

BRECHT BUEKENHOUT

ARISTOTLE'S *ON KINGSHIP* AND EUERGETISM

Introduction

One of the most famous moments in antiquity where theory and practice might have intermingled is in the relationship between Aristotle (384-322 BCE) and Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE). After Aristotle had left Plato's Academy but before founding his own school, he was appointed to be the teacher of Alexander, a task that he performed for several years, beginning around 343 BCE. This connection between the philosopher and the statesman was certainly not an accident of history, since there seem to have been strong ties between Aristotle's family and the Macedonian royal house. Aristotle was supposed to be an acquaintance of King Philip II and his general Antipater; his father Nicomachus seems to have been the court doctor and friend of king Amyntas III, and his nephew Callisthenes accompanied Alexander during the latter's Asian campaign.¹ Although doubt has been raised about the extent to which Aristotle actually tutored Alexander or whether he even served as the prince's main preceptor, no one seems to deny that the philosopher was indeed involved in the education of the future conqueror.² Hence both individuals must have known

¹ See especially D. L. 5.1-5. Other biographies of Aristotle's life are collected in Düring 1957. For a discussion on Aristotle's relationship with Macedonia, see Scholz 1998, p. 153-165 and Natali 2013, p. 42-52.

² For Aristotle as tutor of Alexander, see Plu., *Alex.* 7-8. Düring 1957, p. 287 also mentions various other sources. Doubt about Aristotle as tutor of Alexander has been raised by Chroust 1973, I, p. 125-132.

Lectio



STUDIES IN THE TRANSMISSION OF TEXTS & IDEAS

Concepts of Ideal Rulership
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