

Both in oligarchies and democracies the right arrangement of offices is important. Some kinds of office are necessary in every state; others are peculiar to special types of state (c. 8).

BOOK VII (IV).

cc. 1-3. *The Summum Bonum for individuals and states.*

Before constructing the ideal state we must know what is the most desirable life for states and individuals. True happiness flows from the possession of wisdom and virtue, and not from the possession of external goods. But a virtuous life must be equipped with external goods as instruments. These laws hold good of both states and individuals (c. 1). But does the highest virtue consist in contemplation or in action? The states of the past have lived for action in the shape of war and conquest. But war cannot be regarded as a reasonable object for a state (c. 2). A virtuous life implies activity, but activity may be speculative as well as practical. Those are wrong who regard the life of a practical politician as degrading. But again they are wrong who treat political power as the highest good (c. 3).

cc. 4-12. *A picture of the Ideal State.*

We must begin by considering the population and the territory. The former should be as small as we can make it without sacrificing independence and the capacity for a moral life. The smaller the population the more manageable it will be (c. 4). The territory must be large enough to supply the citizens with the means of living liberally and temperately, with an abundance of leisure.