Book 5

Very well, then. "Good" and "correct" are the labels I attach to a city and political regime of this kind, and to a man of this kind. And if this city is correct, then I call other cities bad and faulty, both in the way they are run and when it comes to forming the character of the individual soul. The bad ones fall into four categories.'

'What are they?'

I was about to embark on a systematic account of the way I thought the various categories developed out of one another, when Polemarchus, who was sitting a little bit away from Adeimantus, reached out a hand and took hold of his cloak up at the shoulder. Drawing Adeimantus towards him, he leaned forward and started whispering to him. All we could hear of it was: 'What shall we do? Shall we let it go?'

'No,' Adeimantus replied, out loud.

'What in particular,' I asked, 'do you not want to let go?'

'You.'

'What in particular that I have said?'

'We think you're taking the lazy way out. Short-changing us out of a whole line of thought -- and an important one -- in the argument, to save yourself the trouble of explaining it. You think that when it comes to women and children you can get away with a casual remark to the effect that friends will hold things in common, as if no one could be in any doubt about this.'

'Wasn't what I said correct, then, Adeimantus?'

'Yes, it was,' he said. 'But like the rest of our correct statements, it needs some explanation. What do you mean by "common"? There are lots of possibilities, and you're not going to get away without telling us which one you mean. We've been sitting around here patiently, assuming you were bound to say something about the production of children -- what their practice will be in this regard, and how they will bring the children up once they are born, and this whole business you've suggested of women and children being "in common." We think it's of great, indeed crucial, importance for our state whether this is done in the right way or the wrong way. So when you started to deal with another regime before settling these questions in a satisfactory way, we made the decision you heard us making, not to let you go until you have given a full description of this topic, like the other topics.'

'Count me in as well,' said Glaucos, 'as a joint proposer of this motion.'

'Take it as a unanimous decision, Socrates,' Thrasytus added.

'I hope you realise,' I said, 'what you're doing in taking me to task. You're taking us right back to square one, to begin a second major discussion about our state, just as I was starting to congratulate myself on having completed my account of it. I'd have been only too pleased if those remarks had been accepted as they stood. Instead of which you've brought them up for examination, without the slightest idea what a verbal hornet's nest you are stirring up. I could see it earlier on, which was why I thought I would save us a lot of trouble back then by avoiding the question.'

'Do you think,' Thrasytus asked, 'that all these people have come here to look for the rainbow's end? Or have they come to listen to a discussion?'

'To listen to a discussion. But it has to be of a reasonable length.'

'Well,' Socrates,' said Glaucos, 'for people with any sense a reasonable length of time to listen to a discussion of this kind is their whole life. So don't worry about us. Worry about the question we are asking you. You are going to have your work cut out to explain to us what you think this business of things being "in common" among our guardians will be like, as it affects women and children and the children's upbringing while they are still young, in the intervening period between birth and formal education. That is generally regarded as the most demanding part of their upbringing, so you must try and tell us what form it ought to take.'

'What an innocent request! But it's not an easy matter to explain. It's

1 The reference is to 423e-424a.

2 The Greek expression used by Thrasytus, meaning 'to prospect for gold', was similarly proverbial of engaging in a wasteful task with little chance of success.
open to objection at a number of points – even more so than the suggestions we have made so far. There may be doubts whether it is practicable, and however possible it may be, there will be doubts about its wisdom. Hence my reluctance to get involved with it, in case my suggestions strike you, my dear friend, as just wishful thinking."

"No need for reluctance. Your audience is neither ignorant, nor sceptical, nor hostile."

"Do you really think," I asked him, "that you're encouraging me by saying that?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Because the effect is exactly the opposite. If I thought I knew what I was talking about, then your encouragement would be welcome. In a gathering of intelligent and congenial people, talking about important and congenial topics, the knowledge that what one is saying is true gives grounds for security and confidence. But if you're not sure of the answer and are still looking for it when you start talking – as I am now – that's an alarming and unsettling experience. It's not the fear of making a fool of myself – that would be childish. No, I'm worried that if I make a false step on the path of truth, I shan't just fall myself, but shall drag my friends down with me as well – and in a place where a false step is most disastrous. So I make my apologies to Adrasteia for what I am about to say, Glaucon, since I believe that when it comes to involuntary crimes, homicide is less serious than giving wrong directions on the subject of fine, good and just institutions, and that it is better to take chances of that sort with one's enemies than with one's friends. So thanks a lot for your encouragement."

Glaucion laughed. "Well, Socrates, if what you say does us any harm, we'll treat it like a homicide case. We acquit you of misleading us, and you can leave the court without a stain on your character. So relax. Tell us what you have to say."

"Well, the law says if you are acquitted, then you are free from pollution. The chances are if it's true in the case of homicide, it's true here as well."

"That's all right, then. Say on."

"In that case," I said, "I'd better go back and deal now with something I should perhaps have dealt with earlier, in its rightful place. Though maybe this is the right way to do it. Get the men's performance well and truly finished first, before going on to the women's. All the more so as that is what you are so keen on. For people whose nature and education are as we have described, then, the only correct way of possessing and dealing with women and children, in my opinion, is one based on the original starting-point we gave them at the beginning. Our intention, I take it, was to make the men in our hypothetical city into some kind of guardians of the herd."  

"Yes."

"Shall we follow that up then by giving them a birth and upbringing consistent with this role? Shall we see whether or not that suits our purpose?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean this. Do we think female watchdogs should do their share of watching, in the same way as male watchdogs? Should they do their share of hunting, and join in other activities? Or do we think that bearing and raising puppies makes them incapable of doing their share? Do we expect the females to stay at home indoors while the males do the work and have the whole responsibility for the flocks?"

"We think they should join in everything," he said. "We treat the females as weaker, though, and the males as stronger."

"Well then, is it possible to employ one animal for the same tasks as another without giving it the same upbringing and training?"

"No, it's not possible."

"So if we're going to employ women for the same tasks as men, we must give them the same teaching."

"Yes."

"The education we gave men had a musical and poetic element, and a physical element."

"Yes."

"So women too should receive these two disciplines, plus military training. And they should be treated in the same way."

"It looks like it," he said, "from what you've been saying."

"Much of what we are saying now is pretty unconventional. It may well seem absurd, if our suggestions are really going to be put into practice."

1 In Athenian law the relatives of a murder victim could pardon the murderer and so acquit him – that is, free him of penalties – if it was determined at trial that the murder was involuntary.

4 There may be an allusion to the classification of mimes (dramatised scenes from everyday life) as 'men's performances' and 'women's performances', according to whether the fictional characters were male or female. Plato's dialogues are thought to have been influenced by the mimes of the fifth-century Sicilian writer Sophron, which were so classified.

5 The comparison was introduced in Book 2, 375a, and developed at 416a and 440d.
'Indeed it may.'

'What do you find the most absurd thing about it? Isn’t it obviously the idea of women taking exercise naked, along with men, in the wrestling-schools? Not just young women, but older ones as well, like the old men you find in the gymnasia. They’re all wrinkled, and by no means a pretty sight, but they still retain an enthusiasm for taking exercise.'

'Yes,' he replied. 'That would certainly look pretty absurd—at least the way things are at present.'

'Well, now that we’ve brought the subject up, we mustn’t be afraid of all the standard jokes we’d hear from humorists if we introduced changes of that sort in physical exercise, in musical and poetic education, and particularly in carrying arms and riding on horseback.'

'You are right,' he said.

'And since we have brought it up, we must get on to the difficult business of legislation, with a request to these comedians to be serious. We don’t mind them not performing their own proper function. We can remind them that it is not so very long since the Greeks thought it immoral and absurd, as most foreigners still think it, for men to be seen naked. When first the Cretans, and then the Spartans, started exercising naked, all that became a legitimate target for the humorists of the day. Don’t you agree?'

'I do.'

'I take it that once experience showed that you can do all these activities better stripped than wearing clothes, then too the perception of absurdity evaporated in the face of what rational calculation had revealed to be best. It became clear that only a fool regards as laughable anything other than what is bad. Anyone who tries to be amusing by pointing at any spectacle other than the spectacle of folly and wickedness must quite seriously have set himself some standard of beauty other than that of the good.'

6 Although women of the Athenian elite had at least basic literacy, girls were not normally given the education of boys. As in most other Greek states, they were trained for the dual roles of household management and raising children, and had no political rights as individuals. Spartan women, exceptionally, were given a gymnastic training equivalent to that of males. This is the first of a number of ways in which Socrates’ proposals for social reform in Book 5 resemble, with much exaggeration, existing social arrangements at Sparta: see pp. xiv–xvi of the introduction. Some women apparently managed to participate in the philosophic life—two women are reported to have been students at Plato’s Academy, and Pythagorean communities may have included them as equals.

7 Since the late sixth or early fifth century it had become standard in the Greek world for men to take their physical exercise naked.
'So we're going to have to swim too, and try and save ourselves from this objection. Let's hope we get picked up by a dolphin, or some equally unlikely agent of rescue.'

'Yes, it does look as if we shall have to swim for it.'

'Come on then,' I said. 'Let's see if we can find an escape route. We agreed that different natures ought to pursue different occupations, and that a woman's nature was different from a man's nature. But now we are saying that these different natures ought to pursue the same occupations. Is that what we are being accused of?'

'It is indeed.'

'Extraordinary, Glaucan, isn't it, the power disputation has?'

'Why?'

'Because I think lots of people fall into it quite involuntarily. They believe they are holding a discussion, whereas in fact they are having a competition. Because they're incapable of examining what they are talking about by drawing distinctions, they look instead for purely verbal contradictions of what has been said. It's a competition they are having with one another, not a discussion.'

'True,' he said. 'That does happen to a lot of people. Does it apply to us as well, in what we are arguing about now?'

'Very much so,' I replied. 'It looks as if we have lapsed into disputation.'

'In what way?'

'In our thoroughly courageous and competitive, but literal-minded way, we are pursuing the statement that different natures should not engage in the same occupations. We have not begun to ask ourselves what kind of natural difference or sameness we were specifying, or what our distinction applied to when we assigned different occupations to different natures, and the same occupations to the same natures.'

'No,' he said, 'we didn't ask ourselves that.'

'In which case there is nothing, as far as I can see, to stop us asking ourselves whether bald men and men with hair have the same nature or different natures. And when we agree that they have different natures, we can say that if bald men are shoemakers, then men with hair should not be allowed to make shoes. Or if men with hair are shoemakers, then bald men should not be allowed to.'

'The tale of the minstrel Arion's ride to safety on a dolphin after being made to jump overboard by a corrupt crew is the most famous account of such an incident to have come down from antiquity. See Herodotus i.24.'

'That would be ludicrous.'

'Yes, it would be ludicrous— for one very simple reason. When we made our rule, we weren't talking about natures which were the same or different in every possible way. We confined ourselves to the kind of difference and sameness which was relevant to the occupations in question. We meant, for example, that two people with a talent for medicine both had the same nature.'

'Yes.'

'Whereas people who are good at medicine and people who are good at carpentry have different natures?'

'Absolutely.'

'So if either the male sex or the female sex is clearly superior when it comes to some skill or occupation, then we shall say this occupation should be assigned to this sex. But if the only difference appears to be that the female bears the children, while the male mounts the female, then we shall say this in no way proves that for our purposes a woman is any different from a man. We shall still think the guardians and their women should follow the same occupations.'

'And rightly.'

'The next step is to tell those who disagree with us to answer one simple question. For which skill or occupation associated with the running of a city are women's and men's natures not the same, but different?'

'A fair question.'

'And they might say, as you did a few moments ago, that it is not easy to find a satisfactory answer just like that, though with a bit of thought it wouldn't be so hard.'

'They might.'

'Do you want us to ask our opponent on this issue to follow us, and see if we can somehow demonstrate to him that in the management of a city there is no occupation which is the exclusive preserve of women?'

'Yes.'

'Come on then, we shall say to him. Tell us this. When you said that one man was naturally suited for something, and another naturally unsuited, did you mean that one learnt it easily, and the other with difficulty? Was one capable, after a brief period of instruction, of discovering a lot for himself about the thing he was learning, while the other, with any amount of instruction and practice, couldn't even remember the things he had been taught? For one of them, was the body the mind’s useful
assistant, while for the other it was its opponent? When you talked of people being well or ill suited for various things, did your distinction amount to anything other than this?"  

"No. I don't think anyone will challenge that.

"Can you think of any human activity in which the male sex is not superior to the female in all these ways? Or do we have to give a long account of weaving, cookery and baking cakes – things the female sex is thought to be pretty good at, and where it is particularly absurd for them to be second-best?"

"No," he said. 'If you are saying that one sex is better than the other at practically everything, then you are right. It's true there are plenty of individual women who are better at all sorts of things than individual men, but in general you are right.'

"In that case, my friend, none of the activities connected with running a city belongs to a woman because she is a woman, nor to a man because he is a man. Natural attributes are evenly distributed between the two sexes, and a woman is naturally equipped to play her part in all activities, just as a man is – though in all of them woman is weaker than man.'

"Exactly."

"Does that mean we should entrust everything to men, and give nothing to a woman?"

"Of course not."

"No. We shall say, presumably, that one woman is a natural doctor, while another is not, that one is naturally musical, and another unmusical."

"Certainly."

"Isn't one warlike and fitted for physical training, while another is unwarlike and no lover of training?"

"That's certainly my belief."

"What about wisdom-loving and wisdom-hating? Or spirited and lacking in spirit?"

"Yes, those also."

"In which case, there are women who are suited to be guardians, and women who are not. Weren't those the attributes we chose for the men who were suited to be guardians?"

"They were."

"So when it comes to guarding a city, both a woman and a man possess the same natural attributes. They differ only in strength and weakness."

"That's the way it looks."

"It follows that women with these abilities should also be selected to live with the men who have these abilities, and be fellow-guardians with them. They are quite capable of it, and their natures are closely related to those of the men."

"Precisely."

"And the same natures should be given the same occupations, shouldn't they?"

"Yes, they should."

"We have come right round in a circle, back to where we started. We agree there is nothing unnatural in giving those of the guardians who are women a musical education and a physical education."

"We certainly do."

"So it was not an impossibility, some sort of dream, this lawgiving of ours. There was a natural justification for the law we passed. It is society today, apparently, which is out of step and unnatural."

"Apparently."

"Very well. Now, our question was whether our proposals were feasible and for the best."

"It was."

"Has it been agreed that they are feasible?"

"Yes."

"So should the next step be to agree that they are for the best?"

"Obviously."

"Well then, if we want a woman to become guardian material, we shall not have one education for making men guardians, and another for making women guardians, shall we? Particularly when they have the same natural attributes to start with."

"No, we shall have the same education for both."

"Now, here's another point I'd like your opinion about."

"What is that?"

"Whether you feel, in your own mind, that one man is better and another man is worse. Or do you think all men are the same?"

"No, I certainly don't."

"Well, then. In the city we founded, which do you think we shall find turn out the better men? The guardians who have received the education we described? Or the shoemakers trained in the art of shoemaking?"

"That's a fatuous question," he said.

"I see. What about the rest of the citizens? Aren't the guardians better than all of them?"


‘Much better.’

‘What about the women? Won’t the women guardians be the best of the women?’

‘Again,’ he said, ‘much the best.’

‘Is there anything better for a city than for it to have its women and its men alike become as good as possible?’

‘No, there isn’t.’

‘And will this be brought about by the availability of musical and physical education of the kind we described?’

‘Of course.’

‘So our arrangements are not only feasible, but also in the best interests of our city.’

‘Yes.’

‘They must strip, then, the women among our guardians. Virtue will be their cloak. They must play their part both in war and in being the guardians of the city in general. That, and nothing else. And of those tasks, women should be given lighter ones than men, because their sex is weaker. Any man who laughs at the idea of naked women, if they are exercising naked in pursuit of excellence, is “plucking the unripe fruit of laughter.”’

He has no idea, apparently, what he is laughing at, or what he is doing. It is a good saying—and always will be—that what is good for us is beautiful, and what is bad for us is ugly.

‘Absolutely.’

‘Can we say, then, that in our provisions for the legal position of women we have survived the first wave of criticism? In laying down that our male and female guardians should in all respects lead a common life, we have not been completely overwhelmed. There is some consistency in the argument that this is both feasible and beneficial.’

‘That’s certainly no small wave you have survived,’ he said.

‘You won’t think so when you see the next one.’

‘Go on, then. Let me see it.’

‘I believe that this law, and the others which preceded it, imply a further law.’

‘What law?’

‘That all these women shall be wives in common for all these men. That none of them shall live as individuals with any of the men. That children

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12 The quotation adapts a fragment of the poet Pindar that was originally directed against the philosophic speculation of his day, with its unripe στιχον, rather than against satire.

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13 Various forms of communal sexuality and family life among exotic non-Greek tribes are noted already by the early fifth-century historian Herodotus, but the Greek world could offer, as a distant parallel, only the custom at Sparta that men who lacked heirs were permitted to produce them from others’ wives, or from their own wives but using other men as fathers.
orders, and the rulers will issue those orders either in obedience to the letter of the law, or, in places where we have left the interpretation of the law to them, in obedience to its spirit.

'That's fair enough,' he said.

'It will be your job, then, as their lawgiver, just as you selected the men, so now to select the women as well, as similar as possible in nature, and allocate them to the men. Since houses and dining-halls will be communal, and no one will possess any private property of this kind, the sexes will live in close proximity, and in this state of universal proximity, both in their physical education and in the rest of their upbringing, their natural instincts will inevitably, I think, lead them into having sex with one another. Or don't you regard that as inevitable?

'Well, it's not a mathematical inevitability. But it is a sexual inevitability, and for the majority of people that is probably a keener agent of persuasion and attraction.'

'Much keener,' I said. 'Now for the next point, Glaucy. In the city of the blessed, haphazard sexual intercourse is unholy. Like haphazard behaviour of any kind. The rulers will not allow it.'

'No, because it is wrong.'

'Clearly the next step is for us to do everything we can to make marriages as sacred as possible. And it will be the most useful marriages which are the sacred ones.'

'Absolutely.'

'What will make them the most useful? Tell me something, Glaucy. I've noticed that as well as hunting dogs you have a fair number of purebred birds in your house. Isn't there one thing you surely must have noticed about their unions and production of offspring?'

'What sort of thing?' he asked.

'For a start, though they are all pure-bred, aren't some of them – don't they prove themselves to be – the best?'

'Yes, they do.'

'459 The communal dwellings and mess halls of the guardians, and their lack of private property, were discussed at the end of Book 3 (416d–417b). Communal mess halls were a distinctive feature of domestic life at Sparta, as also in Crete. But they were reserved for men, and were not residences.

The Greek word for 'marriage' could also be used to refer to sexual liaisons in general. Throughout the Greek world, legitimate marriage was sanctioned by a religious ritual. There may also be an allusion to the Athenian festival of the Sacred Marriage, held in honour of the union of the king of the gods, Zeus, and his consort, Hera.

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'So do you in that case breed from all of them alike? Or are you careful to breed as much as possible from the best?'

'I breed from the best.'

b 1 What about age? Do you breed from the youngest? Or the oldest? Or do you breed, as far as possible, from those in their prime?

'From those in their prime.'

'If the breeding is not handled like this, do you think your stock of birds and dogs will greatly deteriorate?'

'Yes, I do.'

What about horses, and other animals? I asked. 'Do you think they're in any way different?'

'No. That would be absurd.'

'Help!' I exclaimed. 'We're going to need some extremely expert rulers, my dear friend, if the same applies to the human race as well.'

c 'Well, it certainly does apply. But why do they have to be expert?'

'Because they are going to have to use some pretty strong medicine,' I replied. 'With doctors, I take it that when your body is ready to respond to a prescribed regimen, and doesn't need medicines, a second-rate doctor will do. But if it's a question of prescribing medicines as well, then we know a more resolute physician is needed.'

'True. But why is that relevant?'

'I'll tell you. The probability is that our rulers will need to employ a good deal of falsehood and deception for the benefit of those they are ruling. And we said, if I remember rightly, that useful things of that kind all came in the category of medicine.'

'How right we were,' he said.

'Well, it looks as if one place where it really matters whether we were right over this is when we come to their unions, and production of children.'

'In what way?'

'On the principles we have agreed, the best men should have sex with the best women as often as possible, whereas for the worst men and the worst women it should be the reverse. We should bring up the children of the best, but not the children of the worst, if the quality of our herd is to be as high as we can make it. And all this has to happen with no one apart from the actual rulers realising it, if our herd of guardians is also to be as free as possible from dissension.'

16 382c–d, 380b–d, 414b–c.
'Quite right.'

'In that case we must legislate for some festivals, at which we shall bring together the brides and their grooms. We must have sacrifices, and our poets must compose hymns appropriate to the unions which are taking place. We shall leave the number of marriages to the rulers, so they can keep the number of men as nearly as possible at the same level, taking war, disease and things like that into account. That will stop our city getting either too large or too small, if it can be prevented.'

'That's right,' he said.

'We must have lotteries, I think -- and pretty ingenious ones -- so that every time there is a marriage the inferior type we want to exclude will blame chance rather than the rulers.'

'They'll have to be extremely ingenious, these lotteries of yours.'

'Presumably those among the young men who are outstanding in war or any other sphere are to be given various prizes and rewards, and in particular more generous permission to sleep with the women, so that as many of the children as possible can plausibly be fathered by young men of this sort.'

'That's right.'

'As for the children who will be born from time to time, they will be taken away by the officials responsible for these things. These officials may be men or women, or men and women, since offices, I take it, are open to women and men alike.'

'Yes.'

'The children of good parents will be taken, I think, and transferred to the nursing-pen, where there will be special nurses living separately, in a special part of the city. The children of inferior parents, on the other hand, or any deformed specimen born to the other group, will be removed from sight into some secret and hidden place, as is right.'

'Yes,' he said, 'at any rate if the breed of guardians is going to remain pure.'

'Will these officers also be in charge of feeding? They will bring the mothers to the nursing-pen when their breasts are full, though using every means they can think of to prevent any of them recognising her own child, and they will make sure there are other women with milk, in case the actual mothers do not have enough. Will they keep an eye on the

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\[17\] The cryptic phrase would doubtless have suggested to Plato's contemporaries the not uncommon practice of infanticide by exposure, as a way of dealing with unwanted births.
its way into existence, the parents must deal with it on the understanding that they cannot bring up a child of this sort.'

'That all seems quite reasonable,' he said. 'But this business of fathers and daughters, and the relationships you were talking about just now – how will they tell their own from anyone else's?'

'They won't. When a man takes part in a marriage, he will regard as his children all those born in the tenth – or indeed the seventh – month from the day of the festival. He will call the male children his sons, and the female children his daughters. They will call him father. Similarly he will call the children's offspring his grandchildren, and they in turn will call his generation grandfathers and grandmothers. Those born during the period when their mothers and fathers were producing children they will call their sisters and brothers. In this way they can avoid one another, as we were suggesting just now. However, the law will allow unions between brothers and sisters, if that is how the lot falls out, and if the Pythian priestess gives her consent as well.'

'Quite right.'

'There you are, Glaucn. That's what it is for women and children to be "in common" among the guardians of your city. That's what it is like. The next thing we have to do is establish from what has been said that it is consistent with the rest of the constitution, and that it is by far the best arrangement. Or should we go about things in some other way?'

'No, let's go about it that way. By all means.'

'If we want to settle this, isn't it a good starting-point to ask ourselves what is the greatest good we can think of in the organisation of our city – the thing the lawgiver should be aiming at as he frames his laws – and what is the greatest evil? Then we can ask "Do the proposals we have just described match the features of this good? Do they fail to match the features of this evil?"

'Yes, that's the best possible starting-point,' he said.

'Well, then, can we think of any greater evil for a city than what tears it apart and turns it into many cities instead of one? Or any greater good than what unites it and makes it one?'

'No, we can't.'

'Is it community of pleasure and pain which unites it, when as far as possible all the citizens are equally affected by joy or grief over any particular gain or loss?'

'It certainly is.'

'And is individual variation in these feelings divisive? Things happen to the city or to its inhabitants which make some people distraught and others delighted?'

'Of course it's divisive.'

'Is this because words like "mine" and "not mine" are not applied by people in the city to the same things? The same with "somebody else's"?'

'It certainly is.'

'Does that mean the best-regulated city is the one in which the greatest number of people use this phrase "mine" or "not mine" in the same way, about the same thing?'

'Much the best.'

'And the one which is most like an individual person? Take the example of someone hurting his finger. It is the whole community extending through the body and connecting with the soul, the soul being the ruling element that organises the community into a single system – this entire community notices the hurt and together feels the pain of the part that hurts, which is why we say "the man has a pain in his finger." The same applies to any other part of the human body, to the pain felt when a part of it is hurt or the pleasure felt when the part gets better.'

'Yes,' he said, 'the same does apply. And in reply to your question, the city with the best constitution is organised in a very similar way to this.'

'When anything at all – good or bad – happens to one of its citizens, a city of this kind will be most inclined to say that what is affected is a part of itself. The whole city will rejoice together or grieve together.'

'Yes, it's bound to. A city with good laws, that is.'

'This is the moment for us to return to our city,' I said, 'and look for the characteristics our argument has led us to agree on. We want to know if this city possesses them to an outstanding degree, or if some other city does.'

'Yes, we do need to go back and do that.'

'Very well. Presumably there are rulers and common people, aren't there, in other cities as well as in our city?'

'There are.'

'Do they all call one another citizens?'

'Of course.'

'But in other cities, what else do the common people call the rulers, apart from calling them citizens?'