PLATO

The Republic

EDITED BY

G. R. F. FERRARI

University of California, Berkeley

TRANSLATED BY

TOM GRIFFITH

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

justice coming under attack, and not come to her defence for as long as I have breath in my body and a tongue in my head. So the best thing is to make what defence I can.'

Well, Glaucon and the rest of them insisted that they wanted me to make a defence, and not abandon the argument. They wanted me to make a full investigation into what justice and injustice both were, and what the true position was concerning the benefit they both brought. So I adopted what seemed to me the best approach. 'The enquiry we are undertaking
d is not a simple matter. If you ask me, it requires sharp eyesight. And since we are not clever people, I think we should conduct our search in the same sort of way as we would if our eyesight were not very good, and we were told to read some small writing from a bit of a distance away, and then one of us realised that a larger copy of the same writing, apparently, was to be found somewhere else, on some larger surface. We would regard it as a stroke of luck, I think, to be able to read the large letters first, and then turn our attention to the small ones, to see if they really did say the same thing.'

e 'We certainly would,' said Adeimantus. 'But where can you see anything like that in our search for justice?'

'I'll tell you,' I said. 'We say that there is justice in an individual; but also, I take it, justice in a whole city?'

'Yes.'

'And a city is something bigger than an individual?'

'Yes, it is.'

'In that case, maybe justice will be on a larger scale in what is larger,
369 and easier to find out about. So if you approve, why don't we start by finding out what sort of thing it is in cities? After that we can make a similar inquiry into the individual, trying to find the likeness of the larger version in the form the smaller takes.'

'I think that's a good idea,' he said.

'Suppose then,' I said, 'we were to study the theoretical origin of a city, would we also see the origin in it of justice and injustice?'

'We might,' he said.

'And if we do that, is there a chance that what we are looking for will be easier to find?'

b 'Yes, much easier.'

'You think, then, that this is a task we should attempt to complete? I suspect it is a fairly major undertaking, so you decide.'

'We have decided,' said Adeimantus. 'Go ahead.'

'Very well,' I said. 'The origin of a city lies, I think, in the fact that we are not, any of us, self-sufficient; we have all sorts of needs. Can you think of any other reason for the foundation of a city?'

'No, I can't.'

c 'Different individuals, then, form associations with one person to meet one need, and with another person to meet a different need. With this variety of wants they may collect a number of partners and allies into one place of habitation, and to this joint habitation we give the name "city," don't we?'

'Yes, we do.'

'Does one person share with another, when he *does* share – or does he accept a share – because he thinks it is better for him personally?'

'Yes, he does.'

'Right then,' I said. 'Let's construct a hypothetical city, from the beginning. It is the product, apparently, of our needs.'

'Of course.'

d 'And the first and most important of those needs, if we are to exist and stay alive, is the provision of food.'

'Unquestionably.'

'Second comes the need for housing, and third the need for clothing and things like that.'

'That is right.'

'Well then,' I said, 'how will our city be equal to meeting these requirements? Won't it just be one farmer, plus a builder, plus a weaver? Or should we add a shoemaker as well, and anyone else who provides for physical needs?'

'Yes, we should.'

'So the most basic city would have to consist of four or five men.'

'It looks like it.'

e 'Next question. Should each one of them make what he produces available to all alike? Should the one farmer, for example, provide food for four? Should he put four times the hours, and four times the effort, into the production of food, and then share it with the others? Or should he
370 forget about them and provide for himself alone, producing only a quarter of the amount of food in a quarter of the time – and of the remaining three-quarters, devote a quarter each to the provision of housing, of clothing, and of footwear? That way he would save himself the trouble of sharing with others, and provide for his own needs by his own individual efforts.'

Book 4

419 At this point Adeimantus interrupted us. 'How will you defend yourself, Socrates, against the charge that you are not making these men very happy, and that they have only themselves to blame? The city in fact belongs to them, yet they derive no benefit from it. Other people have acquired land, built themselves beautiful great houses, and are now collecting the furniture to go with them; they make their own sacrifices to the gods; they entertain foreign visitors; and they are also the owners of the things you've just been talking about – gold, silver and everything
420 which is regarded as necessary for people who are going to be happy. Our men just seem to sit there in the city, like hired bodyguards. All they do is guard it.'

'Yes,' I said, 'and working just for their keep at that. Unlike the others, they receive no pay over and above their food, so if they feel like going abroad as private individuals, they won't be able to. They can't give presents to mistresses, or spend money on anything else they choose, on the things people who are generally regarded as happy spend money on. You left that, and a whole lot more along the same lines, out of your accusation.'

'Very well,' he said, 'you can take those as being part of the accusation as well.'

b 'What is our defence, then? Is that your question?'

'Yes.'

'We shall find our answer, I think, if we carry on down the same road. We shall say that we wouldn't be at all surprised if even our guardians were best off like this, but that in any case our aim in founding the city is not to make one group outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city

as happy as possible. We thought we would be most likely to find justice in a city of this kind, and most likely to find injustice in the city with the
c worst institutions, and that looking at these would give us the answer to our original question. What we are doing at the moment, we believe, is not separating off a few of the inhabitants, and making *them* happy, but constructing a complete city, and making that happy. We'll have a look at its opposite later. Imagine we were putting the colours on a statue of a man, and someone came along and told us we were doing it wrong, since we weren't using the most beautiful colours for the most beautiful parts
d of the living creature.[1] The eyes, the most beautiful feature, had been coloured black, not purple. We would regard it as a quite reasonable defence to say to him: "Hang on a minute. You surely don't think, do you, that we should make the eyes – or any of the other parts of the body – so beautiful that they don't even look like eyes. The thing to ask yourself is whether by giving the right colours to everything we are making the whole
e thing beautiful." It's the same with us. You mustn't start forcing us to give the guardians the kind of happiness which will turn them into anything other than guardians. We could perfectly easily dress our farmers in purple robes, and give them gold jewellery to wear, and tell them to work the land when they feel like it. We could let our potters recline on banqueting couches, passing the wine to the right and feasting in front of their fire, with their potters' wheels beside them for when they really felt like doing some pottery. We could make everyone else happy in the same
421 kind of way, so that the whole city would be happy. You mustn't ask us to do that. If we do as you suggest, the farmer will not be a farmer, the potter will not be a potter, nor will anyone else continue to fulfil any of the roles which together give rise to a city.

'For most of the population it is not that important. If our cobblers are no good, if they stop being proper cobblers and only pretend to be when they are not, the city won't come to much harm. But if the guardians of our laws and our city give the impression of being guardians, without really *being* guardians, you can see that they totally destroy the entire city, since they alone provide the opportunity for its correct management and
b prosperity. If we are making real guardians, people who are incapable of harming the city, whereas the person who criticises us is making them into farmers of some kind, who are not so much running a city as presiding

[1] Our image of Greek statues is one of unpainted stone. This, however, is the fault of time, which has left the stone but removed the paint.

over a jolly banquet at a public festival, then he is not talking about a city at all. The question we have to ask ourselves is this. What is our aim in appointing the guardians? Is it to provide the greatest possible happiness for them? Or does our aim concern the whole city? Aren't we seeing if we can provide the greatest degree of happiness for that? Isn't that what
c we should be compelling these auxiliaries and guardians to do? Shouldn't we be persuading them – and everyone else likewise – to be the best possible practitioners of their own particular task? And when as a result the city prospers and is well established, can't we then leave it to each group's own nature to give it a share of happiness?'

'I'm sure you're right,' he said.

'In that case,' I said, 'I want to ask another question, closely related to the last one. Are you going to think that reasonable as well?'

'What question, exactly?'

d 'I wonder if there aren't some things which can corrupt other skilled workers as well, so that they too turn bad.'

'What sort of things?'

'Wealth and poverty,' I said.

'And how do they corrupt them?'

'Like this. Do you think a potter who becomes rich will still be prepared to practise his craft?'

'No.'

'Does he grow more lazy and careless than he was before?'

'Yes. Much more.'

'He becomes a worse potter, in fact?'

'Again, much worse.'

'On the other hand, if poverty stops him equipping himself with tools
e or anything else he needs for his business, will what he produces suffer? And will his sons, or anyone else he teaches, turn out worse craftsmen as a result of his teaching?'

'Of course.'

'So both these things, poverty and wealth, have a damaging effect both on what craftsmen produce and on the craftsmen themselves.'

'It looks like it.'

'We've found another class of things, apparently, for our guardians to watch out for. They must do everything they can to prevent them creeping into the city without their noticing.'

'What sort of things do you mean?'

422 'Wealth and poverty,' I said. 'One produces luxury, idleness and

revolution, the other meanness of spirit and poor workmanship – and of course revolution as well.'

'Exactly. But here's a question for you, Socrates. Since our city has no money, how will it be capable of fighting a war – especially if it is forced into war with a large, wealthy city?'

'Well, obviously fighting one large, wealthy city will be more difficult than fighting two.'

b 'What do you mean?' he said.

'Well, for a start,' I said, 'if they have to fight, I take it their opponents will be rich men. They by contrast will be warrior-athletes, won't they?'

'Yes,' he said. 'For what that's worth.'

'Think about boxing, Adeimantus. Don't you think a single boxer, with the finest possible training, could easily fight two rich, fat people who were not boxers?'

'Possibly not both at the same time,' he said.

'Even if he were allowed to take to his heels, and then turn round and c hit whichever of them was nearer to him at the time? Even if he kept on doing this repeatedly, on a sunny day, in stifling heat? Don't you think a boxer like this could even beat a larger number of opponents of that sort?'

'It would certainly be no surprise if he did.'

'And don't you think the rich have greater knowledge and experience of the art of boxing than of the art of war?'

'I certainly do,' he said.[2]

'So our trained warriors will probably have no difficulty in fighting against two or three times their own numbers.'

'I'm not going to argue with you,' he said. 'I think you're right.'

d 'What if they sent an embassy to one of the other two cities, and said to them, quite truthfully, "Gold or silver are no use to us. We are not allowed them. But you are. Be our allies in this war, and you can have our opponents' wealth." Do you think anyone who heard this offer would choose to make war on dogs who are lean and fit, rather than side with the dogs against the fat, tender sheep?'

'No, I don't. But if the wealth of the other cities is concentrated in the e hands of one city, you'd better be careful it doesn't pose a threat to the one that has no wealth.'

'Well, if you think there's any point in calling anything "a city" other than the one we are establishing, the best of luck to you.'

[2] Sports were the man of leisure's regular concern, whereas it was a controversial question whether the handling of weapons required special training.

'What *should* we call them?' he asked.

'The others need some grander name,' I said. 'Each of them is "cities upon cities, but no city," as the quip goes.[3] At the very least two, opposed
423 to one another. A city of the poor, and a city of the rich. Each of these contains many more, and if you treat them as a single city, you will achieve nothing, whereas if you treat them as several cities, offering one group the money and power – or even the people themselves – of another group, you will always have plenty of allies and few enemies. As long as your city lives the disciplined life we have just laid down for it, it will be a great city. Not in reputation, I don't mean, but great in fact, even if it is a city with only
b a thousand men to fight for it. You will have a job to find a single city which is great in this way, either among Greeks or non-Greeks, though you will find plenty, many times the size of this one, which give the illusion of greatness. Don't you agree?'

'Emphatically,' he said.

'In that case,' I said, 'this could also be an excellent marker, or limit, for our rulers, to show them how big they should make the city, and the amount of land they should mark out for a city this size, before saying "no" to any more.'

'What is the limit?' he asked.

'This, I would guess. As long as any increase in size is unlikely to stop the city remaining united, they should let it go on increasing. But not beyond that point.'

'Yes, that's a good approach,' he said.

c 'In which case we shall give our guardians one further instruction. They are to guard in every way against the city being small, but also against its giving the appearance of greatness. It should be no more than adequate in size, and united.'

'A trivial task for them, no doubt.'

'Yes,' I said. 'Almost as trivial as the requirement we mentioned earlier,[4]
d for an inferior child of the guardians to be sent to join the other classes, and for an outstanding child from those classes to join the guardians. This was intended to show that among the rest of the citizen body they should assign each individual to the one task he is naturally fitted for, so that by applying himself to his own one task each may become a single person

[3] It is likely that this obscure proverbial expression had its origin in a board-game of the *petteia* family (see note 10 to 333b, p. 8 above), a game of battle between cities, itself called 'Cities'.

[4] 415b–c.

rather than many people, and in this way the entire city may be a single city rather than many cities.'

'Oh, fine,' he said. 'Even simpler than our first directive.'

'You may be thinking, my dear Adeimantus, that we give them a great
c long list of weighty instructions. But we don't do that. The instructions are all trivial, provided they keep a careful eye on the "first and great commandment."[5] Though "great" isn't really the right word. More of a minimum requirement.'

'And what is that requirement?' he asked.

'Education and upbringing,' I said. 'If the guardians are well educated, and grow up into men of sound judgment, they will have no difficulty in seeing all this for themselves, plus other things we are saying nothing
424 about – such as taking wives, marriage, and having children. They will see the necessity of making everything as nearly as possible "shared among friends," in the words of the proverb.'[6]

'Yes, that would be best,' he said.

'Once it gets off to a good start,' I said, 'our regime will be a kind of virtuous circle. If you can keep a good system of upbringing and education, they produce naturally good specimens. These in their turn, if they receive a good education, develop into even better specimens than their
b predecessors. Better in general, and better in particular for reproduction. The same is true in the animal kingdom.'

'I'm sure you're right,' he said.

'To put it briefly, then, the overseers of our city must keep a firm grip on our system of education, protecting it above all else, and not allowing it to be destroyed accidentally. They must reject any radical innovation in physical or musical education, preserving them as far as they can unchanged. They should regard with apprehension anyone who tells them that

> The latest song, fresh from the singer's lips,
> Has most appeal to men.[7]

c People who approve of this might easily think the poet meant a new style of song, rather than just new songs. But that is not the sort of thing they

[5] Said with reference to the proverb 'the fox knows many things, the hedgehog one great thing'.

[6] The proverb was 'friends will hold things in common', and is said to have originated in the unusually close-knit Pythagorean communities of southern Italy.

[7] An adaptation of Homer, *Odyssey* 1.351–352.

should approve of, and they should not think that was what the poet meant. They should beware of new forms of music, which are likely to affect the whole system of education. Changes in styles of music are always politically revolutionary. That's what Damon says, and I believe him.'

'In which case, you can count me among the believers as well,' said Adeimantus.

d 'Presumably this is where we think the guardians should build their watchtower. In music.'

'It's certainly a place where breaking rules can easily become a habit without anyone realising,' he said.

'Yes, people don't see how breaking rules in the realm of entertainment can do any harm.'

'It can't,' he said. 'Except that once the idea of breaking rules has gradually established itself, it seeps imperceptibly into people's characters and habits. From there it brims over, increasing as it goes, into their contracts e with one another. And from contracts, Socrates, it moves on in its remorseless way to laws and political institutions, until finally it destroys everything in private and public life.'

'I see. So that's how it is, is it?'

'I think so,' he said.

'In that case, as we were saying at the beginning, our children must have entertainment of a more disciplined kind.[8] When entertainment is 425 undisciplined – and children likewise – it's impossible for the children to grow up into disciplined and responsible men.'

'Of course,' he said.

'If they start off as children with the right sort of entertainments, they will acquire discipline through their musical education. This discipline has the opposite effect on them to the effect you were describing just now. It accompanies them in all their actions, and helps them grow, correcting any part of the city which may earlier have gone wrong.'

'That is true,' he said.

'When this happens,' I said, 'these people find out for themselves the apparently trivial rules which were all destroyed by their predecessors.'

'What rules are those?'

b 'Things like the young keeping quiet in the presence of their elders, as

[8] The reference is to the austerity of the literary and musical reforms proposed in Books 2 and 3, and first remarked upon at 399e.

they should; giving up their seats to them; standing up when they come in; respect for their parents; their hair-styles, clothes, shoes and general appearance. All those sorts of things. Don't you agree?'

'Yes, I do.'

'I think it's absurd to make laws about these things. They aren't the result of spoken or written rules. And even if they were, they wouldn't last.'

'Of course not.'

c 'It certainly looks, Adeimantus, as if everything follows from the direction a person's education takes. Like always produces like, doesn't it?'

'Naturally.'

'And I imagine we'd say the final result, for better or worse, is something unique, complete and vigorous.'

'What else?'

'Well, for my part,' I said, 'in this situation I wouldn't go so far as to try and pass laws about this kind of thing.'

'I'm sure you're right,' he said.

'But then what on earth are we to do about business dealings?' I asked.

d 'The contracts various parties make with one another in the market-place, for example? Or contracts with builders, cases of slander or assault, the bringing of lawsuits and the selection of juries, the payment or collection of any tariffs due in markets or ports, and the general regulation of markets, city or harbours? Can we really bring ourselves to legislate for any of these?'

'No,' he said. 'If we've got the right sort of citizens, it's a waste of time telling them what to do. I imagine they can easily develop most of the nec-

e essary legislation for themselves.'

'Yes, my friend,' I said. 'Provided, that is, god grants them the safe preservation of the laws we have described so far.'

'The alternative,' he said, 'is for them to spend their whole lives enacting and amending detailed legislation of this kind, in the belief that they will hit on the ideal solution.'

'You mean their lives will be like those of people who are ill, and who lack the self-discipline required to give up their unhealthy way of life.'

'Precisely.'

426 'What a delightful life those people lead! Their medical treatment achieves nothing, except to increase the complications and severity of their ailments, yet they live in constant hope that each new medicine recommended will be the one which will make them healthy.'

'Yes, that's exactly what life is like for patients of that sort,' he said.

'And what about their equally charming habit of reserving their greatest hostility for the person who tells them the truth, which is that until
b they give up drinking, over-eating, sex and idleness, no medicine, cauterisation or surgery, no charms, amulets or anything of that kind, will do them the slightest good.'

'It's not a charming habit in the least,' he said. 'There's nothing charming about getting angry with people who tell you the truth.'

'You don't seem to be a great admirer of people like this,' I said.

'Emphatically not.'

'So you won't be impressed if, as we were just saying, the city as a whole
c behaves like this. Don't you think this is just what cities are doing when they are badly governed, and yet forbid their citizens to make any change at all in the constitution, telling them they will be put to death if they do? Rather it is the person who takes the city as it is, who is the people's most beguiling servant and flatterer, who creeps into their good graces, who anticipates their wishes and is adept at satisfying them – this person they will declare a fine man, a man profoundly wise. This man they will honour.'[9]

'Yes, I think it's exactly what cities are doing. And I can see nothing to be said for it.'

d 'How about those who are willing and eager to be the servants of cities like this? Don't you admire their courage and readiness?'

'Yes, I do,' he said. 'Apart from the ones who let the approval of the majority fool them into thinking they really are statesmen.'

'Are you saying you can't find any excuse for these people? If a man knows nothing about measurement, and lots of people who also know nothing tell him he is six feet tall, do you suppose it is possible for him to
e avoid thinking that's what he is?'

'No, I don't.'

'Don't let it annoy you, then. After all, surely people like this are the most entertaining of all, passing and amending the kind of laws we were describing just now, in the constant belief that they will find an answer to

[9] Although the Athenian political system made it quite easy for citizens to propose new laws or decrees for action, it hedged the procedure by making liable to prosecution and severe penalty anyone whose proposal was found to contravene existing law. The rhetoric used in such cases tended to present the laws as ancestral and permanent. In practice, new laws and decrees were most often proposed by the leading politicians, who became adept at surviving the legal hazards.

dishonesty in business dealings and all the areas I have just been talking about. They don't realise they are cutting off the Hydra's head.'

427 'Though that's exactly what they *are* doing,' he said.

'Well, if it were up to me,' I said, 'I wouldn't have thought the true lawgiver should concern himself with these details of the laws and the constitution – either in a badly-governed or a well-governed city. In one it is pointless, and achieves nothing; in the other, some of the legislation can be devised by absolutely anyone, while the rest follows automatically from our previous arrangements.'

b 'In that case,' he asked, 'what area of lawmaking have we still got left?'

And I said, '*We* haven't got any. But Apollo at Delphi has – the most important, the finest and the most fundamental pieces of legislation.'

'What are those?'

'The foundation of temples. Sacrifices. Other acts of service performed for gods, demigods and heroes. The burial places of the dead, and the observance which must be paid to those below to keep them

c favourable. We do not know about this kind of thing, and when we found our city, if we have any sense, the only advice we shall follow, the only authority we shall recognise, is the traditional authority. And I take it that in these matters Apollo, making his pronouncements seated on the stone which forms the earth's navel, is the ancestral authority for the whole of mankind.'[10]

'You are right,' he said. 'That must be our approach.'

d 'In that case, son of Ariston, your city can now be regarded as founded. The next step is to look inside it, and for that you are going to need a pretty powerful light. You can provide your own, or get your brother and Polemarchus and the others to help you. Then perhaps we shall find some way of seeing just where in the city justice is, where injustice is, what the difference is between the two, and which of them people who are going to be happy must possess, whether all the gods and all mankind realise they possess it or not.'

e 'Oh, no, you don't,' said Glaucon. 'You told us *you* were going to look for justice. You said it was impious not to do everything you possibly could to support justice.'

[10] The oracle of Apollo at Delphi was authoritative on religious questions for the entire Greek world – questions which were not as a rule so sharply differentiated from other kinds of political questions as they are in this passage. It was also consulted before the founding of any colony. The sanctuary contained a stone, the 'navel-stone', which was thought to mark the centre of the earth.

'That's true,' I said. 'Thank you for reminding me. I must do what I promised. But you must do your bit as well.'

'We will.'

'In that case,' I said, 'here's how I hope to find the answer. I take it our city, if it has been correctly founded, is wholly good.'

'It can't help being.'

'Clearly, then, it is wise, courageous, self-disciplined and just.'

'Clearly.'

'Then as we find each of these elements in it, those we have not yet found will constitute the remainder.'

'Of course.'

428 'With any four things, if we were looking for one of them in some place or other, and it was the first thing we caught sight of, that would be enough for us. But if we identified the other three first, then the one we were looking for would *ipso facto* have been identified as well, since clearly it could then only be whatever was left.'

'You are right,' he said.

'It's the same for us now. Since there actually are four elements, should we conduct our search in the same way?'

'Yes. Obviously.'

b 'Well, I think the first one to catch the eye is wisdom. And it seems to have an unusual feature.'

'What is that?'

'It is truly wise, I think, this city we have described. It has good judgment, doesn't it?'

'Yes.'

'Now this thing, judgment, is clearly knowledge of some sort. Good decisions, I take it, are the result of knowledge, not ignorance.'

'Obviously.'

'But our city contains many types of knowledge, of very different kinds.'

'Of course it does.'

'Is it the knowledge possessed by its carpenters which entitles us to call

c our city wise, and say it possesses good judgment?'

'Certainly not,' he said. 'That merely entitles us to call it good at carpentry.'

'So a city is not to be called wise because of its knowledge and judgment in making the best possible wooden furniture.'

'Absolutely not.'

'How about its knowledge of making things out of bronze, or any other knowledge of that kind?'

'No, nothing like that,' he said.

'Nor the knowledge of how to grow crops from the soil, since that's called farming.'

'So I believe.'

'Is there, then,' I asked, 'among any of the citizens of this city we have
d just founded, *any* branch of knowledge which makes decisions about the city as a whole – deciding on the best policy towards its own members and towards other states – and not about one particular element in the city?'

'There most certainly is.'

'What is this knowledge, and in which group is it to be found?'

'It is the knowledge possessed by the guardians,' he said. 'And it is to be found in the rulers, whom we have just been calling the perfect guardians.'[11]

'And what is the label you give your city on the strength of this knowledge?'

'I call it sound in judgment, and truly wise.'

e 'So which do you think our city will have more of? Metalworkers, or these true guardians?'

'Metalworkers,' he said. 'Far more.'

'Of all the groups which have a branch of knowledge of their own, and which are identified as a group, wouldn't the guardians be the smallest?'

'Easily the smallest.'

'In which case, the wisdom of a city founded on natural principles depends entirely on its smallest group and element – the leading and
429 ruling element – and the knowledge that element possesses. The class which can be expected to share in this branch of knowledge, which of all branches of knowledge is the only one we can call wisdom, is by its nature, apparently, the smallest class.'

'That's very true,' he said.

'Well, that's one of the four things we were looking for. And we've not only found it, I'm not quite sure how, but also found whereabouts in the city it is located.'

'Nothing much wrong with the way it was found as far as I'm concerned,' he said.

'Courage, next. It is not hard to see both the thing itself and the part of

[11] They were distinguished as 'full guardians' at 414b.

the city in which it is located, the part which gives the city the name "courageous."'

'Explain.'

b 'No one classifying a city as cowardly or brave would look at any other part of it than the part which makes war in the city's defence, and serves in its army.'

'Yes, that's the only part anyone would look at,' he said.

'I think the reason for that,' I said, 'is that the cowardice or bravery of the rest of the population would not be enough to make the city itself cowardly or brave.'

'No, it wouldn't.'

'Does that mean a city's courage, as well as its wisdom, lies in a part of c itself, because it has in that part a power capable of preserving, in all situations, the opinion that what is to be feared is just what the lawgiver listed and classified as such in the course of their education? Or isn't that what you call courage?'

'I didn't altogether follow that. Say it again.'

'I mean that courage is a kind of preservation,' I said.

'Preservation? Of what?'

'Of the opinion formed by education, under the influence of law, about which things are to be feared. When I talked about its preservation in all d situations, I meant keeping it intact, through pains, pleasures, desires and fears, without rejecting it. I can give you an analogy, if you would like.'

'I would.'

'When dyers want to dye wool purple,' I said, 'you know they start by selecting, from wools of various colours, the ones which are naturally white. They give these a lengthy preliminary preparation, so that they will e absorb as much of the colour as possible. Only then do they do the dyeing. Anything dyed in this way is colour-fast. No washing, with or without detergent, can remove the colour from it. But when things are dyed in some other way, whether the wool is some other colour, or whether it is white but dyed without preparation, you know what happens.'

'Yes,' he said. 'They look faded and ridiculous.'

'That's the kind of thing you must imagine we too were doing, to the 430 best of our ability, when we selected our soldiers and gave them their musical, poetic and physical education. You must realise that all we were trying to do was organise things so that they would absorb our laws as completely as possible, like a dye. We wanted them to possess the right character and upbringing, so that their views on danger and other things

would be colour-fast, incapable of being washed out by any of the de-
b tergents which are such good solvents. Not by pleasure, which is a better solvent than any soda or lye. Nor by pain, fear or desire, which are stronger than any other detergent. This kind of power and preservation I call courage – the preservation, in all situations, of correct and lawful belief about what is to be feared and what is not. That's my definition, unless you have some objection to it.'

'No, I have no objection,' he said. 'I take it that when a slave or an animal has a correct opinion on these subjects, an opinion which is not the result of education, you do not regard this as properly lawful,[12] and you
c give it some name other than courage.'

'Precisely,' I said.

'In that case, I accept your definition of courage.'

'Take it as a definition of courage *in a city*,' I said, 'and you will be right. We can give a better account of courage some other time, if you like. At the moment, though, we are investigating justice, not courage. And for that purpose I think this is enough.'

'Yes. You are right.'

d 'That leaves two things to for us to identify in our city,' I said. 'One is self-discipline. The other is the object of our entire investigation, justice.'

'Yes.'

'Well, is there some way we can find justice without having to bother about self-discipline?'

'I don't know,' he said. 'I wouldn't want it to make its appearance too soon, if that means giving up the search for self-discipline. If I have any say in the matter, please examine self-discipline first.'

'I'm quite happy to do that. How can I refuse?'

e 'Start looking, then.'

'I shall have to,' I said. 'My first impression is that it is more like a harmony or musical mode than the other two.'

'In what way?'

'Self-discipline, I take it, is a kind of order. They say it is a mastery of pleasures and desires, and a person is described as being in some way or other master of himself. And there are other clues of the same sort in the way it is talked about, aren't there?'

'Indeed there are,' he said.

'But isn't the phrase "master of himself" an absurdity? The master of

[12] A less secure manuscript reading would be translated 'not properly permanent' rather than 'not properly lawful'.

431 himself must surely also be slave to himself, and the slave to himself must be master of himself. It's the same person being talked about all the time.'

'Of course.'

'What this way of speaking seems to me to indicate is that in the soul of a single person there is a better part and a worse part. When the naturally better part is in control of the worse, this is what is meant by "master of himself." It is a term of approval. But when as a result of bad upbringing or bad company the better element, which is smaller, is overwhelmed
b by the mass of the worse element, this is a matter for reproach. They call a person in this condition a slave to himself, undisciplined.'

'Yes, I think that is what it indicates,' he said.

'Now, if you take a look at this new city of ours, you will find one of these situations prevailing. You will admit that it can quite legitimately be called master of itself, if something in which the better rules the worse can be called self-disciplined and master of itself.'

'Yes, when I take a look at our city,' he said, 'you are right.'

c 'But you do also find the whole range and variety of desires, pleasures and pains. Particularly in children, women, slaves, and among so-called free men, in the majority of ordinary people.'

'You certainly do.'

'Whereas simple, moderate desires, which are guided by rational calculation, using intelligence and correct belief, are things you come across only among a few people, those with the best natural endowment and the best education.'

'True,' he said.

'Well, do you see the same qualities in your city? And are the desires of
d the ordinary majority controlled by the desires and wisdom of the discerning minority?'

'Yes, they are.'

'So if any city can be called the master of its pleasures and desires, and master of itself, this one can.'

'It certainly can,' he said.

'In which case, can't we also call it self-disciplined in all these respects?'

'Very much so.'

'What is more, if agreement is to be found among rulers and ruled in
e any city about which of them is to rule, it is to be found in this one, don't you think?'

'I couldn't agree more.'

'Well then, when they agree in this way, in which of the two groups of

citizens will you say the self-discipline is located? In the rulers? Or in the ruled?'

'In both, I suppose.'

'See what a plausible prediction we made just now,' I said, 'when we compared self-discipline to a harmony of some sort?'[13]

'Explain.'

'It is not the same as courage and wisdom. Each of those was located in
432 a particular part, and yet one of them made the whole city wise, and the other made it brave. Self-discipline does not operate in the same way. It extends literally throughout the entire city, over the whole scale, causing those who are weakest – in intelligence, if you like, or in strength, or again in numbers, wealth or anything like that – together with those who are strongest and those in between, to sing in unison. So we would be quite justified in saying that self-discipline is this agreement about which of them should rule – a natural harmony of worse and better, both in the city and in each individual.'

b 'I quite agree,' he said.

'Very well. Three of the qualities have been identified in our city. Or such is our impression, at any rate. What can the remaining quality be, which allows a city to share in excellence? Because clearly, this is going to be justice.'

'Clearly.'

'Now, Glaucon, this is the moment for us to position ourselves, like huntsmen, in a ring round the thicket. We must concentrate, and make
c sure justice does not escape. We don't want it to vanish and disappear from view. It's obviously here somewhere, so keep your eyes open, and try your hardest to see where it is. If you see it first, give me a shout.'

'Some hope,' he said. 'No, I'm afraid the only help I'm going to be to you is if you want a follower, someone who can see things when they are pointed out to him.'

'Say a prayer, then, and follow me.'

'I will. Just you lead the way,' he said.

'The place is impenetrable,' I said, 'and full of shadows. And it's certainly dark. Not an easy place to dislodge our quarry from. Still, we must go on.'

'Yes, we must.'

d And then I caught sight of it. 'Aha! Over here, Glaucon,' I cried. 'This looks like the trail. I think our quarry is not going to escape us, after all.'

[13] At 430e.

'That's good news,' he said.

'We've been complete idiots.'

'In what way?'

'We're fine ones! It's been lying here under our noses all this time. Right from the start, though we couldn't see it. We've been making fools
e of ourselves. You know how sometimes you look for a thing when you're holding it in your hand. Well, that's what we've been doing. We haven't been looking in the right direction. We've been looking miles away in the opposite direction, and that's probably why we haven't seen it.'

'What do you mean?'

'All I mean,' I said, 'is that I think we've been talking about it, and listening to ourselves talking about it, without realising it was in some way what we were talking about.'

'This is a very long introduction,' he said. 'Your audience is getting impatient.'

433 'Very well. See if I'm talking sense, then. The principle we laid down right at the start, when we first founded our city, as something we must stick to throughout – this, I think, or some form of it, is justice. What we laid down – and often repeated, if you remember – was that each individual should follow, out of the occupations available in the city, the one for which his natural character best fitted him.'[14]

'Yes, we did say that.'

'And we have often heard others say, and have often said ourselves, that
b doing one's own job, and not trying to do other people's jobs for them, is justice.'[15]

'Yes, we have said that.'

'Well, it looks, my friend, as if in some way or other *justice* is this business of everyone performing his own task. Do you know what makes me think that?'

'No. Tell me.'

'I think the remaining element in the city, besides the virtues we have been looking at – self-discipline, courage and wisdom – is the thing which gave all the others the power to come into being, and the thing whose

[14] Laid down at 370a–c; repeated or alluded to at 374a–e, 395b, 406c, 421a.

[15] Credit for not trying to do other people's jobs was typically claimed by or awarded to citizens who avoided litigiousness or aggressive politicking, and to states which respected the autonomy of other states (see *GPM* 188). It therefore accrued also to the contemplative life of the philosopher who shunned political ambition. On the other hand, non-interference could be given the coloration of apathy, aggressiveness that of dynamism, as famously in Pericles' funeral oration in Thucydides (2.40).

continued presence keeps them safe once they *have* come into being. We
c said earlier that justice would be the one left over, if we could only find the other three.'[16]

'Yes, it would have to be,' he said.

'Now, if we had to decide,' I said, 'which of these elements would do most to make our city good by its inclusion, that would be a difficult decision. Is it the agreement of the rulers and the ruled? Or the preservation, in the ranks of the warriors, of an opinion approved by law about which things are to be feared and which are not? Or the wisdom and protectiveness we find in the rulers? Or does the largest contribution to making the
d city good come from the presence, in child and woman, slave and free man, in skilled craftsman, ruler and ruled, of the principle that each single individual is to perform his own task without troubling himself about the tasks of others?'

'Yes, that would be a difficult decision,' he said. 'Bound to be.'

'So as a means of producing an excellent city, the ability of everyone to perform his own function is apparently a strong competitor with the city's wisdom, self-discipline and courage.'

'Very much so.'

'And would you not say that the thing which is a strong contender with them when it comes to producing an excellent city is justice?'

e 'Definitely.'

'Here's another way of looking at it. See if you still agree. Will you give the rulers in your city the task of hearing cases in the lawcourts?'

'Of course.'

'When they hear cases, will their main aim be to make sure no class either takes what belongs to another, or has what belongs to it taken away by somebody else?'

'Yes, that will be their main aim.'

'Because this is just?'

'Yes.'

434 'So from this point of view as well, people's ownership and use of what belongs to them, and is their own, can be agreed to be justice.'

'That is so.'

'Now, see if you agree with me about the next step. If a carpenter tried to do the job of a shoemaker, or a shoemaker the job of a carpenter, either because they exchanged tools and positions in society, or because one

[16] 427e–428a.

person tried to do both jobs, do you think in general that changes of this sort would do much harm to the city?'

'No, not really,' he said.

'But I imagine it's different when someone who is naturally a skilled
b worker or businessman of some kind is puffed up by wealth, popularity, strength, or something like that, and tries to enter the warrior class, or when one of the warriors tries to enter the decision-making and guardian class, without being up to it. If these people exchange tools and positions in society, or if one person tries to do all these jobs at the same time, then I think you will agree with me that this change and interference on their part is destructive to the city.'

'Yes, it certainly is.'

c 'It is the interference of our three classes with one another, then, and interchange between them, which does the greatest harm to the city, and can rightly be called the worst crime against it.'

'Absolutely.'

'Isn't "injustice" the name for the greatest crime against one's own city?'

'Of course.'

'That, then, is what injustice is. Conversely, its opposite – the ability of the commercial, auxiliary and guardian classes to mind their own business, with each of them performing its own function in the city – this will be justice, and will make the city just.'

d 'Yes, I think that's exactly how it is,' he said.

'I don't think we can be too sure about it just yet,' I said. 'If the same characteristic turns up in each individual human being, and is agreed to be justice there too, then we shall accept it, since there will be no alternative. If not, we shall have to look for something else. For the moment, though, let's complete our original enquiry. We thought if we started with some large object which had justice in it, and tried to observe justice there,
e that would make it easier to see what justice was like in the individual.[17] We chose a city as this large object, and that's why we founded the best city we could, in the confident belief that it is in the good city that justice is to be found. Now let us apply our findings there to the individual. If they agree, well and good. If we come to some other conclusion about the
435 individual, then we shall go back to the city again, and test it on that. If we look at the two side by side, perhaps we can get a spark from them.

[17] See 368e.

Like rubbing dry sticks together. If that makes justice appear, we shall have confirmed it to our satisfaction.'

'You're on the right road,' he said. 'That is what we must do.'

'Very well, then,' I said. 'If you have two things – one larger, one smaller – and you call them by the same name, are they like or unlike in respect of that which gives them the same name?'

'Like,' he said.

b 'So the just man in his turn, simply in terms of his justice, will be no different from a just city. He will be like the just city.'

'He will.'

'In the case of the city, we decided it was just because each of the three types of nature in it was performing its own function. And we decided it was self-disciplined, brave and wise as a result of other conditions and states of the same three types.'

'True.'

c 'In that case, my friend, if the individual too has these same elements in his soul, we shall feel entitled to expect that it is because these elements are in the same condition in him as they were in the city that he is properly titled by the same names we gave the city.'

'Yes, inevitably,' he said.

'Well! Here's another simple little question we seem to have blundered into,' I said. 'About the soul, this time. Does it contain these three elements within it? Or doesn't it?'

'Not such a little question, if you ask me. Maybe, Socrates, there is some truth in the saying that the good never comes easily.'

d 'So it seems. And I have to tell you, Glaucon, that in my view we are certainly not going to find a precise answer to our enquiry by the kind of methods we are using at the moment in our argument. There *is* a way of getting there, but it is longer and more time-consuming.[18] Still, we may be able to get an answer which is no worse than our earlier answers and investigations.'

'Can't we be content with that?' he said. 'For my part, I would reckon that was enough to be going on with.'

'Yes,' I said, 'I'd be more than satisfied with that, too.'

'No weakening, then,' he said. 'Carry on with the enquiry.'

e 'Very well. Do we have no choice but to agree that in each of us are found the same elements and characteristics as are found in the city? After

[18] The allusion is explained in Book 6, 504a–d.

all, where else could the city have got them from? It would be ludicrous to imagine that the spirited element in cities has come into being from anywhere other than the individual citizens – where the citizens in fact possess this reputation. People in Thrace, for example, or Scythia, or pretty well anywhere in the North. The same goes for love of learning,
436 which can be regarded as the outstanding characteristic of our region.[19] Or the commercial instinct, which you could say was to be found principally among the Phoenicians and people in Egypt.'

'Yes, it would be totally ludicrous to imagine these qualities came from anywhere else.'

'That's the way it is, then,' I said. 'No problem in recognising that.'

'None at all.'

'What *is* a problem, though, is this. Is the same thing used in each of our actions? Or, since there are three elements, do we do different things with different elements? Is there one element in us for learning, another for feeling spirited, and yet a third for our desire for the pleasures of food,
b sex, and things like that? Or do we do each of these things, when we embark upon them, with our entire soul? Those are questions to which it will be hard to give a convincing answer.'

'I agree,' he said.

'So, let us try to ascertain whether they are the same as each other or different. And let's go about it like this.'

'Like what?'

'It's obvious that nothing can do two opposite things, or be in two opposite states, in the same part of itself, at the same time, in relation to the same object. So if this is what we find happening in these examples,
c we shall know there was not just one element involved, but more than one.'

'Fair enough.'

'Now, concentrate.'

'I am,' he said. 'Carry on.'

'Is it possible,' I asked, 'for one thing to be at the same time, and with the same part of itself, at rest and in motion?'

'No.'

'Can we be even more precise about what we are agreeing, to avoid argument later on? Imagine a man standing still, but moving his head and

[19] Both because the clear, dry air of the place was thought to promote clarity and acuteness in its inhabitants, and because Athens was an international magnet for intellectuals and had an especially well-developed cultural life.

his hands. If anyone said the same man was at the same time both at rest and in motion, then I don't think we would regard that as a legitimate
d claim. What he should say is that one part of him is at rest, and another part is in motion, shouldn't he?'

'Yes, he should.'

'He could amuse himself with an even more ingenious example. If he said, of a spinning top with its centre fixed in one place, or of anything
e else rotating on the same spot, that the whole thing is both at rest and in motion, we would not accept that. In cases like this, the parts in respect of which they are both stationary and in motion are not the same parts. We would say they possess both a vertical axis and a circumference. With respect to the axis they are at rest, since they remain upright. With respect to the circumference they are rotating. And if, while they are still revolving, the vertical axis inclines to right or left, or front or back, then they can't be at rest at all.'

'True,' he said.

'So we're not going to be at all intimidated by examples of this kind. It will do nothing to persuade us that it is in any way possible for one thing,
437 in the same part of itself, with respect to the same object, to be at the same time in two opposite states, or to be or do two opposite things.'

'It certainly won't persuade me,' he said.

'All the same,' I said, 'we don't want to have to work our way through every objection of this kind, spending hours establishing that they are not valid. So let us proceed from here on the assumption that this *is* the situation, with the proviso that if this isn't how things turn out to be, all our conclusions based on this assumption will have been destroyed.'

'Yes, that is what we should do,' he said.

b 'Very well. Now, think about things like saying "yes" and saying "no", desire and rejection, or attraction and repulsion. Wouldn't you classify all those as pairs of opposites? Whether they are activities or states will be irrelevant for our purposes.'

'Yes, as opposites.'

'What about hunger and thirst,' I said, 'and desires in general? Or
c wanting and being willing? Wouldn't you find all those a place among the categories we just mentioned? Won't you say, for example, that the soul of the person who desires something either reaches out for what it desires, or draws what it wants towards itself? Or to the extent that it is willing to have something provided for it, that it mentally says "yes" to it, as if in reply to a question, as it stretches out towards the realisation of its desire?'

'Yes.'

'What about not wanting, being unwilling, and not desiring? Won't we classify them with rejection and refusal, with all the corresponding opposites, in fact?'

'Of course.'

d 'That being so, can we say that the desires form a class, and that the most striking of them are the ones we call thirst and hunger?'

'We can.'

'And that one is a desire for drink, the other a desire for food?'

'Yes.'

'Well, then, is thirst, considered simply as thirst, a desire in the soul for anything more than we have just said? For example, is thirst thirst for a warm drink or a cold drink? For a large drink or a small one? Or, to put it e briefly, is it for any particular kind of drink at all? Or does the addition of a little bit of warmth to the thirst produce the desire for cold as well? And does the addition of cold produce desire for warmth? If the presence of largeness makes the thirst a large one, will it produce the desire for a large drink? And will a small thirst produce the desire for a small one? But thirst itself cannot possibly be a desire for anything other than its natural object, which is purely and simply drink – any more than hunger can be a desire for anything other than food.'

'That's right,' he said. 'Each and every desire, in itself, is a desire only for the thing which is its natural object. The additional element in each case is what makes it a desire for this or that particular *kind* of object.'

438 'We don't want to be interrupted by objections we haven't considered,' I said. 'So here's one. No one desires drink, but rather good drink. No one desires food, but rather good food, since everyone desires good things. So if thirst is a desire, it must be a desire for something good. Either a drink, or whatever else it is a desire for. The same goes for the other desires.'

'Well,' he said, 'you might think there was something in this objection.'

b 'Yes,' I said, 'but if you take all the things which are such as to be related to something else, I think that qualified instances are related to qualified objects, whereas the things themselves are each of them related only to an object which is just itself.'

'I don't understand,' he said.

'What don't you understand? That it is the nature of what is greater to be greater than something?'

'No, I understand that.'

'Greater than what is smaller?'

'Yes.'

'And what is much greater than what is much smaller?'

'Yes.'

'And what was once greater than what was once smaller, and what will be greater than what will be smaller?'

'Obviously,' he said.

c 'And the same with more in relation to less, double in relation to half, and all those sorts of things? Or heavier in relation to lighter, faster in relation to that which is slower? Or hot in relation to cold, for that matter, or anything of that sort?'

'Certainly.'

'What about branches of knowledge? Doesn't the same principle apply? There is knowledge in itself, which is knowledge simply of that which can be learnt – or of whatever it is we are to suppose that knowledge is knowledge of. Then there is this or that branch of knowledge, d which is knowledge of this or that specific subject. The kind of thing I mean is this. When a knowledge of housebuilding came into being, did it differ from other branches of knowledge? Was that why it was called knowledge of building?'

'Yes, of course.'

'Because it was a specific branch of knowledge, different from all the other branches?'

'Yes.'

'And was it not because it was knowledge of some specific subject that it became a specific branch of knowledge? And the same with the other branches of skill and knowledge?'

'True.'

'Well, if you understood it this time,' I said, 'that is what you must take me to have meant just now. I said that when things are such as to stand in some relation to something else, the things just by themselves are related to objects just by themselves, while qualified instances are related to e qualified objects. That's not in any way to say they *are like* the things they are in relation to – that the knowledge of health and disease is healthy or diseased, or that the knowledge of good and bad is good or bad. Rather, since the knowledge here is not of that which just is the object of knowledge, but of some qualified object – in this case what is healthy or diseased – the knowledge itself turned out to be a specific branch of knowledge as well. This is why it was no longer simply called knowledge, but rather, because of this specific addition, medical knowledge.'

'I understand,' he said. 'And I think you're right.'

439 'Let's go back to thirst, then,' I said. 'Won't you put that in the category of things which are what they are in relation to something else? Thirst, then, is of course thirst . . .'

'Yes. For drink.'

'So for any particular kind of drink, isn't there also a particular kind of thirst? Whereas thirst as such is not thirst for a large drink or a small drink, nor for a good drink or a bad drink – nor, to put it briefly, for any specific drink at all. No, the object of thirst as such is, in the nature of things, simply drink as such, isn't it?'

'Absolutely.'

'Then all the thirsty person's soul wants, in so far as he is thirsty, is to drink. That's what it reaches out for, and makes for.'

b 'Clearly.'

'And if there is anything at all holding it back when it is thirsty, would this have to be a different element in it from the actual part which is thirsty, and which drives it like an animal to drink? After all, the same thing cannot, in our view, do two opposite things, in the same part of itself, with respect to the same object, at the same time.'

'No, it cannot.'

'In the same way, I think it's wrong to say of an archer that his hands are pushing and pulling the bow at the same time. What we should say is that one hand is pushing, while the other is pulling.'

'Precisely,' he said.

c 'Now, can we say that some thirsty people sometimes refuse to drink?'

'Yes, lots of them,' he said. 'Often.'

'What can be said about these people, then? Can't we say there is something in their soul telling them to drink, and also something stopping them? Something different from, and stronger than, the thing telling them they *should* drink?'

'Yes, I think we can say that,' he said.

'The thing which stops them in these cases – doesn't it arise, when it d does arise, as a result of rational calculation, whereas the things which drive or draw them towards drink are the products of feelings and disorders?'

'Apparently.'

'It will be a reasonable inference, then,' I said, 'that they are two completely different things. The part of the soul with which we think rationally we can call the rational element. The part with which we feel sexual

desire, hunger, thirst, and the turmoil of the other desires can be called the irrational and desiring element, the companion of indulgence and pleasure.'

c 'Yes,' he said, 'that would be a perfectly natural conclusion for us to come to.'

'Let's take it, then, that we have established the presence of these two elements in the soul. How about spirit, the thing which makes us behave in a spirited way? Is that a third element? If not, its nature must be the same as one of the others. Which?'

'The second, maybe. The desiring element.'

'As against that,' I said, 'there's a story I once heard which I think can guide us here. Leontius, the son of Aglaeon, was on his way up to town from the Piraeus. As he was walking below the north wall, on the outside, he saw the public executioner with some dead bodies lying beside him. He wanted to look at the bodies, but at the same time he felt disgust and
440 held himself back. For a time he struggled, and covered his eyes. Then desire got the better of him. He rushed over to where the bodies were, and forced his eyes wide open, saying, "There you are, curse you. Have a really good look. Isn't it a lovely sight?"'

'Yes, I've heard that story, too,' he said.

'It shows that anger can sometimes be at war with the desires, which implies that they are two distinct and separate things.'

'Yes, it does show that,' he said.

'Aren't there lots of other situations as well – whenever people are
b forced into doing things by their desires against the advice of their reason – when they curse themselves, and are furious with the bit of them which forces them to do these things? It's as if there's a civil war going on inside someone like this, with spirit acting as an ally of reason. Spirit siding with the desires, on the other hand, when reason has declared its opposition, is not the kind of thing I imagine you'd ever claim to have seen, either in yourself or in anybody else.'

'No, I certainly haven't,' he said.

c 'Think about someone who realises he is in the wrong. Isn't it the case that the better his character, the less he is capable of feeling anger at having to endure hunger, or cold, or anything like that at the hands of someone he regards as entitled to inflict these things on him? Isn't it his spirit, as I say, which refuses to raise any objection?'

'Yes, that's true.'

'How about someone who thinks he is *being* wronged? While this is
d going on, doesn't he boil with rage at hunger, cold and any hardships of

this kind? Doesn't he ally himself with what he thinks is just, and endure all these things until he wins through, refusing to give up his justified indignation until he either achieves his aim, or dies, or is called back and pacified by the reason within him, like a dog being recalled by a shepherd?'

'Yes, that's a very close parallel with what you were talking about. What is more, in our city we specified that the auxiliaries should be obedient dogs to the city's shepherd rulers.'[20]

'Good,' I said. 'You understand exactly what I'm talking about. But there's another point too you might notice about it.'

'What is that?'

e 'It's the opposite of our suggestion about the spirited element a few moments ago. We thought then it was desirous in character, whereas now we regard it as anything but. In the civil war of the soul, it is far more likely to take up arms on the side of the rational part.'

'Absolutely,' he said.

'Is it something independent of the rational element as well, or is it some form *of* the rational element? Are there not three elements in the soul, but only two, the rational and the desiring? Or is the soul like the city? The city was held together by three classes, commercial, auxiliary
441 and decision-making. Does the soul also contain this third, spirited, element, which is auxiliary to the rational element by nature, provided it is not corrupted by a poor upbringing?'

'Yes, it does contain a third element,' he said. 'It must do.'

'Yes, provided this can be shown to be something distinct from the rational element, just as it was shown to be something distinct from the desiring element.'

'That's easily shown,' he said. 'You can see it in young children. Right
b from the time they are born, they are full of spirit, though most of them, if you ask me, only achieve some degree of rationality late in life. And some never at all.'

'How right you are. Even in animals you can see that what you are talking about applies. And apart from these examples, there is the evidence of Homer, in the line I think we quoted earlier:

> He smote his chest, and thus rebuked his heart.[21]

[20] 416a.

[21] *Odyssey* 20.17, quoted together with line 18 at 390d. The citation develops the comparison of spirit to a dog, since Odysseus is quieting the heart that bays like a dog within him and longs for revenge.

In that passage Homer clearly portrays two different elements. The
c part which has reflected rationally on what is better and what is worse has some sharp words to say to the element which is irrationally angry.'

'You are certainly right,' he said.

'There we are, then,' I said. 'We have made it to dry land – not without difficulty – and we are pretty well agreed that the soul of each individual contains the same sorts of thing, and the same number of them, as a city contains.'

'True.'

'The immediate and inescapable conclusion is that the individual is wise in the same way, and using the same part of himself, as the city when *it* was wise.'

'Of course.'

d 'Also that the thing which makes the individual brave, and the way in which he is brave, is the same as the thing which makes the city brave, and the way in which it is brave. That in everything to do with virtue the two of them are the same.'

'Yes, that is inescapable.'

'So a just man is just, I think we shall say, Glaucon, in the same way a city was just.'

'That too follows with complete certainty.'

'We haven't at any point forgotten, I hope, that the city was just when each of the three elements in it was performing its own function.'

'No, I don't think we have forgotten that,' he said.

e 'In that case, we must also remember that each one of us will be just, and perform his own proper task, when each of the elements within him is performing *its* proper task.'

'Yes, we must certainly remember that.'

'Isn't it appropriate for the rational element to rule, because it is wise and takes thought for the entire soul, and appropriate for the spirited element to be subordinate, the ally of the rational element?'

'Yes.'

'Won't a combination, as we said,[22] of musical and physical education
442 make these two elements concordant? They will bring the rational part to a higher pitch, with their diet of improving stories and studies, while at the same time toning down the spirited part by gentle encouragement, calming it by means of harmony and rhythm.'

[22] 411a–412a.

'They certainly will,' he said.

'When these two elements are brought up on a diet of this kind, when they truly receive the teaching and education appropriate to them, then the two of them will exercise control over the desiring element, which in any individual is the largest element in the soul and, left to itself, the most insatiable where material goods are concerned. They will keep a close eye on it, to make sure the satisfaction of the body's so-called pleasures
b doesn't encourage it to grow great and strong, stop performing its own function, and throw the life of all of them into confusion by its attempt to enslave and rule over elements which it is not naturally equipped to rule over.'

'They will indeed,' he said. 'A very close eye.'

'Aren't these two elements also the best defenders, for body and soul in their entirety, against external enemies? One makes the decisions, the other does the fighting, under the leadership of the ruling element, using its courage to put those decisions into effect.'

'True.'

c 'The title "brave," I think, is one we give to any individual because of this part of him, when the spirited element in him, though surrounded by pleasures and pains, keeps intact the instructions given to it by reason about what is to be feared and what is not to be feared.'

'Rightly so,' he said.

'And the title "wise" because of that small part which acted as an internal ruler and gave those instructions, having within it a corresponding knowledge of what was good both for each part and for the whole community of the three of them together.'

'Exactly.'

'What about "self-disciplined"? Isn't that the result of the friendship
d and harmony of these three? The ruling element and the two elements which are ruled agree that what is rational should rule, and do not rebel against it.'

'Yes. That's exactly what self-discipline is,' he said, 'both for a city and for an individual.'

'And a person will be just, finally, by virtue of the principle we have several times stated.[23] It determines both the fact and the manner of his justice.'

'Yes, inevitably.'

[23] The principle of doing one's own job, last mentioned at 441d. See also 433b, with note 14.

'In that case,' I said, 'do we find justice looking at all blurred round the edges? Does it seem any different to us from what it was when it showed up in the city?'

'Not to me it doesn't.'

e 'If there *is* anything in our soul which is still inclined to dispute this,' I said, 'we can appeal to everyday life for final confirmation.'

'What do you mean, everyday life?'

'Well, imagine we were discussing this city and the man who by his nature and upbringing resembles it, and we had to agree whether we thought a man like this would embezzle a sum of gold or silver deposited with him for safe keeping. Could anyone, do you suppose, possibly
443 imagine such a man to be more likely to do this than people who were different from him?'

'No,' he said. 'I don't suppose anyone could.'

'Would this man have anything to do with temple-robbery, theft and betrayal? Either of his friends in private life, or of his city in public life?'

'No, he wouldn't.'

'What is more, he would be utterly reliable in keeping oaths and other sorts of agreement.'

'Of course.'

'Then again adultery, neglect of parents, failure in religious observance – he'd be the last person you'd expect to find with those faults.'

'Absolutely the last,' he said.

b 'Is the reason for all this that when it comes to ruling and being ruled, each of the elements within him performs its own function?'

'Yes, that is the reason. The sole reason.'

'In which case, do you still want justice to be anything more than this power which can produce both men and cities of this calibre?'

'No, that's more than enough for me,' he said.

'In that case, we have seen the final realisation of our dream – our
c suspicion that our very first attempt at founding our city might possibly, with a bit of divine guidance, have hit upon both the origin, and some sort of model, of justice.'

'Yes, we certainly have seen its realisation.'

'So this principle, Glaucon – that if you are a shoemaker by nature, you should confine yourself to making shoes, if you are a carpenter you should confine yourself to carpentry, and so on – really was a kind of image of justice. Which is why it was so useful to us.'

'Apparently so.'

'But the truth is that although justice apparently *was* something of this
d kind, it was not concerned with the external performance of a man's own function, but with the internal performance of it, with his true self and his own true function, forbidding each of the elements within him to perform tasks other than its own, and not allowing the classes of thing within his soul to interfere with one another. He has, quite literally, to put his own house in order, being himself his own ruler, mentor and friend, and tuning the three elements just like three fixed points in a musical scale
e – top, bottom and intermediate. And if there turn out to be any intervening elements, he must combine them all, and emerge as a perfect unity of diverse elements, self-disciplined and in harmony with himself. Only then does he act, whether it is a question of making money, or taking care of his body, or some political action, or contractual agreements with private individuals. In all these situations he believes and declares that a just and good action is one which preserves or brings about this state of
444 mind – wisdom being the knowledge which directs the action. An unjust action, by contrast, is any action which tends to destroy this state of mind – ignorance, in its turn, being the opinion which directs the unjust action.'

'You are absolutely right, Socrates.'

'Well then,' I said, 'if we were to say we had found the just man and the just city, and what justice really was in them, we couldn't be said to be totally wide of the mark, in my view.'

'We most certainly couldn't,' he said.

'Is that what we are going to say, then?'

'We are.'

'Let's leave it at that, then,' I said, 'since the next thing we have to look into, I imagine, is injustice.'

'Obviously.'

'Injustice, on this definition, must be some sort of civil war between
b these three elements, a refusal to mind their own business, and a determination to mind each other's, a rebellion by one part of the soul against the whole. The part which rebels is bent on being ruler in it when it is not equipped to be, its natural role being that of slave to what is of the ruling class. Something like this is what we shall say, I think. And we shall add that the disorder and straying of the three elements produce injustice, indiscipline, cowardice, ignorance – evil of every kind, in fact.'

c 'We shall not say something *like* this,' he said. 'We shall say exactly this.'

'Very well,' I said. 'Now that we have a clear picture of injustice and justice, do we also have a clear picture of unjust actions and acting unjustly? And similarly of just actions?'

'Explain.'

'Well,' I said, 'the effect on the soul of actions which are just and unjust is really no different from the effect on the body of actions which are healthy and unhealthy.'

'In what way?'

'Things which are healthy produce health, presumably. And things which are unhealthy produce disease.'

'Yes.'

d 'So does acting justly produce justice, and acting unjustly produce injustice?'

'It's bound to.'

'Producing health is a question of arranging the elements in the body so that they control one another – and are controlled – in the way nature intends.[24] Producing disease is a question of their ruling and being ruled, one by another, in a way nature does not intend.'

'True.'

'Does it follow, then,' I asked, 'that producing justice in its turn is a question of arranging the elements in the soul so that they control one another – and are controlled – in the way nature intends? Is producing injustice a question of their ruling and being ruled, one by another, in a way nature does not intend?'

'Indeed it is,' he said.

e 'In which case, virtue would apparently be some sort of health, beauty and well-being in the soul, while vice would be disease, ugliness and weakness.'

'That is so.'

'Doesn't it follow also that good behaviour leads to the acquisition of virtue, and bad behaviour to the acquisition of vice?'

'Inevitably.'

'The only question now remaining for us to answer, it seems, is which
445 is more profitable. Just actions, good behaviour and being just – whether the just person is known to be just or not? Or unjust actions, and being unjust – even if the unjust person gets away with it, and never reforms as a result of punishment?'

[24] It was common in medical theory to attribute health to the right balance between the constituents of the body, disease to a disruption of this balance.

'Now that justice and injustice have turned out to be the kinds of things we have described, that seems an absurd question, if you want my opinion, Socrates. When the body's natural constitution is ruined, life seems not worth living, even with every variety of food and drink, and all manner of wealth and power. Is someone's life going to be worth living
b when the natural constitution of the very thing by which he lives is upset and ruined, even assuming he can then do anything he likes – apart from what will release him from evil and injustice, and win him justice and virtue?'

'You're right,' I said. 'It's an absurd question. Still, now that we've got to the point of being able to see as clearly as possible that this is how things are, this isn't the moment to take a rest.'

'No,' he said. 'The last thing we should do is show any hesitation.'

c 'This way, then, if you want to see what I believe to be the forms taken by vice. The ones worth looking at, anyway.'

'I'm right behind you,' he said. 'Speak on.'

'Well, now that we've got this far in our discussion,' I said, 'it looks from my vantage-point as if there is a single form of virtue, and any number of forms of vice, of which four are worth mentioning.'

'Please explain,' he said.

'If you think how many types of political regime there are with their own specific form,' I said, 'that's probably how many types of soul there are.'

'And how many is that?'

d 'Five types of political regime,' I said, 'and five types of soul.'

'Tell me which they are,' he said.

'All right. I would say that one type of regime is this one we have just described, though there are two names it might be given. It might be called monarchy, if one exceptional individual emerges among the rulers, or aristocracy if several emerge.'

'True.'

e 'This one, then, I class as a single form,' I said. 'It makes no difference whether it is several who emerge, or an individual. Given the upbringing and education we have described, they would not disturb any of the important laws of the city.'

'No. That wouldn't be sensible,' he said.

Book 8

543 'Very well, Glaucon. The agreed characteristics of the city which is to reach the peak of political organisation are community of women, community of children and the whole system of education, community likewise of everyday life, both in wartime and peacetime, and the kingship of those among them who have developed into the best philosophers, and the best when it comes to war.'

'Yes,' he said, 'those are the agreed characteristics.'

b 'What is more, we also agreed that when the rulers assume power, they will take the soldiers and move them to housing of the kind we described earlier – common to all of them, and offering no private property to anyone.[1] And in addition to the nature of their housing, we even reached agreement, if you recall, on the kind of possessions they will have.'[2]

'I do recall. We thought that none of them should have any of the c possessions which most people nowadays have. They should be guardians and warrior-athletes of some sort, receiving from the rest of the citizens, as annual pay for their guardianship, just as much maintenance as they need for this purpose. Their duty would be to protect themselves and the rest of the city.'

'You are right,' I said. 'But after we'd finished dealing with all that, can we remember the point where we began this digression, so that we can carry on from the same place?'

'That's easy enough,' he said. 'You were talking, in pretty much the way you are talking now, as if you had completed your account of the city. d You were saying you regarded the kind of city you had just described –

[1] 415d–416a. [2] 416d–417b.

544 and the individual who resembled it – as a good one, despite the fact that you apparently had an even better city and individual to tell us about. You certainly said that if this was the right sort of city, then the others must have something wrong with them. And you said, if I remember rightly, that there were four other kinds of regime – or four others worthy of discussion, at any rate. You said we should look at their faults, and at the individuals who resemble them, so that when we had examined all the individuals, and reached agreement on which was the best and which was the worst, we could ask whether the best individual is the happiest and
b the worst the most wretched, or whether that's all a mistake. I asked you which four regimes you meant, but then Polemarchus and Adeimantus interrupted, and that started you on the discussion which has brought you here.'[3]

'What an excellent memory!'

'In which case, could you do what a wrestler does when he offers his opponent the same hold again? If I ask the same question again, try and give me the answer you were going to give me then.'

'Certainly,' I said. 'Assuming I can, that is.'

'Apart from anything else, I have reasons of my own for wanting to know which four regimes you meant.'

c 'There will be no difficulty in telling you that. They even have names, the ones I'm talking about. There's the one which is pretty generally approved, the Cretan or Spartan.[4] Next – and next in the scale of general approval – is the one called oligarchy, a form of government filled with all sorts of evils. In contrast to oligarchy, and the form of government which in turn arises out of it, is democracy. And then there is the wonderful institution of tyranny, standing head and shoulders above all the others,
d the fourth and last diseased state of the city. Can you think of any other kind of regime which forms a distinct category of its own? I take it that hereditary rule by families, kingships which go to the highest bidder, and other similar regimes, which you will find are no less common among the barbarians than among the Greeks, are all intermediate between the forms I have mentioned.'

'Yes,' he said, 'we certainly do hear about plenty of extraordinary regimes.'

'Well, then, are you aware that for individuals also there must

[3] See the transition between Books 4 and 5 (445a–449b).

[4] At 545b these relatively parochial terms will be replaced by the coinages 'timocracy' or 'timarchy'. For historical information see 'Crete' and 'Sparta' in the glossary.

necessarily be as many kinds of character as there are kinds of regime? Or
e do you think that regimes somehow come into being "from oak or stone"?[5] Isn't it rather from the characters of people in the city, which tip the scale, as it were, taking the rest with them?'

'No, I think it's entirely the character of the inhabitants.'

'In which case, if there are five types of city, then for individuals there will likewise be five dispositions of the soul.'

'Of course.'

'Well, we have finished describing the person who resembles aristocracy. And we say, quite rightly, that he is good and just.'

545 'Yes. We have described him.'

'Is the next thing, then, to describe the ones who are less good – the lover of victory and honour, who corresponds to the Spartan regime, and then in turn the oligarchic character, the democratic, and the tyrannical? That way we can contrast the most unjust, when we find him, with the most just. Our investigation into how pure justice fares, relative to pure injustice, in terms of the happiness or wretchedness of the person who possesses it, will be complete. And we can either follow Thrasymachus'
b advice and pursue injustice, or follow the argument which is unfolding before us now, and pursue justice.'

'Yes,' he said, 'that's exactly what we have to do.'

'All right, then. In our earlier enquiry we started with the character of regimes rather than that of individuals, because we thought that would be clearer.[6] In the same way now, shall we start by taking a look at the honour-loving regime? I can't think of another term in general use that would
c apply to it. Its name ought to be "timocracy" or "timarchy."[7] Then we can look at the timocratic individual in relation to that regime – followed by oligarchy and the oligarchic individual. After that we can turn to democracy and study the democratic individual, and fourthly we can turn to the city which is ruled by a tyrant, and look at that, before studying the tyrannical soul. Will that be a way of trying to become competent judges of the question we have asked ourselves?'

'It would certainly be a logical way of going about our observations and judgments.'

'Very well. Let's try and describe the way in which timocracy might

[5] The phrase is proverbial of the fact that we all have ancestors, and is so used in Homer's *Odyssey* (19.163) and Plato's *Apology* (34d).

[6] 368d–369a.

[7] The etymological components of these coinages are 'honour' ('timo-'), 'power' ('-cracy'), and 'rule' ('-archy').

d arise out of aristocracy. Is it a general rule that the cause of change in any regime is to be found in the sovereign body itself – when civil war arises within this group? That as long as this group, however small it may be, remains united, it is impossible for the regime to be altered?'

'Yes, that's true.'

'In that case, Glaucon, how *will* the regime of our city be altered? How will civil war break out either between our auxiliaries and our rulers, or
e among them? Do you want us, like Homer, to invoke the Muses to tell us "how first dissension fell upon them"?[8] Shall we imagine that they speak to us in high-flown, tragic tones, as if they were playing with little children and teasing them by pretending to be speaking seriously?'

546 'What would they say?'

'Something like this. "It is no easy matter for a city founded in this way to be altered. But since destruction awaits everything that has come to be, even a foundation of this kind will not survive for the whole of time. It will fall apart, and this will be the manner of its falling. Both for plants in the ground and for animals above the ground it is a fact that souls and bodies are produced or not produced when the cycles of begetting for each species complete their revolutions – short revolutions for short-lived species, and the opposite for long-lived species. In the case of your species, wise though the people you have educated as leaders of the city
b are, still they will not quite hit the mark when they apply calculation – together with observation – to their programme of breeding and birth-control. Success will elude them, and they will sometimes produce children they should not produce. For the birth of a divine being there is a period embraced by a perfect number,[9] while for a human being it is the first number in which increase to the power of roots combined with squares – taking on three dimensions and four defining limits – of the
c numbers which create likeness and unlikeness, and which wax and wane, makes all things conversable and rational with one another. Of these numbers the ones that form the basis of the musical fourth, when coupled with five and three times increased, produce two harmonies. The first

[8] An adaptation of *Iliad* 16.112–113.

[9] The divine being is presumably the cosmos. It is described in the *Timaeus* as a living creature, the most perfect of those made by the creator-god. It is unclear whether the period in question is a gestation-period (the time it took for the creator-god to bring the cosmos into being) or some cosmic period such as the Great Year (the time it takes for the various orbiting bodies in the cosmos to come back to the same positions relative to one another). For an explanation of the remainder of this paragraph, see the glossary under 'Number'.

harmony is a square, the product of equals, so many times 100. The second harmony is of equal length one way, but a rectangle. One side is the square of the rational diagonal of a five-by-five square, minus one, times 100, or the square of the irrational diagonal of a five-by-five square, minus two, times 100. The other side is three cubed times 100. Taken as a whole, this geometrical number is master of this domain – of better and d worse births. When your guardians fail to understand these births, and make injudicious unions of brides and grooms, the children will not have the right nature, and they will not be fortunate. The previous generation will select the best of them for office, but they will not deserve selection, and when they in their turn inherit the powers of their fathers, the first thing they will neglect as guardians will be us, the Muses, since they will put too low a value on musical and literary education. And the second thing they will neglect will be physical education. The result will be a younger generation which has even less regard for us. And from their number rulers will be appointed who completely lack a guardian's ability e to discriminate between Hesiod's classes, or the classes in your city – gold, 547 silver, bronze and iron.[10] When iron is compounded with silver, and bronze with gold, then you will get unlikeness and discordant inequality. And when you get those, wherever they occur, they always breed war and hostility. This is sedition's noble line,[11] we have to say – always, and wherever it arises.'"

'Yes, that is the answer the Muses will give. And we cannot deny that they are right.'

'They must be right,' I said, 'if they are Muses.'

'In which case,' he asked, 'what else do the Muses have to say?'

b 'When civil war breaks out, the classes or natures are divided into two. The iron and bronze draw the state towards commerce, and the possession of land and housing, of gold and silver. The other pair, by contrast, the gold and silver, since in their souls they are not poor, but naturally wealthy, lead the state towards virtue and the traditional order. In fighting c and struggling against one another they arrive at a compromise. The land and housing is to be divided up and owned privately, and they agree to enslave those who were previously watched over by them as free men,

[10] Originally described at 415a–c.

[11] Socrates quotes the first part of a line that appears twice in Homer, to cap a hero's description of his ancestry: 'This is my line, my blood – and this my boast' (*Iliad* 6.211, 20.241).

friends and providers. They now hold them as serfs and slaves, while their role is to watch them, and conduct warfare.'

'Yes,' he said, 'I think that is the origin of this sort of change.'

'In which case,' I said, 'would this regime be a kind of halfway-house between aristocracy and oligarchy?'

'It certainly would.'

'That is how the change will take place, then. But how will the state
d be organised *after* the change? It's obvious, isn't it, since it is midway between the two, that it will in some ways be modelled on the original regime, and in other ways on oligarchy, but that it will also have an element which is peculiar to itself?'

'Yes,' he said.

'Very well. Will the points it has in common with the original regime be these: respect for the rulers; the disqualification of the warrior element in the state from agriculture, manual employment or any other kind of business; the establishment of communal living quarters; and the concentration on physical education and training for war?'

e 'Yes.'

'Whereas fear of putting the wise into positions of power – since the wise men it has are now complex, not simple and direct any more – a leaning towards people who are spirited, more straightforward and
548 naturally cut out for war rather than peace, the value it places on military deceptions and stratagems, and the way it spends its entire time at war – will most of these characteristics be peculiar to itself?'

'Yes.'

'Now that they possess their own treasuries and strongrooms where they can put their gold and silver, and keep it hidden, people like this will be avaricious, like the members of an oligarchy, with a fierce and secret passion for gold and silver. And to protect it all they will have walls around
b their houses – real private nests where they can spend a fortune on women or anyone else they fancy.'

'Very true,' he said.

'The value they put on money, and their inability to acquire it openly, will make them mean with their own money, while their desires and the secret pleasures they enjoy will make them extravagant with other people's. They will run away from the law like children running away from their father, since their education will not have been a matter of conviction, but something imposed on them by force. This in turn is the

c result of neglecting the true Muse, the Muse of argument and philosophy, and setting a higher value on physical education than on education in the arts.'

'It's certainly a mixed regime you are describing – partly bad and partly good.'

'Yes, it is a mixture,' I said. 'But it has one striking characteristic, which comes from the dominance of the spirited element. Love of victory and honour.'

'Absolutely.'

'So much for this regime, then. That's how it would have come into
d existence, and that's what it would be like. It's just an outline sketch of the regime, without filling in the details, but even a sketch will give us a good enough picture of the completely just man and the completely unjust man. It's an impossibly long task to describe every regime and every character without leaving anything out.'

'Quite right,' he said.

'Well, then, who is the man corresponding to this regime? How did he come into existence, and what is he like?'

And Adeimantus replied, 'When it comes to love of victory, I think he's pretty close to Glaucon here.'

e 'Maybe he is,' I said, 'as far as that goes. But there are some ways in which I think his nature is different.'

'What ways are those?'

'He'd have to be more self-willed, and with less education in the arts,
549 though still a lover of them. Interested in listening to speeches, but no speaker. He'll be one of those people who are hard on his slaves, a man like this, since he doesn't feel the superiority the truly educated man feels towards his slaves. He'll be courteous towards free men, and his love of power and success will make him extremely deferential to those in authority. He is an avid hunter and loves physical exercise, and he feels entitled to rule not because of what he says, or anything like that, but because of his warlike deeds and achievements in war.'

'Yes, because this is the character of that regime.'

b 'As for money,' I said, 'someone like this would despise it in his youth, but the older he got, the more fond of it he would become. This is because he shares in the money-loving temperament, and is not purely directed towards virtue, since he has missed out on the finest of all guardians.'

'What guardian is that?' Adeimantus asked.

'Reason, blended with musical and artistic education. Reason is the

only thing which once it is born in a man, remains with him throughout his life as the protector of virtue.'

'You are right.'

'Well,' I said, 'that is undoubtedly what the timocratic man is like in his youth. He is very similar to the timocratic city.'

'Absolutely.'

c 'The way he comes into existence is something like this. You sometimes get the young son of a good man who lives in a badly governed state. The father avoids success, public office, the lawcourts, and all that kind of minding other people's business. He's prepared to settle for less than his due, in the interests of a quiet life.'

'How does the son become timocratic, then?'

d 'It happens when he starts listening to his mother complaining about her husband not being one of the ruling group, and her own failure, in consequence, to receive the respect she is entitled to from the other women. She can see that her husband is not particularly keen on money, that he does not fight, he is not argumentative – either as a private citizen in the lawcourts, or in public life – that he is indifferent to all this kind of thing. She notices that his attention is constantly directed towards himself, whereas for her he feels neither marked respect nor marked disrespect. The boy hears her complaining on all these counts, and saying

e that his father is a coward, far too easy-going, and all the rest of it. You know the kind of litany women tend to recite on these occasions.'

'I do indeed,' Adeimantus said. 'It's a long litany, and all too typical.'

'And you're aware too,' I said, 'that even the servants of men like this, the supposedly loyal servants, will sometimes say this kind of thing to the son behind the father's back. If they see someone owing the father money, or doing him some other wrong, and the father not prosecuting him, they

550 tell the son he must get his own back on all these kinds of people when he grows up, and be more of a man than his father. When he goes out, he hears and sees more of the same kind of thing. People who mind their own business in the city are called simpletons, and regarded as of little account, while those who don't mind their own business are respected and admired. The young man is constantly hearing and seeing this kind of thing, but at the same time he listens to what his father says. He can observe his way of life close to, and compare it with other people's way of

b life. At that point he is torn between the two, his father feeding the rational element in his soul, and making it grow, while the others feed the desiring and spirited elements. Since he is not a naturally bad man, but is

influenced by the bad company he keeps, he is torn between these two extremes, and finishes up somewhere in the middle. He hands over power to the compromise candidate, the competitive and spirited element, and in this way becomes arrogant and ambitious.'

'Yes, I'm happy with that as an explanation of the way this man comes into being.'

c 'In that case,' I said, 'we have both our second regime and our second individual.'

'Yes, we have.'

'Should we move on, then, with apologies to Aeschylus, to "another man before another state"?[12] Or would we rather, sticking to our original plan, deal with the state first?'

'By all means,' he said.

'I imagine the next regime after the one we've just described would be oligarchy.'

'And what form of political organisation do you mean by oligarchy?'

d 'The regime based on property qualifications,' I said. 'The one where the rich rule, and a poor man is excluded from power.'

'I see.'

'Do we have to explain how the change from timarchy to oligarchy first takes place?'

'Yes.'

'Mind you,' I said, 'even a blind man could see how it happens.'

'How does it happen?'

'The regime we described is destroyed by the strongroom full of gold which each man possesses. They start by inventing extravagances for e themselves, and then they bend the laws in that direction, since neither they nor their wives are prepared to obey them.'

'That's likely enough.'

'The next step, I suppose, will have been for them to start eyeing one another and competing with one another, and in this way they would reduce the whole population to their own level.'

'Very likely.'

'After that, presumably, they would become still further involved in making money. And the higher the value they put on that, the lower the value they would put on virtue. Isn't virtue always at odds with wealth in

[12] The phrase puns on 'another man before another gate' (the jingle is preserved in translation), itself an amalgam of two lines from Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* (451, 570).

this way? As if they were in the two scales of a balance, always trying to move in opposite directions?'

'Exactly,' he said.

551 'And as wealth and the wealthy are valued more in a city, so goodness and the good are valued less.'

'Obviously.'

'What is valued at any particular time becomes the common practice. What is not valued is neglected.'

'Yes.'

'Eventually, then, they stop being competitive and ambitious, and become mercenary and money-loving. They praise and admire the rich man, and admit him to positions of power. The poor man they treat with contempt.'

'Absolutely.'

b 'At that point they pass a law defining the oligarchic regime. They establish a wealth qualification – larger in an extreme oligarchy, smaller in a more moderate oligarchy – and declare that anyone whose property does not reach the prescribed value is debarred from the government. Either they put this into effect by force of arms, or else they've already established this kind of regime earlier by intimidation. Isn't that how it's done?'

'It is.'

'So that, more or less, is how it becomes established.'

'Yes,' he said. 'But what are the characteristics of this regime? And

c what are the kind of faults we said it possessed?'

'Well,' I said, 'the first fault is this very thing which defines its nature. Think what it would be like if you appointed ships' captains in this way, on the basis of a property qualification, and refused a command to a poor man even if he was better qualified.'

'I think it'd be a sorry voyage they'd find themselves making,' he said.

'And the same with any position of command over anything?'

'That's certainly my opinion.'

'With the exception of a city? Or including a city?'

'It is especially true of a city,' he said, 'since the responsibility a city brings is the greatest and the most demanding.'

d 'This would be one great failing, then, possessed by oligarchy.'

'It looks like it.'

'What about its second failing? Is that any less serious?'

'What would it be, this second failing?'

'That a city of this kind is bound to be two cities, not one: a city of the poor and a city of the rich, living in the same place, but constantly scheming against one another.'

'That is, god knows, as big a failing as the first.'

'Nor is it much of a recommendation that they are unlikely to be able to fight any kind of war. They must necessarily either arm their own
e own common people and use them, in which case they will fear them more than the enemy, or else not use them, and show themselves, when it comes to the actual fighting, to be true oligarchs, with few under their command.[13] What is more, their love of money makes them reluctant to contribute to the cost of a war.'

'No, that's not much of a recommendation.'

'What about the criticism we made some time ago,[14] that in a regime of
552 this kind the same people are farmers, businessmen and soldiers all at the same time – that they are jacks of all trades and masters of none? Do you think it is right for things to be like that?'

'Not in the least.'

'You must ask yourself, however, if this city isn't also the first to introduce an evil which is greater than any of these.'

'What evil is that?'

'There is nothing to stop one person selling all his property, and a second person acquiring it.[15] Nothing to stop the first person still living in the city after selling his property, without being one of the elements which make up the city. He is neither businessman nor skilled worker,
b neither cavalryman nor infantryman[16] – just a poor man, what they call a man without means.'

'Yes,' he said, 'this city is the first to introduce this evil.'

'Certainly in cities with oligarchical regimes this kind of thing is not prohibited in any way. If it were, you wouldn't get one group of people who are very rich, and the rest living in complete poverty.'

'That's right.'

'And here's another question you might ask yourself. At the point where someone like this was rich, and spending all his money, was he even at that time any use to the city for the purposes we've been talking about?

[13] Socrates is punning on the etymology of olig-archy, 'rule of the few', as if it meant 'rule over the few'. [14] 434a–b.

[15] In Sparta – the model for timocracy – such transactions were at least frowned upon and may have been forbidden. At Athens they were permitted.

[16] Since citizens equipped themselves for military service out of their own pockets, 'cavalryman' and 'infantryman' were designations of wealth and status.

Or was it an illusion, his being one of the rulers? Was he in truth neither a ruler nor a servant of the city, but merely a spendthrift?'

c 'Yes,' he said, 'it was an illusion. He was nothing more than a spendthrift.'

'Do you want us to say, then, that just as a drone born in a cell is a blight on the hive, so a man like this is born as a drone in a household, and is a blight on the city?'

'By all means, Socrates.'

'Well, then, Adeimantus, is it the case that god has made the winged variety of drone all stingless, whereas of these two-legged drones some d are stingless, but others have very nasty stings? Do those who finish up as beggars in their old age come from the stingless class, and all those who are labelled criminals from the class with stings?'

'Yes, that's true,' he said.

'It's obvious, then, that anywhere in a city you see beggars, there you can expect to find a secret nest of thieves, pickpockets, robbers of temples, and all these sorts of malefactors.'

'Yes, that's obvious.'

'And don't you find beggars in cities with oligarchic regimes?'

'Yes. Practically the whole population apart from the rulers.'

e 'Can we avoid the conclusion, then, that in these cities there is a large number of criminals with stings, and that the authorities systematically and forcibly keep them under control?'

'No, we can't,' he said.

'And can we not say that the cause of people like this coming into existence there is lack of education, together with poor upbringing and constitutional arrangements?'

'Yes, we can.'

'Well, that's roughly what the oligarchic city would be like. And those are the evils it would contain – plus some others besides, perhaps.'

553 'Yes, that's about it.'

'Then that's another regime we can regard as dealt with – the one known as oligarchic, whose rulers are chosen on the basis of a property qualification. Let's look next at the man who resembles it – how he comes into existence, and what he's like when he does.'

'By all means,' he said.

'Doesn't the change from the timocratic character to the oligarchic take place more or less like this?'

'Like what?'

'He has a son, who starts by emulating his father's achievements and
b following in his footsteps. But then one day he sees him suddenly fall foul of the city, like a ship striking a reef. He sees all his father's possessions, and even his life, spilled out over the waves. He may have been general, or held some other high office, but then been dragged into the lawcourts, and injured by the evidence of informers. He may have been put to death, exiled or disfranchised, and lost everything he possessed . . .'[17]

'More than likely,' he said.

'When the son sees this, my friend, when he lives through it, and loses everything he possesses, he is gripped by fear, I imagine. He promptly
c tumbles the love of honour and that spirited element we were talking about headlong from their throne in his soul. Demeaned by poverty, he turns to making money. Greedily and gradually he saves and works, and so amasses wealth. The next step, don't you think, for someone like this, is to enthrone the desiring and avaricious element, and crown that as the great king within his soul, girding it with chains and ceremonial swords and tiaras?'[18]

'Yes,' he said.

d 'As for the rational and spirited parts of the soul, he makes them sit on the ground, one on each side, below the desiring element, reducing them to slavery. The rational part he bans from all subjects of calculation or inquiry other than ways of turning a little money into a lot, while the only things he allows the spirited part to admire and respect are wealth and wealthy people. The only thing it may pride itself on is the acquisition of money, or anything which contributes to this end.'

'There is no swifter or surer way to turn an ambitious young man into an avaricious one.'

e 'And is this the oligarchic type?' I asked.

'Well, he certainly develops from the kind of man who is very like the regime from which oligarchy developed.'

554 'Let's see, then, if he will be like the oligarchic regime.'

'Yes, let's.'

'And won't the first point of similarity be his regarding money as of supreme importance?'

'Yes, naturally.'

[17] Athenian generals were chosen by popular election, and were held to account in the lawcourts, before a popular jury.

[18] Greeks referred to the Persian monarch as the 'great king'. He was emblematic for them of vast empire and wealth, and of absolute sovereignty over a servile populace.

'And of course in his being a toiler, counting every penny, who satisfies only the most pressing and necessary of the desires he has, refuses to spend money on anything else, and keeps all his other desires in subjection, since he regards them as idle.'

'Absolutely.'

'A sordid little fellow,' I said, 'looking to turn everything to his
b advantage. A miser. And this is what most people admire. Won't this be the man who is like this regime?'

'Yes,' he said, 'if you ask me he certainly will. And certainly money is the ultimate value both for this city and for the person who is like it.'

'And the reason, I take it, is that this kind of person never applied himself to his education.'

'I don't think he can have done. Otherwise he wouldn't have chosen himself a blind chorus-leader, and treated him with such respect.'[19]

'Good,' I said. 'Now, the next question. Can we say of him that his lack
c of education gives him drone-like desires – some beggarly, some vicious – but that they are forcibly suppressed by his habitual cautiousness?'

'Certainly we can.'

'So do you want to know the best place to look for these people's crimes?' I asked.

'Where?'

'When they are guardians of orphans, or in any situation of that kind where they find they have a free hand to behave unjustly.'

'True.'

'Isn't this a clear indication that when this kind of person has a good reputation in most of his business dealings, and is generally regarded as a
d just man, he is using something decent in himself to suppress by force other, evil desires that he possesses? He does not persuade them that what they want is wrong, or use reason as a civilising influence. He uses compulsion and fear, because he is afraid of losing the rest of his fortune.'

'Exactly,' he said.

'Though god knows, my friend, when it's a question of spending other people's money, you will find then that most of them possess drone-like desires.'

'And strong desires at that.'

'In which case, someone of this sort will not be free from conflict within

[19] The god of wealth, Plutus, was represented as blind.

e himself. He is two individuals, not one, though for the most part his better desires have the upper hand over his worse desires.'

'That's right.'

'That, I think, is the reason why someone of this sort has a comparatively good reputation. But he's a far cry from the true excellence of the harmonious and well-tuned soul.'

'I agree.'

555 'And of course, for any prize in public life, or any other highly regarded distinction, the penny-pincher, as an individual, is a poor competitor. He refuses to spend money in the cause of reputation or this kind of success, because he is frightened of awakening his extravagant desires and entering into alliance with them in order to compete. He brings only a small part of himself to the fray, fighting with slender resources, oligarchically.[20] So he generally loses – and remains rich.'

'Exactly.'

'Does that leave us in any doubt, then,' I asked, 'that if we are asking about similarity, the penny-pinching and money-loving man is in the same class as the oligarchic city?'

b 'No, it doesn't.'

'Democracy, then, would seem to be our next object of enquiry – how it arises, and what it is like when it does arise. Then we can recognise the character of the democratic man in his turn, and bring him forward for appraisal.'

'Yes, if we want to be consistent, that would be the right approach.'

'Very well,' I said. 'Isn't the way a city changes from oligarchy to democracy something like this? Isn't it the result of their greed in pursuing the ideal they have set themselves – the requirement to become as rich as possible?'

'How do you mean?'

c 'Well, the reason the rulers in it *are* rulers, I take it, is because of their great wealth. So if any of the young turn out to have no self-restraint, the rulers, predictably, are not prepared to restrain them by a law prohibiting them from spending what they own, and losing it all. Their aim is to buy up the property of people like this, or lend them money with the property as security, and in this way become even richer and more highly respected.'

'Yes, that is their overriding aim.'

[20] The pun on olig-archy is the same as at 551e (note 13 above).

'And isn't it obvious by now that a high regard for wealth in a city is
d incompatible with the possession of self-discipline on the part of the citizens? They will inevitably lose interest in one or the other.'

'Yes, that's reasonably clear,' he said.

'So through negligence, and the consistent licence they give well-born individuals to behave without restraint, the rulers in oligarchies can sometimes drive them into poverty.'

'They certainly can.'

'And these people, I take it, sit around armed in the city – in debt, or disfranchised,[21] or both. They are drones with stings. Eager for revolution, they hate and plot against those who now possess their property, and the others like them.'

e 'True.'

'The money-makers, eyes fixed on the ground, pretend not to see them. And they inject the poison of their money into any of the other
556 citizens who offer no resistance, gaining for themselves in interest many times the original sum lent. In this way they create a large class of drones and beggars in the city.'

'Yes, it's bound to be large,' he said.

'As the flames of discontent begin to take hold, they refuse to put them out either in the first way, by forbidding people to dispose of their possessions as they wish, or again in a different way, using a second law which can stop this kind of thing happening.'

'What law is that?'

'Well, it's the next best after the first one I mentioned. And it does compel the citizens to pay some regard to virtue. If you have a law that
b voluntary agreements should in general be entered into at each party's own risk, there would be less shameless money-making in the city, and fewer dangers of the kind we've just been talking about would arise there.'

'Far fewer,' he said.

'As it is, for all the reasons we have given, the rulers treat the subjects in the city in the way I have described. As for themselves and their families, don't they bring their children up to be luxurious, incapable alike of
c physical and mental exertion, weak when it comes to resisting pleasure or pain, and lazy?'

'Of course they do.'

[21] A disfranchised person lost more than just the right to vote, he was also forbidden to hold any public office, to be a litigant in court, and even to show his face in certain important public places.

'Haven't they themselves lost interest in everything other than making money? Have they paid any more attention to virtue and excellence than the poor have?'

'No, they haven't.'

'With this background, what do you think happens when rulers and ruled come into close contact, on a journey, perhaps, or in some other
d joint activity – an embassy or military expedition, or sailing in the same ship, or as fellow-soldiers? Or when they watch each other in the actual moment of danger, and the poor find that here at least they are in no way inferior to the rich? In fact it often happens that a poor man, lean and sunburnt, is stationed in battle alongside a rich man who has had a comfortable upbringing in the shade, and who is carrying a good deal of superfluous flesh. When he sees him wheezing and struggling, don't you suppose he blames his own cowardice for the fact that people like this
e are rich? Don't they egg one another on when they are alone together? "They're ours for the plucking," they say. "There's nothing to them."'

'Yes,' he said. 'Speaking for myself, I'm quite sure that's their reaction.'

'It's like an unhealthy body. It only takes a trivial external cause to tip the balance towards actual illness. Or the body can sometimes come to be at war with itself without any outside intervention at all. It's just the same with a city. An unhealthy city needs only the slightest pretext – one side appealing for outside help to an oligarchy, or the other to a democracy – to become ill, and start fighting against itself. Can't it even sometimes be at war with itself without any outside intervention at all?'

557 'It can. Ferociously.'

'And presumably it turns into a democracy when the poor are victorious, when they kill some of their opponents and send others into exile, give an equal share in the constitution and public office to those who remain, and when public office in the city is allocated for the most part by lot.'

'Yes,' he said, 'that is the way democracy becomes established, whether it happens by force of arms or because their opponents lose their nerve and go into exile.'

'Very well, then. How will these people live? What will this regime, in
b its turn, be like, since it's obvious that the man who resembles it will prove to be a democratic man of some sort?'[22]

[22] The picture of the democratic regime that follows owes many of its touches to the social life of Plato's Athens. But there was something of Athens in the description of the oligarchic regime also.

'Yes, that's obvious.'

'Well, aren't they free men, for a start? Isn't it a city full of freedom, and freedom of speech? Isn't there liberty in it for anyone to do anything he wants?'

'Yes, that's the reputation it has,' he said.

'And where there is liberty, then obviously each person can arrange his own life within the city in whatever way pleases him.'

'Obviously.'

c 'The most varied of regimes, I would think, as far as human character goes.'

'Of course.'

'It's probably the most attractive of the regimes,' I said. 'Like a coat of many colours, with an infinite variety of floral decoration, this regime will catch the eye with its infinite variety of moral decoration. Lots of people are likely to judge this regime to be the most attractive – like women or children looking at prettily painted objects.'

'Indeed they will.'

d 'And I tell you, it's a good place to look if you want a particular kind of constitution.'

'Why?'

'Because the liberty it allows its citizens means it has every type of constitution within it. So anyone wanting to found a city, as we have just been doing, will probably find he has to go to a city with a democratic regime, and there choose whatever political arrangements he fancies. Like shopping for constitutions in a bazaar. Then, when he has made his choice, he can found a city along those lines.'

e 'Yes,' he said, 'he's not likely to find any shortage of models to choose from.'

'There's no compulsion to hold office in this city,' I said, 'even if you're well qualified to hold office, nor to obey those who do hold office, if you don't feel like it, nor to go to war when the city is at war, nor to be at peace when everyone else is, unless peace is what you want. Then again, even if there's a law stopping you holding office or being a member of a jury, there's nothing to stop you holding office and being a member of a jury
558 anyway, if that's how the mood takes you. Isn't this, in the short term, a delightful and heaven-sent way of life?'

'It probably is, in the short term.'

'And what about the relaxed attitude of those sentenced by the courts? Isn't it civilised? Or have you never seen people who have been

condemned to death or exile in a regime of this kind, who nonetheless remain in person, hanging about at the centre of things, and haunting the place like the spirit of a departed hero,[23] without anyone caring or noticing?'

'I've seen plenty,' he said.

b 'Then there's the tolerance of this city. No pedantic insistence on detail, but an utter contempt for the things we showed such respect for when we were founding our city – our claim that only someone with an outstanding nature could ever turn out to be a good man, and only if from earliest childhood he played in the best company and the right surroundings, and did all the right kinds of things. How magnificently the city tramples all this underfoot, paying no attention to what kind of life someone led before he entered political life! All anyone has to do to win

c favour is say he is a friend of the people.'

'Ah, yes, that's true nobility!'

'These and related qualities will be the ones possessed by democracy. You'd expect it to be an enjoyable kind of regime – anarchic, colourful, and granting equality of a sort to equals and unequals alike.'

'Yes, that's a pretty familiar story,' he said.

'Look and see, then,' I said, 'what the individual resembling this regime is like. Or rather, should we ask first, as we did with the regime, how he comes into being?'

'Yes.'

'Doesn't it happen like this? He might come into being, I imagine, as a

d son of the thrifty oligarchic character we were talking about, brought up under his father's direction and with his father's habits.'

'He might well.'

'So he too will force himself to be master of those desires within him which are extravagant and not money-making – the ones called unnecessary desires.'

'Obviously,' he said.

'Would you like us to start by defining necessary and unnecessary desires? We don't want to be completely in the dark about what we're discussing.'

'Yes, I would.'

'Very well. Is it the ones we can't deny which can properly be called

[23] In Greek religion, heroes became minor deities after death and were worshipped in their place of origin.

e necessary – plus the ones whose satisfaction does us some good? Our nature demands that we try to satisfy both these classes, doesn't it?'

'Very much so.'

559 'So we shall be justified in using the name "necessary" for these desires.'

'We shall.'

'What about the desires you *can* get rid of, if you work at it from childhood, the ones moreover whose presence does you no good – may even perhaps do you some harm? Wouldn't we be right in saying that all these are unnecessary?'

'We would.'

'Let's take an example of each class. It's easier to grasp them if we have a pattern, or model.'

'That's a good idea.'

b 'Won't the desire to eat for one's health and well-being, the desire just for bread and cooked food, be a necessary desire?'

'Yes, I think it will.'

'The desire for bread is necessary on both counts. It is not only beneficial, but also the difference between life and death.'

'Yes.'

'Whereas the desire for cooked food is necessary if it can contribute in some way to our well-being.'

'Precisely.'

'What about the desire, over and above this, for other sorts of foods? This desire can be eliminated, in most people, by discipline and education from early childhood. And since it is harmful to the body, and harmful to c the soul's capacity for thought and self-control, would it be correct to call it unnecessary?'

'Absolutely correct.'

'In which case, shall we say that these desires are extravagant, whereas the others are productive, because they contribute to some function?'

'By all means.'

'And we'll say the same about sex, and the rest of our desires.'

'Yes, we shall.'

'Well, then. Did we say that this person we were calling a drone a few moments ago was the one who was stuffed with pleasures and desires of this sort, and that he was ruled by unnecessary pleasures and desires? Whereas d the person ruled by necessary desires was thrifty and oligarchical?'[24]

[24] 555c–556a vs. 554a.

'We did indeed.'

'Let's return, then,' I said, 'to our account of the way the democratic man comes into being from the oligarchic. I think it generally happens like this.'

'Like what?'

'Imagine a young man who has been brought up in the uneducated and stingy way we described just now, but who gets to taste the honey the drones enjoy, and spend his time with wild, fiery creatures who can offer
e him pleasures of every kind, hue and variety. That's probably the point you must regard as the beginning of the change from the oligarchy within him to democracy.'

'No question about it,' he said.

'Just as the city changed when one party received support from an external ally of a similar persuasion,[25] doesn't the young man now change in the same way when one group of his desires in its turn receives support from a class of external desires which are related and similar to it?'

'He certainly does.'

'And if some countervailing help comes to the oligarchic element within him – from his father, perhaps, or from the lectures and reproaches
560 of the rest of his family – I imagine that's when faction and counter-faction arise, and internal warfare against himself.'

'Of course.'

'Sometimes, I imagine, the democratic element loses ground to the oligarchic element, and some of his desires are either destroyed or banished, as some sense of shame is born in the young man's soul, and order is restored.'

'Yes, it sometimes happens like that,' he said.

'But as one set of desires is banished, I imagine another related set has grown up in succession. The father, who has no idea how to bring up his
b son, cannot prevent these desires becoming numerous and powerful.'

'Yes, that's certainly what tends to happen.'

'These desires, then, draw the young man to the same company as before, and secret intercourse breeds a mob of further desires.'

'And then?'

'Finally, I imagine, they seize the citadel of the young man's soul, realising that it is empty of learning, good habits and true arguments, which are of course the best defenders and guardians in the minds of men loved by the gods.'

[25] 556e.

c 'Much the best,' he said.

'False, seductive arguments and opinions run up and seize this stronghold in the young man's mind, I expect, replacing the true defenders.'

'They do indeed.'

'Doesn't he then return to that land of the Lotus-eaters, and take up residence there quite openly? If any help from his family reaches the thrifty part of his soul, those seductive arguments bar the gates of the d royal walls within him.[26] They will neither allow entry to the actual allied force, nor even admit an embassy of wise words, in a private capacity, from the young man's elders. They join battle, and the seductive arguments win. A sense of shame is classed as simple-mindedness, deprived of rights, and driven into exile. Self-discipline is called cowardice, heaped with insults, and sent packing. As for moderation and economy, don't the seductive arguments persuade the young man that these are mean and parochial? Don't they join forces with his many useless desires, and despatch these qualities beyond the borders?'

'Absolutely.'

'And when they have somehow emptied and purged the soul of the e young man they are taking possession of and initiating with solemn rites, they then promptly bring insolence, anarchy, extravagance and shamelessness back from exile, in a blaze of glory, with a great retinue, and crowned with garlands.[27] They sing their praises, and find flattering names for them. Insolence becomes sophistication, anarchy freedom, 561 extravagance generosity, and shamelessness courage. Isn't this likely to be the way a young man exchanges an upbringing among necessary desires for the liberation and release of unnecessary and useless desires?'

'Yes, it is,' he said. 'Quite clearly.'

'From then on, I imagine, a young man of this sort lives his life spending at least as much money, effort and time on unnecessary as on necessary desires. If he is lucky, he may not get too carried away by his b orgy. As he grows older and the first flush of excitement fades, he may accept back some elements of the party he exiled, and avoid complete surrender to the usurpers. Putting all his pleasures on an equal footing, he grants power over himself to the pleasure of the moment, as if it were a magistrate chosen by lot. And when he has had his fill of it, he surrenders

[26] The citadel or acropolis of a Greek city was typically the seat of its ancestral kings.
[27] The imagery parodies the ritual of the Eleusinian Mysteries. (For mystic cults in general, see note 9 to 363c above.)

himself in turn to another pleasure. He rejects none of them, but gives sustenance to all alike.'

'He does indeed.'

'If someone tells him that some pleasures are the result of fine and good
c desires, others of evil desires, and that he should follow and value the first, and punish and hold in subjection the second, he does not admit this truth, or allow it into the fortress. He shakes his head at any claims of this sort, saying that all desires are equal, and must be valued equally.'

'Yes,' he said, 'that's exactly how he feels, and exactly how he behaves.'

'And so he lives out his life from day to day, gratifying the desire of the moment. One day he drinks himself under the table to the sound of the
d pipes, the next day he is on a diet of plain water. Now he is taking exercise, but at other times he is lazing around and taking no interest in anything. And sometimes he passes the time in what he calls philosophy. Much of his time is spent in politics, where he leaps to his feet and says and does whatever comes into his head. Or if he comes to admire the military, then that is the way he goes. Or if it's businessmen, then that way. There is no controlling order or necessity in his life. As far as he is concerned, it is pleasant, free and blessed, and he sticks to it his whole life through.'

e 'You've given us an excellent account of the life of the man who puts equality before everything.'

'Yes. I take it to be a variegated life, full of all sorts of characteristics. This democratic man is elegant and colourful, just like the democratic city. Many men and women might envy him his life, with all the examples of regimes and characters it contains within it.'

'Yes, that is what it is like,' he said.

562 'Very well, then. Can a man like this be ranked on a par with democracy? Can he properly be called democratic?'

'Yes, he can.'

'In that case,' I said, 'that leaves us with the task of describing the most delightful of regimes, and the most delightful of individuals. Tyranny and the tyrant.'

'It certainly does,' he said.

'Very well, my good friend, how does tyranny manifest itself? That it is a change from democracy is pretty obvious.'

'Yes, it is.'

'In which case, does tyranny in its turn arise out of democracy in rather the same way as democracy arises out of oligarchy?'

b 'How do you mean?'

'The thing they held up as an ideal,' I said, 'the thing which formed the basis of oligarchy, was wealth, wasn't it?'

'Yes.'

'It was the insatiable longing for wealth, and the neglect of everything else in the pursuit of profit, which destroyed oligarchy.'

'True,' he said.

'And is it the insatiable longing for what it defines as good which destroys democracy too, in its turn?'

'What is it you say it defines as good?'

c 'Freedom,' I said. 'This is the thing, I imagine, which in a democratic state you will hear described as its finest attribute, and what makes it, for any man of free spirit, the only place worth living in.'

'Yes, that is certainly something you often hear said.'

'Well, then, as I was saying just now, is it the insatiable longing for this good, and the neglect of everything else, which brings about a change in this regime too, and creates the need for tyranny?'

'How does that happen?' he asked.

'I imagine it's when a democracy, in its thirst for the wine of freedom,
d finds the wine being poured by unscrupulous cupbearers, and when it drinks more deeply than it should of pure, unmixed freedom.[28] Then if its magistrates are not totally easy-going and do not offer it that freedom in large quantities, it accuses them of being filthy oligarchs, and punishes them.'

'Yes,' he said. 'That is what they do.'

'Those who obey the rulers are heaped with insults. They are regarded as servile nonentities. Praise and respect, whether in private or public life, go to rulers for behaving like those they rule, and to those they rule for behaving like rulers. Isn't the desire for freedom in a city of this type
e bound to run to extremes?'

'Of course it is.'

'And isn't the anarchy bound to make its way, my friend, into private households? Until finally it starts appearing among dumb animals.'

'And how do we reckon this happens?'

'A father, for example, gets used to being like a child, and being afraid of his sons. A son gets used to being like his father. He feels no respect or
563 fear for his parents. All he wants is to be free. Immigrants are put on a par

[28] The Greeks drank their wine diluted with water.

with citizens, and citizens with immigrants. And the same with visiting foreigners.'

'Yes, that's what happens.'

'That, plus a few more trivial examples of the same kind,' I said. 'In a society of this sort teachers are afraid of their pupils and curry favour with them. Pupils have an equal contempt for their teachers and their attendants. In general, the young are the image of their elders, and challenge them in everything they say and do. The old descend to the level
b of the young. They pepper everything with wit and humour, trying to be like the young, because they don't want to be thought harsh or dictatorial.'

'Precisely,' he said.

'But the extreme limit of freedom in a city of this kind comes when those who have been bought as slaves – whether male or female – are every bit as free as those who bought them. As for the relationship of women to men and men to women, I all but forgot to mention the extent of the legal equality and liberty between them.'

c 'Shall we then, borrowing a phrase from Aeschylus, say whatever it was that "came to our lips" just now?'[29]

'By all means,' I said. 'It's certainly what *I'm* going to do. You wouldn't believe, without seeing it for yourself, how much more free domestic animals are here than in other cities. Dogs really *are* like the women who own them, as the proverb says. And horses and donkeys are in the habit of wandering the streets with total freedom, noses in the air, barging into
d any passer-by who fails to get out of their way. It's all like that – all full of freedom.'

'Talk about telling people their own dreams,' he said. 'I've often had that experience myself on my way out of the city.'

'To generalise, then, from all these collected observations, have you noticed how sensitive it makes the souls of the citizens, so that if anyone seeks to impose the slightest degree of slavery, they grow angry and cannot tolerate it? In the end, as I imagine you are aware, they take no
e notice even of the laws – written or unwritten[30] – in their determination that no one shall be master over them in any way at all.'

'Yes, I am well aware of that,' he said.

[29] The Aeschylean play from which this phrase derives is unknown.

[30] 'Unwritten law' was a common phrase for the customary beliefs and social strictures respected in any particular community.

'This is the form of government, my friend, so attractive and so headstrong, from which I believe tyranny is born.'

'Certainly headstrong,' he said. 'But what is the next step?'

'The same ailment which arose in oligarchy, and destroyed that, arises in this regime also – only more widespread and virulent because of the licence it is given. Here it enslaves democracy. Indeed, excess in one
564 direction generally tends to produce a violent reaction in the opposite direction. This is true of the seasons of the year, of plants and animals, and particularly true of political regimes.'

'Probably so,' he said.

'Yes, since the only likely reaction to excessive freedom, whether for an individual or for a city, is excessive slavery.'

'Very likely.'

'In which case,' I said, 'the chances are that democracy is the ideal place to find the origin of tyranny – the harshest and most complete slavery arising, I guess, from the most extreme freedom.'

'That makes sense,' he said.

'However, that doesn't by itself answer your question, presumably.
b What you wanted to know was the nature of this ailment which arises not only in oligarchy but also in democracy, enslaving it.'

'True.'

'Very well,' I said. 'What I had in mind was that class of idle and extravagant men, the most courageous element leading, the least courageous element following. We compared them to drones – the leaders to drones with stings, the followers to drones without stings.'[31]

'Rightly so.'

'Both these classes,' I said, 'disturb the balance of any regime in which
c they arise. Like phlegm and bile in the body.[32] The good doctor and lawgiver for a city must be far-sighted in his precautions against both of them – just like a good beekeeper. His intention, ideally, should be to prevent their occurrence at all. If they do occur, he should make sure they are cut out, cells and all, as swiftly as possible.'

'Heavens, yes. And as completely as possible.'

'All right, then,' I said. 'To help us see what we are after in a more clear-cut way, let's tackle the question like this.'

[31] 552c–e.

[32] These were two of the so-called 'humours' – the Greek term simply means 'juices' – upon whose balance in the body much of Greek medicine made physical health depend.

'Like what?'

'Let's make a theoretical division of the democratic city into three
d parts. After all, this is how it is in fact composed. This class of drones, I imagine, is one part, and because of the absence of restrictions it grows at least as freely in a democracy as in an oligarchy.'

'That is so.'

'But it is much fiercer in a democracy than in an oligarchy.'

'In what way?'

'In an oligarchy it is treated as of no value, and excluded from power. So it gets no exercise, and does not develop its strength. In a democracy, by contrast, barring a few individuals, it is the dominant influence in the state. The fiercest element in this class does the talking and acting; the remainder sit around the rostrum buzzing, and refusing to allow the
e expression of any other view. The result is that in a regime of this kind everything, with very few exceptions, is run by the class of drones.'

'Exactly,' he said.

'Then there's a second class which always separates itself off from the majority.'

'What class is that?'

'When everyone is engaged in making money, presumably it is those with the most disciplined temperament who generally become the richest.'

'Very likely.'

'They provide a plentiful supply of honey for the drones, I imagine, and an easy source from which to extract it.'

'Yes,' he said. 'After all, they can't extract much from those who haven't got much.'

'They're called the rich, these people we are talking about, the drones' feeding-ground.'

'That's about it,' he said.

565 'The general populace would be the third class – manual labourers with little interest in politics, and very little property of their own. This is the most numerous and powerful class in a democracy, but only when it is assembled together.'

'It is indeed,' he said. 'But if it isn't getting some share of the honey, it is reluctant to assemble very often.'

'That's why it always does get a share of it, if its leaders have anything to do with it. They take it away from those who possess property and distribute it among the people, keeping only the lion's share for themselves.'

b 'Yes, the people do get a limited share of that sort,' he said.

'Those whose property is taken away are presumably compelled to defend themselves by speaking in the assembly and taking whatever other action they can.'

'Of course.'

'Even if they have no desire at all for revolution, they are accused by the others of plotting against the people and being oligarchs.'

'Naturally.'

'In the end, when they see the people attempting to injure them – not c maliciously, but out of ignorance, misled by their opponents – at that point, whether they like it or not, the rich really do become oligarchs, though not from choice. This too is an evil implanted in them by the stings of the drone we were talking about.'

'It is indeed.'

'Then you get impeachments, litigation and lawsuits between the two classes.'

'You certainly do.'

'And isn't there a universal tendency for the people to set up one single individual who is their own particular champion? Don't they feed him up and make him mighty?'[33]

'They do.'

d 'So when we look at the growth of a tyrant,' I said, 'one thing at least is clear. This position of champion is the sole root from which the tyrant springs.'

'Yes, that's absolutely clear.'

'In that case, what prompts the change from champion to tyrant? Isn't it pretty obvious that it happens when the champion of the people starts acting like the character in the story about the temple of Zeus the wolf-god in Arcadia?'

'What story?' he asked.

'That there is one piece of human innards chopped up among all the pieces of the other sacrificial offerings, and that anyone who tastes it will inevitably turn into a wolf. Or haven't you heard that story?'

[33] This narrative, although a generalised composite, alludes most particularly to two instances of struggle between democratic and oligarchic factions: the turmoil in late fifth-century Athens, and the rise of Dionysius I as popular champion in Sicily (see pp. xi–xiii and xxii of the introduction). There was no people's champion who became tyrant at Athens in Plato's time. What this fits is rather the rise of Dionysius, as well as that of Pisistratus, ruler of Athens in the mid-sixth century, when the city was first becoming prominent.

e 'Yes, I have heard it.'

'Isn't it the same with a champion of the people? Once he really wins the mob over, the blood of his kinsmen is no bar to him. He accuses someone falsely, as such people do. He brings him to trial and murders
566 him, and as he rubs out a man's life his unholy mouth and lips taste the blood of a butchered kinsman. He drives people into exile or kills them, hinting at a cancellation of debts and the redistribution of land. What is the inevitable and predestined next step for someone like this? Doesn't he either have to be destroyed by his enemies, or else become tyrant, turning from man into wolf?'

'Yes. That is absolutely inevitable,' he said.

'He becomes the architect of civil war against those who own property.'

'He does.'

'Well, then. If he is sent into exile, but returns despite his enemies, doesn't he return as an out-and-out tyrant?'

'Yes. Obviously.'

b 'And if his enemies are unable to drive him into exile or kill him by attacking him publicly, then they start plotting to kill him secretly by assassination.'

'Yes, that's certainly what tends to happen,' he said.

'The tyrant's response to this is the famous request which everyone who has reached this stage discovers. He asks the people for a personal bodyguard, to guarantee the safety of their people's champion.'

'Indeed he does.'

'And they give him one. More worried about his safety than their own, presumably.'

c 'Much more.'

'When a man with money sees this, one who in addition to his money has reason to be an enemy of the people, then this man, my friend, in the words of Croesus' oracle,

> Without delay to Hermus' pebbled shore
> Flees straight, nor thinks it shame to play the coward.'[34]

'That's right,' he said. 'He certainly wouldn't get a second chance to think it shame.'

'No. I imagine anyone they can get their hands on is done to death.'

[34] The Hermus is a large river in Lydia that would have provided an escape-route for its king, Croesus, in the event of his overthrow. The oracle was the reply given to Croesus when he asked how long he would reign. See Herodotus 1.55.

'Bound to be.'

d 'And this champion of ours is obviously not going to be the one lying there, "measuring his full length"[35] in the dust. After destroying all these other people, he'll stand tall in the chariot of the city, having graduated from champion to tyrant.'

'Of course,' he said. 'What's to stop him?'

'Shall we then describe the happiness of this man and of the city where such a creature comes into being?'

'By all means let's describe it,' he said.

'Very well. To start with, in the early days, doesn't he have a smile and
e a friendly word for everyone he meets? He says he's no tyrant, and is full of promises both to individuals and to the state. Won't he have freed them from their debts, and divided up the land among the people and among his supporters? Doesn't he pretend to be universally kind and gentle?'

'He's bound to.'

'But I imagine that once he feels safe from his enemies in exile, being reconciled with some and destroying others, his first concern is to be constantly starting wars, so that the people will stand in need of a leader.'

'Very likely.'

567 'And perhaps with the further intention that their contributions to the war will impoverish them, compel them to concentrate on their daily occupations, and make them less likely to plot against him?'

'Undoubtedly.'

'And if there are some independent-minded people whom he suspects of challenging his rule, doesn't he try to find a good excuse for handing them over to the enemy and destroying them? For all these reasons, isn't a tyrant always bound to be stirring up war?'

'Yes, he is.'

b 'Doesn't this tend to make him increasingly unpopular with the citizens?'

'Of course it does.'

'Then the boldest of those who helped to make him tyrant, and who are now in positions of power, start to speak their minds freely, don't they, both to him and to one another, criticising what is going on?'

'Probably.'

'So the tyrant, if he wants to go on ruling, must be prepared to remove all these people, until he is left with no one who is any use – whether friend or enemy.'

[35] Homer, *Iliad* 16.776.

'Obviously he must.'

c 'He will need a sharp pair of eyes, then. He needs to pick out the brave, the noble, the wise and the rich, since it is his unavoidable good fortune, whether he likes it or not, to be the enemy of all of them. He must plot their downfall, until he has got the city clean.'

'A fine way to clean a city,' he said.

'Yes. The exact opposite of what doctors do to the body. They remove what is worst, and leave what is best. With the tyrant it is the other way round.'

'That's what he *has* to do, apparently, if he is to go on ruling.'

d 'In which case,' I said, 'he is firmly and inevitably impaled on the horns of a delightful dilemma, which requires him either to spend his life with the worthless mob – and be hated by them into the bargain – or not to live at all.'

'That's about the size of it,' he said.

'And the more hated by the citizens his behaviour makes him, the larger and more reliable a bodyguard he will need, won't he?'

'Of course.'

'Who are these reliable people, then? Where can he send to for them?'

'They'll come winging their way of their own accord,' he said. 'Any number of them, as long as he pays the going rate.'

e 'Ye dogs![36] Drones again! Foreign ones, all kinds of them, I think you're talking about.'[37]

'Good. I haven't given you the wrong impression, then.'

'And from the city itself? Might he not bring himself . . .'

'To do what?'

'To deprive the citizens of their slaves, set the slaves free, and make them part of his bodyguard?'

'Indeed he might. They are, after all, the most reliable people he can find.'

568 'What a wonderful thing you make a tyrant out to be,' I said, 'if these are the people he has as his friends, the people he can trust, once he has destroyed the friends he started with.'

'Well, these certainly *are* the kind of friends he has.'

'So while he enjoys the admiration of these friends, and the company of these new citizens, do decent people hate him and avoid him?'

[36] See note 50 to 399e above on Socrates' habit of using this oath.

[37] Mercenaries were increasingly used in warfare throughout the Greek world in the fourth century, but it was characteristic only of tyrants to use them for a personal bodyguard.

'How can they help doing so?'

'It's no wonder,' I said, 'that tragedy in general, and Euripides in particular, has such a reputation for wisdom.'

'Why?'

b 'Because among other insight-filled utterances he produced this one: "A tyrant's wisdom comes from wise companions."[38] Clearly it was these associates of the tyrant that he was referring to as the wise.'

'Yes,' he said. 'And Euripides also praises tyranny as "godlike"[39] – and a whole lot else besides. And not just Euripides – other poets as well.'

'That's why writers of tragedies, being so wise, will forgive us and those with regimes like ours, if we refuse to accept them into our state on the grounds that they are apologists for tyranny.'

'Well, if you want my opinion,' he said, 'they will forgive us. Or the more civilised of them will, at any rate.'

c 'They can tour the other cities, presumably, drawing great crowds and hiring actors with fine, loud, persuasive voices, and so seduce those states into tyranny and democracy.'

'They certainly can.'

'What is more, they get paid for this, and are treated with respect. First and foremost by tyrants, as you might expect, but also by a democracy.[40] But d the higher they climb in the ascending scale of political regimes, the fainter respect for them becomes, as if it were short of breath, and unable to progress further.'

'Exactly.'

'We have strayed from the point, however,' I said. 'Let us return to that army the tyrant has – that fine, large, varied and ever-changing army – and ask how it is going to be maintained.'

'Well, obviously, if there is money in the city's temples, then as long as it lasts he will spend that. Plus the money of his victims, allowing him to exact smaller contributions from the people.'

e 'But what happens when these run out?'

'He will use his father's money, obviously – to support himself, his drinking-companions, and his male and female friends.'

[38] The play from which this statement comes is lost, and some sources attribute it to Sophocles rather than Euripides. Poets and intellectuals were frequently to be found at the courts of powerful patrons.

[39] *Trojan Women* 1169.

[40] Pindar, Simonides and Aeschylus are said to have attended the court of the Sicilian tyrant Hiero, while Euripides and Agathon – the tragedian featured in Plato's *Symposium* – attended the court of the Macedonian tyrant Archelaus. We also know of non-Athenians who came to Athens to have their dramas performed.

'I see. The people, who spawned the tyrant, will support him and his friends.'

'It will have no choice,' he said.

'What if the people resent this?' I asked. '"It is not right," they might say for a start, "for a grown-up son to be supported by his father. Quite the reverse, in fact. A father should be supported by his son. What is
569 more, the reason we fathered you and put you in power was not so that we could ourselves become slaves to our own slaves, as soon as you became powerful, and support you and them and the rest of your collection of human flotsam. No, with you as our champion we wanted our political freedom from the rich and the so-called aristocracy. We order you to leave the city now, you and your friends." Suppose the people spoke to him in this way, like a father driving his son and his unruly drinking-companions from the house? What do you think would happen then?'

b 'My god!' he said. 'Then the people really will find out what they are, and what kind of offspring they have fathered, taken to their hearts, and allowed to grow. They'll realise it's a case of the weaker trying to drive out the stronger.'

'What do you mean?' I asked. 'Will the tyrant have the effrontery to use force against his parent? Will he beat him if he disobeys?'

'Yes – once he has taken away his weapons.'

'A parricide, then, this tyrant you are describing. A cruel guardian for man's old age. At this point, it seems, the thing is an acknowledged
c tyranny. The people have jumped out of the proverbial frying pan into the fire, from their enslavement to free men to a despotism of slaves. They have exchanged the ample – too ample – freedom they had before for the hair shirt of the most harsh and galling form of slavery, the slavery imposed by slaves.'

'Yes, that is precisely how it happens.'

'Will there be any objection, then,' I asked, 'to our saying that we have given an adequate description of the way tyranny evolves out of democracy, and of what it is like when it has done so?'

'No,' he said, 'our description is perfectly adequate.'

Book 9

571 'That still leaves the tyrannical man himself,' I said. 'We must ask how he develops out of the democratic man, what sort of person he is, and what manner of life he leads. Is he wretched or blissful?'

'Yes, we are still left with him.'

'And there's something else I need before I can deal with him. Shall I tell you what it is?'

'What?'

'I'm not very satisfied with our analysis of the nature and extent of our
b desires.[1] Until we remedy that, we shall be pretty much in the dark in our present enquiry.'

'And is it too late now?' he asked.

'Not at all. I want to make the following distinction between desires. Think about it. Among the unnecessary pleasures and desires there are some which seem to me to be violent or lawless. Everyone is born with them, in all probability, but in some people, under the control of the laws and the better desires, allied with reason, they are either eliminated completely, or remain few and weak. In other people, however, they become stronger and more numerous.'

c 'Which desires do you mean?'

'Those which are aroused in sleep,' I said, 'when the rest of the soul – the rational, gentle and ruling element in it – slumbers, and the bestial, savage part, filled with food or drink, suddenly comes alive, casts off sleep, and tries to go out and satisfy its own nature. In this state, as you know, since it is released and set free from all shame or rational judgment, it can

[1] 558d–559d.