soul. It's good in and of itself; by nature, it's good.

So the intrinsic good, it must be an inclusive good. So that is to say it doesn't exclude lesser good things, but embraces them all. So that the lesser ones can serve the good as a whole.

And he says it must be applicable to the human species. That is to say, the sort of thing that the species can participate in. And the term participate there is the important thing because it's loaded, isn't it? With connotations of the relationship of the particular to the universal.

By virtue of the universal nature of human beings, there is going to be some intrinsic good, some supreme good. And because it has to do with the universal, the particular, the human should be able to participate in it. So those are the, if you like, the job description.

But the question is, what is it that fits the job description? What, in fact, is the good? Is the supreme good? And there you get some difficulty because of the vocabulary and problems of translation. The word that's used most is the word happiness. And immediately, in our hedonistic society, we have images of pleasure.

But happiness is not pleasure. The pursuit of happiness is not the pursuit of pleasure. Aristotle is not a hedonist pursuing pleasure.

Pleasure is not the highest good of rational animals. You see. The Greek term eudaimonia is used.

And it's pretty well untranslatable in any, well, literal sense. The daimons were the gods, the spirits that inspired Socrates to his mission. Well, what has that got to do with the price of potatoes in Athens and so forth? Now, the best you can translate here approximately is with our English phrase well-being.

Eu is the Greek adverb, well. So eudaimonia, well-being. But of course, when you say well-being, that means nothing but good.

And so you know further. Get it? So the vocabulary as such doesn't define the good. You have to read Aristotle and how he talks about happiness.

What is happiness? What is eudaimonia? Some translations use the term fulfilment. Well, what they really mean is actualising the potential. But the term fulfilment is a bad one in terms of current usage.

Where we think of individual fulfilment in individualistic ways. I feel fulfilled. You know, that sort of thing.

Which is not what Aristotle is talking about. Nothing about your feelings or your idiosyncratic desires being satisfied. No.

What he's after is fulfilment in the sense of actualising the rational capacity of the soul. That's the good, of course. Intrinsically good.

Inclusively good. Something that all rational beings can participate in. So, as you read Aristotle, notice that he defines the good as the actualisation of human potential.

And perhaps the best single statement is this. That is, a complete life lived in accordance with reason. And in the same context, he says in accordance with virtue.

Now, it's easy to say, oh, in accordance with reason. Of course, that's the old Greek ethic. The good life is one guided by reason.

But notice this. You see, and that's what makes a difference between Plato and Aristotle. Plato was interested in the good of a soul that can function perfectly well without a body.

Okay? So the highest kind of good that Plato could conceive for a well-balanced soul, just one, was contemplation of the good. And Plato's ethical ideal has influenced, therefore, a contemplative way of life. That's why Platonic philosophy underlies a lot of medieval mysticism.

The contemplative life. Monasticism. Contemplative life.

Yeah. Now, Aristotle's not against contemplation. He thinks that contemplating as God contemplates eternal truth is indeed our highest capacity.

But the highest good is a complete life. Why? Because a human being is not a soul imprisoned in a body. A human being's a rational animal.

You see? And he sees the good life then as actualizing your life as a distinctively rational animal. Which means affairs and responsibilities of this life. Yes, sir.

All of them guided by reason. All of them with virtue. So it's a very holistic concept.

Very holistic. He wants the active exercise of the soul's natural functions. So the good is what today is often called a human flourishing.

A flourishing of humans. A thoroughly human quality of life. Well, that leads us to the concept of flourishing.

The concept of virtue. Okay?