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Democracy in Plato's Laws

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One of the most significant obstacles to using Plato as a guide to modern politics is his view of democracy. Plato has much to say on the subject of self-government, and little of it seems good. Although many interpreters have gone so far as to turn Plato into an enthusiastic democrat, we need to be cautious lest our methodology become mere wishful thinking.

This is not to say that Plato speaks only ill of democracy or that friends of democracy should altogether ignore him. What most interpreters have overlooked is the importance of The Laws and how it bears on Plato’s view of democracy. This is a grave oversight, given that, as one prominent theorist argues, in contrast to The Republic’s philosophic message, The Laws is “the only political work proper of Plato.” What is more, David J. Melling notes, because The Laws is Plato’s final text, we should consider it to be his “last words.” In this respect, The Laws should be placed at the center of any serious study of Plato’s political thought.

Upon consideration, it seems that democracy appears in a more positive light in The Laws than it does in Plato’s other writings. While The Republic contrasts democracy with the ideal city and the nearly impossible rule of philosopher-kings, The Laws illustrates how democracy plays an essential role in establishing the best possible regime. In so doing, The Laws presents a more practiced assessment of popular government and provides substantial confirmation for theorists and citizens concerned with the practicality and virtue of self-rule.

Democracy at the Founding

The most obvious example of the more positive treatment of democracy in The Laws is that Plato presents monarchy and democracy as the “mothers of regimes,” or the foundation of all the other types. This foundation is also democratic in that the Athenian Stranger incorporates a certain degree of participation into the best possible regime. Participation is required to elect rulers and fill offices, including the Guardians of the Laws, Generals, Cavalry Commanders, and the Council. And in order to maximize equality of representation, the three hundred and sixty persons on the Council are divided into four divisions that correspond to classes in society. The graduated fines for non-participation are also significant, insofar as the wealthy incur great penalties for shirking civic duties, although voting remains voluntary for the poorer members of the city. The primary purpose of these measures is an oligarchic check on the electorate, but it is striking that the poor are given
special considerations for duty and payment, while receiving equal access when they so desire.

Participation is also used to ensure against faction and as a means to foster the civic responsibility necessary for maintaining an army. The inclusion of democratic principles in the regime is not necessarily a matter of politics and participation; rather, its chief purpose seems to be developing a spirit of community and a sense of friendship. With regard to the offices of the city, for example, the Athenian establishes strict criteria for eligibility. The military offices are naturally restricted to military leaders, and other offices have restrictions as well. But the initial selection of rulers, we discover, is limited to those who possess heavy weapons or who already have military experience.

The mixed nature of the regime of *The Laws* has been confirmed by observers, ancient and contemporary. The regime of *The Laws* "manifestly lacks a monarchical element," Aristotle determined. "Its characteristics are oligarchic and democratic, although its tendency is to incline more toward oligarchy." More recently, Thomas Pangle concluded that the regime of *The Laws*, "strikes a nice balance between unrepresentative centralization and unwieldy diffusion of authority." C. C. W. Taylor thoughtfully concludes, in opposition to those who interpret Plato as totalitarian, that Plato is unconsciously "paternalistic." In any event, the regime of *The Laws* is a far cry from the absolute rule of the wise that is commonly associated with Plato and his philosopher-kings.

After the city is founded and citizenship is extended, the Athenian proposes, quite astonishingly, a nearly equal and permanent redistribution of property. Although a *Republic*-style call for communal property is absent, the Athenian insists that matters of property should not interfere with the health and stability of the *polis*. As Pangle notes, "the city's political life cannot avoid being deeply influenced by inequalities of wealth, and it is better that the city confront the situation openly than try to hide it or ignore it." Plato appreciates the undue influence that wealth and status have in ancient politics and intends to limit that influence whenever possible.

Although matters of equality take precedence, the founding of the regime in *The Laws* is hardly consensual. Whereas Socrates purges everyone older than ten in *The Republic*, the Athenian purges the best possible regime of those willing to follow leaders who propose intruding on the property rights of others. Although the purge in *The Laws* is less severe, it significantly limits the extension of citizenship and participation of the city. The Athenian acknowledges that the best method of purging the city is through the "death and exile" that a tyrant offers, yet proposes a gentler means for founding the best possible regime.

Attention to equality and property rights is also found in Plato's most famous work. Nickolas Pappas argues that, although Plato disapproves of democracy, his treatment of economic power in *The Republic* provides a great check on its undue influence in the city. "Although Plato is no democrat," Pappas writes, "one might defend him from the harshest political criticisms by pointing out how his classes are supposed to function. Since the class dif-
ferences in his city separate economic power from political power, a higher status does not translate into wealth or enjoyment.” Thus, in *The Republic* as well as in *The Laws*, we find attention to issues of inequality, even if democracy itself is not as such commended.

Although the mix of democracy and monarchy is said to be the most desirable, the Athenian does admit that the most perfect origin of a city is tyrannical; the most desirable way for a lawgiver to implement legislation is to do so after the rule of a tyrant. “Let no one persuade us, friends, that there will ever be a quicker or easier way for a city to change its laws than through the hegemony of all-powerful rulers,” he says. “This is the case now and it will always be so.” The Athenian lists the order of desirability as tyranny, monarchy, democracy, and oligarchy. Democracy is second only to oligarchy as the regime most resistant to the establishment of good laws, a defect that is only relevant at the founding. Although democracy and monarchy are later presented as good regimes, tyranny is most desirable when founding a city. Tyranny may not be the most virtuous regime, but much can be said for its efficiency. But saying that tyranny is a useful expedient with regard to founding a city is far different from claiming tyranny as the best regime.

Concerning the administration and aim of a political community, Plato is more favorably disposed to democracy and democratic principles than he is typically given credit for. Although Plato does not endorse a pure democracy, it appears that, concerning the origins of regimes and purposes of government, many well-governed and desirable polities have elements of democracy at their founding; and, to some extent, these regimes adhere to democratic principles, such as equality and participation.

**Democracy’s Claim to Rule**

One of the more searching accounts of democracy offered by the Athenian is the distinction between regimes and administrations. Although monarchy and democracy are depicted as the beginning of most regimes, it seems that they are not regimes in the proper sense. For the Athenian, administrations are those arrangements of offices governed with a view to self-interest. Monarchical administration, for example, aims at the interest of the monarch. Similarly, oligarchies as administrations aim at the interests of the wealthy. Democracy is that regime—or non-regime, rather—where the many rule with an eye to self-interest. These administrations govern self-interestedly, at the expense of the common good. Regimes rule for the city; factional administrations rule others for themselves. As the Athenian clarifies, the best possible regime is always mixed; conversely, pure regimes, insofar as they are guided by the self-interest of those in office, are necessarily despotic. For this reason, both Kleinias and Megillus, the Stranger’s two interlocutors, have difficulty appraising the nature of the mixed regimes in their own cities, Crete and Lacedaemon. This practical treatment of regimes and administration differs greatly from the typology of regimes presented in *The Republic*, where Socrates speaks only in terms of pure, or unmixed, regimes and of deviations from the best regime. Given the clarification offered by *The Laws*, it seems
that the regimes of The Republic ultimately come to ruin not by the natural decline of political associations, as Socrates there suggests, but from factional disputes caused by self-interested politics.\textsuperscript{21}

Although The Laws is replete with indictments of human nature and popular rule, democracy per se is rarely mentioned.\textsuperscript{22} Instead, the Athenian uses the example of a poorly governed symposium to symbolize a democratically governed city. The Athenian, referring to the problems of an insufficient education, claims that, during a symposium, "Everyone becomes lighter than he really is, rejoices, becomes filled with license of speech, and fails to listen to his neighbors; each considers himself capable of ruling the others are well as himself."\textsuperscript{23} The goal is to give control of the party to those who are able to abstain from drink. Drunkenness is not something merely detrimental to the health of the participants. There is such a thing as good drunkenness; it exists where individuals indulge themselves within the confines of the law, and for the sake of moderation.\textsuperscript{24} This type of drunkenness, although somewhat aristocratic in nature, actually proves beneficial to many, in that it provides an opportunity for education and self-mastery. Bad drunkenness is excess unconcerned with the city. In either case, slaves and magistrates are not permitted to drink at all, and no one is permitted to drink during the day.

The implications of this view on indulgence and mastery are detailed later in The Laws. "The bulk of human beings," the Stranger professes, "want without measure, and when it's possible for them to gain measured amounts, they choose to gain insatiably."\textsuperscript{25} In effect, most citizens are rarely able to experience good drunkenness, so much so that others must control their appetites and actions. Only a few are able to participate moderately, and even fewer are able to remain sober. Democracy is, at its worst, a collection of irrational individuals seeking pleasure at the expense of order and justice; the best regime, by contrast, is "sober and wise," in that it abstains from drink and directs the city toward moderation and virtue. The indictment of democracy is more subtle and less disdainful than in other Platonic texts, yet the metaphor of the symposium goes a long way in understanding why The Laws has been overlooked as a window into Plato's political philosophy.

One other unique aspect of The Laws is the attention given to the legitimacy of claims to rule in the city and household. Plato does not consider alternate claims to rule in The Republic. Conversely, The Laws lists seven distinct claims to rule: parents over children, elderly over the young, masters over slaves, the well born over those not well born, the lucky over the unfortunate, the stronger over the weaker, and the prudent over the ignorant.\textsuperscript{26} Not surprisingly, the Athenian gives much credence to the rule by the prudent, asserting it is consistent with nature and, when there are willing subjects, the most desirable of all claims. Nevertheless, the practical nature of The Laws requires more than simply dismissing rival claims in favor of the best regime. If absolute rule by prudence—that is, a philosopher-king—is not possible, then one of the other claims takes precedence. The regime detailed in The Laws, when scrutinized, seems to possess a portion of each of these claims. In light of the limitations of human nature, stable regimes must not become exclusionary or factional administrations, but incorporate many claims to
rule. "Wisdom is not a sufficient title," Strauss writes. "A viable regime presupposes a blend of the claim based on wisdom with the claims based on the other kinds of superiority; perhaps the proper or wise blend of some of the other titles can act as a substitute for the title deriving from wisdom." Simply put, the best possible regime is truly mixed.

Although the Athenian associates democracy with the principle of freedom, it is noticeably absent from his list of claims to rule. Indeed, freedom, in many ways, implies the freedom from such claims. When compared to the best possible regime, democracy includes far fewer claims to rule. While ancient democracies may have included claims by parents, masters, the well-born, and the fortunate, the claims by the prudent, the strong, and the elderly are largely ignored. Later in the work, the Athenian states the "discontent of the many leads them to altogether abandon all claims to rule save selection by lot." The Athenian, of course, is highly suspicious of any group willing to leave the well-being of the city to chance, a dangerous proposition, to be sure. The likelihood that democracies become unruly is the reason for an emphasis on the rule of law. Aristotle, in a similar vein, contends that a lawless democracy is among the worst of regimes. "For where the laws do not rule there is no regime," he writes. Nevertheless, the Athenian Stranger lists the democratic principle of freedom, along with friendship and prudence, as a requirement for any stable political association. On the freedoms allowed to individuals in democracies, Pangle notes that "a philosopher cannot help but have affection for permissive democracy." Although Plato's Socrates abhors individual liberty, even blaming it in Book VIII of *The Republic* for the (seemingly) inevitable degeneration of democracy into tyranny, the Athenian Stranger appreciates how essential liberty is to happiness and the general contentment of the city.

The more practical attention to the city in *The Laws* provides greater detail to the problems that disunity and faction bring forth. Early in the work, the Athenian suggests that internal stability is more important to a city than is freedom from external conflict. In Book IX, the Athenian argues, "Whoever enslaves the laws by bringing them under the rule of human beings, whoever makes the city subject to faction ... through violence ... this man must be regarded as the greatest enemy of all to the whole city." Internal factions, as the cause of civil war, are most dangerous. This parallels the objection that the Athenian raises against the regime of Crete: the city legislates with a view to war, not to peace. Good legislation is guided toward moderation, peace, and justice.

Given Plato's preference for both a tyrannical founding and moderate and prudent laws, it should not surprise us that he also disfavors the legislative process in democratic cities. In Book VI, the Stranger invokes the "ship of state" analogy to illustrate the need for able commanders. The point of the story is that, like waves upon a ship, factions and demagogues keep a city in constant danger of instability. The best antidote is a steady succession of able rulers. "It can never be the business of a large number to keep a sharp watch in this way," the Athenian declares. As Pappas notes cryptically, "Having lost the power to tell necessary from unnecessary, the democratic soul has no principle to guide its steps, not even the drab and crass principle
of avarice." While it is true that the many possess faulty opinions of the good, and when given the opportunity, there is always a risk that they will rule despotically with a view to equality and freedom over ability, strength, and virtue, we have also seen that all non-mixed regimes are prone to this error.

Elements of Plato's political thought can also be found in The Statesman, a text that has not been ignored by scholars. Julia Annas and Robin Waterfield claim that Plato rejects democracy as weak "because it parcels out authority more widely than others do." While democracy may at best limit the potential for tyrants, it also makes true kingship less likely. Annas and Waterfield later conclude that "Plato's revised judgment of democracy is that it is the worst . . . if laws are strictly adhered to, but the best if they are not. [because of its extreme division of power]." Similarly, Pappas argues, "In the Statesman Plato will [conclude] that when human society cannot depend on the stable rule of fixed laws, democracy is the most desirable form of government." This is consistent with what we have seen of The Laws yet sharply contradicts what Plato writes about democracy in The Republic.

Despite the fuller account of democratic practices and the blending of democracy with monarchy for the establishment of the best regime, the political nature of The Laws seems to provide a more realistic assessment of democracy, one that is not possible with the more philosophic, or idealistic, approach Socrates takes in The Republic during his search for justice and the best regime.

Education and the Illiberal Democracy

One of the more democratic aspects of the best possible regime is the education made available to its citizens. In The Laws, as in The Republic, Plato spends a great deal of time detailing the nature and importance of civic education. Music, for example, is perhaps the central tenet of Plato's proposal for instruction. In Book II of The Laws, the Athenian Stranger says, "every man and child, free and slave, female and male—indeed, the whole city—must never cease singing." Plato also introduces liberal principles concerning socialization and enforcement of the laws. In Book IV, after articulating the two modes of enforcing the laws—persuasion or violence—the Athenian lists a third, superior mode. Rather than using conventional means to delineate the laws to the city, the Athenian recommends a series of preludes that appeal to the citizens' capacity for reason. More specifically, the Athenian states, "he who receives the law uttered by the legislator might receive the command—that is, law—in a frame of mind more favorably disposed and therefore more apt to learn something." Insofar as the Athenian seeks to engage and educate the citizenry, it would seem that Plato's regard for the reason and virtue of the average citizen has been underappreciated by contemporary scholars.

As the Athenian begins to detail the second best city in Book V of The Laws, he argues that the purpose of a regime is to bring the city "the nearest to immortality and second in point of unity." In short, the city ought to aim at a unity of citizens. "Democracy carries disunity and built-in decay to their logical conclusion," Pappas notes. "Democracy presupposes disagreement,
not as a temporary evil to be overcome in some unanimous final state, but as an inherent condition of society." The problem, of course, is that humans are not gods. The Athenian has abandoned the requirements for the perfect regime of *The Republic*—the holding of women, children, and property in common—because of the limitations of human nature. It is impossible that humanity could erect a city suited for gods or children of gods. Consequently, human nature dictates the likelihood and desirability of all regimes, including democracy.

When the Athenian emphasizes the role that reason plays in the governance of the city, he suggests that individuals use reason in decision making; a city, conversely, ought to take its cues from gods or individuals in the name of law. "A private individual . . . should acquire within himself true reasonings," the Athenian insists; "and live according to it, while a city should take over a reasoning either from one of the gods or from this knower of things, and then set up the reasoning as the law for itself." Although this is a serious qualification of the limits of democratic deliberation, it stems from human nature itself, and not any inherent limitations of democracy. "Human nature," the Athenian contends, "is not at all capable of regulating the human things, when it possesses autocratic authority over everything, without becoming swollen with insolence and injury." While this may seem to be an indictment of humanity, the Athenian praises Kronos for establishing a rule of divine individuals in Lacedaimon. The message is clear: properly instituted kings and rulers are nearer to gods than the many. Peace, happiness, and good laws result not from democratic processes, but from deference to the lawgiver and, more importantly, to the laws. Democracy is not by nature an errant regime; it is good or bad based on the extent to which it is a regime of laws and not a rule of men.

On one occasion, the Athenian even remarks how he dissents from the many. In a brief moment of feigned humility, the Athenian says, "it is not at all easy to take the path of speaking against what has been said often, by myriads of mouths." The Athenian goes on to criticize the educational process for the influence granted to the poets, as was done in democratic Athens. Whereas just rulers and just laws foster greatness and obedience, the poets patronize weakness and lawlessness. Moreover, the poets do not possess the kind of knowledge necessary to determine the truth and virtue of their works. Josiah Ober notes that Plato's chief objection to democracy was its relation to such truth. "Democracy's claims to be a legitimate way of knowing about society and a just system for making decisions were false because it had no way of testing appearances by references to an external, metaphysical Truth (i.e., the Forms)," he writes. "A political regime based on mass opinion (the lowest sort of *doxa*) was thus not only likely to be sloppy in its judgments and capricious in its behavior, it was also wrongly constructed by definition." While poets are indeed needed for instructional purposes, their role is to be limited by their abilities and controlled by those guiding the laws. The failure to provide a proper education in Persia under Cyrus, for example, brought a great regime of freedom and prudence to an end. Not surprisingly, the Athenian proposes strict censorship of the poets, the kind found in *The Republic*.
Given the strict control of the poets, it is natural that the Athenian goes on to suggest an authoritarian sort of music. Indeed, the musical experience of the citizens in the best possible regime is a totalitarian experience, without room for imagination or individual creativity. As the Athenian states more precisely, "it is possible to persuade the souls of the young of just about anything, if one tries." The aim is to develop and maintain a city where all speak and think as one in music, religion, and opinion. The education afforded to all may be relatively equal, but it is equally authoritarian. As Aristotle noted, the education of the best possible regime of The Laws is identical to the best regime in The Republic.

Although The Republic does not present any direct accounts of Athenian politics, The Laws does not share this omission. In discussing the history of politics in Athens, the Athenian Stranger begins by praising the democratic yet orderly reforms of Solon. The reforms "made us even more the slaves of the rulers and the laws, and all these things created a very strong sense of friendship among us." The problem, however, was similar to that of Persia: inadequate control of education. Poor education allowed the poets to become rulers, diminishing the greatness of the laws and instilling a general sense of lawlessness in the public. The Athenian terms the displacement of aristocratic music with the autonomy of poets and entertainers as a noisy, ugly, and "wretched theatocracy." In the case of Athens, disobedience and licentiousness brought forth "a harsh epoch in which there is never a cessation of evils." Freedom is only desirable and healthy when it is inspired and constrained by citizenship and virtue. Hence, there is no apparent difference between pure democratic freedom and absolute subjugation: the worst democracy is as undesirable as the best tyranny. While the Athenian does not detail the inevitable rise of a tyrant from democracy that Socrates asserts in The Republic, the endorsement of democracy in The Laws is not without qualification.

In addition to the controls on education, the Athenian recommends limitations on the speech of citizens, specifically, those who question the existence of the gods or lack reverence for the laws. Indeed, the Athenian proclaims not only that the laws must be revered, but also that they should remain largely unchanged. When new laws are developed, they ought to use the tradition and foundation of the ancestral laws. Because change can be dangerous, it should be rightly guided and minimal. Similarly, when the Athenian praises types of citizens, he does so with a view not to general notions of virtue or justice, but rather with specific regard to "unbroken obedience." While such obedience does indeed require virtue, the most perfect praise and the most specific requirements of a citizen are reverence to the laws. This reverence for laws and tradition is at odds with the notion of popular sovereignty and democratic deliberation. As Socrates often illustrates, many, or even most, people who claim to have knowledge are later found to be in some manner deficient. The discussion in Book I of The Laws gives an example of such an instance. Here, Megillus and Kleiniias have formed opinions about the symposium without ever participating or witnessing such an event. As the Athenian charges, "some of us are immediately blaming it and others are praising it—both absurdly." Those who lack
experience or the ability to reason are more prone to faulty assessments of laws.

Lack of experience and reverence for the laws requires the proper education of all citizens. Such an education, however universal, is strikingly undemocratic; indeed, the Athenian lists several examples that illustrate the problems of an egalitarian education. Proper instruction of children, and all citizens for that matter, must be undertaken at the direction and behest of those most capable of such guidance. In Lacedaemon, for example, the Athenian remarks to Kleinsias, “You keep your young in a flock, like a bunch of colts grazing in a herd.”

Insofar as The Laws is an attempt to perfect, as much as possible, the timocratic regime of The Republic, the purpose of the dialogue is to detail the best possible education. However democratic Plato’s politics might appear, he rarely concerns himself with the good of individuals; he is hardly a liberal. While Plato does endorse limited freedom and participation, he does not go so far as to advocate a stark individualism or any brand of politics that compromises the rule of law or imperils the health of a city.

Although Plato is often heralded for his egalitarian depiction of women in parts of The Republic, The Laws finds him taking steps away from this otherwise liberal stance. It is clear that women are not included in politics for their virtue or uniqueness; instead, they are given a place in the regime because independence would allow them undue influence in the city. As the Athenian says, “That race of us humans that is by nature more secretive and cunning because of its weakness—the female—was incorrectly left in disorder by the legislator’s failure to be firm.” In the case of Persia, the women had unmerited control over the rearing of children, causing the young to become undisciplined, materialistic, and corrupt.

Women must be included then to protect the rest of the city from their unfettered influence. Women are educated and participate in the regime not with a view to their freedom, but their control. The most we can say in his defense is that the Stranger treats men in the same manner.

In The Republic much attention is given to the type of citizen associated with each deviation from the best regime. In particular, Socrates’ description of regimes in Book VIII focused on the role that individuals play in the decay of cities. In every instance, a critique of human nature is the primary force behind Plato’s philosophy. This same view guides much of modern political thought—beginning with Hobbes’s state of nature or Smith’s invisible hand—allowing for more, not less, symmetry between the practice of contemporary politics and the political theory of the ancients. While Plato might share with liberals a general skepticism about human nature, Plato cared more for virtue than he feared the concentration of power. This is the true chasm between Plato and modern politics, not Plato’s qualified embrace of democracy.

Conclusion

In many ways, the teaching on democracy found in The Laws is the same as that of The Republic. The objections to self-interest and vice, for example, are given equal treatment; and the attention to education, perhaps the most important subject in both works, is also nearly identical. While The Laws may
be a more practical account of Plato's philosophy, the aim of political association found therein is not foreign to students of other Platonic texts. From this perspective, Plato's political philosophy is clear, coherent, and at odds with modern liberal democratic sensibilities.

Yet, on the whole, The Laws supplies a far more positive view of democracy. In The Republic, for example, democracy is listed not only as an errant and vicious regime, second only to tyranny, it is the cause of tyranny. In The Laws, however, Plato is more sensitive to the practice of politics, and his treatment of democracy differs accordingly. Indeed, Plato's final suggestion of a mixed regime with quasi-elected officials is very different from the authoritarian rule of philosopher-kings that is commonly associated with his less than egalitarian brand of politics. It is no wonder that Plato had no use for Socrates when he wrote The Laws.

Moreover, the practical nature of The Laws requires greater attention to the limits of political action, which makes evident the necessity of democratic principles for the stability and well-being of the city—a perspective mostly absent from Plato's other dialogues. This lowering of sights, as it were, gives a much clearer vision of Plato's political philosophy and illustrates, quite helpfully, how we might use Platonic politics to guide an increasingly democratic world.

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Notes

4. It is not surprising that the identity of the Athenian Stranger is contentious. Cicero claims that the Athenian is Plato himself. Aristotle refers to the Athenian as Socrates without comment or justification (Politics, 1264b25). Leo Strauss argues that the Athenian is Plato's speculation of Socrates had he chosen to flee Athens to escape his death sentence. "What Is Political Philosophy?" An Introduction to Political Philosophy, 26-28. The speculation matters little with regard to the political implications of the text.
13. Pangle, 461.
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17 Plato, The Laws, 711c.
20 Plato, The Republic, 543a–569c.
21 Seth Benardete claims that democracy appears in The Republic as the “least political of regimes.” Socrates’ Second Sailing: On Plato’s Republic (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 201.
22 As Benardete notes, quite strangely, Plato does not use the word demos in the treatment of democracy in The Republic. Socrates does, however, mention the demos when detailing tyranny. Socrates’ Second Sailing, 198.
24 Plato, The Laws, 673c.
26 Plato, The Laws, 690a–d.
30 Plato, The Laws, 695e.
31 Pangle, 398.
32 Plato, The Laws, 856b.
33 Plato, The Laws, 628b–d.
34 Plato, The Laws, 758b.
35 Pappas, 160.
37 Annas and Waterfield, 72n69.
38 Pappas, 125.
40 Plato, The Laws, 723a.
41 Plato, The Laws, 739e.
42 Pappas, 160.
43 Plato, The Laws, 645b.
44 Plato, The Laws, 713c.
45 Plato, The Laws, 810d.
47 Plato, The Laws, 694a–c.
48 Plato, The Laws, 801d.
51 Aristotle, The Politics, 1265a5.
52 Thomas C. Brickhouse and Nicholas D. Smith claim that, in addition to being both philosophically and morally opposed to democracy, Socrates “repeatedly uses Athens’ greatest and most beloved democratic leaders as examples of moral, political, and pedagogical inadequacy.” Plato’s Socrates (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 160.
53 Plato, The Laws, 698c.
54 Plato, The Laws, 700d.
55 Plato, The Laws, 701c.
56 Plato, The Republic, 564a.
57 Plato, The Laws, 634e, 891b.
59 Plato, The Laws, 822e.
60 Plato, The Laws, 638d.
61 Plato, The Laws, 666b.
62 For a discussion of Plato’s treatment of women, see Gregory Vlastos. “If we are looking for feminism in Plato,” he writes, “there is only one place where we do not need to
invent it: in the legislation for the Guardians in The Republic. Among all of Plato's writings and among all the writings which have survived from the classical age of Greece, that work alone projects a vision of society in whose dominant segment the equal rights of human beings are not denied or abridged on account of sex. “Was Plato a Feminist?” in Plato's Republic: Critical Essays, ed. Richard Kraut (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 126.

64 Plato, The Laws, 694d–695c.