

*The following is a dialogue recently discovered by the Greek Archeological Society of Athens. Its discovery has created quite an uproar in the philosophical world because it is an obvious extrapolation, apparently written by Plato himself, on one of his most ambitious and confounding works, the Republic. The exact date of its origin is a matter of some debate. This historian, however, falls into the category of those scholars who place it very near the end of Plato's life, possibly even as late as 348 B. C. E., the year of his death. The introduction of a host of characters previously absent in any writing of the time, and an uncharacteristic jocularly in some aspects of the conversation seem to suggest both an aged recognition of the passing of the torch to younger philosophers and disregard for the youthful worries of appearing silly or absent-minded. Perhaps the best suggestion of its age is found in the last line of the dialogue, "Good night, old man." It is not difficult to see the connection between the twilight of the day and that of Plato's life.*

*The body of the work is aimed primarily toward a better understanding of Plato's most virtuous person, the philosopher-king. It is found in many of Plato's works that he adamantly believed in a need for the philosopher to govern the city-state if any of the problems that plagued governments of his time were to be resolved. This dialogue seems to be his masterwork in defense of this belief. With the introduction of his main question –Is the philosopher-king truly just? – Plato takes his primary characters, Socrates and Tomarchus, through the many topics discussed in the Republic in an effort to clarify the philosopher-king's virtue. Ironically, as is noted in the text, the answer to the question will bring his participants back to the original topic of the Republic in a brilliant reexamination of the true meaning of justice.*

*Finally, Plato offers one of the most striking arguments found in the writings of the ancients. The utilitarian idea of the good – the greatest happiness for the greatest number – has long been believed to have solidified with such precision in the work of John Stuart Mill in Utilitarianism. This text shows, however, that Plato has conceived the idea – to make as many people as possible, as happy as possible – in such a way as to suggest an almost prophetic understanding of Mill's work many centuries later. Plato delivers a brilliant argument through the use of a younger contemporary known for his grandiosity of speech, his belief in democratic ideals, and his clarity of communication, Gordias. Plato jokingly attributes one of the most convoluted statements in the whole text to this character as a sort of ironic compliment. Plato offers a response to this democratic defense in order to conclude his conversation. It is hard, however, to know whether or not he believes himself to have persuaded Gordias, and the democrat in general, of the failings of democracy and the corresponding supremacy of aristocracy when the last resort of the aging man is essentially to agree to disagree.<sup>1</sup>*

### **Tomarchus**

Tomarchus: Good afternoon, Socrates, how does your day fare?

Socrates: Very well, Tomarchus.

Tomarchus: Socrates, I was wandering the city today and I met a peculiar man. He claimed to be a philosopher of the highest order. He spoke most of the day with anyone who

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<sup>1</sup> The following work is intended as an addendum to the *Republic*. Its truth regarding the beliefs of any character of antiquity is purely coincidental and should be read with consideration of this fact. The introductory note is a matter of creative flare rather than biographical accuracy.

would listen on matters of state, stars, and morality among others. Though of little interest to me for his ideas, I found that his pedantry aroused in me a great many memories.

Socrates: Which were those my young friend?

Tomarchus: I wish you would not refer to me in such a way. I am only four years your junior and hardly a man of youth any longer.

Socrates: I apologize, old friend; habits of youth do not leave so readily as those acquired in later life. Please, tell me why you were aroused to memory.

Tomarchus: I found myself wondering back to the conversation you had some time ago with Glaucon on the topic of justice. Do you remember it?

Socrates: I do.

Tomarchus: Well, the peculiar man claiming to be a philosopher got me to wondering what it was you had said about the philosopher. You see, this man was speaking as without reason. He would offer propositions for which he would then give no support. He made no attempt to show that what he said was necessarily true.

Socrates: That does not sound much like the philosopher with which I am familiar.

Tomarchus: That's just it, Socrates. Though I do not consider this man a philosopher by any stretch of understanding, the fact that he spoke on all topics, great and small, was what interested me.

Socrates: How so?

Tomarchus: What was interesting was that I found myself unable to find a problem with this.

Socrates: I am not sure I understand what you mean, Tomarchus.

Tomarchus: Well, if it isn't his interest in all topics of discourse that causes me to frown on his claim to a philosophic nature, then it seems that must be a part of what I believe to be the philosophic nature. But the notion of justice that you came to in your discussion with Glaucon seems to contradict that characteristic.

Socrates: My friend, if you were to phrase this problem in the more common form of a question, I might be able to better grasp and answer it.

Tomarchus: Can you explain to me the apparent discrepancy between your conclusion about the nature of justice and the nature of your supremely virtuous citizen, the philosopher kings?

Socrates: Why do you ask? What seems to be creating your confusion?

Tomarchus: The problem I see is that you have said that justice is "minding one's own business."

Socrates: This is true.

Tomarchus: And yet, the very character of your philosopher kings is defined contrary to this idea.

Socrates: I think that you could make your objection clearer.

Tomarchus: I am sorry. Let me try to clarify my meaning. Philosophers are lovers of wisdom, are they not?

Socrates: Yes, they are.

Tomarchus: And did you not argue in your conversation with Glaucon that a lover of a thing, one who is erotically inclined toward something "desires everything of that kind," without preferring "one part of it but not another"?<sup>2</sup>

Socrates: Yes, I do recall that conversation.

Tomarchus: And did you not also say that "the philosopher doesn't desire one part of wisdom rather than another but desires the whole thing"?<sup>3</sup>

Socrates: This I also recall having said in that conversation.

Tomarchus: So the love of wisdom that is a key component in the nature of the philosopher requires of him an interest in all forms of knowledge. We can agree to this?

Socrates: We can.

Tomarchus: Well, if we then consider the process by which you and your companions from that conversation came to define justice, we will see that as a part of that process you determined a truth about the different classes of people.

Socrates: Which is the truth you mean to highlight?

Tomarchus: Why, it is the injustice of meddling in the work of a class other than one's own, of course.<sup>4</sup>

Socrates: Yes, and do you remember why we determined that to be such an injustice?

Tomarchus: Certainly. The inevitable outcome that you foresee in intermingling and meddling among the classes of people is disharmony which leads to civil conflict. This in turn

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<sup>2</sup> See 475b

<sup>3</sup> See 475b

culminates in the downfall of the city.<sup>5</sup>

Socrates: Exactly. And do you recall the way by which we came to this truth?

Tomarchus: Indeed, I do. It originates in the discussion of the division of labor. It occurred to you that as people are born with different talents and abilities it makes more sense to divide the labors of the city among them in terms of what will produce the finest goods. And since committing one's self to a task completely rather than a number of tasks is the best way to produce those goods, it stands to reason that all people should do only the job for which they are most "naturally suited".<sup>6</sup>

Socrates: Well said. It was our conclusion that if one does not act to provide the best possible service to the community by committing to the kind of work that best suits one's nature but dabbles in many kinds, then one is contributing to the degradation of the city and is acting badly. Then it must have come clear to you now. In this case justice is minding one's own business, and all men, as they are individuals and not collectives, must have only one task and not many, for which they are most naturally suited, and toward which they should devote their time. But, it is also true that the philosopher, as a lover of wisdom, knowledge and truth, attempts to learn all things associated with these. And in so doing he is dabbling in the work of all other classes of people as it is within the duties of all professionals to know something with regard to what product or service they provide for the city.

Socrates: I see.

Tomarchus: I would like to suggest an image, one derived from your work<sup>7</sup> that may better exemplify what I mean.

Socrates: Please, do so.

Tomarchus: When we speak of a carpenter, we say that if he commits himself to his work, attempting only to perfect this craft for which he is best suited, then he is a good carpenter. He does all the things appropriate to carpentry and does not interfere in the affairs of others. This good carpenter we also call just, for it does not seem that we should call a man both a good carpenter and an unjust one. Can we not agree to this?

Socrates: We can agree.

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<sup>4</sup> See 434a-c

<sup>5</sup> See 434a-c

<sup>6</sup> The phrase "naturally suited" is found at 369e-370c

<sup>7</sup> Referring here to a similar analogy involving a carpenter at 434a-c

Tomarchus: Then what will we call a carpenter who does not commit himself to his own work, becoming a poor craftsman, and instead attempts to study the art of war? This is the work of a member of the auxiliary class<sup>8</sup> and does not conform to his nature. Because of the spreading of his efforts, his work as a carpenter lacks precision and care. He becomes a hindrance to the health of the city because his buildings are falling apart, hurting people, and giving it a disheveled appearance. We would rightly call him a bad carpenter. And as the good carpenter is necessarily just, so must his opposite be the opposite of just. We may call him unjust because he is acting in such a way that is not best for the community. He is minding the business of other classes of people and this brings disharmony to the city.

Socrates: This all appears to have coherence.

Tomarchus: Then let us continue. All members of the city are to be subject to the same laws. They are all subject to the same qualifications of virtue and goodness. Or would we say that the true forms<sup>9</sup> of virtue and good change from person to person?

Socrates: No, we say that they remain the same.

Tomarchus: Then just as the carpenter is a good and virtuous carpenter or his opposite by a set of qualifications determined by his profession, so, too, is the philosopher-king a good ruler or his opposite by a similar set of qualifications determined by his profession. Agreed?

Socrates: I have no objections.

Tomarchus: Well, it seems that in the case of the carpenter, his desire to know the art of war was an unjust desire because it made him a bad carpenter. Should we not take this to mean that if the philosopher-king, the ruler of the city, mind you, should similarly probe the professions of another class, he would have to be considered unjust? The ruler is one who guides the city and protects the people by upholding the laws and creating new ones when necessary or removing antiquated ones. He necessarily needs to have knowledge of what makes good and bad laws, what is best for the community, and other questions of the nature that a philosopher would be best equipped to answer. However, the nature of the philosopher, as you have noted yourself, is not one that is drawn to the governing of the city. It is one interested in "the sort of learning

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<sup>8</sup> This is a concept developed in Plato's division of the best possible city wherein there are three distinct classes divided by their particular psychic structures. This concept is further developed in both the original *Republic* itself and later in this dialogue at the behest of one of only two female interlocutors ever introduced in a Platonic dialogue

<sup>9</sup> The forms are one of the most famous aspects of Plato's writing. They represent the knowledge to which the true philosopher aspires because they are the objective parts of the world. They can be known only through the process Plato calls dialectic, never experience.

that makes clear to them some feature of the being that always is and does not wander around between coming to be and decaying"<sup>10</sup> whereas governing is a process dealing in the coming to be of images and not a thing that is without changing.<sup>11</sup> The philosopher has a specific measure of the satisfaction of his desires for knowledge. That is, he only sees his desires sated when the fruits of his labor produce knowledge of true things. It appears that he has no interest in remaining confined by the limits of his class or profession; that he has virtually no concern for a just life if such a life is characterized by the avoidance of appropriating the work of another class of people. Can it be said honestly that a person with a "soul that is always reaching out to grasp everything both divine and human as a whole"<sup>12</sup> will commit his efforts solely to the governing of the city and leave the other members of the city to find perfection in their own fields?

Socrates: I do not see that you have made a clear connection between the love of learning and distaste for governing. It seems you want to distinguish a necessity within the nature of loving wisdom, which clearly precludes a desire to participate in the polis. Perhaps you can clarify?

Tomarchus: Dear Socrates, do you not remember your own statements regarding the strong inclination toward one subject naturally diminishing interest in others? You likened it to a stream diverted into another channel, the one taking away from the force of the other.<sup>13</sup> This is all I mean to say by showing a strong inclination in the philosopher for knowledge as precluding a desire for governing.

Socrates: This I do remember having said. The purpose of questioning you about it was simply to make sure you do not feel justified making claims without proper reason. Please, continue.

Tomarchus: Not only that, but how can a person who has no interest in a job be considered the best candidate for the job? Should it not be taken into account whether or not a person enjoys the work before it is decided what they are naturally best suited to do?

Socrates: These are pertinent questions you mean me to address. And though you inquire with much spirit, it seems you may have sacrificed clarity and reason somewhat for the sake of

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<sup>10</sup> See 485a

<sup>11</sup> This is another reference to the forms. For Plato, that which is unchanging and real is not knowable through experience. The argument seems to suggest that Tomarchus interprets this to mean that because leadership deals with the world of experience, there can be little if any interest within the true philosopher for concerns of governorship.

<sup>12</sup> See 486a

it. Nevertheless, I think we have enough to start so long as you will agree to better explain your reasoning when we come across a matter under consideration whose relevance is not clear.

Tomarchus: I will without hesitation.

Socrates: Good. The questions to which you require answers are, as I understand them, how is the philosopher to be considered just if I have attributed to him a nature that seems to conflict with the definition of justice? How can a person who is, by nature, in no way interested in governing be considered the best candidate for a position of leadership? And does it not make sense to take into account what a person will enjoy doing when considering what they are best suited to do? Does this give a more or less accurate description of your inquiry thus far?

Tomarchus: You do seem to have captured the essence of what I meant.

Socrates: Excellent. Let me begin with your third question as I believe not only that it can be answered most easily but that it may help shed light on the more complex questions. I will use the image you have constructed of the carpenter, if you don't mind. It is quite similar to that image of mine that you used<sup>14</sup> and I think it will make for an easy transition. Also, I think it will help to maintain some continuity in our conversation.

Tomarchus: That sounds like an effective plan of action.

Socrates: Does the carpenter, the one who commits himself to his work and diligently pursues only those works that apply to his craft, only go to work when he feels like it? Or does he more likely go to work because if he does not, he will not only fail to earn wages but allow the city to turn to ruins?

Tomarchus: The latter seems most reasonable.

Socrates: And if he did choose to go to work only when he felt like it, would he be knowledgeable in his craft? Or might he become ignorant to the latest advancements in carpentry and allow his work to be second-rate?

Tomarchus: Again, the second seems the most likely to occur.

Socrates: And we know that a carpenter and a non-carpenter are two and not one and that they differ in terms of the characteristics associated with carpentry. That is, the carpenter possesses skills that the non-carpenter does not with respect to carpentry.

Tomarchus: This would be the case.

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<sup>13</sup> See 485d

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 6

Socrates: And we would not say that the carpenter is ignorant of the skills of his craft? Wouldn't we say, rather, that the carpenter is the member of the population who knows the proper and best ways to construct the multifarious structures in the town that pertain to the medium with which he works?

Tomarchus: Yes, we would.

Socrates: And as we already said, the carpenter who goes to work only when he desires to lacks the skills that make him the most knowledgeable on the subject of carpentry. He does not have the appropriate knowledge allowing his work to become second-rate. Isn't that what we said?

Tomarchus: Yes, that is what we said.

Socrates: Then, if the person who goes to work everyday regardless of the pleasure he believes he will derive from it is the person who will know all that is necessary to be a carpenter and is therefore called a carpenter, then his opposite, who only goes to work when he feels he will enjoy himself, will be rightly called a non-carpenter because he lacks the skills of the person who has committed to a just life of carpentry. Should we not say that this is the case?

Tomarchus: I see no reason to say otherwise.

Socrates: Well, it would appear that the considerations that need be taken into account to determine the thing to which a person's nature is best suited would not include the consideration of enjoyment. Wouldn't you agree?

Tomarchus: I would.

Socrates: In fact, the most important aspect of this question of pleasure derivation is one I discussed with Adeimantus. The important thing to note is that "in establishing our city, we aren't aiming to make any one group [or individual] outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city so, as far as possible".<sup>15</sup> The city is meant to function in harmony as a unit and that does not always include the constant pleasure of every individual.

Tomarchus: I see.

Socrates: I feel that I would be remiss here if I did not reiterate the fact that the reasoning behind dividing the city by class is the inborn dispositions within people that are not always the same.

Tomarchus: And what significance does this have with regard to our present inquiry?

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<sup>15</sup> See 420b



Socrates: It is significant because the city which we divided as we did was divided based with no small consideration on the notion that those people who have souls best suited to the different classes are made happiest by the attaining of the things gained by participants of each class respectively.

Tomarchus: And in what way does this apply to the carpenter or the philosopher-king?

Socrates: Tomarchus, you are a smart man and I feel that you should already have made this connection, but I will show you succinctly what I mean.

Tomarchus: Socrates, you know as well as I do that it was you who received the gift of reason from the gods where I received a proportionate amount of beauty from them. I ask only that you treat your gift with the same modesty with which I treat mine.

Socrates: I'll try to keep that in mind, Tomarchus. To respond, the carpenter is driven by his appetites. What he desires most are the pleasures which money can satisfy. Therefore, he is appropriately made a member of the money-making, or, laboring class. His desires will, in theory, best be satisfied by participating in the work of that class of people. And the same is true of the philosopher-king. As the lover of wisdom he is interested in satisfying his rational desires more than any other. Therefore, he is rightly placed in the class whose satisfactions most closely coincide with his preference. Namely, he is a member of the guardian class, the kingly class.<sup>16</sup>

Tomarchus: I believe I am beginning to see much more clearly.

Galineia: Hold on a minute, Socrates. [Galineia, a woman of some distinction for her unyielding interest in the philosophers concerned with the interactions between elements of the physical world, steps forward from the crowd of fifteen or twenty that has gathered enthusiastically to hear Tomarchus question Socrates]. There are those among you today, gentlemen, who do not have the benefit of your knowledge concerning the class distinctions of *your* city, Socrates, nor the benefit of *your* friendship with the progenitor of those concepts, Tomarchus. It may do us all well to hear you speak on this and other topics suited to the soul of the philosopher.

Socrates: Galineia, you have made a wonderful point. It seems to me there are three ideas I have mentioned thus far that to those who have not heard me speak on the topic before

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<sup>16</sup> Tomarchus apparently is considered a close friend of Socrates and, as we will see later, the two tend to have a particularly entertaining banter when in conversation. However, Socrates will occasionally be required to better elaborate on points made because his friend seems to know more than most of Plato's readers. Note 13 in the text

may appear not to have a rational grounding. The first is the way in which the best city is divided; there are three distinct and necessary classes of people within the best possible city. The second is the similar composition of the best possible soul; the most harmonious and happy soul is the one that functions under the same governing principles as the most just city. The third is the relationship between the kinds of souls and the classes to which they are ascribed. Each kind of soul is driven by a belief in what is best for it, what will make it happiest. These beliefs correspond to a class. The function of a class is to provide what is best for a person who holds the belief that corresponds. If I provide a better explanation of these three, will your confusions be relieved, Galineia?

Galineia: I think that will suffice for the time being, Socrates.

Socrates: Then let us begin. The best possible city will have out of necessity three distinct classes. Each class serves a purpose with regard to the harmonious function of the city. The primary class is the largest and is associated with the most basic of needs within the city. They constitute the labor force and are called the money-making class because they produce some service or good for which they ask a wage so that they can purchase the products or services of the other members of the city. Now, if we take it that people will only have necessary desires for the things they need – the desires for bread, water, sex and all the necessities associated with things of this nature – there is no need for any further division. But I believe that we can agree people will have desires that are not necessary but that they will attempt to satisfy nonetheless. Can we agree on this point?

Galineia: We can.

Socrates: Therefore, there will be a need for more resources. This requires a class whose purpose it is to wage wars with surrounding communities when disputes over property occur. This class of people is different from those who are the moneymakers – the laborers. It is soldierly and must have the courage and viciousness of character to succeed in battle. Does this not seem to follow?

Galineia: It does, Socrates.

Tomarchus: Then it would seem we can stop here. But if there are people who are warrior-like wandering about in the city free from guidance, would it not seem likely that they

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points out a particularly sparse clarification and will immediately require greater elaboration. There is much debate as to whether or not a Tomarchus actually existed with this relation to Socrates.

will attack anyone they wish regardless of kinship?

Galineia: That is a definite possibility.

Tomarchus: Then it would appear we need a final class of people, a guiding class that will use rationality to guide the efforts of the soldierly class toward the appropriate expressions of their warrior tendencies. Does this appear to follow?

Galineia: It does.

Tomarchus: Then you see now that the city that is best is the one where those who are guided by desires for food, drink, sex and all of their relatives, along with those members of the city who are guided by desires for the honors of war, should both exist subservient to the class of people who are best equipped to guide them toward what is best for the city as a whole. Have I made this distinction clearer to you, Galineia?<sup>17</sup>

Galineia: You have done quite well, Socrates.

Socrates: It is important to recognize that there is not one way in which the desires of a class manifest. There will be as many different kinds of want as there are individuals in the city. However, we are only interested in a government that is the best possible and most just. And the most just city is not one that includes superfluous classifications. Therefore, we have only designed the city with three classes because they were the only ones necessary for the city to function in a harmonious state. Any further class distinction would be subdivision of the three necessary classes and is not the focus of our present inquiry.

Galineia: That is quite clear, Socrates.

Socrates: Then let me continue by clarifying how the soul is best divided and how people are associated to their classes. There is a very definite relationship between an individual and the class to which he belongs. Therefore, I will discuss the soul and its guiding pleasures by reference to the divisions of the city. Each class is distinguished by an emphasis in the souls of its members. For the money-making class – which may also be referred to as the laboring class – the most important desires to satisfy are those associated with the appetites. The appetitive part of the soul is the largest part of the soul and is the part where the desires for food, drink, and sex and all things related to these originate. They are not interested in honor or rationality so much as they want the pleasures that money can bring; that is, the gaining of the objects which satisfy the aforementioned desires. The second class, those soldierly people we discussed, is guided by

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<sup>17</sup> This argument is laid out in much greater detail primarily between books II through IV of the original *Republic*.

a love of honor and all pleasures associated with that. The division of the soul which corresponds here is the spirited part. There is less consideration of the pleasures that rationality or appetite bring as compared to the pleasure they derive from the praise of others. The third class, those who will lead by their rational desires, are those we call philosophers. We have already discussed their love of knowledge and learning. They derive the most pleasure from the satisfaction of desires associated with learning and the like. Also, this highest class of people will have a soul composed in the best, most just way which, as noted before, is the way in which the best, most just city is composed, reason set over spirit and appetite.<sup>18</sup> Does all of this seem to make sense?

Galineia: It does.

Socrates: Then it must now be to some degree clearer that though the consideration of the happiness of the individual is secondary to the harmonious function of the city, each person will receive the most happiness possible within that harmony because they are designated to a profession that is most conducive to satisfying the desires with which they have the greatest connection.

Galineia: Thank you for pausing to clarify for us, Socrates. I think it may now be possible for those of us who are unfamiliar with your original conversation to better follow your present inquiries.

Tomarchus: Oh, Socrates.

Socrates: Yes, Tomarchus?

Tomarchus: It appears we may have a problem.

Socrates: Please, do not keep your worry from me, old friend. If you have stumbled upon some new issue, let it be aired.

Tomarchus: It appears, Socrates, that the divisions of the soul that you have determined are quite necessary in considering the virtue of the philosopher-king.

Socrates: This is true, but in what way do you mean to emphasize its importance, Tomarchus?

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<sup>18</sup> These connections between the soul and the city are introduced in book IV of the *Republic*. For the best understanding of the tripartition of the soul, it is best to read the arguments offered in that book and then to supplement that with a careful reading of the section immediately following this wherein Plato offers further elaboration on those ideas originally present in the *Republic*.

Tomarchus: Well, you pointed out in your discussion of these divisions that the term justice, as defined in the city, would rightly be applied to the individual if it could be shown that he shared in common a tripartite composition similar to that of the virtuous city. And your argument was quite elegantly constructed. However, I think that some inconsistencies might be laid bare when this argument receives a closer inspection.

Socrates: My friend, I do not know how well I may be able to correct what errors you think you have found, but I do greatly desire you to speak them so that we all might have the opportunity to correct them.

Tomarchus: Certainly, Socrates. Let me start from the beginning. If memory serves me, your criteria for necessary division included the inability of a thing to do or undergo opposites within the same parts of itself and relating to the same object at the same time?<sup>19</sup>

Voradenes: Yes, that is what he said, Tomarchus. That is what I call the *Principle of Opposites* (PO)<sup>20</sup>.

Tomarchus: Hello, Voradenes. You sound terribly confident this evening. Perhaps this is a topic you have discussed with your teacher in recent conversation?

Voradenes: It is, indeed, good friend. Socrates, may I be so bold as to respond to this line of questioning? I have spent much time in contemplation of this topic since last we spoke and I believe I am familiar with the objections our companion will inevitably offer.

Socrates: Of course, Voradenes. I would be glad to see what fruits the efforts of your labor have reaped.

Voradenes: Thank you, Socrates. Sorry to have interrupted, Tomarchus. Please, continue your inquiry.

Tomarchus: Well, Voradenes, there is one other point Socrates made before the determination of a divided soul could be completed. It is that...

Voradenes: I know it well. This one I call the *Principle of Qualification* (PQ). Its basic premise is that for all things that are related to something, the thing to which they are related must be qualified in the same way. Look back to Socrates argument about thirst. Thirst is an appetite itself for its natural object, drink itself. Now if we were to say that this thirst is much thirst, then just as thirst has been qualified, so too must its natural object be appropriately

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<sup>19</sup> See 436b

<sup>20</sup> Reeve 118

qualified, much drink, or the former will no longer be in relation to the latter, much thirst naturally being for much drink because both thirst and muchness are present. Thirst is itself unqualified and it is for its object, drink unqualified. But the thirsts of different kinds (i.e. much thirst, little thirst, etc.) are augmented to distinguish them from the form of thirst itself and must necessarily be for augmented objects (i.e. much drink, little drink, hot drink, cold drink, etc.) that are distinguished from the form drink itself.<sup>21</sup>

Tomarchus: That is how I remembered it. Please, do not stop there. It would be a great help if you might offer a defense of the justification for delineation within the soul as you seem to grasp this concept with such clarity.

Voradenes: Certainly, Tomarchus. The argument can be mapped most specifically by looking at the thirst analogy again. What it tells us is that a thirsty person, insofar as he is thirsty, wants only for the natural object of thirst, drink. But it happens occasionally that a person who is thirsty does not want to drink. In this case a person is said to simultaneously want to drink and not want to drink. These two, being opposites, will not occupy the same part of the same mind at the same time and therefore must be present in different parts of the soul. It seems that the part wanting to drink is of the appetitive nature where the part that forbids drinking, that does not want to drink, has come to this conclusion by calculation. These come to be called the appetitive and the reasoning parts of the soul respectively.<sup>22</sup>

Tomarchus: That is all as I remember the argument. One thing strikes me strangely, though. I do not understand a situation where a person might be both thirsty and unwilling to drink.

Voradenes: It is better understood if I offer an example of what that premise means. A person has a desire for a hot drink. A drink *x* is one he believes will satisfy that desire. Therefore, he wants to drink *x*. But after closer inspection he finds that *x* is a sweet drink as well and because he does not like sweet things, does not want to drink *x*. In this situation, he both wants to drink *x* and does not want to drink *x*.<sup>23</sup>

Tomarchus: I see, Voradenes. So there seem to me two possible conclusions for this point that might need to be better clarified if the tripartite division is to hold. The first would be that this image suggests a comparison between two desires that could both be appetitive just as

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<sup>21</sup> See 437d-e; a more complete analysis of PQ can be found in Reeve 119-21

<sup>22</sup> See 439a-e

easily as they could be an appetitive and a reasoned desire. This suggests a complexity of division within the soul that far exceeds a simple tripartition. In fact, it suggests an infinite division.

Voradenes: That is a great observation, Tomarchus. I will gladly attempt to dispel this apparent problem. However, if your second critique is along these same lines, perhaps I might be able to answer both at once.

Tomarchus: My second critique is the opposite of the first. Though the example shows a seemingly contradicting disposition in the psyche of the same person, perhaps what is truly the case is that the drink *x* is not necessarily to be considered as a single unit toward which the same person at the same time has opposing desires. Could it not be that *x* has two separate characteristics, that of being hot and that of being sweet, toward which a person at the same time and with the same part of himself might have differing desires?<sup>24</sup>

Voradenes: This, too, is a wonderfully well-posed question. Let us continue with the drink example. If a person who is faced with such a dilemma were to come to the realization that the hot, sweet drink toward which he has opposing desires were the only drink available, it would be possible for him to then form a compromised desire for the drink because the natural objects of the opposing desires are a hot drink and a sweet drink. What I mean by this is that the combining of these two desires requires a modification. When the desires are modified, their natural objects must be modified as well so that they are in fact the natural object of the new, compromised desire. If a modified natural object cannot be found, then there can be no compromise.

Tomarchus: I see, Voradenes. Please, continue.

Voradenes: But because one desire is for a hot drink and the aversion is toward a sweet one, the combination of the two becomes a hot, sweet drink. Therefore, when this is the new natural object the desires are combined and depending on which was the stronger, whether it was the desire for hot drink or the aversion to the sweet drink, the compromise will be a proportionately weaker desire for the drink or a proportionately weaker aversion to the drink. The important thing to note here is that even if we take the division of the soul seriously, it is not necessary for all conflicts of desire to end in psychic division because it is not necessary for all

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<sup>23</sup> Reeve 125

<sup>24</sup> these two critiques of tripartition are offered by Reeve 124-5

conflicting desire to be irremediably present and separate within the soul. That seems to be what you were suggesting with your initial question, is it not, Tomarchus?

Tomarchus: That was the intended question to be answered. I take it that this argument is meant to imply Socrates' argument only necessitates three divisions and no more?

Voradenes: That is it exactly, my friend. And the next step will surely confront your second question. We have to this point, only showed that it is not necessary, even given the division of the soul, to determine it an infinite division. But now we must show that a division does in fact exist as necessitated by your second question. What we must acknowledge at this point is that if Socrates wanted to show that there is a true necessity for division of the soul, there must be situations in which the opposing desires have natural objects which cannot be combined, unlike the drink that was both hot and sweet. If this is the case the undivided soul is impossible.

Tomarchus: I think I understand. Does Socrates offer any argument to that effect?

Voradenes: Absolutely he does, Tomarchus. In Socrates' example of the drink *x* there is thirst whose natural object is *x*. In other words, he desires to drink *x*. But by calculation, he has an aversion to drinking. It is not quite as easy to recognize the natural object of this aversion. We call calculation a product of reason and since this aversion is a product of calculation, it is necessarily a product of reason. Socrates describes reason as a process working toward what is best for the whole of the individual. It is the part of the person that endeavors to provide overall for the soul as a "complex whole" composed of several different parts. So, what this means essentially is that the natural object of the aversion to drinking is what does not agree with what is best for the individual understood as a complex whole. To word it more appropriately to Socrates' example, the natural object of the individual aversion is what is "*not-good drink*."<sup>25</sup>

Tomarchus: And how do this and the natural object of the individual thirst, conflict so irreconcilably, Voradenes?

Voradenes: Well, we must combine the original natural objects if we are to get a modified object that fits the modified desire, yes?

Tomarchus: That is the appropriate action.

Voradenes: In this case, we have only the objects of the conflicting desires, drink and not-good drink, to combine. And since drink is merely a part of the natural object of the aversion to drinking, no new object is attainable. All that we can get is a repetition of the old. Therefore,

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<sup>25</sup> Reeve 126



a compromise is not possible and one is required to either frustrate the appetite for drink by abstaining or to frustrate reason by partaking of x.

Tomarchus: This is a wonderful argument, Voradenes, but let me ask you a few things for I am a bit confused about some of your points.

Voradenes: By all means, Tomarchus.

Tomarchus: Based on your principle of qualification, is it possible to have a thing itself stand in relation to a qualified thing?

Voradenes: No, Tomarchus, I thought we had made that clear already.

Tomarchus: You are right, Voradenes, but it seems to me that the argument you offered may have inadvertently implied a false connection of this sort.

Voradenes: How so?

Tomarchus: Well, the thirst of the initial desire for x, is it qualified?

Voradenes: No, it is only appetitive and for the natural object drink unqualified.

Tomarchus: And what of the second, opposing aversion to drinking, is it qualified? And, is its natural object in agreement?

Voradenes: Yes, Tomarchus, the aversion is a qualified aversion toward the kind of drink that is “not-good” for the individual.

Tomarchus: So, it is the case that the nature of the desire itself for the object itself must exist only in a situation that is timeless, and situationless, would you agree?

Voradenes: I don't think I understand what you mean.

Tomarchus: If all that exists is thirst, then all that can be related to it as its natural object is drink. There can be no drink now, or hot drink, or drink with friends. If there were, there would be a corresponding feeling in relation to the object that must have the same qualified characteristics. Do you agree?

Voradenes: Yes.

Tomarchus: Then, it would seem that the only way that thirst for drink can exist in the soul is if nothing modifies those basic elements of the experience of thirst. At the moment an individual is presented x he will not hesitate to drink it because his pure thirst requires no other qualifications for drinking. All that is necessary is drink to satisfy thirst. If, however, calculation takes a part in the determining of whether or not the drink x is going to satisfy thirst, then the object x has significance other than as drink. It must be of a certain kind, and if the

object must be of a certain kind, then the desire for it must also be of a certain kind. We know this because a desire itself cannot be in relation to a natural object that is qualified.

Voradenes: So, how do you think this applies to the example we have been using, Tomarchus?

Tomarchus: Well, given that a person actually has thirst itself for drink itself, when x is introduced the person will drink x with no other regard than that it is drinkable. It could be hemlock or ambrosia, and it will not make any difference because this is not an aspect under consideration.

Voradenes: But no person in his right mind drinks hemlock without first considering its effects.

Tomarchus: I agree completely with you in this respect, Voradenes. But what does that tell us about the thirst we previously believed to be unqualified? Does it make more sense to say that the person both wants to drink the hemlock regardless of the fact that it is hemlock and does not because it is hemlock? Or does it make more sense to say that the thirst that was previously in relation to drink unqualified is now qualified by recognition of a qualified thing, x, that is not good and will not satisfy the desire?

Voradenes: The second seems reasonable but that still does not reconcile the two opposing beliefs about the drink x.

Tomarchus: Allow me the opportunity to complete my thought. So, we now have the unqualified thirst for its natural object, unqualified drink, changing through experience which necessarily requires separation by time, into a qualified distaste for a specific drink, x. Is this a fair assessment of our situation, Voradenes?

Voradenes: It would seem so.

Tomarchus: And should we not say that unqualified thirst is not present when a thing that satisfies the characteristics of the natural object of thirst itself does not satisfy the thirst that is experienced?

Voradenes: I'm not sure I understand the connection here.

Tomarchus: If a person has a desire and the natural object of that desire is the thing presented to that person to satisfy it, then that person's desire is satisfied, is it not?

Voradenes: It is, Tomarchus.

Tomarchus: Drink satisfies thirst?

Voradenes: Yes.

Tomarchus: And if the natural object of a desire is offered to a person whose desire is unsatisfied by it, then that person must not have the desire that is satisfied by the natural object offered. Yes?

Voradenes: Surely.

Tomarchus: And does this drink, x, satisfy the thirst with which we are presently engaged?

Voradenes: It does not satisfy.

Tomarchus: Then you see now, Voradenes. The thirst experienced is not an unqualified one but one qualified at least once by being for drink that is not bad drink *after* calculation has rendered the natural object of thirst itself unsatisfactory.

Voradenes: It would seem so, Tomarchus.

Tomarchus: Furthermore, if the thirst itself for drink itself and the thirst qualified for drink qualified do not occupy the soul simultaneously, then regardless of their opposite natures with regard to x, they do not violate the principle of opposites. The same person with regard to the same thing must have opposite desires at the same time for the principle to necessitate division within the soul, mustn't he?

Voradenes: That is the case.

Tomarchus: And the aversion to x necessarily comes *after* the thirst for drink itself?

Voradenes: Yes, it does.

Tomarchus: Then, what we have is not a necessary division of the soul based on an irreconcilable pairing of opposite beliefs. It would seem we simply have the recognition of opposing desires based on a set of qualifying criteria affecting the soul at different times, would it not?

Voradenes: I do not seem to be able to argue with that.

Tomarchus: Then the soul cannot be said to be necessarily divided even once. Does this not seem to follow, Voradenes?

Voradenes: It does appear to be the logical end.

Socrates: Tomarchus, that was extremely well said. I believe you have found quite a glaring discrepancy in my argument which Voradenes took great pains to defend. I apologize, Voradenes, had I known that my argument was flawed in this way, I would not have let you

make so valiant an effort only to be cast down. But I do believe in listening to your argument, Tomarchus, that I may still be able to salvage the tripartition of the soul.

Tomarchus: By all means, Socrates, I would very much like to hear what new light you have to shed on this dilemma. As I am sure it is no mystery to you, the primacy of the philosopher-king is founded in no small part on the necessity of a divided soul as well as a clear distinction of reason as the most appropriate guiding force. Though it was necessary for me to make this argument, I have great desire to see the philosopher-king take his throne, if only in theory, as the best and most virtuous leader of government.

Socrates: Then let us begin. You say that for an unqualified desire to be present in relation to a thing that is its natural object, there must be certain characteristics of this relationship present as well, do you not?

Tomarchus: I'm not sure I understand what you mean, Socrates.

Socrates: It is your contention that if thirst itself is all that is present, then drink itself, as the natural object of thirst, is all that will be necessary to satisfy that thirst, is it not?

Tomarchus: It is.

Socrates: And you also said that if the desire for drink were the only desire, then there would be no further consideration beyond whether or not the object set in front of that thirst was drinkable, yes?

Tomarchus: That is what I said.

Socrates: Are drink and its object, thirst, the same thing or different?

Tomarchus: They are different.

Socrates: Then, one is not the other but is related in some way to the other?

Tomarchus: Yes, that is the case.

Socrates: And is it possible to recognize a relationship between separate things without rational consideration of any kind?

Tomarchus: I don't see how that could be possible.

Socrates: So, as thirst is not drink but is, instead, a separate thing *for* drink, would you say that a drink is known to have an appropriate relationship to thirst prior to any consideration of that relationship?

Tomarchus: Certainly not, I would say that every object presented to one who desires to drink is considered in terms of its ability to satisfy thirst and nothing more.

Socrates: So, Tomarchus, you would say that calculation did take place in this situation regardless of how seemingly insignificant and simple a calculation is necessary to distinguish drink from not drink?

Tomarchus: Exactly, for it would be unintelligible to say that a thing can be distinguished from another thing without a rational consideration of knowable differences between them.

Socrates: This is all I mean to point out. A desire is set in relation to its object which is distinguished from all other things by calculation.

Tomarchus: Then I do indeed agree with your assessment that the relationship between a desire and its object is characterized by calculation.

Socrates: Good, then let us consider this in terms of what our friend Voradenes has called the principle of opposites. A thing will not do opposite acts or undergo opposite movements in the same part of itself with regard to the same thing at the same time.

Tomarchus: How do you mean to consider it, Socrates?

Socrates: Is appetite for a thing reserved, Tomarchus, or is it a compulsion toward something?

Tomarchus: It seems always to drive toward its object.

Socrates: So, desires based on appetite will necessarily move toward their objects?

Tomarchus: That seems to be the case.

Socrates: And what about the process of calculation, is it a process of reservation or compulsion?

Tomarchus: If anything it is reservation.

Socrates: And how do come to this conclusion so readily?

Tomarchus: Well, Socrates, it is calculation which seems to offer the opposing force to appetite.

Socrates: That is exactly what I had in mind. In the case of thirst, it is appetite which drives toward drink, but it is reason which reserves action so that it can determine whether or not an object is appropriate to satisfy thirst. Said in another way, is it not calculation that desires not to drink so that a determination about the object under scrutiny is suitable to the appetite?

Tomarchus: It is apparently this way, Socrates.

Socrates: It was your argument that, though there are opposing desires within the soul from time to time, they exist separated in time by calculation, one replaced by the other, was it not?

Tomarchus: It was, Socrates.

Socrates: And this abolished the necessity of division in the soul, correct?

Tomarchus: That is as I argued.

Socrates: But if it is the case that desire is reserved rather than replaced, are not the opposing forces of appetite and calculation, moving toward and reserving action, necessarily present simultaneously?

Tomarchus: That does seem to be the case.

Socrates: And if calculation is only a process of reservation, then a forward-moving force must exist in opposition to it for its effects to be felt?

Tomarchus: It would appear.

Socrates: Thus, an appetitive force must exist at the same time as the calculated reservation for calculation to take effect.

Tomarchus: Yes, it does seem that it must.

Socrates: And therefore, appetite and calculation – which is naturally derived from reason – must occupy separate parts of the soul.

Tomarchus: I must admit, I do not see what problems I originally did when considering this division. However, there still exists one problem which you have yet to solve.

Socrates: What problem is that, Tomarchus?

Tomarchus: Well, if division is created by opposites, then how can it be possible to have more than this single division between reason and appetite? If an opposite is what is directly contrary, there can only be one possible opposite for any one attitude. How will you posit a third part – the spirited part – to the soul if opposites are what create division in the soul to begin with?

Socrates: An excellent challenge, my friend. Let me attempt to answer you this way. Does appetite move or stand still? Does it continually move toward the object of its desire or not?

Tomarchus: It is constantly moving toward its object.

Socrates: And what of reason? Does calculation reserve by maintaining a static disposition or does it instead move as a force in opposition to the driving force of appetites so as to reserve action?

Tomarchus: It seems that the latter is the case when we take into account that we have determined reason to be in opposition to appetite.

Socrates: So it would seem that decisions made based on these two parts alone will be the result of constant motion. Do you agree?

Tomarchus: I do, in theory. But I do not see how this will lead us to a necessity for the spirited division.

Socrates: Have patience; we will soon come to an answer. Now, when a ship is in motion, is it more or less affected by the wind than when it sits still in port?

Tomarchus: It is much more at the mercy of the wind when it moves.

Socrates: And when in a foot race, does a competitor not have a greater possibility of falling when an opponent bumps him than a person who is standing still bumped with the same force?

Tomarchus: It is much more likely that a person, while in motion, is more easily knocked off course.

Socrates: Then it would appear that motion has as one of its characteristics the possibility of being altered in some way. Would you not agree?

Tomarchus: That seems to be the case.

Socrates: But is it not the case that often we find people terribly immovable with regard to some mundane belief?

Tomarchus: Yes, it does happen on occasion that a person will not change his mind with regard to things of very little importance, or those of great importance for that matter.

Socrates: And do we not also see ships sailing in high winds finding their way to port?

Tomarchus: Yes, that happens regularly.

Socrates: And isn't it the rudder of the ship which sets it steady in those winds?

Tomarchus: It is.

Socrates: And the rudder is a part of the ship?

Tomarchus: That's a silly question.

Socrates: It may seem that way, but it is absolutely necessary to understand that there is a distinct part to the ship which gives it stability while in motion so that it may run its course.

Tomarchus: Why is that?

Socrates: Because we find that it is the same with regard to motion in the soul. There are occasions when that motion is easily affected by the persuasions of other people, and other occasions when it is not. A person may on one occasion be persuaded to stay all night at the Piraeus no matter how exhausted he becomes. But on another night he will, under no circumstance, be convinced to remain after the desire for sleep has taken hold.

Tomarchus: And?

Socrates: And it stands to reason that this fluctuation in his ability to stay the course is caused by some part of the soul that is distinct.

Tomarchus: How can you say that it is the spirit that does this and not one of the other two parts we have already distinguished in the soul?

Socrates: Is it the rudder or the sail which moves the ship?

Tomarchus: It is the sail.

Socrates: And is it the appetite or reason that moves the individual?

Tomarchus: Both move the individual; one by its own accord and the other only reciprocally.

Socrates: And is it possible for the part of the ship which causes motion to simultaneously be the part that restricts motion or is this a contradiction and an impossibility?

Tomarchus: It would seem that it is not possible for the ship to undergo opposites with regard to the same part of itself at the same time.

Socrates: Then there must necessarily exist a separate part of the ship that is meant to hold it fast to its course.

Tomarchus: There must.

Socrates: And it is the same in the soul. When the appetites and calculations are both forms of movement, then a distinctly separate part must necessarily exist if that thing can be shown to vary in its responses to outside forces. Is this not a necessity?

Tomarchus: It does seem to be.

Socrates: And we already said that some people can be seemingly immovable on a point of either little or great importance while others may be moved with very little effort?



Tomarchus: Yes, we did.

Socrates: Then there must be a part of the soul separate from appetite or reason performing this duty. And that we will call the spirit.

Tomarchus: But how does spirit find itself on the side of either appetite or reason without its own ability to calculate?

Socrates: That is simply a matter of the kind of soul with which a person is born. As in the city, the philosophical person will naturally have a spirit that is aligned with reason. A member of the laboring class will have spirit aligned with appetite. These will fluctuate to some degree but only whimsically – without reason – or guided by the reasoning part of the soul. The latter process is similar to encountering an obstacle in my path. Appetite tells me to continue forward on the path I know will satisfy my desire to reach a destination. But the obstacle – reason – will challenge my conviction – spirit – to continue that path. Though I may adamantly believe I should stay this path it is reason which has guided spirit away from that conviction as far as is necessary to allow me to take a new path.

Tomarchus: Well, it seems you have rescued your divided soul from near death.

Socrates: It does seem we can be satisfied with our conclusion for now, Tomarchus. But I remember that there were questions to which you still required answers before we can call the evening finished and be satisfied with it.

Tomarchus: That is right, Socrates. It did strike me that your philosopher-king had a strange disposition toward his duties. Especially in the light of what you have said about people being classified by the kinds of pleasures they most enjoy.<sup>26</sup>

Socrates: Perhaps you can resubmit the question so that we will have it fresh in our minds.

Tomarchus: Certainly, Socrates. It seems to me that a person is motivated by his or her interest in a subject. If we were to consider the greatest warriors, blacksmiths, artists, or the greatest of any of the other professions, an apparent unifying characteristic of them all would be that they had a great love for the craft. Why, then, would it be the case that the best of your perfect city would be those rulers who had absolutely no interest in ruling?

Socrates: A good question. The answer is, I believe, best found in the conversation I had

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<sup>26</sup> This is a reference to the third question Socrates answers for Galineia; namely, what qualifies a person for membership in a specific class?

with Adeimantus in determining the response that most people have toward the true philosopher. The image goes like this: A ship owner is shortsighted, hard of hearing and has no knowledge of seafaring. He must choose a sailor to steer the ship even though all of the sailors who are competing with one another for management of the ship know nothing of navigation nor do they believe that any man can know how to properly steer a ship. These men are masters of the gaining of power over the ship. That is, they are all good at persuading the owner of the ship to turn power of the ship over to them. Those people that are the best at persuading the owner to turn control over to them are called "navigator," "captain," and "one who knows ships." These people do not understand any of the true skills that are involved in piloting a ship. They know nothing of the stars, or trade winds, or any of the other necessary subjects to be a good ruler of a ship. Because they don't believe there is any true way to know how to run a ship, the competitors for power will see the true captain – a person who spends time mapping the stars, studying wind currents and generally avoiding the business of vying for controlling positions aboard the ship – as a good-for-nothing and a stargazer. This is the fate of the philosopher in the political world. He is interested in the true knowledge that makes him a good ruler but has no interest in the rule of the city. He is thought worthless by the politicians and the bureaucrats who have no true knowledge of ruling a city because he spends his days in solitude contemplating the true nature of things rather than lobbying for a senate seat.<sup>27</sup>

Tomarchus: I am beginning to see your view, Socrates. The true philosopher is engaged in learning all of the things that are necessary for governing a good city because the good is an element of the true knowledge with which he is erotically involved. And to govern in a good way, one must know what it truly means to be good. Therefore, the philosopher's love of wisdom best suits him to govern a good city.<sup>28</sup> But the nature of the true philosopher is solitary and his constant need for learning precludes the desire for the pleasures of other endeavors. Well, that is what I took you to mean when you recognized that a person whose desires lean strongly toward one thing that they are necessarily weakened for others.<sup>29</sup> And the desire to rule in the city is not itself a part of the desire for knowledge. Therefore the philosopher will not have an interest in governing. This, it seems, shows that distaste for governing is a necessary characteristic of the person best suited to govern though it is not sufficient in itself. There are

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<sup>27</sup> See 488-489

<sup>28</sup> See 506a-b

those many other characteristics of the philosopher that make him most appropriate for ruling that are not possessed by people with whom he shares his distaste for political involvement. However, the love of wisdom, because it both impels a person toward the necessary knowledge to govern well and subordinates the desire to rule, requires that the person best suited will also be a person who is not interested. Do I follow well?

Socrates: I think you do very well, Tomarchus.

Tomarchus: So how then does he come to govern? What motivates him to take power in your city?

Socrates: It is only when he knows that he can perform the duties of governing better than those people who wish to rule that he accepts the burden. It is a far worse fate to live under the rule of an inferior man than to accept the duties of governing.<sup>30</sup>

Tomarchus: That is an interesting point, Socrates. But you have said yourself that those who are not suited to govern but who vie for power nonetheless will not have access to true knowledge, the pursuit of which best suits the philosopher to govern.

Socrates: That is what I said.

Tomarchus: Then explain to me how he will convince them otherwise? How will he show them that their knowledge is not the best?

Socrates: Another good question. You are right to see that the philosopher is in search of the truest of knowledge and that, inevitably, is knowledge of the forms. But it is not all people who desire this knowledge. And there are even more still who are not capable of understanding this kind of knowledge.

Tomarchus: Who are these people?

Socrates: These are the people who do not possess the true philosopher's soul. There are lovers of things, who have passion and spirit but who do not believe in the forms. They do not believe that there can exist a truth with regard to a thing. They are of the belief that all things exist in terms of their relationships to one another. It is a matter of relatives rather than absolutes.

Tomarchus: I don't understand. What is guiding these people? How do they know about the things in the world if they do not see them in relation to some higher ideal?

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<sup>29</sup> See 485d

<sup>30</sup> See 347c

Socrates: Let me try to show you what I mean by way of an argument I used in my conversation with Glaucon. If we were to question someone of this disposition, we would first need to clarify of what it was a person could have knowledge. And we would find that a person must have knowledge of something that is rather than something that is not because ignorance – the opposite of true knowledge – is rightly placed over what is not.

Tomarchus: And what is intermediate between what is and what is not, as these are the extremes defined by true knowledge and ignorance, is called something else. I think I am beginning to remember this argument, Socrates.

Socrates: Very well, Tomarchus, can you finish it?

Tomarchus: I can. If knowledge and ignorance are the extreme opposites of knowing, and opinion is a form of knowing that is not the same as these, then it must be intermediate between the two.

Socrates: Very good. And what of the kind of knowledge that the lovers of things who do not believe in the true form of those things? How do we determine the truth of that knowledge?

Tomarchus: We find that when questioned as to the beauty of beautiful things for example – though we will find it is the case with all opposites – the lover of beautiful things will say that beauty and ugliness must exist in things in relation to other beautiful things. That is, one art work is considered more beautiful as compared to another while it is simultaneously considered uglier than yet another art work.

Socrates: Very well said. And finally, what does this tell us about the nature of the lover of things' knowledge?

Tomarchus: In effect, by suggesting that all opposites exist in things, it is implied that those things both are and are not to some degree. And it was already established that the kind of knowing that is applied to things that are intermediate between being and not being, as is the case with the things that both are and are not, is opinion and not knowledge which is applied only to those things which truly are without a simultaneous non-being.<sup>31</sup>

Socrates: Well, Tomarchus, it seems you have understood the nature of the philosopher better than you thought. What is most important to note here is that the philosopher, the true philosopher, is a lover of knowledge that is of the forms, the true knowledge that the lovers

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<sup>31</sup> See 476e-480

of things are not interested in. The opinion of the others pertains only to the images and the objects from which the images originate. That is the difference between the knowledge of the philosopher and that of all other people.

Tomarchus: So, if the philosopher can see the form of the good and is by this fact the best possible ruler, will that not mean that others inevitably see a different ideal of what is best for the city and rise in opposition to the philosopher-king?<sup>32</sup>

Socrates: That is a concern in the formation of the best possible city, indeed. But I know you remember the censorship program that was devised to educate the population in such a way as to instill in them the understanding that though they cannot see the good itself, they can know that the philosopher-king does see the good and that he will govern in the best way possible.

Tomarchus: Yes, that's right, your noble lie, I remember it.<sup>33</sup> But what of your philosophically inclined children? Will they not see through the obviously irrational stories and come to see your regime as a totalitarian dictatorship expending all of its energy trying to keep the people enslaved to their philosophical masters?

Socrates: They may come to see that it is in fact not true. However, if they possess the rational capabilities of the philosopher, then will it not also be most likely that they will examine it in terms of its usefulness? Will they not both recognize the falsehood and at the same time recognize its necessity if the city is to be the best possible?

Tomarchus: That does seem most likely. But what of the other class of people? They may surely be intelligent enough on occasion to recognize a falsehood. How will they believe that the government who lies to them and gives them very little freedom in the direction of their lives knows what is best for them? This is especially pertinent when considering those people who have a naturally democratic soul.<sup>34</sup> How will you continue to keep these people from satisfying their natural tendencies for rebellion?

Socrates: If I did not know any better Tomarchus, I would say you were of this belief. A

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<sup>32</sup> See 562b; "And isn't democracy's insatiable desire for what it defines as the good..." The reference seems to hit on a paradox in the concept of moderation mentioned in the original text. Moderation is defined as the agreement between the different classes as to who is to rule and who is to follow. However, it seems that Socrates' interlocutor recognizes that this will not be reasonable if the classes of people do not see eye to eye on what is good in the city.

<sup>33</sup> See 414c-417b; the "noble falsehood" includes a fake story about the people being born of the earth and an implantation, by the gods, of a bit of metal in the soul of each person.

<sup>34</sup> In book VIII of the original text Socrates notes that it is the democratic person who values freedom over all other things. He is guided quite blindly by a commitment to having choice in his own life and strongly distrusts those who would attempt to remove that freedom.

wonderfully perceptive question you pose. Let me ask you this, what is it about this class of people that guides their belief? Isn't it the insatiable desire for money and all of the pleasures it brings?

Tomarchus: That is what guides their souls.

Socrates: And in our best possible city, who are the people that are offered the opportunity to make money? Are they not the members of the money-making, the laboring class only, or do we allow guardians and auxiliaries to pursue the goals associated with gaining wealth?

Tomarchus: It is only the members of the money-making class who we allow to pursue those goals.

Socrates: And are the other two classes, in the sense that they lack money, not considered by those of the money-making class to be impoverished?

Tomarchus: They are with regard strictly to the acquisition of money.

Socrates: Then it will not be for the deprivation of money that those intelligent money-makers will feel deprived of freedom in the democratic sense. For they are offered many more opportunities to acquire money than any other class of citizen.

Tomarchus: It does not seem that that will be their justification for feeling deprived of freedom. But what of those people who claim that freedom is a matter of principle? They will want their city – a place they love and want to see at its happiest – to be in pursuit of the greatest good, which they perceive as freedom. How do you respond to them and convince them that they are members of the best city possible so that you might slake their thirst for rebellion?

Socrates: It is quite perceptive of you to note that the democratic person is the one with whom we will most likely have this problem. Because of his tendency to dabble in many things, he will be most likely, aside from the philosophers themselves, to attempt philosophy. But it is the drawbacks to his philosophy which will best suit us here.<sup>35</sup>

Tomarchus: How so?

Socrates: For those who believe in freedom on principle, is the freedom they want absolute or are there still regulations?

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<sup>35</sup> This is a reference to Socrates' depiction of the soul of the democratic man. He is considered quite lazy and generally aimless in his pursuits. Therefore, Socrates says, he will attempt some philosophy among a multitude of other endeavors. However, he is, in effect, implying that the philosophizing of the democrat is substantially weaker

Tomarchus: There must still be provisions for safety which include laws and other checks against civil discord.

Socrates: Then it is not an absolute freedom they will argue for?

Tomarchus: No. That would be no kind of government at all. They would have to deny government in any form whatsoever. And I do not believe that that would be the sentiment of a democrat.

Socrates: Then they will agree that some forms of restriction are necessary?

Tomarchus: Absolutely, they must.

Socrates: Then their system does not exist in strict contrast to ours but as if on a scale of allowances where our system is more strictly regulated than theirs?

Tomarchus: That does seem to be the case.

Socrates: Then we are in the clear.

Tomarchus: How can that be?

Socrates: If the democracy and its gluttonous pursuit of freedom is not opposed to our ideal city – they are arguing quantity when we argue quality – then all we have to do is show that the freedoms allowed in our city are most precious and necessary and that those of democracy are in fact too close to anarchy to be rationally feasible. The freedoms they desire are in fact dangerous to the happiness of the people. And this is one purpose of devising the best possible city; to clarify and correct the flaws in those other systems of government. Did you not say that these democratic people love their home?

Tomarchus: Yes, and that they wanted to see it as happy as possible.

Socrates: Then it may be natural for them to dislike being denied freedoms, but they will be necessarily rationally convinced that they must either accept those conditions of living in the best possible city or remove themselves from it. However, they will not be able to justify a rebellion because they understand that what is best for the people of the city is what we have offered in rational discourse.<sup>36</sup>

Tomarchus: And what of those people with the democratic disposition who do not desire or do not have the rational capabilities to understand this truth?

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than that of the true philosopher in an aristocratic city. In the original text, he suggests a certain danger in the inappropriate use of dialectic that can cause civil unrest and possibly rebellion.

Socrates: Can we not agree that there will be many more democratically inclined people taking issue on the grounds of principle only if they are able to grasp ideas on a theoretical level?

Tomarchus: That would be most common.

Socrates: And isn't a revolution in the democratic tradition only possible with the majority on its side?

Tomarchus: Yes, that is the only way revolutions of this kind take place.

Socrates: Then we have nothing to fear from the very small minority of people who will both disagree with the good we see for the city on theoretic grounds while having no regard for civilized discourse.

Tomarchus: And what of your lie? Does it disappear with the first people who find it to be a falsehood?

Socrates: It may if people were inclined not to believe in myths and gods. As people are naturally pious, so too will they be inclined to believe falsehoods which inspire great conviction and support beliefs they already hold. Believing the falsehood is conducive to loving one's home and feeling kinship with one's brothers and sisters in the city regardless of blood relation. And as people naturally desire this kinship and relation to a land of origin, so they will believe this falsehood.<sup>37</sup>

Tomarchus: It seems you have once again expertly defended yourself against the arguments of the enemies of your city.

Socrates: We seem to have satisfied what we believe to be their questions at least. Have we finally come to the completion of your line of inquiry?

Gordias: No, the two of you have not completed your inquiry, Socrates.

Socrates: Gordias, how wonderful to see you here. You must have been toiling in your note-taking behind the other onlookers, for I did not see you until you appeared to us just now.<sup>38</sup>

Gordias: I was, Socrates. But that is not important. What is important is that you have

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<sup>36</sup> This is a reference to the whole of the *Republic*. The proof offered here assumes that the democratic person that is intelligent enough to feel compelled to argue against the aristocracy on principle in a philosophic forum will be capable of understanding the arguments showing the degenerative nature of democratic freedom.

<sup>37</sup> Many scholars believe this to be the most outspoken condemnation of religion ever offered in Plato's dialogues. It is not clear whether or not this was Socrates' belief or Plato's. Although it does not follow from Socrates' conviction and subsequent execution for disbelief that he was, in fact, a non-believer, the fact does lend credence to the possibility that some inchoate form of distrust for the idea of gods played a part in his thinking.

<sup>38</sup> In some of the more recently discovered dialogues of various different writers of Plato's time, Gordias is often depicted vigorously scribbling notes when listening to a dialogue. He is believed by some scholars to have been a ground-breaker in developing a system of shorthand that died sometime during the middle ages.



not completed your conversation until you deliver what I believe to be the final blow to the belief that the philosopher's love of wisdom contradicts his justness.

Socrates: And what blow might that be, Gordias?

Gordias: That the understanding of justice which Tomarchus used to qualify his argument against the justice of the philosopher-king is in fact faulty.

Socrates: Well, it looks as though you have seen a shortcoming in his argument that I have overlooked. Maybe you could explain to him, and to me, the way that justice should be understood.

Gordias: Gladly. You have agreed throughout your discussion that justice is minding one's own business. Therefore, it seemed there was no need for elaboration on the idea. I would have gladly agreed with you both and happily moved on were it not for the inference that followed. Your argument, Tomarchus, if I understand it, rests on the application of this definition to the spectrum of knowledge that the philosopher endeavors to gather. Would you agree?

Socrates: Yes, I do.

Gordias: This applies justice to knowledge as an entire and self-contained system. In other words, the justness of minding one's own business is not, here, necessarily in terms of the whole person or the whole city with constituents that alone have no application to justice except indirectly as a part of the just system. But, rather, it is applied to a part – the loving and seeking of knowledge – in terms of its justness in and of itself.

Socrates: I don't know if you even understood what you just said.

Gordias: Ha-ha, point well taken. Allow me to explain. Socrates, I may ask for your assistance to keep me as true to the original conversation as possible, if that is all right?

Socrates: I will do my very best, so far as my memory serves me.

Gordias: You said, Socrates, that the reason you took the minding of one's own business to be the definition of justice was that it "is what is left over in the city when moderation, courage, and wisdom have been found".<sup>39</sup> Left over in the sense that once we had defined everything else, the element of the city that still did not have a name – the thing that allowed all the parts of the city to be in harmony with one another – would surely be justice.

Socrates: That was my justification.

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<sup>39</sup> See 433b

Gordias: You followed this by recognizing its unique characteristic function in the city. You took justice as the connection between the other three virtues. It is a means through which the other virtues could be present in the city. If it were not for justice, the city would be without a unifying element.

Socrates: I'm not sure if I understand.

Gordias: Well, let's look at the other three virtues of moderation, courage, and wisdom. Wisdom is what guides the city toward the good. It is what insures that the best choices are made for the good of the city. Courage is the protective force. It is what keeps the people safe from "what is to be feared".<sup>40</sup> Moderation is the agreement among all people about who is to rule and who is to follow. It insures that the people can live harmoniously in their proper places in the city.<sup>41</sup>

Socrates: This all seems to follow the conversation I had with my companion, Glaucon.

Gordias: Then the conclusion you came to – after defining all other virtues and having only justice to determine – was that justice would be the leftovers. What was left in the best city that still lacked a name? It was the thing that allowed all the other virtues to remain in the city so long as it was present, was it not?<sup>42</sup>

Socrates: Yes, I recall that conversation very well. In fact, the argument I gave was quite similar to the one you gave about the carpenter wanting to learn the art of war. Do you remember, Tomarchus?

Tomarchus: Yes, I do, Socrates. The argument was based on your argument<sup>43</sup> because I was using what I believed to be your definition of justice.

Gordias: And though you seemed to understand the definition, Tomarchus, you expanded and distorted its meaning to encapsulate the virtue of wisdom by itself. The fault was not in misreading the analogy, but in misunderstanding the limitations of that analogy.

Tomarchus: How do you mean, Gordias?

Gordias: The image that Socrates used was meant to show the necessity of maintaining the relationship between the classes. It is a synergistic view of the city. The money-making class is not meant to know the art of war. That is outside of the realm of its job. But it is the

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<sup>40</sup> See 433c

<sup>41</sup> See 428a-432b

<sup>42</sup> See 433b

<sup>43</sup> See 434a-d

philosopher-king who must know the jobs of the other citizens so that he can provide a leadership appropriate to each station. If he is to educate them, he must know what they are to be taught. If he is to judge their justness, he must know what it is for people to be just. For the philosopher to be unaware of the nature of any member of the city would be for him to act unjustly because he would not be minding his business; his business is the whole city. The best, most just ruler is the one who cares for the entire city and does not neglect any of its parts. This is what justice is when we say that it is minding one's own business.

Tomarchus: That was some argument.

Socrates: That would be an understatement, my young Tomarchus. Gordias, you have given your argument with great spirit. I think the only thing you could have given more clarity to would have been the specific argument with which you began, namely, the challenge to Tomarchus' understanding of my argument as applicable to the constituent rather than the whole.

Gordias: Please, feel free to amend or augment any part of my argument as you see fit. It is offered only in support of your own work and is yours to do with as you like.

Socrates: Thank you. Tomarchus, how would you answer if I asked you to explain a particular feature of the best form of a system?

Tomarchus: I do not understand your meaning, Socrates.

Socrates: Let me offer an analogy that may serve our needs here. If I asked you, "What is the best sail with which one might adorn a ship?" how would you respond?

Tomarchus: I would say that the best sail for the ship is the one that made the ship most effective and efficient.

Socrates: Good. And how might we determine this effectiveness?

Tomarchus: We would need to determine all of the functions that the ship is to perform and what characteristics that sail would need in order to perform the duties it is responsible for performing.

Socrates: I agree completely with your assessment. Now, is it not this consideration of the function of the whole of the ship that allows us to determine what characteristics this sail must exhibit?

Tomarchus: It does seem to be that.

Socrates: And does the sewer of the sail act inappropriately to neglect the size and purpose of the ship for which the sail is sewn, or is it simply a matter of achieving a tight and

consistent weave regardless of shape and girth that determines a well-crafted sail?

Tomarchus: It is most definitely the former of the two.

Socrates: So we agree then that we must consider whether or not a large rectangular sail would be bad for a small battle ship because it is clumsy and does not allow the ship to sail both with and into the wind and that a small, triangular sail would not allow for speedy delivery of a large cargo ship that has no need for great maneuverability?

Tomarchus: Yes, we do.

Socrates: What is most important here is the necessity for considering the whole of the system. The qualities of each part of the ship are to be judged by a consideration of both their individual perfection and their perfection in relation to the whole effectiveness of the ship. The same is true of just individuals in the city.

Tomarchus: How so?

Socrates: A carpenter does not build any building he wants whenever he chooses regardless of the needs of the city. He performs his duty well when he builds what and when the city needs it to support the most effective functioning of the city as a whole. The way in which the just carpenter minds his own business necessarily includes a consideration of the city and not only a strict consideration of exact woodwork.

Tomarchus: Are you saying that a carpenter must make decisions for the good of the city? You had previously made it clear that the class of guardians is to guide the development of the city toward virtue and the good. How can you now suggest that the carpenter, a member of the money-making and lowest class, is appropriately equipped to determine what is best for the good of the city?

Socrates: It would seem, Tomarchus, I have not been clear with my words. I do not mean to suggest that the carpenter should make these decisions. It is the work of the ruling class to decide the good of the city just as the duty of the ship captain is to determine the sail that best suits his vessel. Once the decision is made, it is the duty of the carpenter to construct that which the ruler has determined. However, the justness of the carpenter's work is in this intermingling between the duties of the classes to produce the final outcome, the building. What is just is that everybody contributed in the way they were supposed to with regard to the functioning of the whole city. Justice is each person minding the business that allows the city to function most effectively as a single system.

Tomarchus: Well, it would appear that my understanding of justice has led me astray. It does not seem I knew justice as you meant it, Socrates. After consideration of the philosopher-king – his soul, his ability to lead, the kinds of knowledge he possesses – I believe we have come circuitously, and somewhat ironically, to an answer – my misinterpretation of the true nature of justice – that satisfies my original inquiry.

Gordias: And now that you are satisfied, Tomarchus, I must revisit a topic that still troubles me.

Socrates: Which one is that, Gordias?

Gordias: I must revisit the democratic state. You have given a great amount of time to the challenges that freedom presents, Socrates, but now I believe it is necessary to reconsider the democratic state from a different view.

Socrates: I am more than happy to hear your argument, Gordias.

Gordias: You may find me terribly presumptuous, Socrates, but I feel you have not been entirely honest with us.

Socrates: How do you mean?

Gordias: You told us that the good is not accessible by those who are untrained in dialectic and that most people, specifically, everyone other than the philosopher-king, was incapable of knowing the good.

Socrates: And you do not believe I know the good?

Gordias: That is not what I believe you were dishonest about. I think you know the good and that it is implicit in every one of your arguments. The good is no secret, Socrates; it is what necessarily challenges the very form of your best possible city. It is what will make as many people as possible, as happy as possible.<sup>44</sup> Does that not ring familiar in light of what you have said about the function of the best possible city? You say it is one in which the goal is to make the city as happy as possible. Do you not see the implication that the people, as they constitute the city, are the ones you endeavor to make as happy as possible?

Socrates: I do see your logic.

Gordias: But wait, there is much more. On these grounds you do not disagree with those of us who would support the democratic ideal. But you have made the most selfish and short-

sighted move in determining the city that best satisfies the principle. The philosopher-king is of the highest order of mistakes. He has no respect for anyone who values what he does not. His love of learning blinds his soul and teaches him to undermine all things that do not conform to his reason and his pomposity. He is the most dangerous of all tyrants for he does not wear his truth on his sleeve as the appetitive tyrant but keeps it hidden in an enigmatic weave of complex discourse and circumlocutory reasoning. You say people will be most happy and harmonious in this city of yours, but they will hardly be people at all. They are confined to one station only in a life that is guided by the strictest requirements. Even in your analogy they represent the parts of the soul that are attributed absolutely no power to rationalize their existence.<sup>45</sup> How can this philosopher-tyrant know what is best for the people he is set over? He sees them only as tools for the satisfaction of the philosopher's utopia. He will not care for their true happiness. He will only know how to tell them that they cannot see the truth but if they could they would understand that it is most appropriate for him to tell them how to live in every facet of life.

Socrates: That is quite a condemnation, Gordias. Have you a means to support your own democratic ideals that might counteract these tyrannical attributes you see in the philosopher-king?

Gordias: Most definitely, Socrates. If we are to consider what is best for the people, it is not in private contemplation that we will see the truth. That may work for the ship captain. He may only need to know the things that can be learned in contemplation of the stars and the winds. But his goals are set on efficiency and safety and all the things involved in making a ship function in the working environment. But you cannot be so short-sighted not to see that he will come home and his priorities will change. The governing body in a city must have more than productivity in mind. People do not want their entire lives treated as business. It is absolutely necessary to allow for the parts of life that one cannot dictate. The philosopher-person that you praise so highly is incapable of knowing what is on the minds of his slaves not only because he does not truly understand their complexity and beauty – you said yourself that the philosopher is concerned with the world as a whole and, therefore, sees the individual human life as relatively

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<sup>44</sup> The discovery of this passage is profoundly important because it contrasts a very clearly utilitarian belief in the primacy of the democratic system against the Platonic aristocracy. It is a unique opportunity to hear an ancient perspective on what was previously believed to be a modern concept.

<sup>45</sup> The Auxiliary and laboring classes are the vast majority within Plato's city. This argument seems to suggest that the city of Plato's design is simply a system of biomechanical cogs in the plaything of a demagogic genius, the philosopher-king.

insignificant – but also because no one person, no matter his genius, can know what insight the unique experience of each and every individual will offer up. The only way to truly create the greatest possible happiness in the city is through the free exchange of ideas among the whole of the population. Though not all people have great knowledge of governing, they do no one harm when they express their views. They will be given the opportunity to make their case and when it is overruled they still feel as though they are present and a part of their city because they were heard. Who is going to feel connected to a city that tells them they are incapable of taking care of themselves and that they have no chance of ever understanding why? No, Socrates, you are no king. You are the worst kind of liar, one who uses the gift of his genius to shroud the truth so that you might convince all other people to be your willing slaves. How will you respond, Socrates?

[Gordias heaved in huge swells of self-righteous breath.]<sup>46</sup>

Socrates: Is this the truth of how you feel, Gordias?

Gordias: The argument is of the utmost importance but the volume, tone, and some of the language is a matter of dramatic flare. I think you philosophers miss more than you know in your condemnation of the arts. I fear the beauty of passion for its own sake is lost on you, Socrates. However, I mean you no ill will nor do I believe you to be anything other than a brilliant man of great virtue.

Socrates: I will try to keep all of that in mind, Gordias. But for now I will do my best to respond to these allegations you have heaped upon me. You accuse the philosopher of tyrannical intentions. You accuse the aristocracy of demeaning human life. You accuse me of falsehoods and a profound misunderstanding of human nature. And you do all of this knowing well what I have said in defense of these things in many different conversations, this one included. It does not seem that I will convince you of my sincerity in these matters today as I have failed so utterly to do this previously. But I do not consider you too foolish to ignore what I say. Will you listen now for only a few more moments so that I might give you the benefit of what little knowledge there is in me?

Gordias: I am more than willing, Socrates.

Socrates: You say we share common ground in understanding the good. You say that it

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<sup>46</sup> This oddly poetic line seems to suggest ironically that the democrat's penchant for freedom gives rise to a certain playful abandon in his speech and actions.

is no mystery and all people can know it. You say it is what makes as many people as possible, as happy as possible. But you are wrong. You may say the same words that I say, but you do not hear what I hear when those words are spoken. You do not understand the good the way that I do. Your democracy is an enticement to conflict and discord. You have openly stated that people are, in many ways, very different; their happiness as varied as their appearance. And you assume that by allowing them as much room to act as possible, you are essentially encouraging that happiness generally across all divides. But you know people like Thrasymachus who are excellent speakers and quite persuasive regardless of the validity of their arguments. People like that have no use for moderation when in debate. They will argue relentlessly and gain all positions of significance in the city. And though everyone was heard, the regulations of the city will be guided by them. How long do you think it can last that those whose nature it is to fight will not take up arms against these sophists? It is not me but the democrat who fails to see the true nature of people. Treating people as equals regardless of obvious differences is such a blatant disregard for reason that it pains me to think you have fallen so steadfast under its control.

Gordias: And what of the faults of your philosopher-king? Can you say with good reason that he will not be the worst of all possible choices in light of these accusations I have brought upon him?

Socrates: I was coming to that. When you hear the good, you hear freedom and democracy. When I hear the good, I hear self-restraint. We all experience appetites that are dangerous to the city. This is why it is so inappropriate to encourage all people to pursue their satisfactions equally. There will inevitably be conflicts that arise which in turn inspire disharmony in the city if everyone believes that their desires are the most important. But if you do not succumb to these self-destructive desires, you will find the greatest happiness that only comes in association with virtuous self-restraint. The philosopher-king is the epitome of this life. He shows no signs of aggression toward his fellow citizens, he does not desire the things that are given to the other classes of people, and he does not have a single selfish desire to use the governing power of the city to gain those things. He lives solely to serve the city. That is the burden of responsibility that he accepts so that there may be peace and harmony. It may be that power corrupts but you need only see that the training involved in becoming the philosopher-king is far too strenuous for him to fall victim here. You will not receive a life free of strict



guidance until you reach the age of fifty. What person with even the remotest inclination to tyrannical behavior will sacrifice this much of his life to gain absolute power? And you of all people would agree that those who will be his mentors all his life will get to know his soul and see who he will become. Even if you do not believe that my philosopher is so wise as I do they would not allow him to become the ruler of a city without first considering the risks of handing to him the state and great amounts of power. You will remember that the dominant part of the philosopher-king's life, after the completion of his education, is spent in philosophy but that for a short time he will be called upon to guide the city toward the good. Then, when his time is spent and he has educated the next generation of leaders through the benefit of his time in power, he will leave for the Isles of the Blessed to live out his days in peace and happiness as a divine human being.

Gordias: And what of your dehumanizing aristocracy?

Socrates: It is true that there are fewer freedoms in the aristocracy. But those freedoms that are restricted are ones that a truly virtuous person does not desire. They are the ones that are harmful to the city. You have heard my support for all of this. It is not a matter of my explaining it to you any longer. It is a matter of your coming to know the virtuous life and coming to know the harmony and happiness of the soul that are derived from it. Your soul is philosophic but it is uneducated and quarrelsome, my young friend. The tumult of your speech can attest to that. It is time we stopped for the evening. You and I have lost our dialectic composure and digressed into speeches and rhetoric. Let us return to our respective homes and gather our strength for tomorrow.

Tomarchus: Why? What is happening tomorrow that will require of us reserves of strength?

Socrates: Do you think our inquiries into these matters are finished just because this conversation has halted without resolution?

Tomarchus: Good night, old man.

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