"The manifold and fruitful destruction of jealousy is widely spread. It is the root of all evils, the source of disasters, the nursery of sins, the substance of transgressions. From it hatred arises; animosity proceeds from it."[1] -Saint Cyprian of Carthage

---

1. Cyprian, *Treatises*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, ed. Roy J. Deferrari (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958), 297.

INTRODUCTION

Although Ancient Athenian democracy began around 508 B.C. when Cleisthenes passed legislative power to Athens' assembly of citizens [*i.e.*, the *Ecclesia*], which allowed all the free adult male citizens to vote on the laws, the background to the rise of Athenian democracy stretched even further. Athens, one of Greece's most significant cities, went through multiple changes in its governance and suffered from conflicts with the Persians and political corruption. Athens' history did contain much turmoil in the city-state, but the strife suffered there gave way to the formation of democracy. Athens' government would make multiple transitions in tyranny, aristocracy, oligarchy, and democracy, but Athenian life would flourish under democracy.

However, writers like the Old Oligarch (Pseudo-Xenophon) warned that Athenian democracy could be prone to abuse, such as the possibility of the citizens voting for injustice based on their ill-tempered passions. Although the Old Oligarch spoke from the perspective of an oligarch, he appeared to be correct when Athens' jury sentenced the philosopher Socrates to death. Consequently, many of Greece's most prominent philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, criticized the Athenians for the execution of Socrates. However, democracy was another concern for Plato and Aristotle. They both believed the Athenians abused democracy to unjustly execute Socrates. However, both of their views on democracy did contain contrasts.

Nevertheless, based on Athens' history, the origin of the world's first official democratic government portrayed how society can evolve and even develop a mass psychosis based on political threats. However, what exactly did contribute to the execution of Socrates and the collapse of Athenian democracy? Did democracy itself cause Athens' democracy to collapse, or did there exist other factors that led to the collapse of Athens' democracy? Based on research,

Athenian nationalism under the influence of radical egalitarianism and mass psychosis was the leading factor in the execution of Socrates and the collapse of Athens' democracy.

The Legend of Athens' Monarchy and the Fabled Kings of Athens

Before discussing Athenian nationalism's role in the execution of Socrates and the collapse of Athenian democracy, it is important to first understand the history of democracy's emergence in Athens to understand how it contributed to the rise of Athens' nationalism. To begin, according to tradition, the earliest government of Ancient Athens was a monarchy, but most of the kings were either mythical or semi-historical. Regardless of their existence, Athens' monarchy did not last very long. According to a student of Aristotle, Athens' government originated as a monarchy, which developed into a mixed government:

> Now the ancient constitution, as it existed before the time of Draco, was organized as follows. The magistrates were elected according to qualifications of birth and wealth. At first[,] they governed for life, but subsequently for terms of ten years. The first magistrates, both in date and in importance, were the King, the Polemarch, and the Archon. The earliest of these offices was that of the King, which existed from ancestral antiquity. To this was added, secondly, the office of Polemarch, on account of some of the kings proving feeble in war; for it was on this account that Ion was invited to accept the post on an occasion of pressing need. The last of the three offices was that of the Archon, which most authorities state to have come into existence in the time of Medon.[2]

Although the accounts of Athens' monarchy contained both pure myths and semi-myths, these myths still became part of Athenian folklore. Although Athens' folklore recounts twenty kings ruling Athens, the kings to focus on would be specifically those that made significant contributions to Athens' formation of a democracy, starting with Cecrops, Athens' first king.

---

2. Arist. *Const. Ath.* 3, trans. Kenyon

According to Ancient Greek mythology, Cecrops was traditionally the first king of Attica, which encompassed Athens. He would be responsible for handing the guardianship of Athens to Athena.[3] A later descendant of his, King Erectheus I, would establish the *polis*, Athens. Generations later came King Theseus, descendant of Erechtheus, cousin of Hercules, and another mythological figure in Greek mythology. Despite the likeliness that he did not exist, Theseus later came to serve as a precursor to Athenian democracy.

According to legend, When Theseus began to rule Athens, he implemented certain democratic changes.[4] Theseus started Athens' earliest democracy before Pericles could make it a historical reality. As Edith Hamilton stated,

> He [Theseus] declared to the people that he did not wish to rule over them; he wanted a people's government where all would be equal. He resigned his royal power and organized a commonwealth, building a council hall where the citizens should gather and vote. The only office he kept for himself was that of Commander in Chief. Thus[,] Athens became, of all earth's cities, the happiest and most prosperous, the only true home of liberty, the one place in the world where the people governed themselves.[5]

Plus, while Theseus was announcing the news that the Athenians in the assembly decided to vote on making peace with the Thebans, a herald entered, starting a conversation that hinted a prelude to Athens' future democracy and its criticisms. As stated by Hamilton,

---

3. See Apollodorus, *The Library*, vol. 2, trans. Sir James George Frazer (London: William Heinemann, 1956), 77-81. For accounts that demoted Cecrops' mythological tenets, see Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans*, vol. 5, trans. Eva Matthews Stanford and William McAllen Green (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 391-393; Edith Hamilton, *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1942), 396.

4. See Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 1:22.

5. Hamilton, *Mythology*, 215.

He [the herald] asked "Who is the master here, the lord of Athens? I bring a message to him from the master of Thebes."

"You seek one who does not exist," Theseus answered. "There is no master here. Athens is free. Her people rule."

"That is well for Thebes," the herald cried. "Our city is not governed by a mob which twists this way and that, but by one man. How can the ignorant crowd wisely direct a nation's course?"

"We in Athens," Theseus said, "write our own laws and then are ruled by them. We hold there is no worse enemy to state than he who keeps the law in his own hands. This great advantage then is ours, that our land rejoices in all her sons who are strong and powerful by reason of their wisdom and just dealing. But to a tyrant such are hateful. He kills them, fearing they will shake his power."[6]

Not only did Theseus' speech appear to foreshadow the future of Athens' democracy, but it also foreshadowed the Athenians' views on tyrants after they eventually came under a tyranny. The herald believed that a democratic rule in Athens would cause mob-rule since the equal treatment of all the citizens of Athens would promote radical egalitarianism.

Under radical egalitarianism, everyone is to receive equal political treatment. However, even if every person is equal by human nature, not everyone is equal in status. In a society where there are conflicts between rich and poor citizens, radical egalitarianism risks having the poor tax the rich to the point of all the citizens having an equal amount of wealth. Radical egalitarianism resembled an ancient form of distributive justice, and the social conflicts between the rich and poor citizens of Athens made it likely that the poor citizens of Athens would support distributive justice out of envy of the rich. In appearance, the poor would receive money for which they did not work, and the rich would lose money for which they did work. Since Theseus wanted everyone in Athens to receive equal treatment and promoted democratic rule, the herald worried that this type of rule would risk Athens becoming an egalitarian democracy.

---

6. Hamilton, 391.

Furthermore, the bonding of democracy and egalitarianism under a tribalistic mindset would create an ancient form of nationalism in which the envious citizens would rely fully on the government to grant them what they did not deserve. Having a democratic rule in Athens in which the poor citizens ruled under an egalitarian mindset likely created the idea amongst the poor citizens that a "true" citizen of Athens was one who supported democracy and egalitarianism. This type of collectivist nationalism, which paradoxically emerged from the unity of individuals, showed how too much individuality can create a new form of collectivism. The fact that a "true" citizen of Athens had to support every citizen's complete dependence on the government to receive what the citizen was not deserving of would be an example of Athenian nationalism. Although Theseus was only a character of legend, there appeared to be tenets of ancient nationalism under his reign based on his role in introducing elements of democracy in Athens. As a result, Theseus became the father of Athenian democracy.

Finally, the last king of Athens would be the semi-mythical Codrus. Now, Codrus was able to defend the Athenians against the Dorians by having the Dorians kill him. According to the oracle at Delphi in Ancient Greek tradition, the Athenians would win their fight against the invading Dorians once the Dorians killed Athens' king:

> Remember the reign of Codrus. The Peloponnesians, whose crops had failed at home, decided to march against our city and, expelling our ancestors, to divide the land amongst themselves. They sent first to Delphi and asked the god if they were going to capture Athens, and when he replied that they would take the city so long as they did not kill Codrus, the king of the Athenians, they marched out against Athens.[7]

---

7. Lycurgus, "Against Leocrates," *Perseus Digital Library*, trans. J. O. Burtt, accessed November 17, 2020, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0152%3Aspeech%3D1%3Asection%3D84.

On realizing the oracle's message, Codrus disguised himself and headed towards the Dorians'

camp to start an altercation. Once the Dorians killed him and discovered his identity, they

retreated. Since the Athenians did not see anyone worthy to be Codrus' successor, they abolished

the monarchy and had archons rule Athens. By the end of Codrus' reign, "his descendants were

recognized only as archons for life."[8] As taught by Aristotle, "So it is only at a comparatively

late date that the office of Archon has become of great importance, through the dignity conferred

by these later additions."[9] From this account, Athens was no longer under a monarchy, leaving

the city-state as an aristocracy. According to Irving M. Zeitlin, "The weakening and gradual

breakdown of the primitive monarchy turned to the advantage of the powerful noble chiefs who

had been working toward that end for some time."[10] However, whether Athens' monarchy

existed or not, the archons[11] still ruled over Athens as an aristocratic government.

However, is it possible for Athens' monarchy to be a historical reality? Possibly so, but

as an obvious mixture of fact and fiction. According to Thucydides in his work, *The History of

the Peloponnesian War*, "Assuredly[,] they will not be disturbed either by the lays of a poet

displaying the exaggeration of his craft, or by the compositions of the chroniclers that are

attractive at truth's expense; the subjects they treat of being out of the reach of evidence, and

time having robbed most of them of historical value by enthroning them in the region of

---

8. George Grote, Esq., *Greece: I. Legendary Greece; II. Grecian history to the reign of Peisistratus at Athens*, vol. 2 (New York: Peter Fenelon Collier, 1899), 16.

9. Arist. *Const. Ath.* 3

10. Irving M. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision: The Classical Origins of Social and Political Thought* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1993), 2.

11. The archons were the chief magistrates of Athens.

legend."[12] In other words, the Ancient Greek poets and chroniclers would take historical events and exaggerate them to make the events more appealing and mystical. N. G. L. Hammond further supported the possible historical reality of the certain legends of Ancient Greece, viewing them as mixtures of folklore and history: "[T]he range of archaeological discovery is limited; but its findings in certain cases confirm the assumption which Herodotus and Thucydides made, that Greek legend was set within a framework not of poetical fantasy but of historical reality."[13] For example, "there is a family of Medontidai, claiming descent from Athenian kings, there is the fact that Athens, in contrast to Sparta, is not a monarchy,[14] and that in contrast to its neighbors, it is free from Dorian admixture; there was even a sanctuary of Codrus."[15] Therefore, it is possible that Athens did have a monarchy that developed into an aristocracy.

Athens' Aristocracy

Athens' government now primarily consisted of archons and the Areopagus. As a student of Aristotle wrote of the Areopagus,

> The Council of Areopagus had as its duty the protection of the laws; but in point of fact it administered the greater and most important part of the government of the state, and inflicted punishments and fines summarily upon all who misbehaved themselves. For the Archons were elected under qualifications of birth and wealth, and the Areopagus was composed of those who had served as Archons; for which

---

12. Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1950), 14.

13. N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Greece to 322 B. C.*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 58.

14. Commonly called an oligarchy, Sparta was not one in its *pure* sense. There were still kings ruling Sparta, and it was a mixed government. The misconception of Sparta being an oligarchy would come from the city's Council of Elders, who held most of the power in Sparta.

15. Walter Burkert, *Sather Classical Lectures*, vol. 47, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 62.

reason the membership of the Areopagus is the only office which has continued to be a life-magistracy to the present day.[16]

Essentially, Athens was most likely an aristocratic government from "the local ties of neighbourhood and the regional nuclei of clannish power."[17] However, the Athenians suffered threats of coming under a tyranny, such as Cylon's attempt to seize the Acropolis. According to Victor Ehrenber, "In 632 (or 636) a young nobleman, Cylon, a former Olympic victor and the son-in-law of the tyrant Theagenes of Megara, seized the Acropolis, but was prevented from further success by the remarkable action of the peasants who flocked into town, were armed, and saved the situation for authorities."[18] The peasants' fight against Cylon was likely a precursor to Athens' future democracy, as "[t]he people in arms had become a serious danger to the ruling class."[19] Eventually, during Aristaechmus' archonship, Draco, Athens' first lawgiver, replaced oral law with a written code that was impossible to enforce without the court of law in Athens in 621 B.C.[20] However, "he [Draco] was concerned not with the working of the constitution but with the administration of justice."[21] For example, "[t]he only part of his code which survived Solon's legislation was his laws on homicide, which renewed late in the fifth century, and preserved on stone."[22] In his code, Draco set the difference between murder and manslaughter.

---

16. Arist. *Const. Ath.* 3

17. Victor Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.*, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen & Co LTD, 1973), 55.

18. Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates*, 56.

19. Ehrenberg, 57.

20. See Arist. *Const. Ath.* 4.

21. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 156.

22. Hammond, 156; *See also* Arist. *Const. Ath.* 7.

Hammond mentioned that Draco also created the law of debt, which "entitled a creditor in certain cases to enslave, or to sell into slavery, an insolvent debtor and his dependents,"[23] and instituted the Court of Appeal, "to which appeal could be made from the court or tribe or phratry."[24] Draco's would leave his legacy by having others the use of his name as a word, creating the term "Draconian" to describe laws that prescribe unnecessarily harsh punishments.[25]

By this time, Athens' poor citizens were under the rule of the rich. From Draco's harsh laws, it is likely the egalitarianism of the Athenian citizens grew under the impression they suffered oppression from their rich rulers, leading the poor citizens to revolt against the rich. Eventually in 594 B.C., Solon, an Athenian statesman, lawmaker, and archon, made reforms that granted free citizens who owned property permission to cooperate with the city's assembly meetings. He even "[gave] the most prominent office of the state, the archonship, to the richest of the four classes into which the people were divided,"[26] creating a type of guild system in Athens. With a class collaboration, it is possible that Solon suppressed egalitarianism in Athens. Plus, his reforms included the creation of the boule,[27] taking control of the Areopagus' original role of running affairs and dealing with politics. However, the Areopagus did not disband, taking its new role as guardian of the laws of Athens.

---

23. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 156.

24. Hammond, 156.

25. See Arist. *Pol*. II.12.1274b15-20, trans. Jowett.

26. Arthur J. Grant, *Greece in the Age of Pericles* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1973), 139.

27. The boule is an Athenian council composed of 400 citizens as members to the council, 100 of them being from each of the four tribes of Athens.

Solon further contributed to making democratic reforms in Athens by creating the Ecclesia, which was an assembly that composed of all the free male citizens of Athens. He also gave the Ecclesia a role in making decisions in politics and warfare, including electing magistrates into the Areopagus.[28] However, Plutarch presented a different account, claiming that neither party benefited from Solon.[29] Nonetheless, democracy was not the type of government Solon was making in Athens.

Athens' Timocracy

Despite what appeared to be democratic reforms, Solon created the Solonian Constitution to establish a timocracy. Under a timocracy, the citizens received a certain amount of power depending on the amount of land each citizen owned. To advance his installment of a timocracy, Solon separated the citizens of Athens into four classes based on the amount of land each citizen possessed. As Plutarch described,

> [. . .] Solon, being willing to continue the magistracies in the hands of the rich men, and yet receive the people into the other part of the government, took an account of the citizens' estates, and those that were worth five hundred measures of fruit, dry and liquid, he placed in the first rank, calling them Pentacosiomedimni [sic]; those that could keep a horse, or were worth three hundred measures, were in the third; and all the others were called Thetes, who were not admitted to any office, but could come to the assembly, and act as jurors; which at first seemed nothing, but afterwards was found enormous privilege, as almost every matter of dispute came before them in this latter capacity. Even in the cases which he assigned to the archon's cognizance, he allowed an appeal to the courts.[30]

---

28. See Justinus, "Epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Philippic Histories*," *Attalus*, trans. Rev. J. S. Watson, accessed October 30, 2020, http://www.attalus.org/translate/justin8.html#2.7; Evelyn Abbott, *A History of Greece*, vol. 1, *From the Earliest Times to the Ionian Revolt*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1893), 411.

29. Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 1:165 and 1:168.

30. Plutarch, 1:169.

Apart from Solon's separation of the classes of Athens and contrary to Justinus' account, Solon pleased neither the rich nor the poor citizens. Many of Athens' citizens, ranging from all four classes, did not approve of Solon's timocracy. In fact, only "when things are *even* there never can be war, and this pleased both parties, the wealthy and the poor."[31] According to Plutarch, "In this he [Solon] pleased neither party, for the rich were angry for their money, and the poor that the land was not divided, and, as Lycurgus ordered in his commonwealth, all men reduced to equality."[32] Concerning wealth and property, the rich citizens wanted "all [to] have their fair proportion,"[33] and the poor citizens all to be absolutely equal.[34] Furthermore, from the case of Plutarch, there appeared to be a sign that the poor citizens of Athens grew egalitarian from their desire to be equal to the rich citizens of Athens in wealth and property. However, it also seemed that each of Athens' classes desired more power rather than justice. The rise of egalitarianism in Athens' lower class would foreshadow Athens' future democracy degenerating to corruption in the eyes of the Old Oligarch, Plato, and Aristotle. However, the egalitarian presence in Athens seemed to show how both rich and poor alike primarily concerned themselves with power, which later Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, would explain.

Nevertheless, Solon was also able to make various social reforms, such as making changes to Athens' laws regarding certain punishments of certain crimes and loosening Athens' strict economic laws. Solon even freed debtors along with their land by cancelling all debts and

---

31. Plutarch, 1:165 (emphasis in original).

32. Plutarch, 1:168.

33. Plutarch, 1:165.

34. See Plutarch, 1:165.

"forbade for the future all loans on the security of the person (*epi sōmasi*) so that never again could a man, or his wife and family, be enslaved for debt."[35] He even revoked Draco's laws for their excessive punishment except for homicide. As stated by George Grote, "He [Solon] left unchanged all the previous laws and practices respecting the crime of homicide, connected as they were intimately with the religious feelings of the people."[36] Despite these reforms, Solon would not fulfill his desire to make Athens a peaceful society.

Even though many of Athens' citizens did not want to be under a tyranny, some of Solon's supporters suggested that he become a tyrant, which he refused to do. As A. Andrews claimed, "The average Greek was firmly enough convinced that he did not want to be the subject of a tyrant, but he was not so firmly convinced that he would not like to be a tyrant himself, nor could he withhold his admiration from the man who had succeeded in making such a position for himself."[37] Hence, to stop any chance of becoming a tyrant, Solon "tried to safeguard his work by imposing an oath on the archons of each year to maintain his legislation"[38] since "he preferred instead to incur the hostility of both parties by placing his honour and the general welfare above his personal aggrandizement."[39] Eventually, civil strife occurred, failing Solon's desire to create a peaceful society and causing him to escape to Egypt, "giving out that he should not return for

---

35. Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates*, 64 (emphasis in original). The term *epi sōmasi* is Greek for "on the body;" *See also* Arist. *Const. Ath.* 6

36. Grote, *Greece*, 2:134.

37. A. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 25.

38. Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates*, 77.

39. Arist. *Const. Ath.* 6

ten years."[40] Despite his failure to make a peaceful society, Aristotle claimed that "Solon was one of the foremost men of the day,"[41] even with a middle-class status, making him one of the "Seven Wise Men" of Ancient Greece. Nevertheless, Peisistratus, Solon's distant relative, would later conquer Athens and become its first official tyrant.

However, Peisistratus' conquering of Athens did not primarily come from any grand or magnificent military leadership; rather, it primarily came from deceit. For example, prior to Peisistratus' takeover of Athens, the factions of Lycurgus and Megacles were disputing with each other on who should rule Athens. According to Aristotle in his work, *The Constitution of Athens*,

> The parties at this time [of Solon] were three in number. First there was the party of the Shore, led by Megacles[,] the son of Alcmeon, which was considered to aim at a moderate form of government; then there were the men of the Plain, who desired an oligarchy and were led by Lycurgus; and thirdly there were the men of the Highlands, at the head of whom was Pisistratus [sic], who was looked on as an extreme democrat. This party was reinforced by those who had been deprived of the debts due to them, from motives of poverty, and by those who were not of pure descent, from motives of personal apprehension. A proof of this is seen in the fact that after the tyranny was overthrown a revision was made of the citizen-role, on the ground that many persons were partaking in the franchise without having a right to it. The names given to the respective parties were derived from the districts in which they held their lands.[42]

According to Polyaenus, Peisistratus' takeover of Athens originated with a dispute he had with Megacles in regard to ruling Athens while Megacles' faction was still disputing with Lycurgus' faction.[43] To become a tyrant and stop Megacles and his faction from ruling Athens, Peisistratus

---

40. Arist. *Const. Ath*. 11

41. Arist. *Const. Ath*. 5

42. Arist. *Const. Ath.* 13

43. See Polyaenus, *Polyænus's Stratagems of War*, trans. R. Shepherd (Chicago: Ares Publishers Inc., 1974), 19.

"organized a third party which Herodotus describes a *hyperakrioi*, the men beyond the hills."[44] Later, Peisistratus tricked the Athenian assembly into thinking that Megacles attacked him by wounding himself.[45] Peisistratus's scheme in asking for more bodyguards resulted in the establishment of Athens' tyranny, as he used these guards to take over the city-state. As Aristotle taught, "For in the past Peisistratus kept asking for a bodyguard in order to carry out such a scheme, and did make himself a despot as soon as he got it."[46] In this case, Peisistratus, who would seem to be a demagogue,[47] deceived the Athenians into making him their tyrant.

Though Peisistratus was able to deceive many Athenians, there were also Athenians who averted themselves from being tricked by Peisistratus. However, the Athenians who saw through Peisistratus' deception decided to say nothing about it. According to Aristotle, "It is related that, when Pisistratus [sic] asked for a bodyguard, Solon opposed the request, and declared that in so doing he proved himself wiser than half the people and braver than the rest—wiser than those who did not see that Pisistratus [sic] designed to make himself tyrant, and braver than those who saw it and kept silence."[48] Based on what Aristotle taught, the Athenians who knew of Peisistratus' deception did not have the courage to report it, most likely in fear of harm done to them from Peisistratus. Consequently, Peisistratus successfully became Athens' tyrant.

---

44. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants*, 100.

45. See Polyaenus, *Polyænus's Stratagems of War*, 19.

46. Arist. *Rhet*. I.2.1357b30-35, trans. W. Rhys Roberts

47. See Arist. *Pol*. V.10.1310b30-35.

48. Arist. *Const. Ath*. 14

Athens' Tyranny

Led by Peisistratus, Athens was under a tyrannical government. However, Peisistratus went into exile from Athens twice before fully ruling Athens to his death. Still, when Peisistratus officially took full control of Athens, his tyrannical rule seemed to be much more stable than those fearing tyranny would imagine. As tyrant, Peisistratus "levied a tenth part of all Attic produce and probably taxed all imports and exports,"[49] increasing his wealth. He was able to create foreign policies and widened Athenian trade. Originally, he also "inherited friendly relations with Thebes, Argos, Thessaly, Eretria, and Sparta. But this network did not endure."[50] Thebes wanted Plataea to make alliances with the Boeotian League, but the Plataeans decided to receive aid from Sparta. However, Sparta convinced them to receive aid from Athens, with whom the Plataeans made an alliance. This alliance caused a battle between Thebes and Athens, which is what the Spartans hoped. The Spartans most likely wanted to depose Peisistratus from his tyrannical rule because they were in favor of oligarchy and disapproved tyranny. Nevertheless, Athens was able to defeat Thebes, and Peisistratus did not confiscate the estates of the survivors "as a condition for good behavior," even though "in some cases their sons were held as hostages."[51] Though Peisistratus was a tyrant, he also accomplished significant achievements.

Peisistratus wanted the citizens of Athens to trust him. According to Hammond's summary of Peisistratus' rule over Athens,

---

49. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 180.

50. Hammond, 181.

51. Hammond, 182.

He . . . respected the civil and constitutional laws of his country, even submitting to trial in the Court of the Areopagus. But behind the scenes the tyrant held the strings. He tolerated no party and no policy save his own; candidates for major office were of his choosing, and of their election they administered his policy and in due course became members of the Areopagus.[52]

Peisistratus appeared to behave decently to the Athenians. In fact, "[h]is rule gave peace, prosperity, and distinction to the Athenian state. He won the affection of a class which later became predominant, and his régime was remembered by many as a golden age, 'The age of Cronus'."[53] He was also very fond of Athens' culture, participating in the arts. According to the Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero, "[b]ut a particular attention to the art, and a greater ability in the practice of it, may be observed in Pisistratus."[54] Further into his rule, Peisistratus planned to remove Athens' relation with the island of Chios, which the Persians were occupying at the time, most likely to create Athenian independence, which would seem to be a significant factor to Athens' later rise in ancient nationalism. As Aristotle taught, "His [Peisistratus'] administration was more like a constitutional government than the rule of a tyrant,"[55] even though there were certain anti-aristocratic biases under tyrannies. Nevertheless, after Peisistratus' death, his eldest son, Hippias, took control as Athens' tyrant. Later on, Hippias would exile the Alcmeonids, the rival of Peisistratus' sons.

---

52. Hammond, 182; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. V.12.1315b20-25 for an ancient note remarking Peisistratus' summoning before the Areopagus.

53. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 182. "The age of Cronus" refers to the rule of Kronos, the father of Zeus, who, according to ancient Greek tradition, ruled a golden age of peace and happiness for all of humanity until Zeus overthrew him.

54. Cicero, *Cicero's Brutus, or History of Famous Orators: Also, His Orator, or Accomplished Speaker.*, trans. E. Jones (New York: AMS Press, 1976), 24.

55. Arist. *Const. Ath.* 14

Following the exile of the Alcmeonids after their attempts to rid Athens of the Peisistratids, Peisistratus' sons, there occurred an incident at the Panathenaic festival. In 514 B.C., Harmodius and Aristogeiton, two 'tyrannicides,' assassinated Hipparchus, Hippias' brother, after Hipparchus made sexual advances to Harmodius. As a result, Harmodius and Aristogeiton became "the symbol of liberty to the Athenian people, which tended to attribute its liberation rather to them than to the coalition of Sparta and of the nobles under Alcmeonid leadership."[56] Eventually, "Harmodius was killed on the spot by the guards, while Aristogeiton was arrested, and perished later after suffering long tortures."[57] Later on, "[i]n the next year some exiles led by the Alcmeonidae seized Leipsydrion under Mount Parnes, but they were not supported by the people and the enterprise failed."[58] Consequently, "Hippias, feeling insecure, sought fresh alliances abroad and began to rule more harshly at home,"[59] becoming very rigorous in his rule over Athens, and later executed many of his brothers' opponents. Later, Hippias "marr[ied] his daughter to the son of the tyrant of Lampsacus, who was influential at the Persian court."[60] It soon turned out the assassination came from Sparta, where the Spartans received inspiration from the Alcmeonids. They continued to fight the Peisistratids to liberate Athens from tyrannical rule, which the Spartans viewed as corrupt.

---

56. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 184.

57. Arist. *Const. Ath.* 18

58. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants*, 101.

59. Andrewes, 101.

60. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 184.

The Spartans fought Hippias and the other Peisistratids, at Phalerum, but the Peisistratids, knowing ahead of the Spartan advance, prepared a calvary from Thessaly and defeated the Spartans. The Spartans made a second advance, this time successfully defeating the Thessalians and capturing the Peisistratids, along with their sons. Eventually, the "[t]erms of capitulation were concluded in July 510,"[61] freeing Athens from a tyrannical government. Granted, "the tyranny had vastly strengthened the other element in Attic society, the guildsmen, whose numbers had been swollen by immigration and whose importance had increased with the growing prosperity and maritime trade of Athens."[62] The downfall of Athens' tyranny may even be the result of the loss of the Thracian and Paionian mines, as Peisistratus became a tyrant from the miners he gathered. As P. N. Ure wrote, "It can scarcely be an accident that the tyranny at Athens ended almost immediately after the removal of one of its two roots, the mines of the country of the Thracians and Paionians."[63] Nevertheless, the citizens of Athens had to structure a new government to govern the city.

As shown above, Athens' kings became another part of Ancient Greek mythology, taken over by the aristocracy when (the possibly real) King Codrus passed away. The aristocracy, from the excessively strict laws of Draco to the reforms made by Solon, was not able to function properly, leading Peisistratus and his sons to rule Athens under a tyranny. The assassination of Hippias and the revolt led by the Spartans brought about the end of the tyranny, leading into the formation of Athens' democracy. Throughout the constant changes of Athens' government, there

---

61. Hammond, 184.

62. Hammond, 184.

63. P. N. Ure, *The Origin of Tyranny* (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1962), 59.

was always a measure of democracy in all of them. The mythical Theseus gave the poor Athenian citizens more political involvement, leading to the earliest account of Athens' democratic rule, even if it is a myth. Solon was able to give the poor citizens of Athens more involvement in the aristocracy by giving them positions in the Acropolis. Peisistratus, though not entirely democratic, appreciated Athenian culture and won over many of Athens' citizens, giving an era of peace to Athens. Democracy hid in every government Athens was in, and it would finally, gradually emerge over the city-state, starting with the reforms of Cleisthenes.

However, there was an emphasis on egalitarianism's presence in Athens. Most of the emphasis came whenever there was democratic freedom. Many poor Athenians wanted as much wealth as the rich Athenians. Even though there was not much emphasis on egalitarianism during Athens' tyranny, there was a rise in Athenian nationalism. Nevertheless, once democracy emerged in Athens, there would be a reemergence of Athenian egalitarianism along with a rise in Athenian nationalism. Most likely, egalitarianism would merge as part of Athenian culture under a democracy since money held a significant influence on the poor citizens of Athens.[64]

---

64. See Robin Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died: Dispelling the Myths* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), 22.

CHAPTER I

ATHENS' DEMOCRACY AND THE OLD OLIGARCH'S CRITICISM

Democracy in Athens would be an anomaly to the Ancient World. No other country in the world ever possessed democracy as an official form of government, and many governments in the Ancient World, such as Spartan's oligarchy, opposed such civil institutions. There were many accounts of early Athens possessing elements of democracy, and many countries besides Athens did have elements of democratic rule. However, Athens was now beginning to establish democracy as the official system of government. The idea that the majority should rule appeared as unworkable and prone to corruption, as many of the ancient critics of Athens' democracy suggested. The critics feared the Athenians would become egalitarians and require everyone to be absolutely equal in wealth. Such an early concept of distributive justice would undermine the different ancient Greek philosophies of justice, which is a discussion for later. Though Athens' democracy appeared to corrupt from ancient nationalism under egalitarianism and a mass psychosis, Athens' democratic government was initially workable. Athens' democracy would only corrupt once the citizens received too much power over the city-state's government.

The Formation of Athens' Democracy and the Democratic Reforms of Cleisthenes

From the rise of political upheaval, coming right before the downfall of Athenian tyranny, the male citizens of Athens were demanding for a democracy. According to John L. Myres, democracy functioned as the "'control by the countryside' over war-lords, landlords, money-lords, and all minorities alike."[65] Democracy in Athens would give political power to the

---

65. John L. Myres, *The Political Ideas of the Greeks with Special Reference to Early Notions about Law, Authority, and Natural Order in Relation to Human Ordinance* (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1927), 347.

common citizens, notably the poor. However, no ancient empire would ever think of giving power to the majority. Still, when Athens was under a tyranny, there was a democratic element in the government. For example, according to Hammond,

> The tyrants had always placed the interests of the state—as controlled by themselves—before those of the clans, and the buildings, festivals and coins of the tyranny emphasized the fact. They had also fostered the interests of the small man the typical member of the people (*demos*), and their own example set a value upon the individual as such. Thus, because the tyrants were enlightened and time did the work of reform, the Athenian state of 510 had a sense of unity and a trend of political thought which the faction-ridden state of 591 to 546 had lacked.[66]

Despite Peisistratus and his sons' efforts to strengthen and beautify the city of Athens, the corruption coming from the assassination of Hipparchus was a sign that the Athenians no longer wanting to engage in a government in which the rules tightened. The citizens demanded equality and a fair say in the government. Although the Peisistratids' laws began to become strict after the assassination of Hipparchus, putting much pressure on the citizens of Athens, there may be another reason why the Athenians wanted a democracy. As the critics of Athens' democracy will show, it may have nothing to do with fairness or justice, but egalitarianism.

Despite the possible alternative motive, Herodotus reported that there was an argument for democracy in Athens.[67] Nevertheless, democracy would not immediately arise. In fact, according to Christian Meier, "Strife arose among the various aristocratic factions that revived after the tyrant was expelled, and Cleisthenes [grandson of Cleisthenes of Sicyon, the former tyrant of Sicyon] lost the 508-507 election for chief archon to a nobleman named Isagoras."[68]

---

66. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 184-185 (emphasis in original).

67. See Herodotus, *The History of Herodotus*, 5.78

68. Christian Meier, *Athens: A Portrait of the City in Its Golden Age*, trans. Robert and Rita Kimber (London: John Murray, 1993), 83.

The Persians, with whom Athens and Spartans conflicted, did not even fully understand democracy. According to Myres, "the policy, or lack of policy, of the more democratic states threw the Persians into the arms of the reactionary elements in Greece, with even more momentous results than the same situation produced later."[69] Plus, it would be difficult for Athens to become a democracy when the citizens decided to join the Spartan League. However, Cleisthenes ran for chief archon again and promised to issue democratic reforms if the Athenians would elect him. His plan consisted of "separat[ing] the political arrangements from the social, . . . excit[ing] in the country people a greater interest in politics, . . . [and] increase[ing] the power of the 'demos.'"[70] As Hammond stated, "The aim of Cleisthenes was to destroy the clans' influence in local and general elections and to place the guildsman on an equal footing with the clansman."[71] Consequently, Isagoras, Cleisthenes' rival, called for the Spartan military to intervene in Athens again to stop Cleisthenes from making his democratic reforms. The Spartans agreed, believing that Isagoras would bring liberty to Athens, "given that they [the Spartans] regarded democracy not as true liberty but rather as unbridled license propelled by the whim of the masses."[72] In other words, the Spartans believed that democracy would make the majority a

---

69. Myres, *The Political Ideas*, 337.

70. Abbott, *A History of Greece*, 1:473.

71. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 187. The "clan" and "clansmen" referred to a certain racial group in Attica that owned land with a *naucraria* in a *trittys*, both certain geographical groups.

72. Thomas R. Martin, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times*, 2nd ed. (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013), 113.

tyrant of their own, as "[t]hey [the Spartans] had no sympathy with democracy."[73] Nevertheless,

a majority of Athenian citizens drove Isagoras out of the city, bringing peace and distrust

between Athens and Sparta for the next two generations.

As promised, Cleisthenes began to issue reforms for a democracy. One of the first things

he did was separate and distribute power in Athens,[74] which including the establishment of the

Council of Five Hundred, whose job was "to carry out the business of the state upon the lines

laid down by the general assembly."[75] The council "elevated many Athenians beyond their status

of mere hoplites or followers of noblemen to that of true citizens—assuming, of course, that the

will to take on such a role existed among them."[76] Soon, the Athenian citizens began to have

more involvement in Athens' government. According to Myres, "[T]he tribal reforms of the

Athenian state by Cleisthenes, in the last years of the sixth century, replaced a rigidly hereditary

citizenship by a form of government which was as new as it was precisely described by what

may have been the new word *demokratia*—government by all free inhabitants of the

countryside."[77] Previously, in order to be a citizen, one had to be a member of one of the four

tribes in Athens known as *phylai*. They served as "agglomerations of clans and sub-clans in

which the eupatrid families of the nobility played a dominant role both social and in cult

---

73. Abbott, *A History of Greece*, 1:473.

74. See Lucie Laurian, "This Is What Direct Democracy Looks Like: How Athens in the 5th Century BC Resolved the Question of Power," *The Town Planning Review* 83, no. 4 (2012): V-Xi, accessed November 17, 2020, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41509859.

75. Grant, *Greece*, 155.

76. Christian Meier, *Athens*, 84.

77. Myres, *The Political Ideas*, 347.

matters."[78] Instead of abolishing this system of citizenship, Cleisthenes decided to let it die out. Furthermore, along with Cleisthenes' reforms, the citizens allied with Darius I, king of Persia, to protect them from the Spartans so the democratic reforms would flourish across Athens. As a result, many of Cleisthenes' opponents regarded his reforms as a threat to the aristocracy.

Isagoras later asked King Cleomenes of Sparta to establish ties of hospitality with Athens to prevent democracy and preserve the aristocracy. Cleomenes "endeavoured [sic] to disband 'the Council'—which was probably the Areopagus Council—and to establish in power a narrow oligarchy of three hundred men with Isagoras as president."[79] As a result, the Spartan took over Athens, expelling 700 Athenian families from the city, and Cleisthenes fled, leaving Athens under an oligarchy. However, the men of Athens united and rebelled against Isagoras and the Spartans. Since the Spartans were unable to locate help outside the city, they made a truce with the Athenians. The Spartans eventually left the city, and Isagoras' allies suffered execution.[80]

Meiers suggested that the Athenians were victorious from the equal rights given to all of them.[81] However, there was still suspicion of political corruption through mob-rule.[82] To note, the military victories under Athens' democratic laws gives a hint that nationalism was forming in Athens. Nevertheless, Cleisthenes' democratic reforms made the Athenian military more

---

78. David Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 24.

79. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 185.

80. See Meier, *Athens*, 85.

81. Meier, 86.

82. Myres, *The Political Ideas*, 157.

powerful than it was under tyranny, which would help portray Athens as a powerful city-state. This glorious portrayal of Athens likely contributed to the eventual rise of Athenian exceptionalism. Unfortunately, this power struggle is partly what got the Persians involved, leading the way to the Persian Wars.

The Persian Wars

The Persian Wars originated with the revolt against Persian control of in the city-states of Ionia. The Ionians had already lost their independence to King Croesus of Lydia. King Croesus planned on conquering more territory, and he went to Apollo's oracle at Delphi for advice on conquering a region the Persians were claiming. Accordingly, the oracle told Croesus that "if [he] attacked the Persians, he would destroy a great kingdom."[83] Unfortunately, Croesus did not realize that the kingdom that he would destroy would be his own.

King Croesus attacked the Persians, but he lost his kingdom to the Persian king, Cyrus. King Cyrus placed tyrants across the region, including the newly conquered Ionia, to have them under Persian control. In 499 B.C., the Ionians began to revolt against the Persians. The Spartans were unwilling to help, but the Athenians allied with the Ionians. They would assist them in rebelling against the tyrants in Ionia, possibly as a way to influence democratic reforms, as they were once under tyranny as well. This intervention caused King Darius, the third Persian king, to go into a rage, "[vowing] to avenge their [the Greeks] disloyalty as a matter of justice, to set things right in the world that by nature he was supposed to rule."[84] It is also possible that the Persians were going to invade Greece eventually to expand the Persian Empire, but the

---

83. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 127.

84. Martin, 128.

Athenians only hindered the process, leading Darius to enact the Persian attack against Athens. Nevertheless, the start of the Persian Wars should not be blamed on the Ionians, although their revolt did lead to it. According to Meier, "Had the Athenians stayed out of the conflict, the Ionian revolt would have been no different from the many other uprisings that periodically occurred in the Persian empire and were always crushed. … Instead, because of the involvement of the Athenians, it turned out to be the beginning of the Persian Wars."[85] The Ionians did lead into the conflict with the Persians, but the Athenians were the direct cause of the Persian Wars.

The Persians would attempt to defeat the Athenian army at the Battle of Marathon as vengeance for their interference in supporting the Ionians. The Plataeans allied with the Athenians against the oncoming Persian army in the Battle of Marathon as "a debt of gratitude for having protected them from their hostile neighbors the Thebans thirty years earlier." [86] Due to the tactics of Miltiades, the Persians were not able to capture Athens. Many Athenians in favor of democracy rejoiced at the defeat of the Persians. According to Thomas Martin,

> The ordinary Athenian citizens who made up the city-state's army . . . had dramatically demonstrated their commitment to preserving their freedom by refusing to capitulate to an enemy whose reputation for power and wealth had made a disastrous Athenian defeat appear certain. The unexpected victory at Marathon gave an unparalleled boost to Athenian self-confidence, and the city-state's soldiers and leaders thereafter always boasted that they had stood resolute before the feared barbarians even though the Spartans had not come in time to help them. They also forever after celebrated the Plataeans as noble allies.[87]

From this defeat, King Darius planned to invade all of Greece with his son, Xerxes I, as leader. Thirty-one Greek states would defend themselves from the oncoming Persian invasion. Even

---

85. Meier, *Athens*, 195.

86. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 128.

87. Martin, 129.

though the Athenian and Spartan relations were still weak, the Greek states chose Sparta as their military leader for their intimidating hoplite army. Nevertheless, the Persians were able to sack Athens and burn the city.

Frightened by the burning of Athens, the Peloponnesian Greeks harmed their alliance with Athens by their desire to retreat to their homeland to protect it. "The Greek warships at this point were anchored off the west coast of Athenian territory,"[88] and the Athenian commander Themistocles, a supporter of naval warfare, sought this as an opportunity to use the "topography of the narrow channel of water between the coast and the island of Salamis"[89] to prevent the Persian navy from taking advantage of its numerical superiority. However, Themistocles had urged the Greeks before the Persian Wars to finance the navy, but the popular assembly did not support him or his idea because of his controversial status, despite him "broadly [identifying] with what he understood to be the interests of the city."[90] Nevertheless, he tried to use a democratic approach to the Athenians to persuade them to finance the warships and defend the island of Salamis. Furthermore, he had to defeat his political opponent, Aristides, who, though "may not necessarily have opposed Athens' military preparations against the Persians," was more likely to object against "the building of the navy."[91] Aristides sought to do what he thought was right, but Themistocles was ambitious in defeating the Persians. Plus, Aristides thought that Themistocles' idea was good, but he believed that enacting his idea of financing warships to

---

88. Martin, 133.

89. Martin, 133.

90. Meier, *Athens*, 234.

91. Meier, 236.

defend Salamis would make his opponent too powerful to defeat. Nevertheless, the Athenian assembly voted to ostracize Aristides in support of Themistocles.[92] As Plutarch wrote in his work, *Plutarch's Lives*, "Gradually growing to be great, and winning the favor of the people, he [Themistocles] at last gained the day with his faction over that of Aristides, and procured his banishment by ostracism."[93] This power to ostracize others in Athens, as shown against Aristides, "symbolize[d] the principle that the interest of the group must prevail over that of the individual citizen when the freedom of the group and the freedom of the individual come into conflict in desperate and dangerous cases,"[94] building up Athenian democracy. As Myres stated,

> Hence in private law and social relationships the familiar transition from status to contract; in public life the personal interests and responsibilities of the individual, setting him more and more on his own feet, in face both of his hereditary group, and of the *universitas civium* [total citizen] which was the *polity* [government], whose protection and prestige made such a mode of life possible for him at all.[95]

Plus, as Plutarch stated, "[O]stracism was not the punishment of any criminal act, but was spaciously said to be the mere depression and humiliation of excessive greatness and power; and was in fact a gentle relief and mitigation of envious feeling, which was thus allowed to vent itself in inflicting no intolerable injury, only a ten years' banishment."[96] Even Aristotle mentioned that the Athenians practiced ostracism because "equality is above all things their aim, and therefore they ostracized and banished from the city for a time those who seemed to predominate too much

---

92. Ostracism was a democratic tactic practiced by the Athenian citizens to ban someone who seemed to be a threat to Athenian democracy for ten years from Athens.

93. Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 1:215-216.

94. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 145.

95. Myres, *The Political Ideas*, 110 (emphases in original).

96. Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 2:218.

through their wealth, or the number of their friends, or through any other political influence."[97]

American cultural anthropologist Christopher Boehm took ostracism to be an ancient form of

egalitarianism,[98] and if ostracism was part of Athens' democratic policies, then egalitarianism

would seem to be an essential feature of Athenian nationalism. After all, "[p]olitical institutions,

like those of religion, may be an important factor in crystallizing a nationality."[99] However, a

graphe paranomon, which is essentially the People's Court, would replace Athens' ostracism in

462 B.C.,[100] which challenges the idea that ostracism was an essential feature of Athenian

nationalism during Socrates' trial. Nevertheless, according to Plutarch, "Themistocles spread a

rumor amongst the people, that, by determining and judging all matters privately, he [Aristides]

had destroyed the courts of judicature, and was secretly making way for a monarchy in his own

person, without the assistance of guards."[101] It seemed as if Themistocles slandered Aristides in

order to lead the Athenians against the Persians. If Aristides defeated Themistocles, it was likely

that the Persians would successfully conquer Greece.

No matter how Themistocles was able to defeat Aristides, democracy in Athens was

building up. However, that "'democracy' as practiced in Attica necessarily stood for a wide

---

97. Arist. *Pol*. III.13.1284a15-25; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. III.13.1284a35-40.

98. See Christopher Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest: The Evolution of Egalitarian Behavior* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 77-79.

99. Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), 19.

100. See Mogens Herman Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes: Structure, Principles, and Ideology*, trans. J. A. Crook (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 205.

101. Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 2:218

toleration of individual peculiarities goes without saying: its political 'object,' in the Aristotelian sense, was inevitably 'freedom' in a sense unknown and almost inconceivable before."[102] Once Athens' established its democratic government, the city's sense of freedom would be absolute liberty, where there are few to no restrictions, "[f]or the government of Athens allowed men far greater liberty of thought and speech than was to be found elsewhere in Greece."[103] As a result, "[the] Athenians assumed that the right way to protect democracy was always to trust the majority vote of freeborn adult male citizens, without any restrictions on a man's ability to say what he thought was best for democracy."[104] However, in the case of Socrates, the promise for liberty in thought and speech would never always prevail in democratic Athens as a consequence of mob-rule. Nevertheless, Aristides was exiled to Aegina, and when he served Athens at Salamis, he supported Themistocles' power to handle Attica's allies. Eventually, Aristides would return to take a seat in Athens' assembly and "[bring] forward a decree, that every one might share in the government, and the archons be chosen out of the whole body of the Athenians,"[105] supporting Athens' democracy. Though Aristides' return would happen later in Athens' history, the Greeks were able to finance the warships and successfully defeated the Persians at Salamis.

Themistocles wanted to block the Persians' escape route, but the Spartan commander, Eurybiades, convinced him to let the Persians go. Later, King Xerxes of Persia sent a message to the Athenians to forgive them and let them keep their land and liberty as long as they became

---

102. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 352.

103. Grant, *Greece*, 174.

104. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 145.

105. Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 2:237.

Persia's allies. Even though this seemed to be an offer difficult to refuse, the Athenians rejected

the offer. Xerxes sent an army, conquered Attica, where many of the Athenians were residing,

and made his offer to them again. One council member by the name of Lycidas thought about

accepting the offer, but "the other councilmen were so outraged that they surrounded the man

and stoned him to death."[106] Eventually, the Greeks defeated the Persians at Plataea, which

would serve as the conclusion to the Persian Wars. However, many Athenians wanted to

continue fighting the Persians to protect the Ionians, and the Spartans opposed the Athenians'

plan. Apart from the details of the Persian Wars, the Athenians' common willingness to fight the

Persians aided in developing the democratic ideals of Athens, especially with the help of

Themistocles. As stated by Meier, "There is much to suggest that Themistocles' kind of

planning—his refusal to be cowed by the enemy's numerical superiority, his ability to devise a

strategy based on the enemy's weakness, his recognition that victory was possible—was a direct

product of the special bent of intelligence the Greeks forced to develop."[107] The Athenian's

common willingness to continue fighting the Persians would contribute to the Athenians' self-

confidence in unity, developing into the democratic government Athens would soon be under.

However, the Athenians' common willingness to protect Athenian ideals became their national

identity, which holds a strong possibility of nationalism in its ancient form emerging in Athens.

The Democratic Reforms of Themistocles and the Straining Relationship with Sparta

Many Athenians desired for Sparta and Athens to unite, but that unification never

occurred. From this failure came the rise of the Delian League, which composed of different

---

106. Meier, *Athens*, 243.

107. Meier, 246.

Greek city-states under the leadership of Athens whose main purpose was "protecting Greece from the Persians"[108] and "[freeing] the Greek cities in Asia Minor from Persian domination."[109] Sparta would have a league of its own called the Peloponnesian League to maintain its dominance over other Greek city-states and protect oligarchism from tyranny and democracy. However, regarding the Delian League, Aristides "successfully persuaded the other Greeks in the alliance to demand Athenian leadership of the continuing fight against the Persians in the Aegean region."[110] The Athenians were set on expanding their power, making relations with Sparta very difficult. The Spartans believed Athens was becoming too powerful. The democratic reforms set up by Cleisthenes were beginning to manifest themselves in the city-states of the Delian League, increasing Athens' power. Themistocles would announce that "Athens now no longer recognized any authority above itself, be it Sparta or members of the alliance formed against the Persians."[111] The league contributed to financing the military and navy to defeat the Persians. The democratic reforms in Athens, as well as Athenian nationalism, continued to expand.

Cimon, who helped in the Delian League's campaigns against the Persians,[112] supported the Spartans and desired to assist them when they asked for Athens' help in dealing with the helots. This support angered Themistocles, who was anti-Spartan. Cimon's support would eventually lead to his own ostracism by the Athenians. As claimed by Arthur J. Grant,

---

108. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 141.

109. Meier, *Athens*, 257.

110. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 138.

111. Meier, *Athens*, 255.

112. See Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 3:101 for Cimon's success in defeating the Persians.

"Opposition to Cimon was not wanting. The Athenian democracy had entered on a path that seemed blocked by his personal supremacy."[113] However, because of Athens' threat to Spartan dominance, the Spartans changed their mind and refused Cimon's assistance. Consequently, the Athenians, outraged by Sparta's rejection, cut off their alliance with Sparta and enacted more democratic reforms. Eventually, these democratic reforms led Ephialtes, son of Sophonides and one who was against Spartan alliance, to weaken most of the judicial power of the Areopagus in Athens. Such a procedure "pushed through a motion that deprived the council of all functions *except jurisdiction over blood feuds and supervision in some religious matters*."[114] Soon, most of the judicial power of the aristocrats in the Areopagus transferred to the *heliaea*, Athens' jury system, which happened to have democratic elements based on the practice to choose Athenian citizens by lot. Only one magistrate would be present in every trial conducted to prevent fights from breaking out. Ephialtes was against Cimon's aristocratic leaning and supported a more democratic Athens. He was against the Areopagus, believing that "[it] was the people who were to rule, *not* the aristocracy; that is, not the Areopagus."[115] From Ephialtes' decision to weaken the power of the Areopagus, Athenian democracy would grow even further. Even though he died from murder, possibly by aristocrats, due to political upheaval in Athens, Ephialtes would still be alive when the Athens' government officially became a democracy.

The power of the Athenian citizens grew from the change of roles in leadership. As part of the change, most of the judicial power of the aristocracy and the Areopagus transferred to the

---

113. Grant, *Greece*, 110.

114. Meier, *Athens*, 291 (emphases added).

115. Meier, 296.

heliaea. Eventually, the Council of Five Hundred would be "the permanent [*i.e.*, official] government of Athens."[116] However, despite Cleisthenes' democratic reforms, Themistocles' democratic policies, and Ephialtes' contribution to the destruction of the Areopagus, it would be by the leadership of Pericles that Athens would officially become a democracy.

The Democratic Reforms of Pericles and the Official Establishment of Athens' Democracy

Pericles contributed to establishing democratic reforms in Athens that would emphasize the equality of the Athenian citizens. He believed that the reasonableness of taking less rights from others and giving more rights to them "as the characteristic of Athenians as he idealized them, believing democracy to be capable of this and predisposing men to it."[117] In other words, Pericles believed the ideal Athenian to be a charitable being and pursued that notion by later instituting a democracy in Athens. Furthermore, "Pericles' proposal for state stipends for jurors made him overwhelmingly popular with ordinary citizens."[118] As Evelyn Abbot wrote, "A new democracy was rising under the auspices of Pericles, which would be satisfied with nothing less than absolute and direct supremacy."[119] Pericles also made reforms to the Athenian Constitution, which "[came] to be regarded as the type of *par excellence* of Greek democracy."[120] These changes made by Pericles followed a change in Athenian culture. According to Meier,

---

116. Grant, *Greece*, 153.

117. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 369.

118. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 146.

119. Evelyn Abbot, *Pericles and the Golden Age of Athens* (London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930), 74.

120. M. Cary, "ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY," *History*, NEW SERIES, 12, no. 47 (1927): 206-14, accessed November 15, 2020, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24400152.

It cannot have been easy for the Athenians to reconcile what they were with what they felt they had to be. Traditional values were left further and further behind. Principles of morality no longer supplied adequate rules for politics, and it was unclear whether the new constitution, which had done away with the Areopagus, reflected the will of the gods. Now there was no routine, no sense of the resignation to fate that can so easily relieve people of the necessity to measure events and actions against generally accepted principles.[121]

Even though it is possible to believe that Pericles supported the idea that the majority vote would always contribute to the common good, a common view of democracy, the evolving culture of Athens contributed to their rising egotism and egalitarianism as well.

Athens took control of more regions in their fight against the Peloponnesians and broke ties with Sparta. The Spartans would fear the growing Athenian power. The Delian League even moved away from its primary mission of defending Greece from the Persians after Pericles got into a conflict with the island of Samos. Athens practically saw itself as the most powerful city in Greece. However, the rise in power among the Athenians contributed to the corruption of power the Old Oligarch, Plato, and Aristotle accused the Athenians of committing.

Pericles held a favorable view of democracy when he made many of his democratic reforms. According to William Anderson,

Pericles stood in spirit very close to Solon. He put the responsibility for the good government and security of Athens directly upon the people. He did not expect the gods to intervene to help them, or promise that they would. Thus, he taught them the lesson of individual and collective responsibility for their own welfare. Furthermore, by his enlightened cultural policies, and the improvements in the people's conditions of life and in the beauty of their city that he helped to bring about, he taught them also what great benefits a democracy could achieve for itself by following a moderate and liberal policy.[122]

---

121. Meier, *Athens*, 312.

122. William Anderson, *Man's Quest for Political Knowledge: The Study and Teaching of Politics in Ancient Times* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1964), 199.

However, it is possible that he made these reforms as a means to gain popularity among the citizens. Nevertheless, he did contribute to changing Athenian culture, such as establishing festivals and musical contests. For example, Pericles "laid down the rules for a competitive recitation of the works of Homer by the rhapsodes."[123] Even though he most likely made these additions to Athenian culture to maintain popularity, he eventually "identified himself with democratic Athens."[124] He would not attend aristocratic feasts and focused solely on his job of governing Athens. He received praise from the Athenians for his desire to govern Athens in a democratic fashion, prompting the new democratic government of Athens. According to Aristotle, "He [Pericles] took away some of the privileges of the Areopagus, and, above all, he turned the policy of the state in the direction of sea power, which caused the masses to acquire confidence in themselves and consequently to take the constitution more and more into their own hands."[125] Furthermore, he based his leadership on Anaxagoras' philosophy, leading him to study natural science and renounce superstition. According to Meier, "he [Pericles] spent his time musing over the policies of Athens, in which endeavors he may have been aided by the theories philosophers were beginning to expound,"[126] which were part of the emerging philosophical trend of Sophism. Later in Athenian history, the trend of Sophism would play a crucial role in the corruption of Athenian democracy, especially regarding the infamous trial of Socrates.

---

123. H. W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 34.

124. Meier, *Athens*, 312.

125. Arist. *Ath*. *Const*. 27

126. Meier, *Athens*, 365.

Even though the Athenian citizens received power, they appeared to return to tyranny under *radical democracy*. To maintain unity in the Delian League, Athens' "formerly dependent allies were explicitly required to 'obey.'"[127] Pericles eventually faced threats from Sparta when Athenian relations with the Spartans worsened. The Spartans wanted Pericles and the Athenians to stop getting involved with the problems of the Corinthians in Corcyra and Potidaea. Pericles refused the Spartans' demands, believing that this refusal would make him gain popularity with the Athenians. Peace between Athens and Sparta declined, leading into the Peloponnesian War.

However, prior to the Peloponnesian War, Athens lived a prosperous life under its new democratic rule. Athenian culture grew and evolved, and art as well as stability flourished in Athens. The city even depended on the rich to provide for the poor citizens and culture of Athens. Martin stated that "[t]he social values of Athenian democracy called for leaders like Cimon and his brother-in-law to provide such gifts for public use to show their goodwill toward the city-state and thereby earn increased social eminence as their reward."[128] The Athenians even contributed to building the Parthenon, a sanctuary dedicated to the Greek goddess Athena, patron goddess of the city of Athens. The design of the Parthenon "proclaimed Athenians' high confidence about their city-state's close relationship with the gods and the divine favor that they fervently believed they enjoyed."[129] This religious devotion to the gods is an essential part to Athenian society, as many of the citizens believed the gods were on their side. As Ancient Greek religion went, "[i]f the members of the family maintained the proper relations towards one

---

127. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 149.

128. Martin, 151.

129. Martin, 154.

another, such as the tending of aged parents, they received protection from their gods; if they violated those relations, divine punishment fell on the whole family."[130] Nevertheless, "[t]he Athenians also wondered about the envy of the gods, who were still feared. As new situations arose[,] rational considerations and practical politics became increasingly important."[131] Much of Athenian democracy would revolve around their religious culture, but as democracy rose, so did new philosophical thinking, challenging traditional Athenian culture.

The philosophy of Sophism played a vital role in the evolution of Athenian democracy. For example, Protagoras of Abdera, one of the first Sophists, "reached the conclusion that it was impossible to say anything about the gods, whether they existed or not, and if they did, what they were like," leading every human being to become "the measure of all things."[132] As Myres stated, regarding the rising trend of Sophism in Ancient Athens,

> Among the excesses of the Sophistic movement, then, and alongside of the new birth of logically cogent reasoning on all subjects alike, what is significant in the political thought of Greece in the late fifth and early fourth centuries, is the general desire of the ordinary citizen to become better equipped both to form opinions of his own and to criticize opinions presented to him on matters of administrations and conduct alike.[133]

The Athenians became godlike under this philosophy, giving them high regard of themselves, supporting egotism and egalitarianism as part of the ideal Athenian.

---

130. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 169.

131. Meier, *Athens*, 366.

132. Meier, 366.

133. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 294-295.

This new way of thinking led many Athenians to abandon their old Athenian tradition for a new, prideful character. Many Greek poets, such as Sophocles and Creon, would write of the Athenians' degeneracy in their new government. Unfortunately, "[t]he popular assembly shortly thereafter ruled to restrict comic satire by forbidding attacks on politicians by name. . . . Three years later, however, the regulation was rescinded."[134] This restriction showed how democracy began to corrupt as an ochlocracy through the citizens' new powers over politics. The Athenians' sense of pride would become part of Athenian culture, divinizing Athens and supporting Athenian nationalism from Athens' perspective of exceptionalism.

Pericles prided himself and all of Athens when he downgraded the legendary Greeks under Athens. This new rise in Athenian nationalism had many Athenians viewing themselves as godlike. With this nationalistic culture came the era of Periclean Athens, with Athens at the height of its democracy. At first, democracy in Athens was stable, mostly because it initially functioned similarly to an aristocracy under the unquestioned leadership of Pericles. Athens was, in fact, a direct democracy by name only rather than in practice. However, with the Sophist and nationalist view of the Athenians came the rise of radical egalitarianism.

Despite the rise of radical egalitarianism, the Athenians were able to bring about Athens' Golden Age. Most Athenians were in favor of the interest of the majority, but this interest also contributed to the eventual downfall of Athens. Tragic drama became common in Athens' Golden Age as a response to the downfall of traditional Athenian culture. There was even a restriction in education so that only the wealthy would learn, much to the disappointment of traditionalists. All these changes decreased the Athenians' devotion to the gods of Ancient

---

134. Meier, *Athens*, 372.

Greece. Furthermore, with these new, unconventional policies, political critics would emerge, questioning the legitimacy of Athens' democracy.

Athens' Nationalism and Its Initial Dependence on the City-State's Gods

The Athenians developed an ancient nationalistic perspective of their city-state. Even some Greeks outside of Athens like the Theban poet Pindar praised Athens as a city of glory and superiority. The religious devotion in Athens was a sturdy background to the new, contemporary Athenian culture. From building monuments and sanctuaries to offering sacrifices and festivals, "[h]uman beings both as communities and as individuals paid honors to the gods to thank them for blessings received and to receive blessings in return."[135] The Athenians devoted themselves to the gods of Ancient Greece, but in their city-state of Athens, two gods were the primary deities they worshipped: Hephaestus and Athena.[136] However, the city's artisans especially worshipped Hephaestus. They believed that they could relate themselves with Hephaestus because, "[a]ccording to Protagoras, Prometheus had stolen fire from Hephaestus and craft from Athena to save mankind."[137] Since the artisans consisted of both craftsmen and artists, they paid high devotion to Hephaestus. However, the Athenians did not believe the gods loved human beings except sexually. The Athenians believed the gods would protect them if they paid them honor without offense, but the gods did not desire to develop a relationship with them. The only thing a god could do was "make known the truth: he can utter a voice, reveal the matter as it

---

135. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 159.

136. Meier, *Athens*, 385.

137. Meier, *Athens*, 385.

really is. But he can only 'offer help.'"[138] Although, if the gods were angry, Athenians, just like

the other Greeks of Ancient Greece, believed that they would send calamities and destruction

upon their homes. As recalled, "people [in Ancient Athens and Greece] who dishonor the gods

and their parents perish miserably."[139] The fear of the gods inspired the Athenians to enact

punishment upon those they deemed guilty of angering the gods.

      To protect themselves from the supposed punishments of the gods, the Athenians took

strict measures to appease their anger. For example, "[o]ffenses could be acts such as forgetting a

sacrifice, blasphemy (especially denying the power of the gods), failing to keep a vow to pay an

honor to a particular god, or violating the sanctity of a temple area."[140] As what would happen

with Socrates, the punishment for offending the gods could be the death penalty. Though many

Athenians held a negative view of death, especially with their dismal depiction of the

mythological underworld Hades, it is likely that non-traditional Athenians would see this future

execution of Socrates as a good act since they held a non-traditional, positive outlook on death.

According to Meier, the priests of Athens "'[showed] that death was not evil but good,'"[141] and

Epicharmus gave his thought on why to not fear death in the following,

> [The body] comes together and is dispersed and goes back whence it came: earth
> to earth, and the breath on high. What hardship is in that? None!

---

138. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 133.

139. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 285.

140. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 160.

141. Meier, *Athens*, 398.

> If you have a pious mind, no harm will come to you when you die. Your living breath (*pneuma*) will always remain aloft in the sky.[142]

It is possible that this non-traditional, positive outlook on death influenced Socrates to drink the poison as his punishment, believing that death was good and something nobody should fear. Even though Socrates' death would follow the Peloponnesian War, the Athenians in Periclean Athens held a unifying view that the citizens must contribute to appeasing the gods' anger to protect democracy in Athens. Hence, Athenian nationalism grounded itself on a religious basis and revolved around the obligation to offer religious devotion to Athens' gods.

The Unconventional Culture and Government of Athens and Their Criticisms from the Old Oligarch

The Athenians also held a high regard for beauty based on the amount of wealth the city contained. Harmony and knowledge were essential for the beautification of Athens as well; however, "[w]hat mattered was not so much beautification but the very structure of life in the city, its standards and its concept of order."[143] Polycletus of Argos would conclude beauty to derive "through minute variations in mathematical proportions" and used that idea to create "the ideal citizen and political equality"[144] in *The Spear Bearer*, his statue of Achilles, a semi-divine warrior-hero. Possibly, Polycletus chose to use Achilles as his subject based on the legend of his strength and swiftness against the Achaeans in the Trojan War. Nevertheless, the Athenians also

---

142. Epicharmus, "Popular Thought," in *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*, ed. Ernest Barker (London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923), 234 (emphasis in original).

143. Meier, *Athens*, 399.

144. Meier, 399.

believed that "beauty was the recognition that laws underlie natural phenomena."[145] As a result,

Pericles described Athens as *the school* of Greece: "Our constitution does not copy the laws of

neighbouring [sic] states; *we are rather a pattern to others* than imitators ourselves."[146] It would

appear then that Athens also held an ancient form of exceptionalism, in which all other Greek

cities must view Athens as a model for the political order of democracy. As Grant wrote,

"Democratic feeling doubtless demanded that in judicial matters as everywhere else the will of

the people should be supreme."[147] Nevertheless, the first major critic of Athenian democracy

would arise from this idea of government.

The Old Oligarch, also known as Pseudo-Xenophon,[148] created his treatise, *On the

Constitution of Athens*, to attack the Athenians' idea of democracy. According to the Old

Oligarch, "Now, as for the constitution of the Athenians, and the type or manner of constitution

which they have chosen, I praise it not, in so far as the very choice involves the welfare of the

baser folk as opposed so that of the better class. I repeat, I withhold my praise so far."[149] The Old

Oligarch believed democracy to be unstable and prone to corruption for only promoting the

interests of the lower class. According to Meier, "This assessment applied not just to the

---

145. Meier, 400.

146. Thucydides, Peloponnesian War, 123 (emphasis added). *See also* Meier, *Athens*, 400.

147. Grant, *Greece*, 163.

148. Some researchers indicate that the Old Oligarch was Xenophon; however, other researchers indicate that it was not Xenophon but an anonymous author. Nobody fully knows the Old Oligarch's identity, so many refer to him as Pseudo-Xenophon.

149. The Old Oligarch, "The Constitution of the Athenians," in *The Greek Historians: The Complete and Unabridged Historical Works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Arrian*, vol. 2, ed. Francis R. B. Godolphin (New York: Random House, 1942), 633.

constitution in the narrow sense of the word but to the entire system of the city, from the way

public offices were filled to the makeup of the navy's crews, from the politics of the Delian

League to the organization of festivals and sacrifices, and from the building of sports arenas to

that of bathhouses."[150] The Old Oligarch's objection to ruling for the welfare of the low class

against the upper class revealed that there were many Athenians who still preferred an

aristocracy to a democracy.

The Athenians who supported aristocracy believed that the rule of only the rich is better

than the rule of the majority. The Athenian supporters of aristocracy believed the rich to be wiser

from receiving a better education, and the majority would be less likely to make wise decisions

since they did not receive an education with the quality equal to that of the aristocrats. The Old

Oligarch believed "that the people of Athens were concerned primarily with their own advantage

and thus preferred to listen to uneducated and common men, as long as such men were on their

side."[151] As he wrote in his *Constitution of the Athenians*, "If they [The Athenians] chose the

respectable, they would be adopting those whose views and interests differ from their own, for

there is no state in which the best element is friendly to the people."[152] The Old Oligarch thought

that either there should be an abolishment of democracy or it should die out. He understood that

the aristocrats' interests and the citizens' interests were mutually exclusive.[153] He knew that even

---

150. Meier, *Athens*, 400.

151. Meier, 402.

152. The Old Oligarch, *The Greek Historians*, 2:643.

153. See the Old Oligarch, 2:636.

if aristocracy was a better form of government, it would conflict with the common Athenian citizen's interest in democracy, causing political discord.

Even though the Old Oligarch represented the Athenians that preferred an aristocracy, Pericles spoke of Athens as a city-state where everybody would unite by shared beliefs. Pericles treated democracy as "a political order embracing all, not the rule of some over the rest,"[154] even though it would truly be a rule of the majority over the minority. However, not only did Pericles define the Athenians exclusively as special, but, despite his democratic rule, many of his subject allies did not receive any attention from him. In reality, "Periclean Athens was a 'khaki democracy' of servicemen who had become conscious of their value to the state and claimed a larger share in its administration."[155] Even if not every one of Athens' citizens could participate in the city-state's democratic government, the Old Oligarch still recorded how Athenians would abuse the democratic system to obtain what they desired for themselves:

> But in the case of engagements entered into by a democracy it is open to the People to throw the blame on the individual who spoke in favour [sic] of some measure, or put it to the vote, and to maintain to the rest of the world, "I was not present, nor do I approve of the terms of the agreement." Inquiries are made in a full meeting of the People, and should any of these things be disapproved of, they can at once discover countless excuses to avoid doing whatever they do not wish. And if any mischief should spring out of any resolutions which the People has passed in council, the People can readily shift the blame from its own shoulders. "A handful of oligarchs acting against the interests of the People have ruined us." But if any good result ensue, they, the People, at once take the credit of that to themselves.[156]

The Old Oligarch believed Athens' to be morally corruption from the citizens' envy of the rich and lack of accountability, but it appeared that Pericles exposed Athens' glory without

---

154. Meier, *Athens*, 402.

155. Cary, "ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY."

156. The Old Oligarch, *The Greek Historians*, 2:640.

uncovering its moral decay, especially towards Sparta. However, the Spartans would eventually see the moral decay as evidence of Athens' weakness, which they took as a reason to invade the Delian League, which was under the leadership of Athens.

The low-class citizens of Athens appeared to grow excessively egalitarian, praising themselves for any good done and condemning others for any wrong done, leaving out the possibility of testing that claim. However, the main problem present in Athens is *blame-shifting*, which is a form of abusive behavior in which people put the blame of unfortunate events on others rather than accepting accountability. Consequently, democracy in Athens became both egalitarian and nationalistic through blame-shifting, which would open wide the likeliness of a mass psychosis if anything unfortunate happened to the citizens of Athens that would change their perspective of reality. Nevertheless, despite the Old Oligarch's warning, Pericles continued to rule Athens under a democracy.

The social life in Athens under Pericles' rule held a great deal of respect towards the citizens' interests.[157] The poor, specifically, were gaining recognition in political affairs, and many of their interests became part of the democratic affairs in Athens. According to Meier, "[w]here Pseudoxenophon [the Old Oligarch] attributes cleverness to the common people only where their own advantage is concerned, Pericles is intent on showing that their judgment is just as sound as that of the aristocrats, a situation he suggests is particularly Athenian."[158] Athens would even export democracy across the Delian League and outside it later in history. Although Pericles believed that all the Athenians shared a unifying belief, the citizens "who failed to

---

157. See Meier, *Athens*, 402-403.

158. Meier, 403.

participate in politics was considered to be not a peaceful citizen but a useless one."[159] The

obligation to participate in politics was essential for the preservation of Athens' democracy.

There was the fear that corruption would seep into the court system as well in Athens.

The Old Oligarch believed that democracy would threaten justice in trials when the citizens

would require for there to be only a few judges in trials so there can exist an opportunity to easily

persuade them to judge based on the will of the citizens and not on justice.[160] He even

"report[ed] that people often waited a full year without getting a response from the council and

assembly"[161] when it came to manual labor and unjust wages. As the Old Oligarch continued to

state, "It not seldom happens, they tell us, that a man is unable to transact a piece of business

with the senate or the People, even if he sit waiting a whole year."[162] According to Meier, "The

allowances for the councilmen and officials may have been somewhat higher [than they were

before]," leading the Old Oligarch to "[assert] that the less affluent Attic citizens were interested

in politics primarily because of the income they could generate by holding office."[163] As the Old

Oligarch stated, "Can, I ask again, any one find it all surprising that, with all these affairs on their

hands, they are unequal to doing business with all the world?"[164] The citizens of Athens appeared

---

159. Meier, 403.

160. See the Old Oligarch, *The Greek Historians*, 2:642.

161. Meier, *Athens*, 425.

162. The Old Oligarch, *The Greek Historians*, 2:641.

163. Meier, *Athens*, 426.

164. The Old Oligarch, *The Greek Historians*, 2:641.

to abuse the democratic system, leading to the inner corruption of the city's government.[165] In other words, reasonable people were likely to make a good democracy, but Athens' citizens appeared to become more unreasonable, leading to a democracy based on mob-rule and an ancient form of nationalism. As Donald Kagan wrote,

> There can be no doubt that the author and men of his class had thought carefully about what a good constitution, in contrast to democracy, would be. What they wanted was *eunomia*, the name Tyrtaeus had given to the Spartan constitution and that Pindar had applied to the oligarchy of Corinth. In such as constitution the best and most qualified men will make the laws. . . . The author understands, therefore, that bad government (*kakonomia*), democracy, that is, is in the interest of the people, and he expects them to act in their own interest to preserve it.[166]

However, "[i]t may be that political activity was more pleasant than other kinds of work, but on the whole[,] people must have been motivated more by the honor and social rank political office bestowed, than by financial rewards."[167] Furthermore, though the Old Oligarch believed democracy to risk corruption, he does not actually describe the specific qualities of qualified lawmakers. He leaves the answer vague by depicting qualified lawmakers as those who are "the best" and not of a democracy. Nevertheless, whether the Old Oligarch was right or wrong, he believed that the Athenians were envious of the rich and demanded that the government advance the interests of the poor.

Another example of the Old Oligarch's suspicion of the Athenians' envy towards the wealthy lies in making them pay for what is expensive. When it came to promote Athenian culture, "[i]t was expected . . . that the wealthy would, through liturgies or personal sponsorship

---

165. See Myres, *Political Ideas*, 359-360.

166. Donald Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 109 (emphases in original).

167. Meier, *Athens*, 426

commitments, pay for things like the outfitting of ships, the production of plays, the choruses, and the torch race."[168] According to the Old Oligarch, "In fact, what the People looks upon as its right is to pocket the money. To sing and run and dance and man the vessels is well enough, but only in order that the People may be the gainer, while the rich are made poorer."[169] A rich man in Athens "was expected to contribute largely to the state; he was burdened with heavy contributions to the maintenance of the fleet; out of his pocket came the money necessary for the choruses, which took part in the Dionysia and other festivals of the city."[170] Even though the contribution was initially voluntary, it eventually became compulsory for the wealthy citizens to pay for the poor. However, "the rich as a class never formed an opposition to the democratic government: nay, rather, they took an active part in it and wielded their full share of influence."[171] Nevertheless, "[t]o make a public display of wealth became a perilous thing; anyone who did so was suspected of aiming at the tyranny and dealt with by ostracism or other effective means."[172] Pericles promoted this democratic ideal only for Thucydides to declare that Athens was only a democracy in name: "[W]hat was nominally a democracy became in his [Pericles] hands government by the first citizen."[173] However, according to Plutarch,

> Thucydides describes the administration of Pericles as rather aristocratic, — 'in name a democracy but in fact a government by the greatest citizen.' But many others say that the people was first led on by him into allotments of public lands,

168. Meier, 424.

169. The Old Oligarch, *The Greek Historians*, 2:635-636.

170. Abbot, *Pericles*, 344.

171. Cary, "ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY."

172. Ure, *The Origin of Tyranny*, 67.

173. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 144.

festival-grants, and distributions of fees for public services, thereby falling into bad habits, and becoming luxurious and wanton under the influence of his public measures, instead of frugal and self-sufficing.[174]

Even though the citizens of Athens were most likely ignorant of how they were only giving more power to Pericles, Plutarch may be saying that the Athenians were taking advantage of the democratic system, putting the blame of the government of Athens' corruption on Pericles. Apparently, the Athenians were continuing to put the blame on others rather than accepting accountability. Regardless, when Pericles broadened democracy in Athens, "[i]t might even be argued that the extreme democracy he introduced (including the establishment of public sports arenas and the elaboration of the festivals) were an extremely clever way of serving Pericles' own interests by enhancing his popularity and thus removing obstacles to his policies."[175] He wanted for Athens to reach its full potential and ruled the city-state under, what is now at this point, a direct democracy.

The Old Oligarch was correct in claiming that Pericles' policies represented the interests of the common Athenian citizens. However, Pericles appeared to promote his own interests by becoming popular with the Athenians so he could enforce his own policies without hindrance. Nevertheless, the Old Oligarch showed that "certain of Athens' structural problems were already apparent in the 420s, and it was possible for individuals to gain political power in excess of what the constitution intended for them to have."[176] The Athenian citizens seemed to take advantage of Athens' government, as warned by the Old Oligarch.

---

174. Plutarch, *Cimon and Pericles with the Funeral Oration of Pericles*, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 114-115.

175. Meier, *Athens*, 428.

176. Meier, 459.

As apparent, Athens became more conventional in abandoning its traditional culture. One such change that came under Athenian democracy was granting more power to women. Previously, women had no power over anything in pre-democratic Athens; although, there was the incident when Phya disguised as Athena helped restore Athens' tyranny to Peisistratus.[177] However, "[u]nder Athenian democracy, women could control property, even land—the most valued possession in their society—through dowry and inheritance."[178] Nevertheless, the women of Athens also had more legal restrictions on them than did the men. For example, "[t]he only persons eligible for citizenship [in Ancient Athens] were males of age eighteen or over who could prove Athenian parentage on both sides. Women and, of course, slaves were permanently disqualified."[179] Even if women in Athens could control land, the women could not receive citizenship. Moreover, their husbands generally sequestered them in their home, and when their husbands brought guests home, the guests would send their wives to the back of the house.

Regardless of the change of role for women, the Athenians also had to participate in the public life. According to Martin, "[y]oung men from prosperous families traditionally acquired the advanced skills required for successful participation in the public life of Athenian democracy by observing their fathers, uncles, and other older men as they participated in the assembly, served on the council or as magistrates, and made speeches in court cases."[180] What was most

---

177. See Arist. *Ath. Const.* 14; Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*, trans. Charles Burton Gulick, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 283; Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1:60.

178. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 172.

179. Cary, "ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY."

180. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 178.

important for the Athenian youth to learn was to speak persuasively in public. The Athenian

youths needed to learn the art of rhetoric if they were to acquire any social status in Athens.

The abandonment of Athenian tradition likely even led to radical changes in sexual

morality. Such changes possibly included the disapproval of pedophilic homosexuality. The

aristocratic Athenians believed pedophilic homosexuality to foster better bonds with the

community to enhance relations. As Martin wrote,

> Although male homosexuality outside a mentor-protégé relationship and female homosexuality in general incurred disgrace, the special homosexuality between older mentors and younger protégés was accepted as appropriate behavior in many—but not all—city-states, so long as the older man did not exploit his younger companion purely for physical gratification or neglect the youth's education in public affairs.[181]

Plato later supported the aristocrats' claim in his work *Symposium*, believing homosexual

pedophilia to aid in generating Greek masculinity and developing good statesmen [*i.e.*,

politicians].[182] Even though immoral, aristocratic Athenians desired pedophilia, deeming it to be

beneficial. However, Aristotle would make a contrary claim by teaching how pedophilia is

unnatural in his *Nicomachean Ethics*.[183] Even most of the poor Athenians saw pedophilic

homosexuality "as a class practice reeking of effeminacy, luxury[,] and Spartan culture."[184] With

the acceptance of all male Athenian citizens as partakers of Athens' democracy, it is likely that

---

181. Martin, 179; *See also* Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 55-57.

182. Plato, *Symposium* 191e-192b

183. See Arist. *EN* VII.5.1148b25-30, trans. Ross.

184. Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 56.

Athens' culture grew in opposition to homosexual pedophilia. Even though not every Athenian agreed to conventional changes, the culture of Athens did eventually adopt these changes.

The Rise of Sophism in Athens

With all the social and cultural changes that strayed from Athens' traditions, there also came a new group of teachers known as Sophists. The Sophists "aimed, as the Greeks understood it, entirely at political education, training to serve the polis."[185] Since the Sophists were skillful in public speaking and debates, they "offer[ed] more organized instruction to young men seeking to develop the skills in public speaking and argumentation needed to excel in democratic politics."[186] However, the Athenians who valued traditional values despised the Sophists, mainly because the Sophists practiced philosophical skepticism. The Sophists would teach rhetoric as a persuasive technique to aid others in achieving power without discovering truth. As Werner Jaeger wrote,

> They [the Sophists] were the inventors of intellectual culture and of the art of education which aims at producing it. At the same time it is clear that whenever their new culture went beyond formal or factual education, whenever their political training attacked the deeper problems of morality and the state, it was in danger of teaching half-truths—unless it could be grounded on genuine and thorough political thought, searching for the truth for its own sake.[187]

The Sophists abused the art of rhetoric by making persuasive illogical claims. This trend of Sophism in Athens "is the clearest proof both of the severity of the strain on Athenian intellect

---

185. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, *Archaic Greece - The Mind of Athens*, trans. Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), 288.

186. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 179.

187. Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, 293.

and temper."[188] Even some Sophists "regarded law and morality as mere conventions," even "den[ying] the existence of universally valid standards,"[189] leading into an early movement of moral relativism. Eventually, "[t]here was doubtless a good deal of vulgar envy and dislike felt against those who possess superior talents and use them to reject what is traditional."[190] Despite the criticisms the Sophists received, wealthy Athenians, such as young aristocrats, would listen to what the Sophists had to teach, "because the single greatest skill that a man in democratic Athens could possess was to be able to persuade fellow citizens in the debates of the assembly and the council or in lawsuits before large juries."[191] What the Sophists taught their students (for a large fee) had many Athenians believe they were threatening the traditional political and social views of Athens. In fact, "the Sophists were also bitterly attacked by the greatest names in Greek philosophy, by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle."[192] Despite their prevailing influence among wealthy Athenian citizens, the criticism against Sophism would play a big role in the eventual death of Socrates, of which there will be a discussion soon.

Despite the suspicion that the Sophists tended to depart from Athenian traditionalism, they maintained under a democratic viewpoint the equality of all citizens. According to Meier, "[s]ome Sophists went so far as to claim that all human beings—freemen and slaves, Greeks and

---

188. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 365.

189. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 54.

190. Grant, *Greece*, 302.

191. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 180.

192. Grant, *Greece*, 302.

barbarians—were alike."[193] Regardless of the liberal-like nature of the Sophists, many of their

ideas contributed to the progress of Athenian society. An example would include how "law and

custom alike [in Athens] protected slaves against excessively harsh treatment."[194] However, even

when the Greeks saw how much various individuals like freemen, slaves, Greeks, and barbarians

could accomplish, "the Greeks did not recognize the possibility—let alone the desirability—of

transforming one's nature,"[195] meaning they believed that such men were free, slaves, Greek, and

barbarians by nature. Even the widely influential Greek philosopher Aristotle believed that

slaves were less than human, because he believed they were slaves by nature. According to his

Politics, "[H]e who is by nature not his own but another's man, is by nature a slave."[196] Even

though "the political democracy of Athens did not rest on slavery," and "an Athenian who

possessed no slaves at all could enjoy the benefits of the political and cultural life of Athenian

democracy, . . . the State profits derived from the silver mines rested on slave labor,"[197]

suggesting that Athenian democracy benefited from the practice of slavery. Regardless, it

appeared as though the Sophists were changing the culture of Athens, although they maintained

certain traditions if they benefited Athenian society. The Sophists saw slaves as equal, but the

Sophists maintained their belief that slaves were slaves by nature since they benefited Athenian

society. Through this sense, the Sophists were practically utilitarian.

---

193. Meier, *Athens*, 410.

194. Cary, "ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY."

195. Cary, "ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY."

196. Arist. *Pol.* I.4.1254a10-15; *See also* Arist. *Pol.* I.4-5 for his full explanation of why he believed some people were slaves by nature.

197. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 20.

Despite the Sophists' view of straying cultural and social traditions from Athens, young, wealthy Athenian aristocrats who were disciples of the Sophists would make a large impact on Athenian society and contribute well to the *polis*, which did not mean "city-state" at the time, but "a geographical and a military expression: it is a fortified place."[198] In regard to wealthy Athenian aristocrats' contribution to Athens, according to Meier,

> The aristocrats and wealthy citizens contributed a great deal of money to the polity in the form of liturgies. These contributions, which were made in the absence of direct taxation, grew out of the Greek view that honor—in this case, a prominent position in the polis—should come at a price. For although the aristocrats were no longer necessarily in leadership positions, they did very well in this economically flourishing city. The liturgies both repaid the polis for their success and added to their personal honor.[199]

Although the aristocrats would learn from the Sophists, this trend tended to lean towards a more aristocratic Athens rather than a democratic one. Since Sophists would have a large impact on the aristocrats of Athens, Athens' democracy would weaken.

Even with the weakening of democracy in Athens, the Sophist Protagoras believed that Sophism was not hostile to democracy. He believed "that every person had an innate capability for excellence and that human survival depended on people respecting the rule of law based on a sense of justice."[200] In fact, "the sophists did not merely benefit from the democratic conditions in which they found themselves early in their careers, but they played a crucial role in continuing to spread those conditions."[201] However, with the growth of Sophism came the growth of new

---

198. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 68.

199. Meier, *Athens*, 431.

200. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 181.

201. Eric W. Robinson, "The Sophists and Democracy Beyond Athens," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 25, no. 1 (2007): 109-22, accessed November 15, 2020, doi:10.1525/rh.2007.25.1.109.

ideas that went further from the traditional customs of Athens. Although, the irony is the fact that these new, "unconventional" ideas are in fact a part of the progress in science.

The Liberation of Traditional Athenian Thought

During the fifth-century B.C., the Greek philosophers Anaxagoras of Clazomenae and Leucippus of Miletus, made new theories regarding the cosmos, contrasting with early Ionian thinking of physics. Anaxagoras held the theory of the mind "as the organizing principle of the universe,"[202] explaining that "[a]ll things which have life, both the greater and the less, are ruled by Mind;"[203] although, "the details of his thought could offend those who held to the assumptions of traditional religion."[204] For example, Anaxagoras also taught that the Sun, instead of it being a deity, was simply a flaming rock. Although there are better explanations of what the Sun is, Anaxagoras was heading in the right direction when it came to science.

As for Leucippus, he construed an early atomic theory of matter, explaining the reality of *change*. According to Martin, "Everything, he argued, consisted of tiny, invisible particles in eternal motion. Their endless collisions caused them to combine and recombine in an infinite variety of forms."[205] However, this violated the traditional Athenian belief that every change came from divine will. Plus, Isocrates contributed to the idea of *logos*, or divine reason, a sort of predecessor to the Christian philosophy of natural law, that served as "a break with all the older

---

202. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 183.

203. Anaxagoras, "The Pluralists," in *Philosophic Classics: Thales to St. Thomas*, ed. Walter Kauffmann (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), 57.

204. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 183.

205. Martin, 183.

myths which derived human culture from the acts of gods such as Zeus, Prometheus, Athene, Apollo[,] or Asklepios [sic]."[206] With the new, "modern" ideas brought up by Sophists, many Athenians worried that they would offend the gods, thus losing divine favor and the special protection of Athens.

The religious culture of Athens would degrade even further from the rise of monotheism, agnosticism, and atheism in Athens, going against the traditional polytheistic mythology of Ancient Greece. Regarding monotheism, according to Philodemus, Antisthenes believed that there existed only one god. As Philodemus stated, "In Antisthenes' book called *Physicus*[,] it is stated that in popular religion there are many gods, but in nature only one."[207] Clement of Alexandria would put Antisthenes' view even further, stating, "Antisthenes says, 'God is not like anything: hence no one can understand him by means of an image."[208] As for other Ancient Greeks who were not polytheists, Protagoras of Abdera held an agnostic view on the gods of Ancient Greece. One fragment attributed to him stated, "Concerning the gods I cannot know for certain whether they exist or not, nor what they are like in form. There are many things that hinder certainty—the obscurity of the matter and the shortness of man's life."[209] Sextus

---

206. J. K. Davies, *Democracy and Classical Greece*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 161.

207. Philodemus, "Popular Thought," in *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*, ed. Ernest Barker (London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923), 237.

208. Clement of Alexandria, "Popular Thought," in *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*, ed. Ernest Barker (London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923), 237.

209. Protagoras, "Rationalism. The Age of the Sophists," in *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*, ed. Ernest Barker (London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923), 130.

Empiricus would even write of the presence of atheism in Athens, such as Diagoras of Melos' conversion to atheism.[210] According to Empiricus, "Diagoras of Melos, the dithyrambic poet, was at first, they say, god-fearing above all others; for he began his poem in this fashion—"By Heaven's will and Fortune all things are accomplished"; but when he had been wronged by a man who had sworn falsely and suffered no punishment for it, he changed round and asserted that God does not exist."[211] The rise in agnosticism and atheism would surely threaten the city of Athens for offending the gods the Athenians believed to be protecting them and their city-state. In fact, the Athenians would view Socrates as a threat to Athens' democracy on the suspicion that he was an atheist. Surely, atheism was a threat to Athens' nationalism.

Nevertheless, the democracy of Athens allowed the citizens to hold different religious views, from believing in the standard Greek gods to believing in new gods. Even though the liberation from Athenian tradition was harmful to Athenian nationalism, everyone in Athens had to make an obligatory offering in religious rituals. Nevertheless, the development in philosophy in Athens would evolve into the Greeks believing in monotheism, skepticism, agnosticism, or atheism, apart from Athens' traditional polytheism.[212] This religious liberty in Athens would not fare well in Socrates' trial.

---

210. Diagoras of Melos was present in Athens and escaped to Corinth after the Athenians accused him of impiety. One possible explanation of why he was at Athens could be from the Athenian conquest of the island of Melos during the Peloponnesian War, leading Diagoras to conflict with the Athenian government.

211. Sextus Empiricus, "Against the Physicists," in *Sextus Empiricus*, vol. 3, trans. R. G. Bury (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 29.

212. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 37.

These new, "liberal" ideas became a threat to Athenian democracy from the nationalistic viewpoint, which is ironic considering that the aristocrats viewed Athenian democracy as a more unconventional invention. This threat of unconventionality in Athens may show that Athenian democracy, despite it not being an aristocracy and a new, radical idea, still functioned from Athenian traditions. However, the aristocrats, who were traditionalists, began to verge into more "unconventional" ideas, whereas the Athenian democrats, who were originally following more unconventional ideas, began to verge to a more traditional viewpoint. Political leanings at this point began to shift around. In fact, the Athenians worried about the more progressive thinking of the Sophists. As Kagan wrote, at the eve of the oncoming Peloponnesian War, "[a]ttacks on advanced opinions in art, science, and philosophy were more likely to find favor with the uneducated masses than with the aristocrats who supported the sophists."[213] Consequently, "Pericles' friendship with Protagoras, Anaxagoras, and other controversial intellectuals gave his rivals a weapon to use against him when political tensions came to a head in the 430s B.C. as a result of the threat of war with Sparta: His opponents criticized him as being sympathetic to dangerous new ideas as well as to being autocratic in his leadership."[214] Even if the aristocrats were no longer traditional and the democrats no longer unorthodox in religious opinion, the toleration of progressive thinking in Athens showed how a democracy can lead into new, unconventional ideas. With the lack of tradition in Athens, the power of democracy brought in new ideas since no one was bound by any authority that favored contrary ideologies. However,

---

213. Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 199.

214. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 183.

this idea of ancient liberalism was what Plato and Aristotle soon argued was responsible for the destruction of wise leadership.

Along with the more unconventional changes in Athens came Hecataeus of Miletus, who developed an up-to-date version of Greece in the past. Eventually, he would criticize Greek mythology for contradicting his research. Following him came more Greek historians who "wrote in a spare, chronicle[-]like style that made history into little more than a list of events and geographical facts."[215] It would be during the 440s B.C. that Herodotus wrote his revolutionary work, *The Histories*, which focused on research rather than simply tradition. He studied the Greek and barbaric cultures and histories and applied them to explain what happened in the past. Athens began to become revolutionary during this period, and it even had its own upgrade in science as well.

Hippocrates of Cos revolutionized medical theories in Athens, turning away from the traditions of the Ancient Greeks. While the ancient Greeks performed rituals and magic to cure those who were ill, "Hippocrates took a completely new approach, regarding the human body as an organism whose parts must be seen as part of an interrelated whole and whose functioning and malfunctioning must be understood as responses to physical causes."[216] He believed empirical experiences helped decide what medicine to use to help patients.[217] Influenced by his own oath, Hippocrates' contribution to the medical field eventually led doctors to take oaths

---

215. Martin, 183.

216. Martin, 184.

217. See Hippocrates, *Hippocratic Writings*, trans. Francis Adams (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 1952), 7 (emphases added).

bearing his name. However, his medical idea led the Greeks away from worshipping the Greek god Asclepius, who Athenians believed healed those who worshipped in his sanctuaries.

The Domination of the Poor in Athens

Culture was transforming in Athens, with politics becoming more democratic, yet under the influence of aristocrats, history becoming more empirically based, and religion being replaced with an early form of scientism, (though not a complete disregard to religion). Even the notion of equality became widespread in Athens. However, despite the growing notion of equality in Athens, the poor citizens of Athens regarded democracy as their own. For example, according to Meier, "The farmers helped carry out the policies of the league; they fought as hoplites in Athens' wars and surely shared in their city's pride, in the successes of its foreign policy, and probably also in the attendant material gains; they were represented among the settlers of Athenian colonies and *cleruchies*."[218] Some Athenians may even confuse Athens' majority government as a "government by the poor for the poor"[219] based on how the government acted to the poor citizens in Athens. As Democritus wrote, "Poverty under democracy is as much to be preferred to so-called prosperity under an autocracy as freedom to slavery."[220] However, the *thetes* were more influential than the farmers when it came to politics, considering that the *thetes* dwelled in urban areas, making it more likely for the *thetes* to be present in Athens to vote than for the farmers. Nevertheless, the idea of equality in Athens

---

218. Meier, *Athens*, 431 (emphasis in original).

219. Myres, *The Political Ideas*, 346.

220. Democritus, "Fragments on Ethics," in *Philosophic Classics: Thales to St. Thomas*, ed. Walter Kauffmann (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), 68.

revolved around the radical egalitarianism of Athens' culture, as some Athenians still believed in

the inequality of certain people based on them not reflecting the ideal Athenian.

During the time, there was even a challenge against democratic law in Athens. Though

the Sophists intended to defend democracy, their philosophy ended up contributing to the loss of

interest in democracy. Furthermore, although Athens functioned as a direct democracy, the

influence of aristocracy began to grow, possibly from the influence of the Sophists. According to

Meier, "When Pericles replaced the old distinctions with new ones based on the degree of

commitment to the city, he set up new standards that transformed the entire Attic citizenry into a

kind of aristocracy."[221] However, despite its aristocratic style of government, Athens was still a

democracy. In fact, Athens' government was deeply politically egalitarian to the point "that no

alternative to its democracy would take form for a long time to come."[222] Eventually, Pericles

began to identify himself with the polis, no longer exerting his sovereignty over the Athenian

citizens.

Practically, with the advance of Athenian democracy, Pericles began to rule only for what

the citizens desired. According to Meier,

> Pericles could plan his city's policies as he did—in a way never to be repeated in
> history—because for over ten years his position of power was firmly established,
> and he no longer had to fight for control. He came to identify himself with his
> polis—he was the creator of Athens' democracy, the initiator of many of the steps
> that transformed the Delian League into an empire, the shaper of the city of the
> Parthenon to the agora, and the organizer of festivals. The tendency of Attic
> democracy to rely on one leading individual worked in his favor.[223]

---

221. Meier, *Athens*, 433.

222. Meier, 433; *See also* Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 123.

223. Meier, *Athens*, 459.

However, despite his contribution in establishing Athenian democracy, he was not the creator of the new government ideology. The demotion of Areopagus was the true beginning of Athenian democracy. Even though Pericles did help demote the Areopagus, it was not on his initiative. However, "the change of feeling which created the Periclean democracy seems to have been principally due to the overthrow of the Areopagus and the development of the popular jury-courts."[224] By the help of Pericles, "[t]he democracy of Athens was carried . . . to its highest stage of development."[225] As Diodorus of Sicily stated, going back to the Persian Wars, "[T]here was likewise great advance in education, and philosophy and oratory had a high place of honour [sic] among all Greeks, and especially the Athenians."[226] However, "Pericles, towards the end of his life, grew increasingly conservative, tended more and more to temper the program of democratic expansion[,] and, in practical affairs, to draw closer to, and even coalesce with, the party of the 'right.'"[227] Nevertheless, the flourishing of Athens' democracy would all change with the oncoming Peloponnesian War, which Pericles' foreign policy helped start.

The Peloponnesian War

Athens and Sparta originally allied with each other to fight Xerxes' invasion of Greece, but their friendly relationship would not last long. Athens became a very powerful empire in Ancient Greece. As Diodorus wrote regarding Athens back in the Persian Wars,

---

224. Abbot, *Pericles*, 259.

225. Abbot, 357.

226. Diodorus, *The Library of History of Diodorus of Sicily*, vol. 6, trans. C. H. Oldfather (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1961), 377.

227. Alban Dewes Winspear, *The Genesis of Plato's Thought* (New York: S. S. Russell. 1940), 162.

> First place belonged to the Athenians, who had advanced so far in both fame and prowess that their name was known throughout practically the entire inhabited world; for they increased their leadership to such a degree that, by their own resources and without the aid of the Lacedaemonians or Peloponnesians, they overcame great Persian armaments both on land and on sea, and humbled the famed leadership of the Persians to such an extent that they forced them by the terms of a treaty to liberate all the cities of Asia.[228]

Athens became very influential and exerted its powers over foreign territories such as the Persian-captured lands. With Athens' growth in power and democracy, the Spartans deemed this threatening to their relationship, especially after Athens cut off relations with Sparta. The peace that Athens and Sparta made with each other was to originally last 30 years, but the high tensions between them led into the Peloponnesian War that lasted 27 years. Athenian democracy would divide itself as "[t]he war exposed sharp divisions among Athenian citizens over how to govern the city-state and whether to keep fighting as the bodies and the bills piled up higher than they could handle."[229] Plus, the Athenians had a different reaction to war than did their ancestors with the Persians. As Myres explained,

> Their tempers were uncertain, their judgment clouded by panic and prejudice, probably even their physique upset in a way that made them easier victims to war-crowding and insanitary surroundings than they might otherwise have been. Above all there was a notable lack of men of initiative and leadership, together with a superfluity of ill-balanced, temperamental enthusiasts, cranks, and wind-bags.[230]

It seemed that the valor of the Athenians weakened during Athens' democracy because of the Athenians' excessive hedonism and materialism and from them taking advantage of their era of peace by undermining the possibility of future dangers. Regardless, since voters in Athens' democratic assembly did not desire to make peace terms with the Spartans, the Athenians

---

228. Diodorus, *The Library of History*, 377.

229. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 186.

230. Myres, *The Political Ideas*, 363.

eventually lost their democracy to Spartan oligarchy; however, the loss of Athens' democracy to Sparta would not last long. Nevertheless, Athenian democracy self-destructed under Athenian exceptionalism, which lead the Athenians to destroy relations with their Spartan enemies.

Aristophanes criticized the Athenians in his play, *The Babylonians*, for ruining relations with Sparta. He saw the Athenians' desire for war rather than peace, leading to their eventual downfall. The ancient, nationalistic pride of Athens left itself vulnerable to defeat. Unfortunately, Aristophanes' play, *The Babylonians*, is a lost text, so no information from the play is providable. However, "[it] can perhaps be most logically understood as suggesting that the governments of these allies were democracies only in appearance and that the Athenians had let themselves be taken in by appearance, and therefore had exposed themselves to danger."[231] As Aristotle taught on warfare, "Why do states honour [sic] courage more than anything else, though it is not the highest of the excellences? Is it because they are continually either making war or having war made against them, and courage is most useful in both these circumstances? They, therefore, honour [sic] not that which is best, but that which is best for themselves."[232] Aristophanes' play, *The Peace*, also speaks for itself on the other Greeks' anger towards the Athenians due to their lust for war, where Hermes argued to Trygæus that the gods left the Greeks alone, no longer granting divine protection, due to the Athenians' desire for warfare.[233]

---

231. Meier, *Athens*, 492.

232. Arist. *Prob*. XXVII.5, trans. E. S. Forster. There is debate as to whether Aristotle ever wrote *Problems* or not.

233. See Aristophanes, *The Eleven Comedies: Literally & Completely Translated from the Greek Tongue into English with Translator's Foreword, an Introduction to each Comedy & Elucidatory Notes*, trans. The Athenian Society, vol. 1 (New York: Liveright Publishing Corp., 1943), 162-163.

The Athenians had confidence from their nationalistic and radical democratic desire that they would win the war. Consequently, that would not be so.

Corinth was a part of Sparta's Peloponnesian League, and Athens held commercial rivalry with Corinth. However, in 434-433 BC, the city of Corinth warred with the island Corcyra in a disputation over the colony Epidamnus. Corcyra asked the Athenians for assistance, and Athens agreed, which would anger Sparta as Athens would be defending an enemy of the Peloponnesian League. Athens knew the defense would anger Sparta, but the Athenians believed a war against Sparta would eventually arrive and so began to prepare an eventual combat against the Spartans. Plus, Megara, an ally of Sparta, opposed Athens for restricting trade with the Megarans. Consequently, the Spartans warred with Athens, killing many of Athens' civilians. Plus, an epidemic was spreading in the city-state of Athens during the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. According to Thucydides,

> That year then is admitted to have been otherwise unprecedentedly free from sickness; and such few cases as occurred all determined this. As a rule, however, there was no ostensible cause; but people in good health were all of a sudden attacked by violent heats in the head, and redness and inflammation in the eyes, the inward parts, such as the throat or the tongue, becoming bloody and emitting an unnatural and fetid breath. These symptoms were followed sneezing and hoarseness, after which the pain soon reached the chest, and produced a hard cough. . . . Others again were seized with an entire loss of memory on their first recovery, and did not know either themselves or their friends.[234]

To make matters worse, "[t]he rate of mortality was so high that it crippled Athenian ability to man the naval expeditions that Pericles' wartime strategy demanded."[235] The epidemic even

---

234. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 131-132.

235. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 195.

destroyed the confidence that the Athenians had in their relation to the gods. With all these disasters also came a civil war that broke out on the island of Corcyra.

One faction of Corcyra supported Athens and another faction supported Sparta. Each faction wanted to appeal to the major power they supported, but a civil war ensued. Thucydides would later write his account of the civil war in Corcyra in *The History of the Peloponnesian War*.[236] Regardless, Athens was in chaos at this time in Greek history. The Athenian general Cleon, whom Thucydides described as "the most violent man at Athens, and at that time by far the most powerful with the commons,"[237] refused to let the Athenian assembly make peace with Sparta. Cleon believed in Athens' authority based on its new democratic standards, stating "that ordinary men usually manage public affairs better than their more gifted fellows."[238] This nationalistic mindset swept throughout Athens, leading the Athenians to become very haughty. As Herodotus wrote in *The Histories*, "For if one should propose to all men a choice, bidding them select the best customs from all the customs that there are, each race of men, after examining them all, would select those of their own people; thus all think that their own customs are by far the best."[239] Consequently, Athens' unbridled nationalism brought upon the city-state the further weakening of democracy when the Athenians battled against the Sicilians.

When the Athenians fought the Sicilians, they lost so many men that the Spartans used this advantage to attack the Attic countryside. The Athenians attempted to defend themselves,

---

236. See Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 226-227.

237. Thucydides, 196.

238. Thucydides, 197.

239. Herodotus, *The History of Herodotus*, 3.38

but they would lose money to finance the war when their slaves took refuge in Spartan camps.

This situation created a distress so immense that the Athenian government made a major change:

"A board of ten officials was appointed to manage the affairs of the city."[240] Consequently,

"[t]he stresses of a seemingly endless war had convinced the citizens that the normal procedures

of their democracy had proved sadly inadequate to the task of keeping them safe. They had lost

confidence in their founding principles."[241] Thucydides would observe this in *The History of the*

Peloponnesian War that "[W]ar takes away the easy supply of daily wants, and so proves a

rough master, that brings most men's characters to a level with their fortunes."[242] There now

existed a strong contempt of democracy in Athens among the citizens who saw the government

as unhelpful when it came to their desire for an end to the Peloponnesian War.

Athenian Nationalism's Role in the Destruction of Democracy and the Rise of Oligarchy

Despite the growing pessimism towards Athenian democracy, the Athenians strove to

continue fighting for their independence. They did not want to subject themselves to the

Spartans. However, the Athenians needed to change their form of democracy based on their

situation with the Spartans. According to Martin,

> [T]he bitter turmoil in Athenian politics and the steep decline in revenues caused
> by the Sicilian disaster opened the way for a group of men from the social elite,
> who had long harbored contempt for the broad-based direct democracy of their city-
> state, to stage what amounted to an oligarchic coup d'état. They insisted that a small

---

240. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 202.

241. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 202.

242. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 227.

group of leaders was now needed to manage Athenian policy in response to the obvious failures of the democratic assembly.[243]

Alcibiades suggested for Athens to ally itself with the Persian satraps, but the cost of it would be the abolishment of Athenian democracy and the installment of an oligarchy.

Oligarchy was beginning to rise in Athens to defeat the Spartans in the Peloponnesian War. Eventually, the oligarchs succeeded in granting power to the Council of 400, establishing an oligarchy and ending Athens' democracy; however, "[t]his duplicitous regime soon began to fall apart . . . when the oligarchs struggled with each other for dominance; none of them could tolerate appearing to bow to the superior wisdom of a fellow oligarch."[244] Eventually, crews of Athens' war fleet returned home to reestablish democracy by force. After the oligarchy ruled for only four months, Athens created "a mixed democracy and oligarchy, called the Constitution of the Five Thousand."[245] Thucydides would praise this government by writing, "It was during the first period of this constitution that the Athenians appear to have enjoyed the best government that they ever did, at least in my time."[246] Many Athenians were hoping that this new government would help them defeat the Spartans.

After the Athenian fleet revived, they were able to defeat the Spartans at Cyzicus. Soon, the Athenian fleet were able to restore Athens to a democracy. Unfortunately, the Athenians also returned to their nationalistic stance against the Spartans. After the Spartans suffered defeat at Pylos, they tried to negotiate peace with Athens. Predictably, "[t]he Athenian assembly once

---

243. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 203.

244. Martin, 204.

245. Martin, 204.

246. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 620.

again refused the terms."[247] The Spartans would then continue fighting Athens and making peace terms only for the Athenians to reject. Soon, with the loss of the Athenian fleet at Aegospotami and the Spartan commander Lysander blockading the city, Athens would have no choice but surrender to the Spartans. Ultimately, democracy in Athens fell to Spartan oligarchy.

What did nationalism have to do with the collapse of Athens' first democracy? To recall, egalitarianism was essential to Athenian politics from its ties with ostracism. The point of ostracism was to protect the *status quo* from potential threats, which was a type of tribalism. According to Karl Popper, "Nationalism appeals to our tribal instincts, to passion and to prejudice, and to our nostalgic desire to be relieved from the strain of individual responsibility which it attempts to replace by a collective or group responsibility."[248] Nationalism related with culture as nationalism regards the politicization of nationality. As Carlton J. H. Hayes wrote, "A state is essentially political; a nationality is primarily cultural and incidentally political."[249] The politicization of culture in Athens would fulfill the features of nationalism, which would be the degree of government penetration, the degree of citizen participation in politics, the degree of identification, the degree of compliance to the government, and the degree of consensus.[250]

Although Athenian nationalism developed since its monarchial era, the nationalism of Athens would surge because of the Persian War. According to Boyd S. Shafer, "And everywhere

---

247. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 204.

248. Popper, *The Open Society*, 2:49; *See also* Leonard W. Doob, *Patriotism and Nationalism: Their Psychological Foundations* (Westport: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1976), 190.

249. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism*, 5.

250. See Boyd C. Shafer, *Faces of Nationalism: New Realities and Old Myths* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), 12-13.

national groups are in conflict, conflict that strengthens and accentuates their national feelings."[251] Although Athens and Sparta were two different societies with two opposing forms of government, their bond would strengthen by their commonality of Greek culture. According to psychologist Leonard W. Doob, "Patriots and nationalists, since they live together in a society, by definition share a common culture to some extent; their bond is strengthened as the number of culture traits they share increases."[252] From the threat of the invading Persians, the Athenians allied with the Spartans in their common Greek culture, strengthening Greek nationality so the Athenians and Spartans could work together and defeat the Persians.[253] However, the consequence of strengthening Greek nationality led to the idea that "[n]ational interests, national ambitions are or seem to be threatened by other nations."[254] Although Athens permitted the presence of foreigners, despite the difficulty foreigners had under Pericles to become citizens of Athens, the Athenians did hold an extremely antagonistic view of the Sophists when it came to their teachings. As a result, "[n]ationality has become the dominant tie between men, nation-states the highest political form, national patriotism the supreme emotion."[255] However, the aftermath of the rule of the Thirty Tyrants strengthened Athens' nationalism to ultranationalism.

Nevertheless, the egalitarianism of the Athenians functioned as the primary drive of Athens' democracy. The citizens of Athens held civil power, with Pericles serving as the unifier

---

251. Boyd S. Shafer, "Nationalism: Interpreters and Interpretations," 2nd ed., *American Historical Association* 20, (1963): 3.

252. Doob, *Patriotism and Nationalism*, 226.

253. See Shafer, *Faces of Nationalism*, 23-24.

254. Shafer, "Nationalism: Interpreters and Interpretations," 3.

255. Shafer, 3.

of Athens based on his rule over the city-state. The citizens practiced ostracism to protect the *status quo* of Athens, creating egalitarian politics based on ostracism holding an essential role in Athenian politics. As a result, egalitarian nationalism emerged in Athens, as "[t]he reality of nationalism is the feeling of people, a feeling based upon each people's historical myths and realities. The reality of the nation lies in the freedom and hope, the protection and security it affords."[256] Although some people might portray nationalism and democracy as two opposing ideas from nationalism's reputation in associating with tyrannical regimes like Nazism and Sovietism, Ghia Nodia seemed to suggest that it is specifically *liberal democracy* that opposes nationalism.[257] However, Nodia did not mean liberalism as in modern left-wing politics, but she was referring to *classical liberalism* in granting individuals the right to choose,[258] though not in the modern left-wing sense of extreme individualism.

However, many Athenians seemed to abuse individualism by becoming themselves a civil power that would impose their interests upon other Athenians with opposing interests. The unification of individuals and national pride from the defeat of the Persians provided the opportunity for the Athenians to become nationalists in their military reputation and egalitarian in their national pride under individualism and a democracy. Classical liberalism may offer the freedom to choose, but the limit of classical liberalism comes from how there may be those who choose imprudently. Not everyone who chooses does so prudently. As moral relativism made its

---

256. Shafer, 13.

257. See Ghia Nodia, "Nationalism and Democracy," in *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Democracy*, ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994), 9-11.

258. See Nodia, "Nationalism and Democracy," 9.

presence in Athens, there would be less distinction between moral and immoral acts. Consequently, the intemperance of individualism in Athens led to the desire of individual selfishness, especially under Athens' institution of ostracism.[259] From the social instability extreme individualism risks, the desire for a more rigid control of society to maintain social stability tends to emerge, either through enforcing strict traditionalism or strict conventionalism, both of which are essentially collectivist.

Athens's democracy appeared to become a tyranny of the majority, bringing about disunity. Athens became radically egalitarian and nationalistic, which brought about instability and a lack of unity among traditional-minded Athenians. From Athens' lack of unity, there likely came a lack of will among the Athenians to defend a city-state that no longer desired the well-being of the common good. Hence, egalitarian nationalism in Athens brought about the lack of unity and overconfidence against the war against Sparta, leading to Athens' loss of democracy.

Although Athens lost its democracy to the Spartans, the loss of Athenian democracy was inevitable at that point. Because Athens' government made bad policies and had an unhealthy addiction to war, "the city could no longer function democratically."[260] The Athenians' nationalism led to the downfall of their city-state, bringing an end to the Golden Age of Athens. Even though the Spartans defeated Athens, they did not desire to destroy the city-state. They thought if Athens was no longer existing, the Corinthians, with their powerful army, would come and easily defeat the Spartans. The Spartans decided to "[install] a regime of anti-democratic

---

259. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 23.

260. Meier, *Athens*, 583.

Athenian collaborators to rule the conquered city"[261] called the Thirty Tyrants. These tyrants

executed "not only prominent democrats, but also those of oligarchic sympathies who, although

unfriendly to the democracy, were also opposed to injustice and illegality."[262] However,

whenever the Thirty Tyrants became violent towards the Athenians, the Spartans did not mind

there being a pro-democratic resistance from the Athenians to ward off the oligarchy. Democracy

would soon return to the city-state of Athens by the help of Thrasybulus in the Phyle Campaign,

which overthrew the Thirty Tyrants. However, from the hatred brought upon from the Thirty

Tyrants, Athenian democracy would grow under a mass psychosis, leading to extreme

egalitarianism and ultranationalism. This pathway to an early form of fascism would finally lead

to the lowest point of Athenian democracy: the execution of Socrates.

---

261. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 205.

262. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 48.

CHAPTER II

SOCRATES: PHILOSOPHY, TRIAL, AND DEATH

Born around 470 B.C., Socrates, son of Sophronicus, was recognizably one of the most influential philosophers in Athens and Ancient Greek history. Considered to be the father of Western philosophy, Socrates was also the first ethical philosopher. His ideas tended to challenge the norms of Athenian society. He wrote no works on his philosophy or on his life. Any information about him originated from the works of Plato, a disciple of Socrates, and more information about him came from Xenophon and Aristophanes. However, as everyone has their own biases and goals, Plato and Xenophon wrote about Socrates under how they perceived him. Nonetheless, they provided the only sources regarding Socrates' trial. Still, despite his lack of wealth and unnatural appearance,[263] Socrates became one of the most influential philosophers in Western history, gaining many disciples in his lifetime.

To note, as recounted by Plato and Xenophon, Socrates was a citizen of Athens who performed his civic duties dutifully. He fought as a hoplite in Athens' army, and he participated in Athens' politics.[264] Socrates also functioned as "a member of the Athenian Council at age sixty-five; and he was also a member, it so happened, of the chief Committee of the Council."[265] However, he condemned the Council for violating the Athenian Constitution when the Council condemned six Athenian generals by only a single vote for not being able to rescue drowning

---

263. See Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 214; Meier, *Athens*, 572; Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 54.

264. See Meier, *Athens*, 502-503.

265. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 43.

sailors after the Battle of Arginusae.[266] As portrayed by Plato and Xenophon, Socrates performed

his civic duties, but he was also a moralist. Nevertheless, his moralistic perspective would lead

him to take his career as a moral philosopher.

Socrates was not one of the first thinkers in Athens that dealt with moral issues, but he

did become the first philosopher to make his focus primarily on ethics and morality. He

contemplated what constituted a just life and the betterment of justice over injustice under any

situation. His study of mankind's problems "emphasized the supreme importance of cultivating

the human soul," even being "credited with the creation of the very concept of the soul."[267] In

fact, "[Socrates] was a firm believer in the immortality of the soul and in the life to come,

doctrines not necessarily familiar to the Athenians of his day,"[268] possibly from the cultural

decline of ancient Greek tradition. Greek mythology did teach of the afterlife in Hades after all.

Nevertheless, Plato would later write that the idea of the existence and immortality of the soul

led Socrates to speculate what the perfection of the immortal soul would be, which he

determined to be justice.

Socrates contributed to Athens as an important moral philosopher, shaping the minds of

future Greek thinkers like Plato and Aristotle. However, "[c]oming as it did during a time of

social and political turmoil after the war, his death indicated the fragility of the principles of

Athenian justice when put to the test in the crucible of lingering hatred and bitterness over the

---

266. See Plato, *Apology* 32a-c; Socrates said ten generals in the *Apology*, but only eight Athenian generals fought at Arginusae, with six of them condemned by the Council. *See also* Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, 216-217.

267. Anderson, *Man's Quest*, 204.

268. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 44.

crimes of the Thirty Tyrants."[269] Plus, his method of argument, called the Socratic method, was very unsettling in refuting the strongly held beliefs of his dialogue partners. Whenever they stated something, he would ask a question in response, to which they would respond back. This argumentative dialogue would continue until the students were unable to answer any more questions. This dialogue was not in any way to defeat the students' arguments for the sake of winning; rather, Socrates argued this way to expand his students' views so they may be able to answer any question. Nevertheless, "[t]his indirect but pitiless method of searching for the truth often left Socrates' conversational partners in a state of puzzlement and unhappiness because they were forced to admit that they were ignorant of what at the start of the conversation they had assumed they knew perfectly well."[270] Socrates' argumentative dialogue, which would later receive the term "Socratic method," came from his belief "that knowledge itself was sufficient for happiness."[271] However, despite Socrates' revolutionary method of argumentation and philosophy, he stood in opposition against the Sophists.

Socrates was possibly like the Sophists based on his philosophy being revolutionary and counteracting Athenian culture, but what he taught differed from what the Sophists taught. According to Meier,

> The Sophists, having discovered the relativity and subjectivity of all knowledge, sought absolute truth in nature—or what they defined as nature—a realm that existed independently of human consciousness. Socrates' questions, by contrast,

---

269. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 214.

270. Martin, 216.

271. Martin, 217.

focused entirely on consciousness, on what ordinary people said and thought, and what lay beyond their opinions.[272]

Though Socrates appeared to be more democratic than the Sophists based on his poor status and unpretentious attitude, the Athenians believed him to be an opponent of Athens' democracy. Nevertheless, based on Plato and Xenophon's writings, he obeyed Athens' laws scrupulously, fulfilling his duties in the city, the army, and the religion of Athens. However, despite his obedience and democratic-like lifestyle in Athens, the Athenians had Socrates under arrest.

Socrates' Theory of "Forms"

To first note, living under Athens' culture of moral relativism, as promoted by the Sophists, Socrates objected to such a view, believing in valid knowledge and moral absolutes. He counteracted against the Sophists' doctrine of relativism by teaching of a universally valid reality found as an abstract concept, commonly known as "Ideas," but referred to by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as "Forms." According to Socrates' line of thinking, "In order for a definition or concept to be universally valid, it must be a definition of a *constant* reality, independent of any particular or concrete specimens of the thing defined."[273] In other words, Socrates believed "what things are," [*i.e.*, their *essence*] exists independently from "that they are," [*i.e.*, their *being*] and the reality of a particular object, such as a table or a man, is determinable from its essence rather than its being.

Such an example of forms would be clay, where the *particular* clay does not determine *what* clay is, but it is the *clay-ness* of clay that determines *what* clay is. As Plato wrote in

---

272. Meier, *Athens*, 575.

273. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 54 (emphasis in original); *See also* M. B. Foster, *The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), 13.

Timaeus, "Wherefore also we must acknowledge that one kind of being is the form which is always the same, uncreated and indestructible, never receiving anything into itself from without, nor itself going out to any other, but invisible and imperceptible by any sense, and of which the contemplation is granted to intelligence only."[274] What Socrates believed is how the definition or reality of certain objects (*i.e.*, their forms) had an independent existence from the object themselves, not known about without the mind's power to abstract such concepts.[275] Plato argued that an object's form existed in a "Third Realm;" whereas, Aristotle argued that an object's form existed within the object itself, both requiring a mind to abstract the forms. Such concepts of forms would also apply to mathematics and to beauty as well. Nevertheless, Socrates' concept of forms would also benefit his understanding of justice, as explained later by Plato in his description of justice.

The Athenians' Suspicions of Socrates

Many Athenians grew suspicious of Socrates' method of teaching. Many of Socrates' disciples would use his method of argumentation among Athenian citizens, many of whom believed that this was an attempt to undermine Athenian culture as they would sometimes be left unable to answer the questions.[276] In reaction to the Athenian youth's use of Socratic dialogue, Aristophanes, in his comedy, *The Clouds*, portrayed Socrates as a cynical Sophist who always strengthened the weaker argument, concentrating only on the physical sciences and being irreverent whenever the focus is on religion. In the play, when Strepsiades confronted Socrates,

---

274. Plato, *Timaeus* 51e-52a

275. See Arist. *Met*. XIII.4.1078b15-20.

276. See Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 217.

Socrates spoke to him rudely and opposed Athenian tradition by doubting in the existence of the

traditional gods of Athens, such as Zeus, as portrayed here in *The Clouds*,

> STREPSIADES. Hail, sovereign goddesses, and if ever you have let your celestial voice be heard by mortal ears, speak to me, oh! [S]peak to me, ye all-powerful queens.
>
> CHORUS. Hail! [V]eteran [Strepsiades] of the ancient times, you who burn to instruct yourself in fine language. And you, great high-priest of subtle nonsense [Socrates], tell us your desire. To you and Prodicus[277] alone of all the hollow orationers [sic] of to-day have we lent an ear—to Prodicus, because of his knowledge and his great wisdom, and to you, because you walk with head erect, a confident look, barefooted, resigned to everything and proud of our protection.
>
> STREPSIADES. Oh! Earth! What august utterances! [H]ow sacred! [H]ow wondrous!
>
> SOCRATES. That is because these are the only goddesses: all the rest are pure myth.
>
> STREPSIADES. But by the Earth! [I]s our Father, Zeus, the Olympian, not a god?
>
> SOCRATES. Zeus! [W]hat Zeus? Are you mad? There is no Zeus.[278]

Continuing, Socrates gives further arguments on the occurrence of the weather without aid from

Zeus, such as thunder and rain, most of them based on the developing ideas of meteorology in

Ancient Greece.[279] Plato would condemn this notion of Socrates in his work *Apology*, in which

Socrates denies having done against doing anything illegal or immoral.[280] Unfortunately, many

Athenians began to view Socrates as an atheist and a Sophist bent on destroying their culture and

disrespecting the gods, which would be strange since he taught the existence of absolutes, which

---

277. Prodicus was a Sophist who was influential to Socrates.

278. Aristophanes, *The Eleven Comedies*, 1:318-319.

279. For an example of an ancient Greek's developmental idea of meteorology, see Aristotle's *Meteorology*.

280. See Plato, *Apology* 19b-19c.

the Sophists did not believe, as mentioned previously. Nevertheless, many Athenians perceived Socrates as a threat to Athenian ultranationalism.

Many Athenians blamed Socrates for influencing the Thirty Tyrants, primarily Critias. However, many Athenians also held great suspicion of Socrates' loyalty to Athens as one of his students was Alcibiades, who betrayed Athens and defected to Sparta during the Peloponnesian War after his enemies brought him to trial on false charges, which were likely sacrileges to figures of Hermes and the mocking of the Eleusinian Mysteries.[281] Nevertheless, both Alcibiades and Critias were disciples of Socrates, but Critias' contempt for Athens' democracy and role in the Thirty Tyrants, as well as Alcibiades' betrayal, marred Socrates' character. An example of their threat to Athens' culture would be how Critias "argued that the gods and moral codes linked to religion were just cynical inventions by lawmakers to keep people in line and make them obey laws by teaching them that deities knew what human beings were doing even when no one else was watching and would punish wrongdoers."[282] Furthermore, Critias was a supporter of Sparta and criticized Athens for injustice,[283] which led to the speculation that Socrates posed a threat to democracy for his relation to Critias. As for Alcibiades, the mutilation of the statues of Hermes produced a conspiracy theory that the mutilators wanted to prevent democracy and enact a revolution, which led to a "high figure for prosecution of private persons by *eisangelia*,"[284] which is to denounce someone by law. As Barry S. Strauss stated, "One must remember, in any

---

281. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 92.

282. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 218.

283. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 127-128.

284. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy*, 216.

case, that in Athens, religion *was* political; the *demos* believed that the enemies of Athens' gods were also enemies of its laws."[285] For example, in regard to Athens' politics having links to Athens' religion, "when the city became more democratic[,] it created priesthoods additional to those controlled by the aristocrats, and when it became more imperialistic, it started to extend the cult of its most important goddess, Athena, in other cities."[286] The Athenians eventually suspected Alcibiades of being one of the mutilators.[287] Alcibiades even told the Spartans to feel welcomed by them "that democracy had corrupted Athens until it was no longer a place to which he owed allegiance,"[288] and his son even became a disciple of Socrates. The Athenians would appear then to have valid reasons to believe that Socrates posed as a threat to democracy.

However, contrary to the claim that Socrates posed a threat to Athenian democracy, Xenophon wrote in his *Memorabilia* of Socrates' contribution to Athens' democracy. Xenophon wrote that "he showed himself to be a friend of mankind. For although he had many eager disciples among citizens and strangers, yet he never exacted a fee for his society from one of them, but of his abundance he gave without stint to all."[289] Nonetheless, not only was Socrates not like the Sophists who were teaching at a high price, but he also condemned the Thirty Tyrants. In fact, in 404 B.C., "[W]hen the Thirty Tyrants were exercising a reign of terror in

---

285. Barry S. Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy 403-386 BC* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 95 (emphases in original).

286. Jan N. Bremmer, *Greece & Rome: New Surveys in the Classics*, vol. 24, *Greek Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 3.

287. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 93.

288. Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 101.

289. Xenophon, *Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*, trans. E. C. Marchant (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923), 43.

Athens, Socrates was ordered, together with four other men, to fetch a citizen, Leon of Salamis, from his home for execution; once again, [from his last disobedience to the Athenian Committee,] he refused to obey an illegal order."[290] Regardless, the Athenians blamed Socrates for influencing the Thirty Tyrants and using his alleged Sophistry in Athenian society, leading to the temporary destruction of Athens' democracy. Socrates was put under arrest and went to trial in 399 B.C.

The Trial of Socrates

The Athenians charged Socrates for not respecting Athens' gods, introducing new ones, and corrupting Athens' youths. As mentioned before, the Athenians believed the gods would protect Athens if they appeased them. This belief led to strict religious observation everyone in Athens had to follow. According to Martin, "[i]mpiety ranked as an extremely serious crime because the gods were believed to punish the entire city-state if it harbored impious individuals."[291] However, despite the accounts of Socrates obeying the religious observations in Athens, the Athenians believed that introducing new gods would constitute impiety. The Athenians expected their citizens to follow Athens' customs completely. As Myres, reiterated, "[T]he popular sense is the same, in modern as in ancient Greek—to "expect" things, in ordinary course, to happen this way or that."[292] Socrates did not appear to follow Athens' nationalistic view of needing live as the ideal Athenian. Nevertheless, Socrates' arrest is problematic with how the religious culture in Athens politically functioned.

---

290. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 44; *See also* Plato, *Apology* 32c-e.

291. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 218; *See also* Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 36.

292. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 249.

In Athens, the polytheistic religious culture tolerated the belief in more gods than normally believed by the Ancient Greeks.[293] "What mattered was that the religious duties in honor of the gods [recognized in Athens] be performed,"[294] and Plato and Xenophon's accounts state that Socrates did just that. In this case, Socrates did not lack piety to the gods recognized in Athens, and his new philosophy was not a threat to Athenian society. As Irving M. Zeitlin wrote,

> [A] careful reading of the dialogues reveals that Socrates' religious opinions were certainly not deserving of condemnation. There is no evidence in the texts that he had committed the impiety of refusing formally to "worship the deities which the city worshipped"; and even if he had "introduced other and new divinities," this would have constituted no offense as long as it did not preclude the worship of the civic deities.[295]

However, the Athenians believed Socrates' "citing of new gods was actually part of the activity his accusers regarded as corrupting the youth."[296] For Socrates to believe the gods were good contrasted the traditional mythologies regarding the Greek gods' portrayal as immoral beings.[297] In fact, Socrates did not tell the jury that he believed in specifically *Athens'* gods, believing "that his conception of the divine involved too purged and refined a version of Greek religion for the dikasts readily to accept."[298] Since there existed "about two-thousand cults in Athens and Attica at the time,"[299] to not proclaim belief in Athens' gods had the jury believe Socrates was an

---

293. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 44-45.

294. Meier, *Athens*, 587.

295. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 60.

296. Meier, *Athens*, 587.

297. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 40.

298. Waterfield, 43.

299. Waterfield, 43.

atheist.[300] Nonetheless, Alcibiades debated such a conception in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, stating,

> How then could he be guilty of the charges? For so far was he from "rejecting the gods," as charged in the indictment, that no man was more conspicuous for his devotion to the service of the gods: so far from "corrupting the youth," as his accuser actually charged against him, that if any among his companions had evil desires, he openly tried to reform them and exhorted them to desire the fairest and noblest virtue, by which men prosper in public life and in their homes. By his conduct did he not deserve high honour from the State?[301]

In other words, rather than corrupting the youth, Alcibiades claimed that Socrates was teaching them to live virtuously, which involved reforming their lifestyles, and did not deny the gods' role in the reform of one's lifestyle.[302] Nevertheless, Plato and Xenophon's accounts of the jury portrayed the Athenians as wanting to find any excuse they could devise to declare Socrates guilty. What could be the true motives behind the sentencing of Socrates to death?

As mentioned before, many people mistook Socrates as a Sophist. He was against Sophism, yet his revolutionary philosophy, which broke the cultural norms of Athens, had Athenians accusing him of being a Sophist. As Meier explained, "[S]ince the Sophists were not Athenians and charges could not be brought against them [except for expulsion], Socrates may simply have been accused because he was, in the authorities' mind, the 'last Sophist' they could get their hands on,"[303] which revealed the Athenians' willingness to stray over the law to "purify" Athens. Considering that Sophists were normally foreigners, it is likely that the

---

300. See Waterfield, 44.

301. Xenophon, *Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*, 45.

302. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 42-43.

303. Meier, *Athens*, 588.

Athenians viewed Socrates as a foreigner only causing trouble in the city-state, despite his Athenian birth. According to Myres, "For the sole and absolute criteria of a man's worthiness to be enrolled in an Attic *deme* [suburb] were to be *bona fide* [in good faith] residence on Attic soil, and loyalty to the defence [sic] of the Athenian *Polis*."[304] However, Socrates was born in Athens and by two Athenian citizens, which was necessary to be an Athenian citizen at the time, and he obeyed the city-state's laws as prescribed, making the Athenians' judgment of him premature. Nevertheless, there is the argument that Socrates' political teachings may be what the Athenians worried most about, for his teachings appeared anti-democratic.

Socrates held a disdain towards various characteristics of Athenian democracy. He criticized "the use of the lot, the composition of the Assembly, and the ignorance or incompetence of Athenian statesmen," teaching "that statecraft, like any other craft, requires knowledge and training that will produce expertise, which in his eyes neither the statesmen nor the electorate possessed."[305] His teachings did not fare well with the Athenian democrats, and he was able to form new converts to his teachings. He would also teach what he believed to be the characteristics of a good government and a bad government.[306] Under this concept, Socrates was not *specifically* against democracy, but he was specifically against an *ochlocracy*: the rule of a mob. He did not believe democracy itself was evil, but he believed the corruption of democracy, being ochlocracy, was evil. From this understanding, Socrates condemned Athens not for having a democracy, but for corrupting it.

---

304. Myres, *Political Ideas*, 348 (emphases in original).

305. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 59.

306. See Xenophon, *Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*, 343-345.

However, there was also the controversy with the Spartans, as there grew many Athenians sympathetic to Sparta and its oligarchy. As Zeitlin wrote,

> Moreover, the victorious Spartans were imposing oligarchies wherever they could, and in Athens itself there continued to exist an oligarchical party sympathetic to Sparta. In such an atmosphere of insecurity it is not surprising that Socrates had aroused suspicion; he had preached the need for political knowledge and expertise, which was also the propaganda of the oligarchical circles, and he had had among his intimate associates two men (Alcibiades and Critias) who had achieved notoriety for their hostility to Athenian democracy. Socrates thus fell victim to the fears and weakness of the restored democracy in the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War, and it was political motives that led to his condemnation.[307]

The Athenians appeared to condemn Socrates on trumped-up grounds to achieve their end of protecting Athenian democracy. However, the Athenians also condemned him for his relation to Critias and Alcibiades. Plus, disciples of Socrates like Plato and Xenophon made arguments against democracy because of Socrates' death, making it appear that Socrates was an opponent of democracy.[308] As a result, many Athenians saw Socrates as a threat to Athens' democracy.

Initially, after Socrates' trial, the jury had a vote of 280 over 220 for what would likely be a penalty of exile for Socrates. However, the *graphe nomon me epitedeion theinai*, a legal Athenian court procedure where "the same body considers the same matter twice,"[309] likely occurred as the jury would vote for Socrates' punishment again. Nonetheless, Socrates stated to the jury that he was unworthy of any punishment and refused to beg for mercy. Consequently, the jury voted again and declared Socrates guilty "by a majority of 361 over 140 votes,"[310]

---

307. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 59.

308. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 192.

309. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy*, 212.

310. Meier, *Athens*, 588.

sentencing him to death. Though the procedure appeared legal, the penalty from the jury had to be illegal according to Athenian law.

Earlier, the Athenians claimed Socrates to be a Sophist rather than an Athenian, but Athens did not permit sentencing foreigners any punishment except for expulsion from the city-state. Even though Socrates was an Athenian by birth, for the jury to sentence Socrates to death while believing him to be a Sophist would constitute as an illegal sentencing, rendering the trial as unjust. The procedure for the trial went according to law, and Athenians could receive the death penalty, but the jury only had a *justified true belief* in the legality of sentencing Socrates to death. Indeed, Socrates was an Athenian, making the death sentence, by law, even if not justifiable, legal, but only through luck since the Athenians sentenced him to death over Sophism. The *intention* of the jury would contrast with the legality of not sentencing foreigners, whom they believed Socrates to constitute, to death. However, "*after* the death penalty had been passed[,] [Socrates] addressed the 220 who voted to acquit him as true dikasts [*i.e.*, the jury of Ancient Athens] – a strange thing to call them if some of them had subsequently voted to put him to death," suggesting "that *fewer* people voted to put him to death."[311] Nevertheless, there remains the concern of the jury sentencing their own citizen to death on the false presumption of foreign influence, which reveals the nationalistic tendencies of the jurists to "purify" Athens from foreign influence.

For the jury to at least *intend* to declare an illegal sentencing in court, the very body of law, exposes the problem of mob-rule in Ancient Athens and how democracy can corrupt itself

---

311. Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 17 (emphases in original).

into an ochlocracy. According to Xenophon, regarding Socrates' defense in the trial, the

Athenians would act unjustly as a habit in the courts. In his *Apology*, he stated,

> And [Hermogenes said that] when he then responded, "'Don't you see that the
> Athenian juries, when annoyed by a speech, often killed those who did nothing
> unjust, and often acquitted those who acted unjustly but whose speech moved them
> to pity or who spoke agreeably?' Socrates said: 'Yes certainly, by Zeus, and twice
> already I tried to consider my defense, but the *daimonion*[312] opposes me.'"[313]

Based on Xenophon's account, Socrates tried to defend himself, but none of the Athenians

seemed to mind his defense. However, if Xenophon's account of Socrates' trial is accurate, the

Athenians would have concerns regarding Socrates' comment that the *daimonion* spoke to him

exclusively.[314] To speak as exclusively favored by the gods would bring about a suspicion to

condoning tyranny,[315] which would be comparable to the theory of "The Divine Right of Kings,"

where the king may rule in whatever way he preferred based on his royal favor from God.

Xenophon would appear to make an excuse that "Socrates at that time made it his goal above all

else to be neither impious as regards gods nor unjust as regards human beings."[316] Socrates only

appeared to the Athenians as a Sophist since he made himself "the measure of all things."[317] Still,

the Athenians did have a reputation in the Athenian Assembly to make poor decisions.

---

312. According to Socrates, a *daimonion* is a deity he believed to be inspiring him.

313. Xenophon, "Apology of Socrates to the Jury," in *The Shorter Socratic Writings: Apology of Socrates to the Jury, Oeconomicus, and Symposium*, trans. Andrew Patch, ed. Robert C. Bartlett (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 10.

314. See Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 12-13.

315. See Waterfield, 46.

316. Xenophon, "Apology of Socrates," 14.

317. Meier, *Athens*, 366.

To recall, Socrates criticized the Athenians for condemning the generals who failed to rescue the drowning soldiers to death. Plus, according to Mogens Herman Hansen, "[T]he very large number of prosecutions by *eisangelia* faces the historian with an uncomfortable dilemma: either the Athenian Assembly had a notable reputation to elect corrupt and traitorous generals, or else the People's Assembly and the People's Court had a habit of condemning honourable generals on false grounds."[318] Even if Socrates' trial was lawful, the Athenians were susceptible to making poor decisions. Nevertheless, based on Plato and Xenophon's accounts, the trial appeared as a political motivation that likely abused *eisangelia* to maintain Athens' *status quo*,[319] leading up to Socrates' execution. This appearance of the cult of radical egalitarianism and ultranationalism portrayed Athens' democracy as an ochlocracy, and the Athenian citizens would only prove true Socrates' warning of how democracy can corrupt into an ochlocracy.

The Death of Socrates

Although the sentencing appeared corrupt, Socrates accepted his condemnation. According to Plato, Socrates believed that death was not evil and had no hard feeling for his accusers:

> Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death, and that he and his are not neglected by the gods. Nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance; I see clearly that the time had arrived when it was better for me to die and be released from trouble; therefore[,] the oracle gave no sign, and therefore also I am not at all angry with my condemners, or with my accusers. But although they have done me no harm, they intended it; and for this I may properly blame them.[320]

---

318. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy*, 217 (emphasis in original).

319. See Hansen, 213-214; Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 32.

320. Plato, *Apology* 41c-41e

As Martin clarified, "[N]othing can take away the knowledge that constitutes excellence, and only the loss of that wisdom can count as a true evil."[321] However, Socrates' execution could not take place during an official religious ceremony, so he had to wait in prison. Now, his wealthy friend, Crito of Alopece, tried to help Socrates escape, but Socrates refused, explaining to him that he must unconditionally abide by Athens' laws, even if the Athenians enforced them unjustly, because he freely chose to stay in Athens[322] and that "[t]he wrong done to him . . . was done not by the laws but by men."[323] Socrates taught that "if a citizen is selflessly devoted to the State and its laws, which the citizen will disobey only if they conflict with universal justice, then surely the statesman also owes the State unselfish devotion."[324] Plus, "he explained his decision by declaring that death might very well be desirable."[325] As Xenophon wrote, "[H]e already believed death to be preferable to life for himself."[326] Socrates drank the hemlock and died in his prison cell.

Athens appeared to unjustly execute one of the most prominent philosophers of Ancient Greece. Many of Socrates' disciples mourned for him after his death, as Xenophon wrote in his *Memorabilia*.[327] Consequently, Athens' democracy appeared to corrupt itself into an ochlocracy,

---

321. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 219.

322. See Plato, *Crito* 51b-51e.

323. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 61.

324. Zeitlin, *Plato's Vision*, 61.

325. Meier, *Athens*, 588.

326. Xenophon, *Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*, 10.

327. See Xenophon, 357-359.

leading to the death of an innocent man well beloved by studious men of Ancient Greece. However, were Plato and Xenophon's account of Socrates' character and trial accurate?

There is the suspicion that Plato and Xenophon made fictitious accounts of the procedure of Socrates' trial. After the Athenian jury sentenced Socrates to death, "[t]he trial rapidly became notorious that a number of *Apologies of Socrates* were written soon afterwards, and at least one prosecution speech purporting to be that of Anytus."[328] Robin Waterfield believed "[t]he fact that so many versions of Socrates' defence [sic] speeches were written strongly suggests that the authors were not reporters of historical truth, but were concerned to write what, in their opinion, Socrates could or should have said."[329] He even reported that Xenophon most likely copied Plato's *Apology* in order to support a similar claim aimed for a different purpose.[330] Most importantly, Waterfield suggested that Plato only portrayed himself as a witness to Socrates' trial as a form of literary device without actually being at the trial.[331] However, it appears odd to suggest that similar accounts with slight differences on a particular event would likely mean that such information detailing an event were false. Slight differences in accounts could suggest an honest recollection as different accounts with no differences could suggest plagiarism. Then again, the likelihood that *all* the Athenians in the jury and in the whole democracy were corrupt and valued only envy is low, though "ancient democracy was as a rule characterized by frequency of political prosecutions," such as Socrates' trial.[332] However, there is the possibility

---

328. Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 9.

329. Waterfield, 10.

330. See Waterfield, 11.

331. See Waterfield, 12.

332. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy*, 218.

that a mass psychosis occurred in Athens. Many Athenians can hold fatal consequences to those who are not part of the psychosis, but what does a mass psychosis have to do with Socrates' execution?

The Mass Psychosis of Athens

In order to understand how mass psychosis was responsible for Socrates' execution, it is important to first understand what causes a mass psychosis. According to Joost A. M. Meerlo, "Every culture institutionalizes certain forms of behavior that communicate and encourage certain forms of thinking and acting, thus molding the character of its citizens."[333] The idea of the ideal Athenian permeated throughout Athens, which encouraged the Athenians to imitate what the ideal Athenian would do based on Athens' traditions. However, a manipulative culture molds its citizens "[t]o the degree that the individual is made an object of constant mental manipulation, to the degree that cultural institutions may tend to weaken intellectual and spiritual strength, to the degree that knowledge of the mind is used to tame and condition people instead of educating them."[334] Consequently, "to that degree does the culture itself produce men and women who are predisposed to accept an authoritarian way of life."[335] The Athenians held that sense of egalitarianism with them from their culture of extreme individualism, which would be the basis of their authoritarian use of ultranationalism when condemning Socrates to death.

---

333. Meerlo, Joost A. M., *The Rape of the Mind: The Psychology of Thought Control, Menticide, and Brainwashing*, (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1956), 95.

334. Meerlo, *The Rape*, 95.

335. Meerlo, 95.

However, Athens' unconventional culture was not the direct basis of the Athenians' fall for a mass psychosis. Rather, Athens' mass psychosis originated from the period of the Thirty Tyrants.

Sometimes, during unfortunate events, someone's perspective of reality may change in order to develop emotional satisfaction. For example, when the Thirty Tyrants overthrew Athens' democracy, the Athenians would not be able to socialize in politics anymore. Consequently, "[c]onscious and unconscious fantasy life begins to become dominant over alert confrontation of reality."[336] The Athenian nationalists possibly developed schizophrenia by rejecting everything the culture of the more conventional Athens as schizophrenics "[reject] everything that society has taught [them]."[337] Most likely as a response to the rule of the Thirty Tyrants, the Athenian nationalists rejected reality since "[t]he schizophrenic displays tremendous hostility toward the real world and its representatives."[338] As a result of the Thirty Tyrants' oppression against the Athenians, the Athenian nationalists likely developed "a hostile attitude toward everything, not only toward influences from the outside, but also toward thoughts and feelings from the inside."[339] Consequently, Athens' ancient form of nationalism reflected contemporary nationalism. In comparison to Athens' ancient form of nationalism, "[t]he governments of nation-states, to satisfy the most ardent patriots, began consciously to make good citizens, to force all citizens into the national molds. The more they acted, the more nationalist their citizens became, the more these citizens demanded national institutions and national ways

---

336. Meerlo, 118.

337. Meerlo, 118.

338. Meerlo, 119.

339. Meerlo, 119.

of living."[340] A herd mentality of extreme egalitarianism would develop under nationalism, where everyone would view opponents to the *status quo* as villainous:

> There is a point of pathological hollowness and overindulgence in the history of social groups where they even side with those who harm them, with their criminals—and they feel this way seriously and honestly. Punishment seems somehow unfair; at any rate it is certain that the idea of punishment, of having to punish, hurts the group. It creates fear in them. "Isn't it enough to render him *harmless*? Why punish on top of that? Punishment itself is frightful!" With this sentiment the morality of timidity, the herd-morality, draws its ultimate conclusion. If one could abolish danger, abolish the grounds for fear, one would have abolished this morality along with it; it would no longer be necessary; it would no longer consider *itself* necessary![341]

Athenian nationalists would create Athenian ultranationalism to maintain the *status quo* to prevent threats to Athens' democracy. However, the egalitarianism of Athens would worsen the concept of liberty in its democracy, as egalitarians tend to fear the individual dominating the majority.[342] Such use of ultranationalism came from the Athenians' extreme fear of their loss of freedom and security. After all, nationalism tended to rise from the desire for freedom and security.[343] Nevertheless, just like common nationalism, "[t]he nation-state has hence often become an end in itself, the one end socially approved for the supreme sacrifice."[344] The Athenian ultranationalists became fearful of everything that appeared to oppose democracy.

---

340. Shafer, *Nationalism: Interpreters and Interpretations*, 10.

341. Frederick Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Marianne Cowan (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1955), 111 (emphases in original).

342. See Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest*, 65.

343. See Doob, *Patriotism and Nationalism*, 168-172.

344. Shafer, "Nationalism: Interpreters and Interpretations," 12.

When Socrates condemned the Athenians for their egalitarianism, the Athenian ultranationalists, most likely suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, accused Socrates of opposing democracy. Coercive persuasion would be part of the ultranationalists' tactic of forcing everyone to be one with Athens, such as that of identification,[345] but Socrates did not reflect the "ideal" Athenian for criticizing tenets of Athens' democracy. Socrates specifically opposed an ochlocracy rather than a democracy, but the traumatic memories of the Athenian ultranationalists took him to be a fierce opponent of democracy since he criticized the Athenians for their politically extreme egalitarianism. Since extreme egalitarianism became a part of Athenian culture, the ultranationalists perceived Socrates as a traitor to Athens and condemned him to death. Just as Germany's Nazism would condemn Germans who opposed German ultranationalism on trumped-up charges, Athens' ultranationalist democracy would condemn Athenians who opposed Athenian ultranationalism, such as Socrates in this case. Nevertheless, Athens' egalitarianism and, chiefly, the execution of Socrates infuriated many philosophers in Ancient Athens, most notably Plato and Aristotle.

---

345. See Alan W. Scheflin and Edward M. Opton, Jr., *The Mind Manipulators* (New York: Paddington Press Ltd., 1978), 93.

CHAPTER III

PLATO: DISCIPLE OF SOCRATES AND CRITIC OF ATHENS' DEMOCRACY

Born in Athens in 428-27 B.C., Plato was the son of Ariston, of whom there are claims of him being a descendant of King Codrus, and Plato's mother was a descendant of the Athenian statesman Solon. Originally named Aristocles, in his youth, Plato enjoyed wrestling, and either the features of his shoulders or forehead in the ring brought him the name *Plato*, as it signifies broadness or flatness. He would win the Isthmian Games twice, but as he never participated in the Olympics, he attempted to become a tragic poet. However, none of the judges Plato tried to impress at the poetry competitions enjoyed his works. Nevertheless, as Plato was about to choose statesmanship to carry on his family's legacy, he tried to pursue philosophy by listening to Socrates. It was from Socrates' method of teaching that Plato began to enjoy philosophy and understand how much potential he had to be an intellectual. Even though Plato discovered his occupation by teaching philosophy, he still had an inclination to become a statesman. However, he changed his mind once he saw the behavior of Athenian politicians.

When Athens came under the rule of the Thirty Tyrants, two of them, Critias and Charmides, whom Socrates knew, were close relatives of Plato. According to R. M. Hare, "Critias [was] his mother's first cousin, and Charmides [was] his maternal uncle."[346] However, despite Plato's relation to them, the reign of the Thirty Tyrants did not impress him. Regardless, Plato viewed Athens as declining in morality, such as changing the descriptive interpretations of terms to justify immoral actions and ignoring the advice of those who he deemed wise.[347] In fact,

---

346. R. M. Hare, *Plato* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 5-6.

347. See Plato, *Republic* 8.560c-561a.

it was Athens' decline in morality that "had the effect of stimulating Socrates and Plato to look instead for a way of finding *secure* definitions of moral words or of the things they connote. That is why we find them asking 'What then *is* courage?'; 'What is uprightness?', and in general 'What is goodness?'"[348] Nevertheless, it was not until the Athenians tried Socrates and sentenced him to death that Plato began to criticize democracy in Athens as "tarred with the same brush as tyranny."[349] Eventually, Plato had to leave Athens as his close relation with Socrates put him in danger of receiving harm from the Athenians. Plato would leave for Megara for three years to continue his studies with his companion Euclid, another disciple of Socrates.

Either from his stay at Megara or from another stop in his travels, Plato wrote his early Socratic dialogues. Using Socratic logic to explain his positions, he would employ Socrates as a leading character to make propositions. In Plato's works, "[Socrates] comes across as infuriating, brilliant, but ultimately endearing, a complex blend of the buffoon and the saint."[350] Regardless of his devotion to Socrates, Plato travelled from Megara to Cyrene and studied with Theodorus of Cyrene. Eventually, Plato travelled to Egypt, and after travelling for over a decade, he arrived at Sicily where he met the disciples of Pythagoras. It was from Pythagoras' theory that numbers could aid in understanding the universe that Plato "came to believe that the ultimate reality was abstract."[351] This experience led Plato to create his theory that every object perceived is simply an appearance, whereas the true reality of objects come from a type of *Platonic Realm* or *Third*

---

348. Hare, *Plato*, 5 (emphases in original).

349. Paul Strathern, *Plato in 90 Minutes* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Inc., 1996), 19.

350. Strathern, *Plato in 90 Minutes*, 20.

351. Strathern, 23; *See also* Arist. *Met*. XIII.4.1078b20-25.

Realm consisting of ideas and forms. According to Plato, the appearances derived from this realm of objectively existing abstract objects, and the abstract objects are eternal in this realm, not existing in particular things or in the mind. Although Aristotle would object to this view of universals, Plato's theory of Platonic idealism helped him establish a hierarchical view of universals, leading him to conclude in the existence of the *summum bonum* [highest good].

Plato believed that lesser forms led into forms or ideas at an elevated level, leading him to believe that the idea of goodness is the highest of these ideas and forms. According to Paul Strathern, "When we learn to ignore the world of ever-changing particulars and concentrate on the timeless reality of ideas, our understanding can begin to rise through the hierarchy of ideas to an ultimate mystical apprehension of the ideas of Beauty, Truth, and ultimately Goodness."[352] With this hierarchical view of forms, along with the *summum bonum* at the height of the hierarchy, Plato understood that everyone sought what was good in everything they do. In order to reach the *summum bonum*, Plato discouraged arbitrary rules of conduct and desired for everyone to practice spiritual enlightenment under a moral framework. Such ideas as these possibly influenced Plato to create *The Republic*, which related to his idea of a just society.

During his stay in Sicily, Plato formed a bond with Dion, who brought him to meet his brother-in-law Dionysius, Syracuse's ruler. It is possible Dion really wanted to make Plato the court's philosopher-in-residence, but Dionysius did not enjoy having Plato, refusing to grant him a position in the court. The relationship between Plato and Dionysius grew worse when they discussed philosophy, leading into arguments. At one point, Plato referred to him as a tyrant, leading Dionysius to put him under arrest and "placed [him] on a Spartan ship bound for Aegina,

---

352. Strathern, *Plato in 90 Minutes*, 25.

where the captain was instructed to sell Plato as a slave."[353] As it is possible that Aegina was his birthplace rather than Athens, Dionysius thought it to be satisfying to humiliate Plato by sending him back home as a slave. However, "[h]e could also have been fairly certain that Plato would be recognized and bought by some influential friend, thus avoiding serious diplomatic repercussions with Athens."[354] In fact, an influential friend did buy Plato from the slave market.

Plato did not enjoy the thought of working for a living, but his friend, Anniceris the Cyrenaic, spotted him at Aegina's slave market and bought him for twenty minæ. Pleased with his price, Anniceris gave Plato enough money to establish his academy and had him return to Athens. Eventually, in 386 B.C., Plato purchased a plot of land beyond Athens' Eriai Gate and place what was possibly the world's first university at the Grove of Academe. Here, Plato established the Academy, which lasted many centuries. Soon, Plato established himself as a teacher, and it is highly possible that the Grove of Academe was where Plato discussed his work, *The Republic*, which he wrote in 370 B.C. From that point, Plato would criticize democracy, as a likely response to Athens' abuse of democracy and discuss his idea of a just society.

Plato's "Third Realm"

Before discussing Plato's criticism of Athens' democracy and democracy in general, it is important to understand Plato's idea of forms. As mentioned earlier, Plato held a theory of the existence of a Platonic realm where abstract concepts, such as forms and ideas, existed. This theory contributed to the idea of true justice, which would lead to the creation of the most just society, at least in Plato's viewpoint. As written by Michael T. Ferejohn, "Plato's extensive

---

353. Strathern, 31.

354. Strathern, 32.

theorizing on the characteristics of the best form of political state is undertaken for the sake of identifying the nature of justice in a human soul."[355] In other words, to understand Plato's concept of the highest form of justice, one must understand Plato's idea of the nature of the human soul. However, Plato's idea of the human soul is not understandable without having an in-depth understanding of his concept of the "Third Realm."

To begin, Plato strove to discover the nature of reality. He believed that everyday objects are not real, but reflections of what everyone's thoughts perceive from the "Third Realm." In *The Republic*, Plato created the "Allegory of the Cave,"[356] where he discussed how three men are chained facing the wall of a cave with a fire lit behind them. They can only see shadows of figures by the light of the fire on the wall of the cave, and they can only hear the noises behind them without seeing their origin. One prisoner is set free and ascends out of the cave to see the world as it is, including the sun. He goes back to the other chained prisoners to tell them what he saw, but they only ridicule him for his claims. Plato believed that the reality of everyday objects existed independently from a person's senses, living within a realm consisting of forms or abstract concepts.[357] As G. C. Field put it, "We should assume, for instance, that to be 'really there' the quality that we perceive must belong to its object independently of the condition of the person perceiving and, to some extent, of other surrounding conditions and circumstances."[358] In

---

355. Michael T. Ferejohn, "Knowledge, Recollection, and the Forms in *Republic* VII," in *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, ed. Gerasimos Santas (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006), 217.

356. See Plato, *Republic* 7.514a-517a for the full account of the Allegory of the Cave.

357. See Plato, *Republic* 7.517a-517c

358. G. C. Field, *The Philosophy of Plato,* 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 19.

other words, common objects only exist within a third realm and abstracted by the mind as

abstract concepts, whereas, the objects the senses perceive are illusory. As explained by Popper,

"[Plato] believed that to every kind of ordinary or decaying thing there corresponds also a perfect

thing that does not decay. This belief in perfect and unchanging things, usually called the *Theory*

of Forms or Ideas, became the central doctrine of his philosophy."[359] However, Aristotle would

later criticize Plato for his Platonic idealism, leading to the formation of Aristotelian realism, in

which abstract concepts are found within objects, which, according to Aristotle, do, indeed, exist.

Plato's Concept of Justice

With Plato's explanation of universals comes the abstract concept of justice, which was

essential for his argument against democracy. In fact, justice would be impossible to exist if

there were no universals. The *a priori* knowledge of universals is necessary to conceive the

abstract reality of justice.[360] In his work, *The Republic*, Plato placed Socrates and various others

Athenian characters in Cephalus' house for a feast, where Socrates would ask about the nature of

justice. Thrasymachus defined justice as "the interest of the stronger,"[361] "in which the individual

acted on the principle of pleonexia, of getting more than his share."[362] Thrasymachus' argument

of justice was most likely a reference to the Athenians' extreme egalitarianism, where the low-

class Athenians would practice distributive justice to make themselves absolutely equal with the

---

359. K. R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 21 (emphases in original); *See also* Plato, *Republic* 6.510d-511a.

360. Plato, *Republic* 4.433b-c

361. Plato, *Republic* 1.338c

362. Robert W. Hall, *Plato* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 55.

high-class Athenians. However, Socrates rebuked Thrasymachus by explaining how Polydamas is stronger than they are, yet they can live up to his healthy life. In other words, Socrates believed that it is not the strong who define justice, but those who are wise. He believed that the government could err, leading others to do what is injurious rather than what is just. As written by Alban Dewes Winspear, "He [Socrates] remarks that ruling groups frequently make mistakes about their own self-interest."[363] However, no one could define justice unless they described what a just society is first, at least in Plato's view.

According to Plato, the just life was the happiest of lives. He believed "that what human happiness is depends on what is good for us,"[364] and he taught that justice is the good for all mankind, believing that "the perfectly good city is the city that provides the greatest possible happiness for all of its citizens."[365] As he wrote in *The Republic*, "[O]ur aim in founding the State was not the disproportionate happiness of any one class, but the greatest happiness of the whole; we thought that in a State which is ordered with a view to the good of the whole we should be most likely to find justice, and in the worst-ordered State injustice."[366] However, Plato based his theory of justice on "[his] own theories of perfectionist-functional and formal good."[367] According to Popper, Plato believed in "the establishment of a state which is free from the evils

---

363. Winspear, *Plato's Thought*, 191.

364. Gerasimos Santas, *Goodness and Justice: Plato, Aristotle, and the Moderns* (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2001), 58.

365. Rachel G. K. Singpurwalla, "Plato's Defense of Justice in the *Republic*," in *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, ed. Gerasimos Santas (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006), 265.

366. Plato, *Republic* 4.420c; *See also* Plato, *Laws* 2.662c.

367. Santas, *Goodness and Justice*, 63.

of all other states because it does not degenerate, because it does not change."[368] Since Plato was

aware of the different systems of justice and goodness, based on his Platonic Realm of

hierarchical forms, Plato believed the *summum bonum* constituted true justice, and the justice of

society must coincide with the *summum bonum*. Nevertheless, the only person Plato believed to

know the *summum bonum* is the philosopher, as philosophers in his view would contemplate on

the forms of good until reaching the *summum bonum*, thereby applying justice to coincide with

that good to make a truly just society.

In *The Republic*, Plato has Socrates explain how the proper end of every function

corresponded with true justice.[369] Soon, Socrates began to explain why justice is the proper end

of the soul, leading to the happiest and most just life.[370] From that conclusion, Plato held that the

proper end of a soul is to be truly just, contributing to a just society and a happy life, considering

that the highest form of good contains the highest form of justice, leading man to the most just

life. However, oot only would justice be the happiest life, but also a virtuous life. According to

Aryeh Kosman, "A *virtue*, as we come to see in the development of the argument [*i.e.*, Plato's

argument of *The Republic*], is in turn a quality that an entity has that enables it to perform its

function well, that is, to be itself characteristically in a good fashion. . . . Understood in this way,

a virtue is simply a good quality."[371] Plato believed that "whatever is accompanied by justice or

---

368. Popper, *The Open* Society, 1:21.

369. See Plato, *Republic* 1.353a-353b.

370. Plato, *Republic* 1.353d-354a; *See also* Santas, *Goodness and Justice*, 67-68.

371. Aryeh Kosman, "Just and Virtue: The *Republic's* Inquiry into Proper Difference," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*, ed. G. R. F. Ferrari (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 120 (emphasis in original).

honesty is virtue, and whatever is devoid of any such quality is vice."[372] Eventually, Plato

concluded that justice is "doing one's own business and not being a busybody,"[373] narrowing it

down to "the having and doing what is a man's own and belongs to him."[374] In other words,

Plato believed justice composed of class rigidity. According to Popper, Plato "was not out to

construct a state that might come, but a state that had been—the father of the Spartan state,

which was certainly not a classless society. It was a slave state, and accordingly Plato's best state

is based on the most rigid class distinctions. It is a caste state."[375] Rather than being born into a

caste, Plato believed that people should be put into a caste based on their particular abilities.[376]

There would exist equal opportunities for the citizens, but there would also exist unequal

outcomes based on each citizen's caste. Nonetheless, Plato's concept of justice rose from his

criticism of the Athenians and their democracy for enacting injustice against his teacher Socrates,

perceiving the Athenians as uncontrollable in their passions.

Plato's Criticism of Democracy

Plato's idea of a just society seems totalitarian, but his intention was to create a society

aimed at justice. He disapproved of what the Athenians did to Socrates, believing Athens'

democracy to be too dangerous to society and unjust in itself. Plato desired a just society that

---

372. Plato, *Meno* 78e-79a; *See also* Terry Penner, "Socratic Ethics and the Socratic Psychology of Action: A Philosophical Framework," in *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates,* ed. Donald R. Morrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 275.

373. Plato, *Republic* 4.433a

374. Plato, *Republic* 4.434a

375. Popper, *The Open Society*, 1:46; *See also* Popper, 1:89-90.

376. See Kosmon, "Just and Virtue," 125, 127; Foster, *Plato and Hegel*, 7.

would produce happiness, but his idea of a just society seemed to arise from unjust means. As written by Gerasimos Santas, "Plato, using his own conception of functional-perfectionist good…, downgrades the good of freedom radically, and thus downgrades the democratic conception of justice all the way down next to the worst."[377] Plato believed everything must be unchangeable to imitate their unchanging form to better reflect reality. As Popper wrote, "Plato teaches *that change is evil*, *and that rest is divine*."[378] Since Plato thought change to be evil, he supported class rigidity. Even though Plato taught that kings must rule "according to the rules of wisdom and justice,"[379] his idea of a just society in *The Republic* was a strict meritocracy. In a sense, Plato's idea of a just society was essentially consequentialist.

Despite his meritocratic stance, Plato also wanted to avoid democracy from his learning how corrupt citizens can be, like those he viewed in Athens. Most likely referring to the Athenians, Plato noted how the unjust would receive praise and how everyone would ignore the just: "Have you not observed how, in a democracy, many persons, although they have been sentenced to death or exile, just stay where they are and walk about the world—the gentleman parades like a hero, and nobody sees or cares?"[380] Including with his criticism of Athens' democracy, "Plato saw the war [the Peloponnesian War] and Athens' eventual defeat in 404 BC as a sign of her inadequacy to meet the political, moral[,] and spiritual needs of the people."[381]

---

377. Santas, *Goodness and Justice*, 64.

378. Popper, *The Open Society*, 1:37 (emphasis in original).

379. Strathern, *Plato in 90 Minutes*, 40.

380. Plato, *Republic* 8.558a

381. Hall, *Plato*, 1; *See also* Hall, 3.

Under Plato's view, the Athenians held more concern for themselves than for the State, or rather the common good, leading to injustice.[382]

Furthermore, democracy in Plato's perspective concentrated on the envy the poor had against the rich in Athens. Plato believed the poor citizens desired power against the Athenian oligarchs, who constituted the rich citizens.[383] From the Athenian Revolution came the rise of democracy, which Plato saw as a mob-rule rather than one of liberty, though his perspective was of Athens after the reign of the Thirty Tyrants rather than Athens between the Athenian Revolution and the reign of the Thirty Tyrants. Nevertheless, Plato deemed Athens' democracy to revolve around injustice as he believed the citizens were not wise enough to rule based on his perspective that the Athenian jury's sentencing of Socrates to death was unjustifiable. Regardless, Plato also condemned Athens' constant changing of government, which related to his criticism of democracy.

Plato's *Kyklos*

As previously shown, Athens constantly changed its form of government. As Plato had Socrates allude in *The Republic*, "Clearly, all political changes originate in divisions of the actual governing power; a government which is united, however small, cannot be moved."[384] Plato believed that an aristocracy was the best form of government under this sense, which there will be an explanation of later. As he wrote in *The Republic*, "Him who answers to aristocracy, and

---

382. See Plato, *Republic* 8.556c.

383. See Plato, *Republic* 8.557a.

384. Plato, *Republic* 8.545d. Plato's idea of a small government rested on his belief that an aristocracy was the just form of government.

whom we rightly call just and good, we have already described."[385] However, Plato did not approve of timocratic, oligarchic, democratic, or tyrannical governments, believing them to be contrary to justice, as those ruling these different types of governments have unjust desires. As Norbert Blössner put it, "Because these desires are directed towards goods that cannot be shared, they are in essence unjust."[386] The "Five Regimes," as Plato called them, go through a decline known as a *Kyklos*, despite this concept relying on the slippery slope fallacy and historicism.[387]

Plato taught that the best form of government, an aristocracy, began to decline towards a timocracy after the social classes of Athens disputed with each other.[388] When Solon made his timocracy in Athens, he separated the citizens of Athens to four different social classes, being the "Pentacosiomedimni, Knights, Zeugitae, and Thetes,"[389] with each class reserving a certain amount of political power.[390] Essentially, a timocracy based itself on the "Spartan or heroic system marked by competition and determination," which "deriv[ed] from rule by ambition."[391]

---

385. Plato, *Republic* 8.545a

386. Norbert Blössner, "The City-Soul Analogy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*, ed. G. R. F. Ferrari, trans. G. R. F. Ferrari (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 370.

387. It is possible for Plato to not be guilty of committing the slippery slope fallacy or historicism if he believed his *Kyklos* to be a *possibility* of future events rather than a prediction of events that will *absolutely* happen.

388. See Plato, *Republic* 8.547b-c.

389. Arist. *Const*. *Ath*. 7

390. See Arist. *Const*. *Ath*. 7 for an in-depth look of how Solon's timocracy divided properties.

391. Simon Blackburn, *Plato's Republic: A Biography* (London: Atlantic Books, 2006), 133.

What Plato found problematic here is how the State is no longer in unity, with the citizens of Athens now inclining more to wealth and less to wisdom. From this idea, he understood that the Athenians chose leaders based on honor and not on wisdom.[392] As Simon Blackburn described the situation, although the "militia will live the same communal life . . . there will be overvaluation of military men, and because of the general loutishness of the society, there will be greed, and since the displays of wealth are frowned upon, this greed will issue in miserliness."[393] As long as the Athenians continue to value wealth, their desire to honor degenerates to a desire for wealth, as "men of this stamp will be covetous of money, like those who live in oligarchies."[394] This prediction of the honorable Athenians' desire for wealth assumed that Athens' timocracy would degrade towards an oligarchy.[395]

Athenians with large properties would, in Plato's view, desire more money and power, ignoring virtue. The rich Athenians of a timocracy would "grow richer and richer, and the more they think of making a fortune the less they honour virtue,"[396] leading them to "look up to the rich man, and promote him to high office, and dishonour the poor man,"[397] which "breeds envy and once more a corresponding undervaluation of genuine virtue."[398] Eventually, these

---

392. See Plato, *Republic* 8.547e-548a

393. Blackburn, *Plato's Republic*, 134.

394. Plato, *Republic* 8.548a

395. Plato's concept of an oligarchy was really a *plutocracy* since it was not essentially a rule of simply the few but of the rich.

396. Plato, *Republic* 8.550e

397. Plato, *Republic* 8.551a

398. Blackburn, *Plato's Republic*, 134.

Athenians with power would require a certain amount of money to contribute to the government, where every poor Athenian would not have any say in the government.[399] However, there are flaws that arise in an oligarchy.

In Plato's view, the greed of the oligarch eventually served as the ruin of the oligarchy.[400] Along with the weakness of the character of the oligarchs, the suppression of the poor citizens would result in creating an army and stabilizing the economy. Creating an army and stabilizing the economy may not appear problematic at first, but under the context of an oligarchy ruled by unjust rulers who suppress the poor, the oligarchy would end from the establishment of an army of poor quality when only supplying arms to the oligarchs chosen to combat. The oligarchy could supply the poor citizens with arms, but its relationship to the citizens would make that decision problematic. As Plato wrote, "Another discreditable feature is that, for a like reason, they are incapable of carrying on any war. Either they must arm the multitude, and then they are more afraid of them than of the enemy; or, if they do not call them out in the hour of battle, they are oligarchs indeed, few to fight as they are few to rule."[401] Namely, if the oligarchs armed the poor citizens of Athens to fight in wars, the oligarchs may fear that the poor citizens would use the weapons given to them to revolt against the oligarchy. If the oligarchs only armed themselves, very few would fight in battle, especially since certain oligarchs needed to stay behind to rule the city. Nevertheless, once the poor revolt against the oligarchs or if the oligarchs withdraw, the poor citizens will create a democracy, a degeneration of oligarchy, according to Plato.

---

399. Plato, *Republic* 8.551b

400. See Blackburn, *Plato's Republic*, 135.

401. Plato, *Republic* 551d-e

According to Plato, after suffering through poverty by the oligarchs, the lower class of

Athens grew until it becomes a threat to the oligarchs. In this case, the oligarchs' excessive

desire for wealth brought about the poverty of lower classes, reducing even good men to poverty.

Under this idea, the actions of oligarchs ended up "breed[ing] indisciplined [sic] and intemperate

children, spoiled, soft and lazy, many of whom will ruin themselves."[402] Plato blamed Athens'

oligarchy for creating a culture of extreme egalitarianism in Athens. According to Plato the

Athenians revolted against the oligarchs after suffering from their excessive love for wealth,

leading to the Athenian Revolution.[403] The poor Athenian in Plato's perspective would become

envious of the rich and soon realize that "men like him are only rich because no one has the

courage to despoil them."[404] Once after the lower class defeated the oligarchs, a democracy

arose. However, the danger of a democracy, in Plato's view, came from its similarity to anarchy.

As mentioned before, Plato's view of democracy consisted of citizens abandoning

wisdom to fulfill their own desires. It is the rejection of a good State, going after one's own

desires and not looking after the common good, in which case "the poor take over, distributing

political power and office at random."[405] Plato perceived democracy as a complete shunning of

aristocracy, in which the citizens no longer interest themselves with wisdom.[406] In a democracy,

the citizens would desire what is not necessary for them, as the oligarchs previously ruling over

---

402. Blackburn, *Plato's Republic*, 135.

403. See Plato, *Republic* 555d-e. Even Aristotle would admit that "poverty is the parent of revolution and crime" in Arist. *Pol*. II.6.1265b10-15.

404. Plato, *Republic* 556d

405. Blackburn, *Plato's Republic*, 135.

406. See Plato, *Republic* 558a-b.

them prevented them from having whatever they desired as they suffered from poverty. This excessive desire is contrary to wisdom, as an excessive desire for what is not necessary can make one a "slave of the unnecessary desires."[407] Under Plato's perspective, growing out of an oligarchy, the democrat still maintains unhealthy desires, "installing as guides those who know nothing just as readily as those who know their way about."[408] However, after explaining how a democrat pursues unhealthy desires,[409] from living in insolence and anarchy, he concludes how "[h]is life has neither law nor order; and this distracted existence, which he terms joy and bliss and freedom, continues throughout his life,"[410] even though the democrat "recognizes at least external limits on the satisfaction of his appetites."[411] In other words, "Like the democratic city, the democratic man is characterized by a lack of plan and organization in his life."[412] Plato believed democracy followed whim rather than reason, creating radical egalitarianism.

Although Athens did not practice an ochlocracy before the rise of the Thirty Tyrants, Plato's perception of Athens' democracy is from after the fall of the tyrants and the execution of Socrates. One could read Plato's writing about how sensitive he finds the citizens when they come across authority. According to Plato, "And above all, I said, and as the result of all, see

407. Plato, *Republic* 559d

408. Blackburn, *Plato's Republic*, 136.

409. Plato, *Republic* 560a-561e

410. Plato, *Republic* 561d

411. C. D. C. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006), 48.

412. Nicholas P. White, *A Companion to Plato's Republic* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1979), 216.

how sensitive the citizens become; they chafe impatiently at the least touch of authority, and at length, as you know, they cease to care even for the laws, written or unwritten; they will have no master over them all."[413] Nonetheless, Plato did not consider democracy as the worst type of government. He believed once someone realized democracy's problem, its lack of order, that person would seize power. Plato believed the destruction of democracy, as well as oligarchy, originated from the "excessive indulgence in what they call good."[414] However, the one who seized political power to stop democracy will do so excessively, degenerating democracy into a tyranny, the worst government of Plato's Five Regimes.

Plato believed the excess of liberty found in a democracy led to an excess of slavery.[415] A tyrant would appear as one who wants to protect the citizens, only then to murder one or more of them to disestablish democracy and soon murder multiple citizens, turning the democracy into a tyranny.[416] As C. D. C. Reeve put it, "In him [the tyrant], *pleonexia*, or the desire to have more and more without limit, rages unchecked."[417] The citizens suffering from the tyranny are now powerless to stop the tyrant as he seized all power, leading to the desire for his assassination. As Plato wrote, "And if they [the citizens] are unable to expel him [the tyrant], or to get him condemned to death by a public accusation, they conspire to assassinate him secretly."[418] The

---

413. Plato, *Republic* 563d-e

414. White, *Plato's Republic*, 217.

415. See Plato, *Republic* 564a; Blackburn, *Plato's Republic*, 138.

416. See Plato, *Republic* 565d-566a.

417. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings*, 47 (emphasis in original).

418. Plato, *Republic* 566a-b

tyrant would first appear as promising to the State,[419] but he must rid himself of all opponents. As mentioned in the *Republic*, "And if any of them are suspected by him of having such notions of freedom as may make them rebellious to his authority, he will have a good pretext for destroying them by placing them at the mercy of the enemy; and for all these reasons the tyrant must be always getting up a war."[420] The tyrant would purge the State of those disloyal to him, leaving a State with only citizens loyal to him. As for the preservation of the tyranny, the tyrant would confiscate the city's treasures and his victims' fortunes.[421] The tyrant would even commit parricide if his parents opposed his authority.[422] The tyrant would be too powerful to stop, transforming the State into a true tyranny: the tyranny of slavery.

One problem with Plato's preference for an aristocracy is how he never explained why it is the best form of government, at least in his opinion. However, Robert W. Hall appeared to believe that Plato justified aristocracy from deductive reasoning, in which Plato praised aristocracy for its conformity to justice, then criticizing unjust forms of government by explaining how they degenerate from aristocracy and do not conform to justice.[423] In this sense, Plato supported aristocracy because he believed only a few people were virtuous, and those few virtuous people would be proper rulers. However, he did not seem to consider if virtuous people would *remain* virtuous. His idea of a just society appeared to be too idealistic, which is why the

---

419. See Plato, *Republic* 566d-e.

420. Plato, *Republic* 567a

421. See Plato, *Republic* 568d.

422. See Plato, *Republic* 569b.

423. See Hall, *Plato*, 87.

graphe paranomon would act as the main procedure of conducting trials after the dismissal of ostracism. The procedure of the *graphe paranomon* acted as a democratic form of vetoing bills against the People's Assembly in an attempt to challenge demagogues.[424] If Plato thought demagogues could easily persuade the common people, he seemed to ignore the legal procedure of *graphe paranomon*, unless he thought the People's Court to also be prone to corruption.

Plato seemed to have too much distrust on the Athenian citizens, which makes it highly likely that he made his account of Socrates as a political propaganda and ignored certain details of the history of Socrates' trial that would likely change the popular view of the Athenians as corruptors of democracy. After all, a possible mass psychosis over the Athenians appeared to play a more prominent role in Socrates' execution rather than an extensive desire for wealth. Plato's intense distrust on the Athenians would ironically make him a tyrant based on his argument of the tyrant's disregard for the well-being of the citizens and overconfidence in his idea of knowing the truth through forms based on his conception of himself as a philosopher. In fact, it is ironic for Plato promote an ideal society in response to Socrates' death despite the Athenians' opposition to Socrates for not representing the ideal Athenian. It would appear then that the perfectionism of the ideal society holds a significant role in social corruption. Plato would fall fool for the perfectionism the Athenians fell for, especially if he were to idealize his republic as the Athenians idealized Athens. Just like the Athenians, Plato would end up making himself a type of nationalist. Nevertheless, since Plato did not believe timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny conformed to justice or virtue, he left himself with the conclusion that aristocracy conformed to justice and virtue.

---

424. See Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy*, 207-208.

In the case of democracy, Plato criticized it not solely for the rule of uneducated citizens, leading to unjust laws and rulings, but he saw democracy as the origin of tyranny. He believed that if democracy did not end soon, Athens would degenerate into a tyranny. His criticism of Athens' democracy originated with Socrates' trial and his death, but he only saw them as the prelude to a tyrannical state. This radical egalitarianism on the *status quo* is what impelled Plato to create his idea of a just society, believing Athens' downfall resulted from egalitarianism's prevention of order. As Foster explained, "Thus there are two lines or currents in Plato's argument, the former explicit, the latter implicit; the former contending that the Polis exhibits an organic, that is a natural, unity, the latter implying that it is essential to the Polis that is should possess over and above its natural unity a differentia which no natural object can possess."[425] However, Plato was not overtly critical of democracy. According to Nicholas P. White, in Book VII of the *Republic*, "he [Plato] has kind words about democracy, precisely because—it seems— such a city allows scope for a wide variety of activities, including the sort of philosophical activity in which he himself engaged."[426] Nevertheless, from the perspective that democracy is still a weak, unstable, and unjust form of government, Plato decided to create his form of a just society to preserve the State from degenerating from an aristocracy into a tyranny.

Plato's "Just" Society

In contrast to Athens' direct democracy, Plato's concept of a just society based itself on a meritocratic perspective. According to Plato's thought, "[s]ince the city is perfectly good, and since it is by means of its own peculiar virtues that a things is good, the city must contain all of

---

425. Foster, *Plato and Hegel*, 5.

426. White, *Plato's Republic*, 244.

the virtues appropriate to a city."[427] Throughout the *Republic*, Plato described his version of a

just society "on such widespread topics as free speech, feminism, birth control, public and

private morality, parenthood, psychology, education, public and private ownership, and much

more."[428] He believed that such a society was possible through education, since just individuals

"who [lived] in accordance with the value of acquiring and acting on the knowledge of what is

best will live a life devoted to learning."[429] However, he also believed that not every Athenian

citizen would learn how to rule a state justly, leading him to believe that only kings with

knowledge of the science of royalty would know best what is necessary to create a just society as

they would necessarily contemplate on wisdom.[430] As a result, he advocated for "philosopher-

kings," which were simply rulers who held a great deal of knowledge in philosophy. However,

Plato also believed the philosopher-kings were prone to corruption through intellectual failure.[431]

So, to prevent the failures of philosopher-kings, Plato believed "[w]hat the philosopher must

finally be brought to is a knowledge of something more important even than the virtues—the

form of the good,"[432] which would be Plato's concept of God. The philosopher-kings would be

the most fit to rule over others as the philosopher-king "moderated, not only his appetitive

---

427. Singpurwalla, "Plato's Defense of Justice," 265.

428. Strathern, *Plato in 90 Minutes*, 35.

429. Singpurwalla, "Plato's Defense of Justice," 270.

430. See Plato, *Statesman* 293a-293b.

431. See Plato, *Phaedrus* 248c-248e.

432. Reeve, *Philosopher Kings*, 194.

desires, but also his spirited ones."[433] This type of king would rule over the whole state under a

collectivist perspective, distrusting the citizens from living self-sufficiently.

Plus, philosopher-kings, under Plato's perspective, have a habit of contemplating the

forms and the nature of justice, benefitting the good of the State. As Donald R. Morrison noted

regarding Plato's writing of Socrates' argument of what makes someone a true philosopher,

> For it makes a huge difference of two possibilities he has in mind: (1) a true philosopher is a lover of wisdom, one who aspires to knowledge but does not (necessarily) have it yet, or (2) the true philosopher whose rule is key to the approximation of heaven on earth does not just *love* wisdom, but *has* it; not just *aspires* to knowledge of the just the beautiful, and the good, but *has* that knowledge.[434]

However, as mentioned by Blössner, "'Philosopher-kings' are not, properly speaking, kings,

because they do not exert power. Instead, they alter ways of thinking."[435] Plato merely wanted

rulers to be philosopher-kings, whereas it is not necessary to *be* a ruler to be a philosopher-king.

As Popper wrote, "According to the *Republic*, the original or primitive form of society, and at

the same time, the one that resembles the Form or Idea of a state most closely, the 'best state', is a

kingship of the wisest and most godlike of men."[436] Whether one was a ruler or not, everyone

had to be a philosopher-king. Nevertheless, many of the suggestions Plato made to make a good

---

433. Reeve, *Philosopher Kings*, 48; *See also* Plato, *Republic* 487e-489a for his parable of the Ship of State to understand Plato's reason for advocating philosophers as rulers.

434. Donald R. Morrison, "The Utopian Character of Plato's Ideal City," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*, ed. G. R. F. Ferrari (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 236 (emphasis in original).

435. Blössner, "The City-Soul Analogy," 367.

436. Popper, *The Open Society*, 1:39 (emphasis in original).

society were dictatorial, contrary to how one would imagine a philosopher who desired wisdom would propose.

Plato believed that marriages were only permittable to the lower class and that the State should have full control over the children. However, the State would only prevent the children of middle and upper classes from knowing their own parents.[437] Still, by the time the children were twenty years old, they would learn gymnastics and uplifting Athenian military music. As tyrannical as Plato's republic may sound, "[he] was almost certainly born [out] of wedlock, his mother appear[ing] to have soon taken a second husband, and Plato was almost certainly brought up in a number of households,"[438] leaving him little time to have a real family life. Without experiencing life in a family, Plato would not fully realize the consequences of his decision to forcefully separate families. Regardless, he even promoted banning "the worship of the gods, religion, and mythology,"[439] as understood by paganism, replacing them with his own idea of God, who, Plato believed, was unforgiving and demanding of worship. Plato as well advocated for a state-controlled education that would foster temperance in wealth as intemperance may cause a revolution from excessive wealth or excessive poverty.[440] As Plato wrote, "[I]f childish amusement becomes lawless, it will produce lawless children, who can never grow up into well-conducted and virtuous citizens,"[441] especially since "the direction in which education starts a

---

437. See Plato, *Republic* 461c-e.

438. Strathern, *Plato in 90 Minutes*, 37.

439. Strathern, 39.

440. See Plato, *Republic* 422a.

441. Plato, *Republic* 424e-425a

man will determine his future life."[442] Plato did have a point that too much individualism can

lead to radical egalitarianism, which would come from the avoidance of pain in any way

possible, but his collectivism deprived citizens of their liberties and responsibilities.[443] Plus, with

Plato's strict treatment of the citizens, to the point of indignity, as he removed children from their

parents soon after birth, communism and fascism adopted many of his ideas of a "just"

society.[444] The State would function upon the systematic functions of the citizens. Having the

citizens do what they do best would contribute to their happiness, even though they may not

enjoy what they are good at or enjoy class mobility.

However, as corrupt as his society seemed to modern libertarians, Plato's main goal was

to create a just government not based upon democracy. As Foster wrote, the "difference in the

status of rulers and ruled is the key to the understanding of Plato's whole theory of

government,"[445] necessitating that the government should not have a democracy. However, Plato

supported a dictatorship in which everyone must have absolute submission to the State without

criticism or else suffer dire punishments. The problem with Plato's authoritarian view of total

obedience to the state is how that was what held responsibility for the death of Socrates in the

---

442. Plato, *Republic* 425b-c

443. What is ironic about Plato's collectivist mindset and his devotion to Socrates is how Socrates was both an individualist and anti-authoritarian. Why would Socrates create the Socratic dialogue which required having an open mind if he was a collectivist, considering that collectivism rested on the premise that one person can know everything for everyone? See Popper, *The Open Society*, 1:128-129.

444. See Strathern, *Plato in 90 Minutes*, 40; Fred Miller, "Aristotle's Political Theory," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, last updated Nov. 7, 2017, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-politics/.

445. Foster, *Plato and Hegel*, 43.

first place. Just like the Athenians, Plato puffed himself up with pride and resisted changes to society, making himself a hypocrite.

In fact, there is a possibility that Plato wrote *The Republic* as a way of justifying Sparta's social lifestyle. Many aspects of what Plato wrote in *The Republic* reflected those of Spartan society, which he would characterize as a just state. However, Sparta's oligarchy did not promote intellectual training as that would likely create independent thinking and an eventual skepticism of Sparta's governance. Intellectualism threatened to create a democratic society that would weaken Sparta's authoritarian oligarchy. Ironically, it was from Athens' democracy that Plato was able to create his philosophical stance against democracy, as Athens promoted an individualistic stance in intellectualism. Sparta would not allow such intellectualism to exist, so Plato was probably arguing that Sparta should adopt an intellectual leadership, considering that neither Plato nor Socrates would likely receive a warm welcome in Sparta. Possibly, Plato's sympathy for Sparta was just a strong emotional reaction against what Athens did to Socrates, showing Plato's lack of prudence and hypocrisy for believing the Athenians needed to learn temperance when he was not temperate himself. Nevertheless, even though Plato believed democracy to devolve into injustice, Aristotle would form his own idea of a just democracy, not by simply denouncing democracy, but by refining it and including it in his idea of a mixed constitution.

CHAPTER IV

ARISTOTLE: CRITIC OF DEMOCRACY AND SUPPORTER OF POLITY

Born in the Greek city of Stagira in 384 B.C., Aristotle descended from the Ionion

Greeks. His mother was Phaestis and his father was Nicomachus, who served as King Amyntas

II of Macedonia's court physician. When Aristotle's parents died, a relative of his, by the name

of Proxenus, became his guardian, educating Aristotle until he was seventeen. Soon, Aristotle

left for Athens in 367 B.C. to complete his education, where he would meet Plato.

In Athens, Aristotle was initially a student at Isocrates' school of rhetoric, but he left for

the Academy after Plato, who was attempting to make a philosopher-ruler, returned from

Syracuse. Plato soon came to appreciate Aristotle's intellectual power. Later, Aristotle would

occupy teaching positions in the Academy, and he attempted to reconcile his views with Plato's;

however, his views differed from Plato's views in logic and methodology. For example,

"[Aristotle] did not surrender his independence of judgement or succumb entirely either to

Plato's magnetic charm or to his doctrine of universal ideas or 'forms.'"[446] As a result, Aristotle

theorized his own idea of universals, where the form of the object existed in particular things and

in intellects, which abstracts universals from particular things, rather than existing independently

in a Platonic Realm. As he wrote in his work, *Problems*, "[T]hat which is invariable and

universal is not the result of chance, but is in the nature of things."[447] In this way, Plato distrusted

a person's ability to achieve true knowledge from the senses, which may be a factor in his

distrust against democracy. However, Aristotle objected to Plato's "Third Realm," eventually

---

446. Anderson, *Man's Quest*, 260.

447. Arist. *Prob*. XV.3, 910b30-35, trans. Forster

leading him to reject Plato's philosophical basis for his line of thinking. Consequently, Aristotle left the Academy and never returned. Although it was possible for Aristotle to succeed Plato as the Academy's new head, Plato's nephew, Speusippus, took the position.

Aristotle left Athens with Xenocrates, one of the Academy's staff-members, to join Erastus and Coriscus, former Academy students, at Assos, where he would meet Callisthenes. South of them, there was a kingdom ruled by Hermeias, and, under his protection, Aristotle lectured to him on the state's public problems. Later, Aristotle began to study biology and continued his scientific studies at Lesbos. However, his life would not continue in a simple manner once Philip had Aristotle come to Macedonia to tutor his son Alexander, who was the prince. Philip wanted Alexander to learn everything needed for him to be a fit ruler for an expanding empire, so Aristotle taught him the liberal arts, such as reading, mathematics, government, etc. About seven years later, an assassin murdered Philip, leading Alexander to succeed to the throne, and Aristotle no longer had to tutor him.

With Alexander ruling Macedonia, Aristotle returned to Athens and established a new school called the Lyceum in 335 B.C. However, "[w]hen Alexander put Callisthenes to death in the spring of 327 B.C., the relationship between Aristotle and Alexander drastically deteriorated, although at one time they must have been on rather friendly terms."[448] Regardless, in the school, Aristotle would focus on studying from an empirical view since he did not trust Plato's line of thinking on studying from a non-empirical view. Aristotle would teach "that one cannot know

---

448. Anton-Hermann Chroust, *Aristotle: New light on his life and on some of his lost works*, vol. 1, *Some novel interpretations of the man and his life* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973), 86.

any scientific field thoroughly without knowing its development from the beginning."[449] For

example, in his work, *Politics*, Aristotle criticized Plato's and Hippodamus' ideas of a just

society. He believed, from an empirical level, that man was a social animal that always pursued

what was good, either for himself or for everyone, especially the chief good, which was

happiness.[450] Ultimately, "[h]appiness, then, is something complete and self-sufficient, and is

the end of action,"[451] or, in other words, what everyone ultimately desires. Additionally, this

understanding of the natural pursuit to happiness influenced Aristotle's understanding of politics.

According to Aristotle, the chief end of man is also the end of the State since the State is

the composition of men as political animals.[452] As Malcolm Schofield explained,

> [T]he chief good has to be something which in and of itself satisfies the aspirations
> of someone who shares his life *with* the family that depends on him and with friends
> and fellow citizens, and satisfies them inasmuch as he does so. If the chief good
> then turns out to be happiness conceived as "activity of soul according with virtue
> or virtues," it follows that those virtues will have to be such as to enable a person
> in and of himself alone to behave as he should toward family members and toward
> friends and citizens, and to enjoy the life he shares with them to the full. They will
> have an inevitably social orientation.[453]

Thus, "[t]he *polis* is a natural product of man's striving for the good, and the *polis* in turn

becomes a means for further progress toward the good life."[454] From this idea, Aristotle

---

449. Anderson, *Man's Quest*, 265.

450. See Arist. *EN* I.2.1094a15-25; Arist. *EN* I.7.1097a30-1097b25.

451. Arist. *EN* I.7.1097b20-25

452. Arist. EN I.2.1094a20-1094b15

453. Malcolm Schofield, "Aristotle's Political Ethics," in *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Richard Kraut (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), 312 (emphasis in original).

454. Anderson, *Man's Quest*, 267 (emphases in original).

suggested writing a constitution that made a just form of government and fashioned a type of living where everyone received a good education in order for the citizens to pursue goodness, as Aristotle believed the pursuit of goodness is part of human nature. However, he advised all types of government to start educating the youth under his concept of pursuing "the good."

Regardless of his advice to different governments, Aristotle endorsed a mixed constitution, identifying democracy as one of the corrupt forms of government. Influenced by his interest in biology, which involved "handling the lowest forms of life as well as the highest, and all the bodily parts and organs with equal care, in order to understand them all in relation to life as a whole,"[455] Aristotle believed that there are good and bad forms of government. He believed a government composed of all the good forms of constitution would serve as the most just government, whereas a government composed of all the bad forms of constitution would serve as the most unjust government. An example would come from his understanding of what an unjust democracy would be, which he simply called *democracy*, though it was really an *ochlocracy*.

Aristotle's Concept of Universals

Just as with Plato, it is important to understand Aristotle's concept of universals and justice before discussing his criticism of democracy. Aristotle believed democracy to be unjust based upon his concept of universals. However, his idea of universals greatly differed from Plato's theory of universals. As Plato understood universals to exist independently in a "Third Realm," Aristotle believed they existed *dependently* on an object's nature. Thus, it is important to make an in-depth analysis of Aristotle's concept of the reality of universals.

---

455. Anderson, 268.

To begin, Aristotle distinguished between substances and accidental properties. He believed that substances are what define the reality of an object, as "they are not predicated of a subject but everything else is predicated of them."[456] For instance, there exists rational and non-rational animals. Non-rational animals, such as dogs and cats, have the same substance of animality with rational animals; namely, humans. Their difference relies on their accidental properties. Cats and dogs have the accidental property of non-rationality, whereas humans have the accidental property of rationality. Of course, animals and humans are widely different based on their accidental differences, but Aristotle would object to the view that the universal reality of the substance, animality, would exist independently in a "Third Realm."

In Platonic idealism, the universal, animality, would reside in a realm independent from accidental properties, but Aristotle found this type of realism concerning. If animality existed independently from accidental properties, then the idea of animality would be one that is neither rational nor irrational, which is impossible. This difficulty in logic would violate Aristotle's Law of Non-contradictions, where "the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject in the same respect."[457] In this case, animality cannot logically be rational and irrational at the same time, place, and respect.

Since Aristotle found it impossible for universals to exist independently, he proposed that they existed *dependently* on the nature of the object. He taught that "universal attributes belong to things in virtue of their own nature, but accidents do not belong to things in virtue of their own

---

456. Arist. *Met*. V.8, 1017b10-15, trans. Ross

457. Arist. *Met*. V.3, 1005b15-20

nature, but are predicated without qualification only of the individuals."[458] However, in defense

of the "Third Realm" theory, Plato formed the "Third Man" argument, which stated that every

object had its own form, but that would make the same substances different at the same time,

another violation of the Law of Non-contradiction. For example, if there are two people,

common-sense would state that they are both rational animals. However, the "Third Man"

argument would state that they have each a different form, making one not *exactly* a rational

animal. Consequently, one rational animal could be superior or inferior or somewhat to another

rational animal of the same nature, which is impossible. As Aristotle taught, "For Socrates and

musical Socrates are thought to be the same; but 'Socrates' is not predicable of more than one

subject, and therefore we do not say 'every Socrates' as we say 'every man'."[459] In other words,

if Socrates made music, and at another time did not make music, the one who made music would

be different from the one who did not. However, that concept would be implausible since the

subject, Socrates, is still the same subject. In criticism of Plato's "Third Realm," Aristotle

believed it "to be impossible that the substance and that of which it is the substance should exist

apart," questioning "how…the Ideas, being the substances of things, exist apart?"[460] With the

impossibility of universals existing independently in another realm and existing only as one thing

reflecting particular objects in the "Third Man" argument, universals, under the concept of

abstraction, relies not on the "Third Realm," but, according to Aristotle, on the human mind from

its ability to abstract universals. This concept of universals would contribute to his understanding

---

458. Arist. *Met*. V.9, 1017b35-1018a5

459. Arist. *Met*. V.9.1018a1-5

460. Arist. *Met*. I.9.991b1-5

of justice, which he would later use to create a just society in relation to his opposition to Athens' democracy.

Aristotle's Understanding of Political Justice

Aristotle's concept of political justice fell under two categories: General Justice and Particular Justice. He understood justice as "the lawful and the equal," while seeing injustice as "the unlawful and the unequal."[461] His general understanding of justice simply consisted of lawful men abiding by the laws of the State, whereas unlawful men who violated the laws of the State are guilty of committing acts of injustice.[462] However, he also ascribed the existence of a type of universal justice that existed independently from human convention.[463] As vague as it may appear, Aristotle eventually described political justice as "complete excellence—not absolutely, but in relation to others."[464] Likewise explained by Charles M. Young in laymen terms, "Aristotle argues in the Nicomachean Ethics that justice (in one use of the term) counts as the whole of virtue and that (in another use of the term) it is the virtue that expresses one's conception of oneself as a member of a community of free and equal human beings: as a citizen."[465] Nevertheless, Aristotle held that justice, in its narrow sense, consisted of equality based on its lawfulness.

---

461. Arist. *EN* V.1.1129b1-5

462. See Arist. *EN* V.1.1129b10-15.

463. Arist. *EN* V.7.1134b15-25

464. Arist. *EN* V.1.1129b25-30; *See also* Arist. *EN* V.1.1129b30-1130a5.

465. Charles M. Young, "Aristotle's Justice," in *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Richard Kraut (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), 179; *See also* Schofield, "Aristotle's Political Ethics," 314.

Aristotle believed injustice consisted of inequality, considering that citizens not abiding by the law are committing acts not in proportion to what is lawful. He held such an example of particular justice as based upon distributive justice and corrective justice. As he taught in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, "Of particular justice and that which is just in the corresponding sense, one kind is that which is manifested in distributions of honour or money or other things that fall to be divided among those who have a share in the constitution . . . and another kind is that which plays a rectifying part in transactions."[466] Furthermore, Aristotle held that justice depended on equality since it correlated with proportionality.[467] The equality in justice, both through voluntary and involuntary transactions,[468] would necessitate reciprocity, as the Pythagoreans "defined justice without qualification as reciprocity."[469] In this case, Aristotle believed justice to rely on proportional reciprocity (*i.e.*, to give what one owes) and proportional retribution (*i.e.*, "eye for an eye"). However, "[Aristotle did] not [say] anything about the substance of their view or their reasons for holding it,"[470] even though "[he] is committed, methodologically, to taking such views seriously."[471] Regardless, Aristotle also believed the application of justice through punishment varied based on the reason for the crime.

---

466. Arist. *EN* V.2.1130b30-1131a1

467. See Arist. *EN* V.3.1131a10-30; Arist. *EN* V.3.1131b15-20.

468. See Arist. *EN* V.4.

469. Arist. *EN* V.5.1132b20-25

470. Young, "Aristotle's Justice," 186.

471. Young, 187.

Aristotle taught both natural and legal justice, in which there existed a universal concept of justice, but the application of such ideas of political justice varied based on the crime committed. As he taught, "Of political justice part is natural, part legal,—natural, that which everywhere has the same force and does not exist by people's thinking this or that; legal, that which is originally indifferent, but when it has been laid down is not indifferent."[472] Justice by nature "amounts to the whole of virtue,"[473] which is right reason in accordance with nature, but legal justice, commonly called particular justice, "is an individual virtue of character coordinate with courage, temperance, liberality, and so on, and is, like each of them, a part of universal justice."[474] In other words, particular justice refers to simply obeying what is the law based on conventional norms of individual acts. However, there can exist justice that the law does not recognize or even forbids, separating natural justice from legal justice.[475]

Nevertheless, Aristotle noted that there should be a distinction between natural and legal justice, recognizing natural justice as universal and unchangeable and legal justice as restricted and changeable.[476] Many perspectives of legal justice vary, but universal justice is absolute. All governments vary by legal justice, but they must accept universal justice. According to Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, "[T]he things which are just not by nature but by human enactment

---

472. Arist. *EN* V.7.1134b15-20

473. Young, "Aristotle's Justice," 181.

474. Young, 181.

475. See Popper, *The Open Society*, 1:58 to read Popper's similar take on justice. However, Popper does not use the terms *natural justice* or *legal justice*, but *the natural law* and *normative laws*.

476. See Arist. *EN* V.7.1134b20-31.

are not everywhere the same, since constitutions also are not the same, though there is but one which is everywhere by nature the best."[477] There exists justice in its universal sense, and legal justice referred to one's actions in relation to the universal understanding of justice but varying according to the culture and society where they occur. Though Aristotle's concept of justice is very complex, his general understanding of justice comprised actions in application to right reason. It would be though this understanding of justice that Aristotle would criticize democracy in relation to Athens' government. However, his criticism of democracy is much more perplexing than his understanding of justice.

Aristotle's Criticism of Democracy

Just like Plato, Aristotle was not a supporter of democracy because of the Athenians' decision to sentence Socrates to death. However, Aristotle's approach to condemning democracy differed from Plato's approach. For example, Plato did not trust democracy, seeing it as a rule of the poor. He held that the poor (*i.e.*, common Athenian citizens) concerned themselves more in doing what they wanted, no longer governed by the rich (*i.e.*, the oligarchs). Although Plato held contempt for the poor, Aristotle believed "poverty is more commonly found amongst the good than amongst the bad"[478] since he believed wise men adhered to their poverty, whereas wicked men would become envious and bring themselves to steal from others.[479] In Aristotle's point of view, Plato believed most Athenian citizens fell amongst the poverty of the wicked men.

---

477. Arist. *EN* V.7.1135a1-10

478. Arist. *Prob*. XXIX.4.950b5-10

479. See Arist. *Prob*. XXIX.4.950b10-15.

Nevertheless, Aristotle did believe that though the poor, who composed most Athenian citizens, were normally good, he believed the few who were wise made better decisions than the majority. According to Aristotle's teaching of differentiating the majority from the wise in his *Sophistical Refutations*,

> You should lead people, then, into views opposite to the majority and to the wise: if anyone speaks as do the expert reasoners, lead him into opposition to the majority, while if he speaks as do the majority, then into opposition to the wise. For some say that of necessity the happy man is just, whereas it is implausible to the many that a king should not be happy. To lead a man into implausibility of this sort is the same as to lead him into the opposition of the standards of nature and convention; for convention represents the opinion of the majority, whereas the wise speak according to the standard of nature and truth.[480]

In other words, it is better to listen to the few who were wise than the opinion of the majority. If the majority was wrong, then the government would provide injustice by listening to the majority rather than the few who were wise. However, Aristotle did not see democracy as simply a rule of the majority since democracies may consist of a lower population of poor citizens than rich citizens.[481] The "rich" would most likely be the Athenians who were highly influential in society based on their monetary contributions to the city-state. There was no financial limit to determine who was "rich" and who was "poor." According to Waterfield, using the term *poor* referred "to anyone who had to work for his living, rather than purchase labour and generate wealth from the

---

480. Arist. *SE* 12.173a.20-30, trans. Pickard-Cambridge

481. See Arist. *Pol*. IV.4.1290a30-1290b5. When Aristotle used the term "accident" in the source, he was not referring the fact that there were more rich Athenians than poor Athenians to be a mistake. Rather, when he uses the term "accident," he is referring to non-essential features of a substance, such as how hair color does not make anyone more or less human. So, when Aristotle said that it was an accident for there to be more rich than poor Athenians, he meant that it was not essential for there to be more rich than poor Athenians in Athens, but only a common feature present in the city-state. Many of the Athenian oligarchs did purposely prevent the poor Athenian citizens from obtaining an equal amount of wealth.

surplus value."[482] Plus, Aristotle believed "[d]emocracy . . . arises out of the notion that those who are equal in any respect are equal in all respects; because men are equally free, they claim to be absolutely equal."[483] To recall, egalitarianism comes from the notion of absolute equality, in which everyone receives the same amount of wealth and property despite everyone's differences in standards and circumstances. In this sense, Aristotle believed democracies to base themselves on radical egalitarianism. However, in accord to his understanding of democracy, Aristotle also believed there to be democracies of different forms.[484]

Nevertheless, what is important to know about Aristotle's criticism of democracy is how he believed democracies set themselves up for defeat. From the envy held by the majority, democracies set themselves up to face revolutions. As Aristotle taught, "Revolutions in democracies are generally caused by the intemperance of demagogues, who either in their private capacity lay information against rich men until they compel them to combine (for a common danger unites even the bitterest enemies), or coming forward in public stir up the people against them."[485] Aristotle taught about the different overthrows of democracies,[486] and he came to also teach how "at Athens[,] Peisistratus led a faction against the men of the plain,"[487] even though

---

482. Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died*, 21.

483. Arist. *Pol*. V.1.1301a25-30; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. V.9.1310a25-35.

484. See Arist. *Pol*. IV.4.1291b30-1292a40.

485. Arist. *Pol*. V.5.1304b20-25

486. See Arist. *Pol*. V.5.

487. Arist. *Pol*.V.5.1305a20-25

Athens was still in its pre-democratic era at the time. Nonetheless, Aristotle believed the overthrow of Athens' democracy resulted from the injustice provided by the rule of the majority.

Regardless of the problem with the tyranny of the majority, Aristotle believed that every state aimed at some good, and the political community aimed at the highest good.[488] This concept of the political community is only possible from Aristotle's belief "that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal,"[489] especially since "what each thing is when fully developed we call its nature,"[490] given that "the nature of a things is its end."[491] According to Aristotle, "the final cause and end of a thing is the best, and to be self-sufficing is the end and the best."[492] As for everyone who is not part of a state, he "is either a bad man or above humanity."[493] In other words, people may depart from a state either from their brutality or antisociality (*i.e.*, the bad man) or for their disdain of the disorder and injustice of the state (*i.e.*, above humanity).

It would seem that total unity is essential for a good state, but Aristotle disagreed. In his *Politics*, Aristotle claimed that "the lesser degree of unity is more desirable than the greater" based on self-sufficiency.[494] Namely, extreme unity would be the melding of all human beings

---

488. See Arist. *Pol*. I.1.1252a1-10.

489. Arist. *Pol*. I.2.1253a1-5

490. Arist. *Pol*. I.2.1252b30-1253a1

491. Arist. *Pol*. I.2.1252b30-1253a1

492. Arist. *Pol*. I.2.1252b30-1253a5

493. Arist. *Pol*. I.2.1253a1-5; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. I.2.1253a25-30.

494. Arist. *Pol*. II.2.1261b15; *See also* Arist. *EN* I.7.1097b5-20.

into one society, undermining self-sufficiency. As everyone's situation differs from everyone else's situation, a collective rule from the government would most likely make problems worse as no one in the government can realistically know how to solve everyone's problems. If the government attempted to solve a problem, some people in certain situations may receive benefits, but that may come at the cost of harming others in different situations, providing more risks than benefits. The reality of the independent human nature would disappear and replaced with a false concept of justice, which Plato saw as the well-ordering of the State.

Still, the problem with Plato's idea of a just state comes from how the concept of happiness disappeared from the human nature, as humans are now part of the systematic functioning of the State. If humans have a nature of self-sufficiency, then "[p]roperty should be in a certain sense common, but, as a general rule, private," especially since "everyone will be attending to his own business."[495] This notion of self-sufficiency in human nature is in contrast with Plato's *Republic*, where the State would have full control of families and communities. Self-sufficiency under Aristotle's context of people as a social beings "means self-sufficiency for a person considered as a social being,"[496] considering how "[t]he continuation of the human species requires two primitive forms of interpersonal relation, that between male and female for the purpose of reproduction and that between master and slave for survival."[497] However, Aristotle also mentioned that unity belonged to "both of the family and of the state, but in some

---

495. Arist. *Pol*. II.5.1263a25-30

496. Schofield, "Aristotle's Political Ethics," 311.

497. C. C. W. Taylor, "Politics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 235-236.

respects only,"[498] since "a state is not a mere aggregate of persons, but, as we say, a union of them sufficing for the purposes of life."[499] Too much unity, which would mimic Plato's belief of everyone working under the one mind of the State, would make the State "inferior" from the lack of recognition of human nature as well as the lack of plurality.[500] Even though Aristotle saw democracy as unjust, he believed an extreme stance against democracy is unjust as well, especially from his understanding that extremities create injustice.[501]

Nevertheless, Aristotle's explanation of the nature of justice would apply to the notion of what a just state would be as well. He taught that "justice is the bond of men in states; for the administration of justice, which is the determination of what is just, is the principle of order in political society,"[502] and "[t]he end of the state is the good life."[503] It was this concept of political justice that led Aristotle to believe women and children should also receive an education with a concentration to the government's constitution "if the excellences of either of them are supposed to make any difference in the excellences of the state,"[504] especially from the notion that the bond of men constituted families as well. That bond would then make it necessary for women

---

498. Arist. *Pol*. II.5.1263b30-35

499. Arist. *Pol* VII.8.1328b15-20

500. See Arist. *Pol*. II.5.1263b30-40; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. II.2-5 for his full explanation of his stance against extreme unity.

501. See Arist. *EE*. II.3.1220b30-35, trans. J. Solomon; *See also* Arist. *EE*. II.3 for his full explanation of the problem with the extremities and his promotion of the *golden means*.

502. Arist. *Pol*. I.1253a35-1253b1; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. III.9.1280b35-1281a10.

503. Arist. *Pol*. III.9.1280b35-1281a1

504. Arist. *Pol*. I.1260b15-20

and children to receive an education, considering that "the neglect of education does harm to the constitution."[505] Plus, commonality was essential for a state of any kind.[506] However, this support for commonality seems as if Aristotle was promoting democracy rather than criticizing it. Some certain sense of unity and full commonality appear as characteristics of democracy, but Aristotle was not criticizing the institution of democracy, in which citizens have the right to vote and make decisions. He criticized an *ochlocracy*, which would be the *disorganized* structure of rule by a state's citizens. This perversion of democracy included citizens implementing into law what was unreasonable. In other words, Aristotle condemned the rule of the mob. Nevertheless, the democracy he did advocate for was a *polity*, which is an *organized* structure of rule by a state's citizens, in which the citizens would implement what is reasonable into law.

Aristotle taught of polity as the means between a democracy and an oligarchy that consisted armed soldiers to protect their communities.[507] However, he did not think polity alone would be the best form of government. Aristotle believed that a good government consisted of a mixture of polity, aristocracy, and monarchy. Though discussion of his concept of the best form of government will come later, it is imperative to note his understanding of the characteristics of democracy.

---

505. Arist. *Pol*. VIII.1.1337a10-15

506. Arist. *Pol*. II.1.1260b25-1261a1

507. See Arist. *Pol*. II.6.1265b25-30; Arist. Pol. IV.8.1293b30-35.

Aristotle understood the end of every democracy to be liberty,[508] which would include all the free citizens to have ruling power and to live as they would like.[509] Aristotle also included the offices democratic people desired to take as well as the payments they desired for their services,[510] including setting restrictions on the terms of power.[511] However, he recognized democracy and the demos' truest form as supports for equal rights under democratic justice.[512] Nevertheless, Aristotle taught that the democrats believed that "justice is that to which the majority agree,"[513] which seems to undermine his previous concept of what true justice consisted of, especially since he stated that "if justice is the will of the majority . . . they will unjustly confiscate the property of the wealthy minority."[514] Of the injustice democracy seemed to have, Aristotle did believe that polity, as mentioned before, would be the best form of democracy. After all, not only is there organization and temperance in the middle-class, at least according to Aristotle, but he also recognized the polity as an agricultural population, considering that "there is no difficulty in forming a democracy where the mass of the people live[d] by agriculture or tending of cattle."[515] As he stated in his *Politics*,

---

508. Arist. *Pol*. VI.2.1317a40-1317b1

509. See Arist. *Pol*. VI.2.1317b1-10; Arist. *Pol*. VI.2.1317b10-20.

510. See Arist. *Pol*. VI.2.1317b15-35; Arist. *Pol*. VI.2.1317b34-40.

511. See Arist. *Pol*. VI.2.1317b40-1318b5.

512. See Arist. *Pol*. VI.2.1318a1-10; Arist. *EN* VIII.11.1161b5-10.

513. Arist. *Pol*. VI.3.1318a15-20

514. Arist. *Pol*. VI.3.1318a20-30

515. Arist. *Pol*. VI.4.1318b5-15

> Being poor, they have no leisure, and therefor do not often attend the assembly, and having the necessaries of life they are always at work, and do not covet the property of others. Indeed, they find their employment pleasanter than the cares of government or office where no great gains can be made out of them, for the many are more desirous of gain than of honour [sic].[516]

Although lower and upper classes can practice temperance, Aristotle held a stereotypical view that only the middle-class lived temperate lives. Nonetheless, Aristotle would continue on teaching the benefits of this polity,[517] but he would state that polity was truly the best form of democracy, fundamentally "because the people are drawn from a certain class."[518] In this way, a polity is simply a type of political society that promoted the common good without undermining the laws of the state and the laws of justice (*i.e.*, the Natural Law). However, Aristotle also believed the shepherds united with the agricultural people in respect of free citizenship, especially from his understanding that "they [the shepherds] are the best trained of any for war, robust in body and able to camp out."[519] From his understanding of polity, Aristotle would use it under his concept of the best form of government, and he would also explain democracy's role in his concept of the worst form of government and what this form consisted.

Aristotle's Concept of the Best and Worst Government

In order to first understand Aristotle's concept of what a good government consists of, it is imperative to note that he believed that a good government came from the education of the citizens. Aristotle mentioned that Socrates taught in Plato's *Republic* "that, having so good an

---

516. Arist. *Pol*. VI.4.1318b11-16

517. Arist. *Pol*. VI.4.1318b20-1319a1

518. Arist. *Pol*.VI.4.1319a5-10

519. Arist. *Pol*. VI.4.1319a20-25

education, the citizens will not need many laws . . . but then he confines his education to the

guardians."[520] Everyone was to receive an education to promote human virtue while at the same

time maintain the well-ordering of the State. Without a good education, there would be a strong

chance that the State would function out of vice and undue desire for pleasure, disregarding true

justice and laws functioning in accord with reason. This unjust state would ignore each and every

individual's desire for the chief good and happiness, for "Aristotle himself thinks that happiness

consists in the realization of rationality in thought and action and that the laws in a proper human

community will promote this aim."[521] Plus, when it came to elections, Aristotle declared that "a

right election can only be made by those who have knowledge."[522] Aristotle seemed to have

more trust in the citizens than Plato did since Aristotle thought the citizens could make decisions

wisely.[523] Nevertheless, Aristotle held that certain citizens should have rule over certain matters

in certain areas,[524] especially since "he define[d] citizenship in terms of the right to participate in

government in one way or another."[525] However, elections would seem to work only when

everyone held a great deal of knowledge of how to justly rule. In this case, what state would

constitute Aristotle's concept of the just state?

---

520. Arist. *Pol*. II.5.1264a30-35

521. Young, "Aristotle's Justice," 183.

522. Arist. *Pol*. III.11.1282a5-10; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. III.11.1282a5-15.

523. Apart from Plato's collective view of people, Aristotle held onto the principle of individuation. According to the principle, everyone had a collective reality, such as humanity, while at the same time an individual reality that distinguished people from each other, such as personalities. See Arist. *Met*. VII.9.1034ᵃ5-8 for more details.

524. See Arist. *Pol*. III.11.1281a15-25.

525. Taylor, "Politics," 247; *See also* Schofield, "Aristotle's Political Ethics," 320.

As mentioned before, Aristotle believed there to be three different kinds of constitution, as well as their perverted forms. According to his *Nicomachean Ethics*, "There are three kinds of constitution, and an equal number of deviation-forms—perversions, as it were, of them. The constitutions are monarchy, aristocracy, and thirdly that which is based on a property qualification, which it seems appropriate to call timocratic, though most people call it a polity."[526] Here, Aristotle held that a mixture of a polity, an aristocracy, and a monarchy would serve as the best form of government. In his *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle taught how such a mixture would resemble that of a family, which he would hold as the natural result of man's nature as a political animal.[527] From what it appears, Aristotle believed the family served as the foundation of the State. Though there were many different types of mixed constitutions before, none of the constitutions composed of a mixture of polity, aristocracy, and monarchy.[528] On the other hand, Aristotle mentioned how the city of Hippodamus held a government similar to his proposal, which included the separation of the classes which formed Hipopdamus' polity.[529]

Regardless, when discussing polity, Aristotle believed that a citizen adapted best to a democratic stance based on self-sufficiency and autonomy.[530] However, he believed that the good state necessarily contained good citizens. As he taught, "All must have the excellence of

---

526. Arist. *EN* VIII.10.1160a30-1160b1

527. See Arist. *EE* VII.1241b25-1242a1.

528. See Arist. *Pol*. II.6.

529. See Arist. *Pol*. II.8.1267b30-1268b5.

530. See Arist. *Pol*. III.1.

the good citizen—thus, and thus only, can the state be perfect."[531] Nevertheless, the good citizen

is not the same as the good person, although a good citizen may be a good person. However, if

that person were to be a ruler of some sort, he or she must learn to be both a good person and a

good citizen.[532] In this case, when living as a polity, people must be good citizens, but when

working in higher offices, they must be both good citizens and good people.

Aristotle suggested creating a constitution to form what he would deem as the best form

of government. He described a constitution as "the arrangement of magistracies in a state,

especially of the highest of all,"[533] which would be similar to a modern government's separation

of powers. However, he also taught that true governments necessarily contained good citizens in

all the different positions of the state, seeking after the common good rather than their own self-

interests. As Aristotle taught, "[G]overnments which have a regard to the common interest are

constituted in accordance with strict principles of justice, and are therefore true forms; but those

with regard only the interest of the rulers are all defective and perverted forms, for they are

despotic, whereas a state is a community of freemen."[534] This form of government is in accord

with his understanding of justice, in which all must distribute what is good and apply to what is

fair to everyone, given that every human being has a nature inclined to the chief good.

Nevertheless, what would be the structure of the government?

---

531. Arist. *Pol*. III.4.1277a1-4

532. See Arist. *Pol*. III.4-5; Schofield, "Aristotle's Political Ethics," 303.

533. Arist. *Pol*. III.6.1278b5-10

534. Arist. *Pol*. III.6.1279a15-23; *See also* Arist. Pol. III.7.1279a25-30.

As mentioned before, Aristotle believed that true governments looked after the common interests of their citizens based on their human nature and aspiration for good. He believed there to be three different governments that look after the citizens' common interests: kingship, aristocracy, and a constitutional government (polity).[535] However, of these three different forms of government, there also existed their perverted forms, which are the governments that seek for their own self-interests rather than for the common good of the citizens, which would be tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy.[536] Oligarchs rule only by reason of their wealth and not of the common good, and democrats rule only by reason of their poverty and not of the common good. In Aristotle's view, oligarchs ruled by avarice, and democrats ruled by envy. Aristotle's criticism of oligarchy and democracy is even similar to how Plato criticized oligarchy and democracy.

Aristotle warned that there is the possibility of the poor gaining wealth and becoming oligarchs if they were to rule, and he warned of the oligarchs plundering the citizens from their excessive desire for wealth,[537] which could come into being from a democratic government due to their envy of the rich, a reversal to Plato's *Kyklos*. From what Aristotle taught, "We must remark generally, both of democracies and oligarchies, that they sometimes change . . . into another variety of the same class."[538] "[T]he ill-mingling of the two elements[,] democracy and oligarchy[,]" as well as "of the three elements, democracy, oligarchy, and excellence, but

---

535. See Arist. *Pol*. III.7.1279a30-1279b1.

536. See Arist. *Pol*. III.7.1279b1-10; Arist. *EN* VIII.10.

537. See Arist. *Pol*. III.10.1281a10-30.

538. Arist. *Pol*. V.1306b15-20

especially democracy and oligarchy,"[539] served as the reason for the downfall of constitutional

governments in Aristotle's perspective. Furthermore, Aristotle's analysis of distributive (*i.e.*,

universal) justice "explain[ed] the struggle between democrats and oligarchs as a dispute about

justice; democrats claim[ed] that all freely born citizens are equal partners in society, and

oligarchs claim[ed] that the rich contribute more."[540] Moreover, Aristotle also viewed democracy

and oligarchy under non-extreme views, as explained by C. C. W. Taylor,

> The distinction between an oligarchic and a democratic regime is not sharp, but is rather a matter of degree; a regime is more or less democratic or oligarchic in virtue of being characterized by more or fewer of a cluster of features. Thus[,] characteristically democratic features are payment for public service, including attendance at the legislative assembly and jury service, the selection of magistrates by lot, and the absence of a property qualification for office. Characteristically oligarchic features are a property qualification for office, election of magistrates, and financial penalties for non-attendance at deliberative or judicial bodies. Extreme instances of either kind will be characterized by both democratic and oligarchic features.[541]

As for the good to rule, Aristotle mentioned how decreasing the number of good rulers, even to

one, is oligarchic since it made every good person subject to the good dishonored, as they would

have no political input.[542] Plus, "Someone may say that it is bad in any case for a man, subject as

he is to all the accidents of human passion, to have the supreme power, rather than the law,"[543]

which would give political power to people subjected to passions that may contradict reason

---

539. Arist. *Pol*. V.7.1307a5-10

540. D. S. Hutchinson, "Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 222.

541. Taylor, "Politics," 253.

542. See Arist. *Pol*. III.10.1281a25-40.

543. Arist. *Pol*. III.10.1281a30-40

rather than a law subject to reason and not maintaining undue passions of any kind. From this discussion, Aristotle based oligarchy "on the notion that those who are unequal in one respect are in all respects unequal; being unequal, that is, in property, they suppose themselves to be unequal absolutely."[544] As he further taught in his *Problems* regarding intemperance towards wealth, which is relatable to his stance against oligarchy, "Why is it that wealth is more often found in the hands of the wicked than in those of the good? Is it because, being blind, it cannot read men's hearts and choose the best?"[545] This political combat between democracy and oligarchy seemed to reflect the reason for Athens' revolution against Sparta and sentencing of Socrates to death based on anti-democratic suspicion. As Aristotle taught, "All these forms of government [democratic and oligarchical] have a kind of justice, but, tried by an absolute standard, they are faulty; and, therefore, both parties, whenever their share in the government does not accord with their preconceived ideas, stir up revolution."[546] However, he did teach how the Athenian Revolution truly came from the Athenian infantry's common defeat in the Peloponnesian War, which reduced the number of notables, especially since "the soldiers had to be taken from the roll of citizens."[547] Furthermore, he also taught his explanation of what caused people to overthrow constitutions by using the Athenians as an example, teaching, "the Athenians everywhere put down the oligarchies."[548] Nevertheless, how would he be able to position polity?

---

544. Arist. *Pol*. V.1.1301a30-35

545. Arist. *Prob*. XXIX.8

546. Arist. *Pol*. V.1301a35-1301b1

547. Arist. *Pol*. V.1303a10-15

548. Arist. *Pol*. V.1307b20-25

Aristotle taught that the many may do better than the few, such as how the rule of many good citizens are better than the rule of a few.[549] However, he did believe allowing every citizen into political offices may be a bad idea, considering how not all of them many know how to properly rule. He taught in the *Politics* how, "[t]here is still a danger in allowing them to share the great offices of state, for their folly will lead them into error, and their dishonesty into crime."[550] Allowing uneducated citizens to rule would be detrimental for a just and orderly state. However, Aristotle did not think they should not hold any offices. As he taught in the *Politics*, "But there is a danger also in not letting them share, for a state in which many poor men are excluded from office will necessarily be full of enemies. The only way of escape is to assign to them some deliberative and judicial functions."[551] Nevertheless, those who are to hold office must have an education, as mentioned before, especially since education held crucial importance to political rule, considering that "true forms of government will of necessity have just laws, and perverted forms of government will have unjust laws."[552] These forms of government depended on the education of those ruling in it received.

The best state would consist of middle-class citizens as part of the polity rather than simply the poor. Aristotle believed the middle-class citizens "do not, like the poor, covet men's goods; nor do others covet theirs, as the poor covet the goods of the rich; and as they neither plot

---

549. See Arist. *Pol*. III.11.1281a40-1281b25.

550. Arist. *Pol*. III.11.1281b25-30

551. Arist. *Pol*. III.11.1281b25-35

552. Arist. *Pol*. III.11.1282b10-15

against others, nor are themselves plotted against, they pass through life safely."[553] The middle-class served as a virtuous means between the poor and the rich, which, Aristotle believed, made the middle-class to be less likely envious of the rich and greedy for gain of wealth. This class provided a safer democracy, "for when there is no middle class, and the poor are excessive in number, troubles arise, and the state soon comes to an end."[554] However, during Ancient Athens' Golden Age, Aristotle believed the middle-class to be a rare feature for states, since many states consisted of quarrels between the rich and the poor and likely cared little about the good of others.[555] Furthermore, Aristotle taught "that form of government is best in which every man, whoever he is, can act best and live happily"[556] and believed the middle-class to form the just form of democracy, in which there is no envy towards any higher power and desired for the good and happiness of all the citizens.[557] Once the middle-class composed the majority of the citizens, they would help compose a polity, which would temper any factions between the rich and poor citizens of the state. The temper would then lead to the rich and poor citizens having proper political offices to maintain a stable government without any political bickering,[558] as well as good knowledge on how to work in a political office,[559] especially under the stance that "a city is

---

553. Arist. *Pol*. IV.11.1295b25-35; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. IV.11.1295b35-1296a1.

554. Arist. *Pol*. IV.11.1296a15-20; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. V.1302a10-15; Arist. *Pol*. V.1304b1-5.

555. See Arist. *Pol*. IV.11.1296b1-5.

556. Arist. *Pol*. VII.2.1324a20-25

557. See Taylor, "Politics," 248.

558. See Arist. *Pol*. V.8.

559. See Arist. *Pol*. V.9.

not to be termed happy in regard to a portion of the citizens, but in regard to them all."[560]

Namely, a good state does not simply aid in the happiness of the polity, but in the aristocracy and

monarchy as well. All the political offices of the state constituted of men in their search for the

summum bonum, which consisted ultimate happiness.

As for kingship, Aristotle described five different types of them, the first four in detail

however.[561] Of all the different types of kingships, the good kings maintained a lifestyle of virtue

and excellence, ranking themselves with aristocracy and protecting their citizens,[562] whereas the

tyrants lived a lifestyle of undue desires.[563] Aristotle held that righteous kings would rule under

law while tyrants would maintain absolute authority. He believed that absolute monarchy was

"the arbitrary rule of a sovereign over all the citizens"[564] and monarchies under law as

reasonable, considering that "law [*i.e.*, true law] is reason unaffected by desire."[565] As stated by

Taylor, "The only form of monarchy suitable for imperfect individuals (including the monarch)

is a monarchy limited by law . . ., but in that form, as Aristotle recognizes, it is the law which has

supreme authority, and the monarchy is in fact a form of magistracy."[566] A government under

such fundamental rules organizing political powers would be a constitutional government. As

---

560. Arist. *Pol*. VII.9.1329a20-25

561. See Arist. *Pol*. III.14 for the full description of each constitution or Arist. *Pol*. III.14.1285b20-25 for a summarized version of them.

562. See Arist. *Pol*. V.10.1310b30-1311a10.

563. See Arist. *Pol*. V.10.1311a5-30.

564. Arist. *Pol*. III.16.1287a10-15

565. Arist. *Pol*. III.16.1287a30-35

566. Taylor, "Politics," 246.

Aristotle taught of constitutions, "A constitution is the organization of offices in a state, and determines what is to be the governing body, and what is the end of each community."[567] The king under a constitution would rule his subjects well, not having too much power to exert over others, but a *written* constitution would not suffice as political circumstances change over time.[568] However, since the king has authority, "he should have the supreme power,"[569] and his citizens must obey him due to his submission to reasonable laws and not to undue passions. This type of government is in accord with polity, as the educated citizens would submit themselves to a reasonable king, not needing to worry about corrupt power. On the other hand, this government contrasts with the democracy Aristotle condemned, where absolute power would lay among the intemperate majority, submitting themselves to undue passions and not to reason.

Finally, Aristotle discussed the good state in relation to human nature. According to his *Politics*, Aristotle claimed that "the first principle of all action is leisure,"[570] and such leisure is attainable through the liberal arts.[571] As he taught, "The customary branches of education are in number four; they are—reading and writing, gymnastic exercises, and music, to which is sometimes added drawing,"[572] and these subjects are useful in aiding the citizens to be useful towards both the state and their own human nature. He taught how gymnastics train those in the

---

567. Arist. *Pol*. IV.1.1289a15-20; *See also* Arist. *Pol*. IV.3.5-15.

568. See Arist. *Pol*. III.15.1286ª10-15.

569. Arist. *Pol*. III.16.1288a25-30

570. Arist. *Pol*. VIII.3.1337b30-25

571. See Arist. *Pol*. VIII.2.

572. Arist. *Pol*. VIII.2.1337b20-25

virtue of courage, necessitating it in education,[573] but he mostly taught how music was crucial to education.[574] Aristotle understood that without music, people would not learn to practice leisure while profiting the State and maintaining temperance. As shown here, it appeared that Aristotle believed education to be essential for the practice of temperance to create a just and stable state.

In contrast with Plato, who held democracy to be unjust and came from the ignorance of the majority, it appeared that Aristotle held that there could exist a just democracy, being a polity. However, the polity would come from the citizens who practiced temperance, as his *golden means* would apply to doing what is right. Aristotle most likely took his narrow criticism of democracy based upon Athens' unjust trial of Socrates, but understanding human nature, Aristotle believed democracy to arise from extreme egalitarianism rather than an unjust political system. Aristotle did not criticize democracy, but an ochlocracy. He held that a good democracy could exist, under the term *polity*, but it would be impossible to exist on its own, necessitating aristocracy and monarchy to create the best state, making the *polity* part of a mixed government. Even though Aristotle did not criticize Athens' democracy as extensively as Plato did, he take influence from both Athens' democracy and Plato's *Republic* when analyzing democracy.

The Aftermath of Plato and Aristotle

Later in his life, due to the presence of Athens' anti-Macedonian leaders, Aristotle did not think Athens would treat him fairly from his previous association with the Macedonians. When hostility against the Macedonians increased after Alexander died in 323 B.C.,[575] Aristotle handed

---

573. See Arist. *Pol*. VIII.4.

574. See Arist. *Pol*. VIII.5-7.

575. See Jonathan Barnes, *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 11.

over the Lyceum to Theophrastus, believing "that Athens should not be given the opportunity to sin twice against philosophy."[576] Aristotle feared the Athenians would sentence him to death as they did to Socrates. However, Anton Hermann Chroust claimed "that the death of Plato was the main, if not sole, reason for Aristotle's withdrawal from Athens,"[577] although Chroust believed the theory of Aristotle leaving to avoid execution to be more persuasive.[578] Nevertheless, Aristotle died the following year, and "his friend and pupil Theophrastus assumed his mantle."[579] Though Aristotelianism would soon lose philosophical influence, Muslim scholars aided in preserving Aristotle and Plato's texts, and the texts' popularity among the Christians during the Medieval Era came by the aid of the Dominican friar Saint Albertus Magnus and his pupil Saint Thomas Aquinas, contributing to the philosophical system of Scholasticism.

As for Plato, after Dionysius passed away, Dion invited Plato to return to Syracuse to tutor his nephew, Dionysius II. Unfortunately, this caused Dionysius II to become suspicious of his uncle, leading to Dion expelling him and keeping Plato hostage. Eventually, Plato returned to Athens and died in 348-47 B.C. Despite Plato and Aristotle's philosophical differences, these men contributed to the development of the Western World. However, the shaping of the Western World, along with the criticism of ochlocracy, would not have been possible without Socrates' contribution, appropriately giving him the title "The Father of Western Philosophy."

---

576. Anderson, *Man's Quest*, 262.

577. Chroust, *Aristotle*, 157.

578. Chroust, 157.

579. Barnes, *Aristotle*, 136.

CONCLUSION

Even with democracy's revival in Athens, the city-state would never regain the economic

and military power it previously had before the Peloponnesian War. Although Athens did regain

enough power to become a political force in Greece once again, there was barely any unification

among other Greek city-states, leading certain city-states to side with who was stronger, even if

it meant allying with Sparta. However, Sparta continued to try to dominate Greece, even to the

point of having the Persian king aid the Greek city-states in warding off Sparta. Nevertheless, it

was Epaminodas and his Theban army that helped repel the Spartan army. Through all these

conflicts, the Greek city-states exhausted themselves militarily and politically, no longer

deciding to dominate each other. This period led into the period of intellectual development

brought upon Greece by Plato and Aristotle. However, with the history of Athens' egalitarian

democracy and the criticisms of it by the Old Oligarch, Plato, and Aristotle, Ancient Athens'

democracy came to its ultimate conclusion from the conquest of King Philip II of Macedon.

The Macedonian Conquest of Athens

The Macedonians and the Southern Greeks had disdain for each other, leading

Demosthenes to criticize Macedonia's king, Philip II of Macedon, for expanding Macedonian

power across Greece.[580] According to Martin, "Demosthenes spoke so forcefully against Philip II

because he recognized how ambitious was this king, the person most responsible for making

Macedonia into an international power and doing so against heavy odds."[581] This imperialistic

---

580. See Demosthenes, *Orations of Demosthenes Pronounced to Excite the Athenians Against Philip, King of Macedon; and on Occasions of Public Deliberation*, trans. Thomas Leland (New York: The Colonial Press, 1900), 157.

581. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 240.

threat included Philip "embark[ing] on a whirlwind of diplomacy, bribery, and military action to make the states of Greece acknowledge his political superiority."[582] Eventually, Philip convinced the Thessalian leaders "to elect him hegemonial commander of their confederacy"[583] so he would be able to unite the Southern Greeks to attack the Persian Empire for invading Macedonia and Greece. Philip would also attack the Athenians when they waged war against him for capturing Delphi and Amphipolis twice.

Athens was weak from its battle with Sparta in the Peloponnesian War, and many Athenians debated as to whether they should either resist Philip or surrender to him. Eventually, Athens allied with their enemy, Thebes, to lead the southern Greek states to resist Philip and his Macedonian army in the Battle of Chaeronea. As written by Hammond,

> They [Athens and Sparta] hoped to keep Philip out and settle the Sacred War by giving the *coup de grâce* to Thebes. But at the last moment the plan miscarried. In northern Phocis[,] [their ruler] Phalaecus had regained control, and he refused to surrender the fortifications. Therefore[,] the Spartans and Athenians had no alternative but to withdraw. Their attempt to outmanoeuvre [sic] Philip was now manifest.[584]

Philip defeated the Athenians and the Southern Greeks, placing them in his League of Corinth. Though the defeated states maintained internal political freedom, "[n]ever again would the states of Greece make foreign policy for themselves without considering, and usually following, the wishes of outside powers."[585] As for Sparta, "[it] managed to stay out of the League of Corinth, but its days as an important power in its own right were over because its population had shrunk

---

582. Martin, 240.

583. Martin, 241.

584. Hammond, *A History of Greece*, 552 (emphasis in original).

585. Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 242.

so dramatically."[586] Philip's conquest of the Greek city-states brought about the beginning of the

end of Classical Antiquity, and Ancient Athens' democracy was at its final end.

The End of Greece's Classical Antiquity and the Aftermath of Democratic Athens

After Philip's death, he handed over his power to his son, Alexander the Great.

Alexander did not receive much popularity with the Athenians and the Spartans for his constant

conquering of foreign lands. However, after his death, Classical Antiquity in Greece came to its

conclusion, ushering in the Hellenistic Period, which lasted until the Romans conquered Greece.

Although Athens would have some political freedom, it would never again regain democracy.

Although the Old Oligarch, Plato, and Aristotle criticized the Athenians for their egalitarian use

of democracy, Plato and Aristotle would bear no fruit in protecting Athens as the city-state was

already weak from its defeat by the Spartans and the civil war that regained its democracy. Even

if Athens heeded their criticisms, the city-state would still likely lose to the Macedonians

because of its military and political exhaustion. It would seem as if the Old Oligarch played a

fruitful role in warning the Athenians for practicing democracy corruptly, as he made the

warning at the beginning of Athens' democracy. Nevertheless, the Athenians grew radically

egalitarian and nationalistic, losing their democracy, taking it back, sentencing Socrates to death,

and losing their democracy once more. Despite its role in bringing about Athens' democracy, the

Athenians' egalitarian nationalism was also the *coup de grâce* to their democracy.

---

586. Martin, 242.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Anaxagoras. "The Pluralists." In *Philosophic Classics: Thales to St. Thomas*. Edited by Walter Kauffmann. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961.

Apollodorus. *The Library*. Vol. 2. Translated by Sir James George Frazer. London: William Heinemann, 1956.

Aristophanes. *The Eleven Comedies: Literally & Completely Translated from the Greek Tongue into English with Translator's Foreword, an Introduction to each Comedy & Elucidatory Notes*. Vol 1. Translated by The Athenian Society. New York: Liveright Publishing Corp., 1943.

Aristotle. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. 2 Vols. Edited by Jonathan Barnes. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Athenaeus. *The Deipnosophists*. Translated by Charles Burton Gulick. Vol. 6. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Cicero. *Cicero's Brutus, or History of Famous Orators: Also, His Orator, or Accomplished Speaker.* Translated by E. Jones. New York: AMS Press, 1976.

Clement of Alexandria. "Popular Thought." In *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*. Edited Ernest Barker. London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923.

Democritus. "Fragments on Ethics." In *Philosophic Classics: Thales to St. Thomas*. Edited by Walter Kauffmann. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961.

Demosthenes. *Orations of Demosthenes Pronounced to Excite the Athenians Against Philip, King of Macedon; and on Occasions of Public Deliberation*. Translated by Thomas Leland. New York: The Colonial Press, 1900.

Diodorus. *The Library of History of Diodorus of Sicily*. Vol. 6. Translated C. H. Oldfather. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1961.

Epicharmus. "Popular Thought." In *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*. Edited by Ernest Barker. London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923.

Herodotus. *The History of Herodotus*. 2 Vols. Translated by G. C. Macaulay. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914.

Hippocrates. *Hippocratic Writings*. Translated by Francis Adams. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 1952.

Justinus. "Epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Philippic Histories*." *Attalus*. Translated by Rev. J. S. Watson. Accessed October 30, 2020. http://www.attalus.org/translate/justin8.html#2.7.

Lycurgus. "Against Leocrates." *Perseus Digital Library*. Translated by J. O. Burtt. Accessed November 17, 2020. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0152%3Aspeech%3D1%3Asection%3D84.

The Old Oligarch. "The Constitution of the Athenians." In *The Greek Historians: The Complete and Unabridged Historical Works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Arrian*. Vol. 2. Edited by Francis R. B. Godolphin. New York: Random House, 1942.

Philodemus. "Popular Thought." In *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*. Edited by Ernest Barker. London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923.

Plato. *The Dialogues of Plato: Translated into English with Analyses and Introductions*. 4th ed. 4 Vols. Translated by B. Jowett. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1953.

Plutarch. *Cimon and Pericles with the Funeral Oration of Pericles*. Translated by Bernadotte Perrin. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910.

_____. *Plutarch's Lives: The Translation Called Dryden's*. 5 Vols. Edited and translated by A. H. Clough. New York: A. L. Burt, 1870.

Polyaenus. *Polyænus's Stratagems of War*. Translated by R. Shepherd. Chicago: Ares Publishers Inc., 1974.

Protagoras. "Rationalism. The Age of the Sophists." In *Greek Religious Thought: From Homer to the Age of Alexander*. Edited by Ernest Barker. London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1923.

Sextus Empiricus. "Against the Physicists." In *Sextus Empiricus*. Vol. 3. Translated by R. G. Bury. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960.

Thucydides. *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. Translated by Richard Crawley. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1950.

Xenophon. "Apology of Socrates to the Jury." In *The Shorter Socratic Writings: Apology of Socrates to the Jury, Oeconomicus, and Symposium*. Translated by Andrew Patch. Edited by Robert C. Bartlett. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996.

_____. *Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*. Translated by E. C. Marchant. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Abbott, Evelyn. *A History of Greece*. Vol. 1. *From the Earliest Times to the Ionian Revolt*. 2nd ed. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1893.

_____. *Pericles and the Golden Age of Athens*. London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930.

Anderson, William. *Man's Quest for Political Knowledge: The Study and Teaching of Politics in Ancient Times*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1964.

Andrews, A. *The Greek Tyrants*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

Augustine. *The City of God Against the Pagans*. Vol. 5. Translated by Eva Matthews Stanford and William McAllen Green. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Barnes, Jonathan. *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Blackburn, Simon. *Plato's Republic: A Biography*. London: Atlantic Books, 2006.

Blössner, Norbert. "The City-Soul Analogy." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*. Edited by G. R. F. Ferrari. Translated by G. R. F. Ferrari. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Boehm, Christopher. *Hierarchy in the Forest: The Evolution of Egalitarian Behavior*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Bremmer, Jan N. *Greece & Rome: New Surveys in the Classics*. Vol. 24. *Greek Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Burkert, Walter. *Sather Classical Lectures*. Vol. 47. *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.

Cary, M. "ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY." *History*, NEW SERIES, 12, no. 47 (1927): 206-14. Accessed November 15, 2020. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24400152.

Chroust, Anton-Hermann. *Aristotle: New light on his life and on some of his lost works*. Vol. 1. *Some novel interpretations of the man and his life*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973.

Cyprian. *Treatises*. Translated by Roy J. Deferrari. Edited by Roy J. Deferrari. New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958.

Davies, J. K. *Democracy and Classical Greece*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Doob, Leonard W. *Patriotism and Nationalism: Their Psychological Foundations*. Westport: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1976.

Ehrenberg, Victor. *From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.* Sec. ed. London: Methuen & Co LTD, 1973.

Ferejohn, Michael T. "Knowledge, Recollection, and the Forms in *Republic* VII." In *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*. Edited by Gerasimos Santas. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006.

Field, G. C. *The Philosophy of Plato*. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Foster, M. B. *The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935.

Grant, Arthur J. *Greece in the Age of Pericles*. New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1973.

Grote, Esq., George. *Greece: I. Legendary Greece; II. Grecian history to the reign of Peisistratus at Athens*. Vol. 2. New York: Peter Fenelon Collier, 1899.

Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1942.

Hammond, N. G. L. *A History of Greece to 322 B. C.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

Hansen, Mogens Herman. *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes: Structure, Principles, and Ideology*. Translated by J. A. Crook. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999.

Hare, R. M. *Plato*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Hayes, Carlton J. H. *Essays on Nationalism*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926.

Hutchinson, D. S. "Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*. Edited by Jonathan Barnes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Jaeger, Werner. *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. *Archaic Greece - The Mind of Athens*. Translated by Gilbert Highet. New York: Oxford University Press, 1945.

Kagan, Donald. *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969.

_____. *The Fall of the Athenian Empire*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987.

Kosman, Aryeh. "Just and Virtue: The *Republic's* Inquiry into Proper Difference." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*. Edited by G. R. F. Ferrari. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Laurian, Lucie. "This Is What Direct Democracy Looks Like: How Athens in the 5th Century BC Resolved the Question of Power." *The Town Planning Review* 83, no. 4 (2012): V-Xi. Accessed November 16, 2020. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41509859.

Martin, Thomas R. *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times*. 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

Meerlo, Joost A. M. *The Rape of the Mind: The Psychology of Thought Control, Menticide, and Brainwashing*. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1956.

Meier, Christian. *Athens: A Portrait of the City in Its Golden Age*. Translated by Robert and Rita Kimber. London: John Murray, 1993.

Miller, Fred. "Aristotle's Political Theory." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Last updated Nov. 7, 2017. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-politics/.

Morrison, Donald R. "The Utopian Character of Plato's Ideal City." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*. Edited by G. R. F. Ferrari. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Myres, John L. *The Political Ideas of the Greeks with Special Reference to Early Notions about Law, Authority, and Natural Order in Relation to Human Ordinance*. New York: The Abingdon Press, 1927.

Nietzsche, Frederick. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by Marianne Cowan. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1955.

Nodia, Ghia "Nationalism and Democracy." In *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Democracy*, edited by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, 3-21. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Parke, H. W. *Festivals of the Athenians*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977.

Penner, Terry. "Socratic Ethics and the Socratic Psychology of Action: A Philosophical Framework." In *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*. Edited by Donald R. Morrison. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Popper, K. R. *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Vol. 1. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Reeve, C. D. C. *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006.

Robinson, Eric W. "The Sophists and Democracy Beyond Athens." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 25, no. 1 (2007): 109-22. Accessed November 15, 2020. doi:10.1525/rh.2007.25.1.109.

Santas, Gerasimos. *Goodness and Justice: Plato, Aristotle, and the Moderns*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2001.

Scheflin, Alan W. and M. Opton, Jr., Edward. *The Mind Manipulators*. New York: Paddington Press Ltd., 1978.

Schofield, Malcolm. "Aristotle's Political Ethics." In *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*. Edited by Richard Kraut. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006.

Shafer, Boyd C. *Faces of Nationalism: New Realities and Old Myths*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972.

_____. "Nationalism: Interpreters and Interpretations." 2nd ed. *American Historical Association* 20. (1963): 1-13.

Singpurwalla, Rachel G. K. "Plato's Defense of Justice in the *Republic*." In *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*. Edited by Gerasimos Santas. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006.

Stockton, David. *The Classical Athenian Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Strathern, Paul. *Plato in 90 Minutes*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Inc., 1996.

Strauss, Barry S. *Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy 403-386 BC*. Ithaca: New York, 1986.

Taylor, C. C. W. "Politics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*. Edited by Jonathan Barnes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Ure, P. N. *The Origin of Tyranny*. New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1962.

Waterfield, Robin. *Why Socrates Died: Dispelling the Myths*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009.

White, Nicholas P. *A Companion to Plato's Republic*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1979.

Winspear, Alban Dewes. *The Genesis of Plato's Thought*. New York: S. S. Russell. 1940.

Young, Charles M. "Aristotle's Justice." In *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*. Edited by Richard Kraut. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006.

Zeitlin, Irving M. *Plato's Vision: The Classical Origins of Social and Political Thought*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1993.

Mayer, Matthew D. Bachelor of the Arts, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Spring 2022

Major: History

Title of Thesis: Egalitarian Nationalism's Contribution to the Rise and Fall of Athens' Democracy and the Criticisms of Athenian Democracy from the Old Oligarch, Plato, and Aristotle

Thesis Director: Dr. Carl J. Richard

Pages in Thesis: 171; Words in Abstract: 238

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to determine how combining radical egalitarianism and nationalism to create radical democracy can lead to the destruction of society. Politics are for the purpose of protecting the common good, but individual liberties are sometimes necessary for the preservation of the common good based on the continual flux of social contexts. However, too much individualism can lead to the rise of tyrannical collectivism. Karl Popper termed this problem of too much toleration as "the paradox of tolerance." Once everything becomes tolerable, there is little to no hope that anyone can guarantee anything. Absolute toleration will tolerate intolerable ideas to plague society, which would threaten liberty. In this research, there was a study of how Athens allowed too much toleration, leading to the rise of an ochlocracy. Research included scholarly books of Ancient Greece and Athens made from ancient and contemporary historians. There were also a use of political philosophy works from ancient philosophers and scholarly commentaries of those philosophers' ideas from contemporary academics. Plus, contemporary works of psychology, nationalism, and the connection of psychology to nationalism were part of the research to understand the background of the mindset of the Athenian nationalists prior to and during the corruption of democracy in Athens. However, there also included scholarly works to challenge the claim that the Athenians were intemperate and full of envy in order to either defend or revise the thesis and prevent bias.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Matthew Donovan Mayer was born in Lafayette, Louisiana on June 20, 1999. He lived in Arnaudville for about five years and in Carencro for about seventeen years up to the present in 2022. Meanwhile, he attended Westminster Christian Academy in Opelousas and graduated from there in 2018. Mayer later attended the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as a new student to the university in 2018, initially pursuing a degree in child and family studies until changing it to a degree in history in 2019. He plans to be a high school history teacher upon graduation, but he is open to other career opportunities as well.