Part 12
I wish to show, respecting Asia and Europe, how, in all respects, they differ from one another, and concerning the figure of the inhabitants, for they are different, and do not at all resemble one another. To treat of all would be a long story, but I will tell you how I think it is with regard to the greatest and most marked differences. I say, then, that Asia differs very much from Europe as to the nature of all things, both with regard to the productions of the earth and the inhabitants, for everything is produced much more beautiful and large in Asia; the country is milder, and the dispositions of the inhabitants also are more gentle and affectionate. The cause of this is the temperature of the seasons, because it lies in the middle of the risings of the sun towards the east, and removed from the cold (and heat), for nothing tends to growth and mildness so much as when the climate has no predominant quality, but a general equality of temperature prevails. It is not everywhere the same with regard to Asia, but such parts of the country as lie intermediate between the heat and the cold, are the best supplied with fruits and trees, and have the most genial climate, and enjoy the purest waters, both celestial and terrestrial. For neither are they much burnt up by the heat, nor dried up by the drought and want of rain, nor do they suffer from the cold; since they are well watered from abundant showers and snow, and the fruits of the season, as might be supposed, grow in abundance, both such as are raised from seed that has been sown, and such plants as the earth produces of its own accord, the fruits of which the inhabitants make use of, training them from their wild state and transplanting them to a suitable soil; the cattle also which are reared there are vigorous, particularly prolific, and bring up young of the fairest description; the inhabitants too, are well fed, most beautiful in shape, of large stature, and differ little from one another either as to figure or size; and the country itself, both as regards its constitution and mildness of the seasons, may be said to bear a close resemblance to the spring. Manly courage, endurance of suffering, laborious enterprise, and high spirit, could not be produced in such a state of things either among the native inhabitants or those of a different country, for there pleasure necessarily reigns. For this reason, also, the forms of wild beasts there are much varied. Thus it is, as I think, with the Egyptians and Libyans.

Part 16
And with regard to the pusillanimity and cowardice of the inhabitants, the principal reason the Asiatics are more unwarlike and of gentler disposition than the Europeans is, the nature of the seasons, which do not undergo any great changes either to heat or cold, or the like; for there is neither excitement of the understanding nor any strong change of the body whereby the temper might be ruffled and they be roused to inconsiderate emotion and passion, rather than living as they do always in the state. It is changes of all kinds which arouse understanding of mankind, and do not allow them to get into a torpid condition. For these reasons, it appears to me, the Asiatic race is feeble, and further, owing to their laws; for monarchy prevails in the greater part of Asia, and where men are not their own masters nor independent, but are the slaves of others, it is not a matter of consideration with them how they may acquire military discipline, but how they may seem not to be warlike, for the dangers are not equally shared, since they must serve as soldiers, perhaps endure fatigue, and die for their masters, far from their children, their wives, and other friends; and whatever
noble and manly actions they may perform lead only to the aggrandizement of their masters, whilst
the fruits which they reap are dangers and death; and, in addition to all this, the lands of such
persons must be laid waste by the enemy and want of culture. Thus, then, if any one be naturally
warlike and courageous, his disposition will be changed by the institutions. As a strong proof of all
this, such Greeks or barbarians in Asia as are not under a despotic form of government, but are
independent, and enjoy the fruits of their own labors, are of all others the most warlike; for these
encounter dangers on their own account, bear the prizes of their own valor, and in like manner
endure the punishment of their own cowardice. And you will find the Asiatics differing from one
another, for some are better and others more dastardly; of these differences, as I stated before, the
changes of the seasons are the cause. Thus it is with Asia.

Part 23
The other races in Europe differ from one another, both as to stature and shape, owing to the
changes of the seasons, which are very great and frequent, and because the heat is strong, the winters
severe, and there are frequent rains, and again protracted droughts, and winds, from which many
and diversified changes are induced. These changes are likely to have an effect upon generation in
the coagulation of the semen, as this process cannot be the same in summer as in winter, nor in
rainy as in dry weather; wherefore, I think, that the figures of Europeans differ more than those of
Asiatics; and they differ very much from one another as to stature in the same city; for vitiation of
the semen occur in its coagulation more frequently during frequent changes of the seasons, than
where they are alike and equable. And the same may be said of their dispositions, for the wild, and
unsociable, and the passionate occur in such a constitution; for frequent excitement of the mind
induces wildness, and extinguishes sociableness and mildness of disposition, and therefore I think
the inhabitants of Europe more courageous than those of Asia; for a climate which is always the
same induces indolence, but a changeable climate, laborious exertions both of body and mind; and
from rest and indolence cowardice is engendered, and from laborious exertions and pains, courage.
On this account the inhabitants of Europe are than the Asiatics, and also owing to their institutions,
because they are not governed by kings like the latter, for where men are governed by kings there
they must be very cowardly, as I have stated before; for their souls are enslaved, and they will not
willingly, or readily undergo dangers in order to promote the power of another; but those that are
free undertake dangers on their own account, and not for the sake of others; they court hazard and
go out to meet it, for they themselves bear off the rewards of victory, and thus their institutions
contribute not a little to their courage.

Such is the general character of Europe and Asia.

Part 24
And there are in Europe other tribes, differing from one another in stature, shape, and courage: the
differences are those I formerly mentioned, and will now explain more clearly. Such as inhabit a
country which is mountainous, rugged, elevated, and well watered, and where the changes of the
seasons are very great, are likely to have great variety of shapes among them, and to be naturally of
an enterprising and warlike disposition; and such persons are apt to have no little of the savage and
ferocious in their nature; but such as dwell in places which are low-lying, abounding in meadows
and ill ventilated, and who have a larger proportion of hot than of cold winds, and who make use
of warm waters—these are not likely to be of large stature nor well proportioned, but are of a broad make, fleshy, and have black hair; and they are rather of a dark than of a light complexion, and are less likely to be phlegmatic than bilious; courage and laborious enterprise are not naturally in them, but may be engendered in them by means of their institutions. And if there be rivers in the country which carry off the stagnant and rain water from it, these may be wholesome and clear; but if there be no rivers, but the inhabitants drink the waters of fountains, and such as are stagnant and marshy, they must necessarily have prominent bellies and enlarged spleens. But such as inhabit a high country, and one that is level, windy, and well-watered, will be large of stature, and like to one another; but their minds will be rather unmanly and gentle. Those who live on thin, ill-watered, and bare soils, and not well attempered in the changes of the seasons, in such a country they are likely to be in their persons rather hard and well braced, rather of a blond than a dark complexion, and in disposition and passions haughty and self-willed. For, where the changes of the seasons are most frequent, and where they differ most from one another, there you will find their forms, dispositions, and nature the most varied. These are the strongest of the natural causes of difference, and next the country in which one lives, and the waters; for, in general, you will find the forms and dispositions of mankind to correspond with the nature of the country; for where the land is fertile, soft, and well-watered, and supplied with waters from very elevated situations, so as to be hot in summer and cold in winter, and where the seasons are fine, there the men are fleshy, have ill-formed joints, and are of a humid temperament; they are not disposed to endure labor, and, for the most part, are base in spirit; indolence and sluggishness are visible in them, and to the arts they are dull, and not clever nor acute. When the country is bare, not fenced, and rugged, blasted by the winter and scorched by the sun, there you may see the hardy, hardy, slender, with well-shaped joints, well-braced, and shaggy; sharp, industry and vigilance accompany such a constitution; in morals and passions they are haughty and opinionative, inclining rather to the fierce than to the mild; and you will find them acute and ingenious as regards the arts, and excelling in military affairs; and likewise all the other productions of the earth corresponding to the earth itself. Thus it is with regard to the most opposite natures and shapes; drawing conclusions from them, you may judge of the rest without any risk of error.
Aristotle, *Politics* (ca. 350 BCE)

http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.7.seven.html

Book 7, Part 7

Having spoken of the number of the citizens, we will proceed to speak of what should be their character. This is a subject which can be easily understood by any one who casts his eye on the more celebrated states of Hellas, and generally on the distribution of races in the habitable world. Those who live in a cold climate and in Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and therefore they retain comparative freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery. But the Hellenic race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent. Hence it continues free, and is the best-governed of any nation, and, if it could be formed into one state, would be able to rule the world. There are also similar differences in the different tribes of Hellas; for some of them are of a one-sided nature, and are intelligent or courageous only, while in others there is a happy combination of both qualities. And clearly those whom the legislator will most easily lead to virtue may be expected to be both intelligent and courageous. Some say that the guardians should be friendly towards those whom they know, fierce towards those whom they do not know. Now, passion is the quality of the soul which begets friendship and enables us to love; notably the spirit within us is more stirred against our friends and acquaintances than against those who are unknown to us, when we think that we are despised by them; for which reason Archilochus, complaining of his friends, very naturally addresses his soul in these words:

"For surely thou art plagued on account of friends."

The power of command and the love of freedom are in all men based upon this quality, for passion is commanding and invincible. Nor is it right to say that the guardians should be fierce towards those whom they do not know, for we ought not to be out of temper with any one; and a lofty spirit is not fierce by nature, but only when excited against evil-doers. And this, as I was saying before, is a feeling which men show most strongly towards their friends if they think they have received a wrong at their hands: as indeed is reasonable; for, besides the actual injury, they seem to be deprived of a benefit by those who owe them one. Hence the saying:

"Cruel is the strife of brethren,"

and again:

"They who love in excess also hate in excess."

Thus we have nearly determined the number and character of the citizens of our state, and also the size and nature of their territory. I say 'nearly,' for we ought not to require the same minuteness in theory as in the facts given by perception.