

Guiding Questions: Aristotle's 'published' works, the ones that are now lost but were meant for public consumption at the time (as opposed to the 'lecture note' style works we do have): what were they like? what do we know about them? How do we know about them?

### Aristotle's Complete Published works

Aristotle is believed to have written as many as 200 treatises, but only about 30 of his original output has survived

- These surviving works from antiquity, often called the Aristotelian Corpus, were made up of esoteric and exoteric texts. They were preserved through medieval manuscript transmission
  - o The collection was originally compiled a few centuries after Aristotle's death
  - o There is an understood distinction among scholars that his exoteric works were intended for the public while the esoteric were the more technical works intended for use in his Lyceum and his philosophical inner circle.
    - There is also a common assumption that his esoteric (think Politics<sup>3</sup>) works were some of Aristotle's own unpolished lecture notes or the transcriptions of his lectures by his students. They were primarily technical, unpublished lecture notes which were preserved by later scholars
- A major difference between the ancient and modern corpus is the inclusion of Aristotle's dialogues. These were his most famous works that he made available for the general public during his lifetime
  - o Mentioned by Cicero and praised for its "golden flow" *Acad. PR. 38.119*)
- The exoteric dialogues were widely circulated but are largely lost today
- The oldest existing Greek manuscripts of them date back to the ninth century

### Exoteric works

What were they like?

- Ancient sources consistently describe them as polished and accessible which is very different from the dense, technical treatises we have (Metaphysics or Nicomachean Ethics)
- Many of them were written in dialogue form modeled after Plato, hence these works also being known as exoteric dialogues
- Titles we know include: *Eudemus (On the Soul)*, *Protreptics (Exhortation to Philosophy)*, *On Philosophy*, *On Justice*, *On Kingship*, *Sophist*, *On Prayer*, *On Rhetoric or Grylus*, *On Love*
  - o *\*we'll see a more extensive list further down*

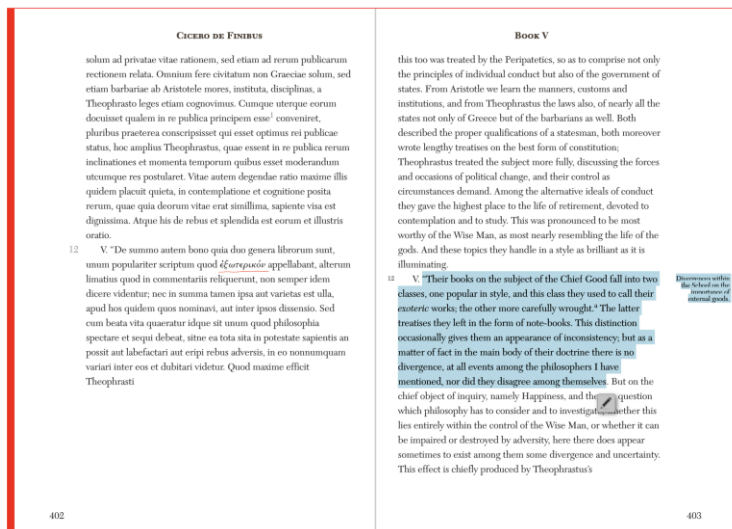
- From surviving fragments, they seem to have used rhetorical flourish and dramatic framing, addressed broader audiences, not just students in the Lyceum, and they engaged with popular philosophical theme i.e, ethics, politics, the good life, and immortality

What do we actually know about them?

- We only have fragments of these works such as short quotations or paraphrases preserved by later writers
- *The Protreptics* survives in pieces quoted by Iamblichus
- *On Philosophy* is partially constructable from citations in writers like Cicero

How do we know about them?

- Quotations in later authors
  - o Authors like Cicero, Plutarch, and Iamblichus quote Aristotle's exoteric works. These quotations are the backbone of modern reconstructions



(Cic. Fin. 5. 12)

- Fragment collections and modern reconstruction
  - o Modern scholars collect and analyze these fragments

How do we know these works existed?

- In *Lives of Eminent Philosophers (Book V)*, Diogenes Laertius give a long catalogue of Aristotle's writings. This is one of the main reasons we even know the names and scope of the lost exoteric corpus
  - o Diogenes explicitly describes Aristotle's works as including dialogues, which is key evidence that the exoteric writing resembles those of Plato. They aren't long

excerpts, but the by the mere fact that he groups these works alongside known dialogue traditions helps modern scholars infer that his philosophy was originally presented in a more accessible, conversational format.

- When later authors like Plutarch or Cicero quote Aristotle, they don't always clearly identify the source work. With Diogenes' catalogue it also allowed modern scholars to attempt to match fragment themes with known titles and reconstruct clusters of material
- At the same time, Diogenes is not a fully reliable guide. He wrote several centuries after Aristotle and was not a critical historian. As a result, Scholars treat his lists with caution as some works may be misattributed, duplicated under different titles, or inaccurately described

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told in this form<sup>a</sup>—"It was not the man," said he, "that I assisted, but humanity." To the question how we should behave to friends, he answered, "As we should wish them to behave to us." Justice he defined as a virtue of soul which distributes according to merit. Education he declared to be the best provision for old age. Favorinus in the second book of his *Memorabilia* mentions as one of his habitual sayings that "He who has friends can have no true friend." Further, this is found in the seventh book of the *Ethics*.<sup>b</sup> These then are the sayings attributed to him.

His writings are very numerous and, considering the man's all-round excellence, I deemed it incumbent on me to catalogue them<sup>c</sup>:

Of Justice, four books.  
On Poets, three books.  
On Philosophy, three books.  
Of the Statesman, two books.  
On Rhetoric, or Grylus, one book.  
Nerinthus, one book.  
The Sophist, one book.  
Menexenus, one book.  
Concerning Love, one book.  
Symposium, one book.  
Of Wealth, one book.  
Exhortation to Philosophy, one book.  
Of the Soul, one book.  
Of Prayer, one book.  
On Noble Birth, one book.

(*Diogenes, Lives, 5.1*)

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On Pleasure, one book.  
Alexander, or a Plea for Colonies, one book.  
On Kingship, one book.  
On Education, one book.  
Of the Good, three books.  
Extracts from Plato's Laws, three books.  
Extracts from the Republic, two books.  
Of Household Management, one book.  
Of Friendship, one book.  
On being or having been affected, one book.  
Of Sciences, one book.  
On Controversial Questions, two books.  
Solutions of Controversial Questions, four books.  
Sophistical Divisions, four books.  
On Contraries, one book.  
On Genera and Species, one book.  
On Essential Attributes, one book.  
Three note-books on Arguments for Purposes of Refutation.  
Propositions concerning Virtue, two books.  
Objections, one book.  
On the Various Meanings of Terms or Expressions where a Determinant is added, one book.  
Of Passions or of Anger, one book.  
Five books of Ethics.  
On Elements, three books.  
Of Science, one book.  
Of Logical Principle, one book.  
Logical Divisions, seventeen books.  
Concerning Division, one book.  
On Dialectical Questioning and Answering, two books.  
Of Motion, one book.  
Propositions, one book.  
Controversial Propositions, one book.

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Syllogisms, one book.  
Eight books of Prior Analytics.  
Two books of Greater Posterior Analytics.  
Of Problems, one book.  
Eight books of Methodics.  
Of the Greater Good, one book.  
On the Idea, one book.  
Definitions prefixed to the Topics, seven books.  
Two books of Syllogisms.  
Concerning Syllogism with Definitions, one book.  
Of the Desirable and the Contingent, one book.  
Preface to Commonplaces, one book.  
Two books of Topics criticizing the Definitions.  
Affections or Qualities, one book.  
Concerning Logical Division, one book.  
Concerning Mathematics, one book.  
Definitions, thirteen books.  
Two books of Refutations.  
Of Pleasure, one book.  
Propositions, one book.  
On the Voluntary, one book.  
On the Beautiful, one book.  
Theses for Refutation, twenty-five books.  
Theses concerning Love, four books.  
Theses concerning Friendship, two books.  
Theses concerning the Soul, one book.  
Politics, two books.  
Eight books of a course of lectures on Politics like that of Theophrastus.  
Of Just Actions, two books.  
A Collection of Arts [that is, Handbooks], two books.  
Two books of the Art of Rhetoric.  
Art, a Handbook, one book.

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Another Collection of Handbooks, two books.  
Concerning Method, one book.  
Compendium of the "Art" of Theodectes, one book.  
A Treatise on the Art of Poetry, two books.  
Rhetorical Enthymemes, one book.  
Of Degree,<sup>3</sup> one book.  
Divisions of Enthymemes, one book.  
On Diction, two books.  
Of Taking Counsel, one book.  
A Collection or Compendium, two books.  
On Nature, three books.  
Concerning Nature, one book.  
On the Philosophy of Archytas, three books.  
On the Philosophy of Speusippus and Xenocrates,  
one book.  
Extracts from the *Timaeus* and from the Works of  
Archytas, one book.  
A Reply to the Writings of Melissus, one book.  
A Reply to the Writings of Alcmaeon, one book.  
A Reply to the Pythagoreans, one book.  
A Reply to the Writings of Gorgias, one book,  
A Reply to the Writings of Xenophanes, one book.  
A Reply to the Writings of Zeno, one book  
On the Pythagoreans, one book.  
On Animals, nine books.  
Eight books of Dissections.  
A selection of Dissections, one book.  
On Composite Animals, one book.  
On the Animals of Fable, one book.  
On Sterility, one book.  
On Plants, two books.  
Concerning Physiognomy, one book.

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Two books concerning Medicine.  
On the Unit, one book.  
Prognostics of Storms, one book.  
Concerning Astronomy, one book.  
Concerning Optics, one book.  
On Motion, one book.  
On Music, one book.  
Concerning Memory, one book.  
Six books of Homeric Problems.  
Poetics, one book.  
Thirty-eight books of Physics according to the  
lettering.  
Two books of Problems which have been examined.  
Two books of Routine Instruction.  
Mechanics, one book.  
Problems taken from the works of Democritus, two  
books.  
On the Magnet, one book.  
Analogies, one book.  
Miscellaneous Notes, twelve books.  
Descriptions of Genera, fourteen books.  
Claims advanced, one book.  
Victors at Olympia, one book.  
Victors at the Pythian Games, one book.  
On Music, one book.  
Concerning Delphi, one book.  
Criticism of the List of Pythian Victors, one book.  
Dramatic Victories at the Dionysia, one book.  
Of Tragedies, one book.  
Dramatic Records, one book.  
Proverbs, one book.  
Laws of the Mess-table, one book.  
Four books of Laws.  
Categories, one book.

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De Interpretatione, one book.

Constitutions of 158 Cities, in general and in particular,  
democratic, oligarchic, aristocratic, tyrannical.

Letters to Philip.

Letters of Selymbrians.

Letters to Alexander, four books.

Letters to Antipater, nine books.

To Mentor, one book.

To Ariston, one book.

To Olympias, one book.

To Hephaestion, one book.

To Themistagoras, one book.

To Philoxenus, one book.

In reply to Democritus, one book.

Verses beginning Ἄγνέ θεῶν πρέσβισθ' ἑκατηβόλε ("Holy One  
and Chiefest of Gods, far-darting").

Elegiac verses beginning Καλλιτέκνου μητρὸς θύγατερ  
("Daughter of a Mother blessed with fair offspring").

In all 445,270 lines.

Such is the number of the works written by him. And in them

he puts forward the following views. There are two divisions of  
philosophy, the practical and the theoretical. The practical part  
includes ethics and politics, and in the latter not only the doctrine  
of the state but also that of the household is sketched. The  
theoretical part includes physics and logic, although logic is not an  
independent science, but is elaborated as an instrument to the rest  
of science. And he clearly laid down that it has a twofold aim,  
probability and truth. For each of these he employed two faculties,  
dialectic and rhetoric where probability is aimed at, analytic and

*(Diogenes, Lives, 5.1)*

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