



Alfarabi:Plato's Laws

2006年5月7日 来源:论坛主题

作者其他文章

Alfarabi:Plato's Laws

Translated by Muhsin Mahdi

Plato's Laws consists of an introduction and accounts of the first nine books of Plato's Laws. In the introduction, Alfarabi explains Plato's art of writing in general and the method he follows in writing the Laws in particular. He also states his own method of summarizing Plato's Laws, points to the two groups of readers for whom the work was written, and indicates the benefit that each can derive from reading it. In the proceeding Selections Alfarabi examines the place of laws and legislation in the broader context of political philosophy. Here, the question of laws becomes the object of a specialized study. In the guise of a commentary on Plato's Laws, Alfarabi shows the relevance of Plato's investigation of Greek divine laws to the study and understanding of all divine laws; hence Avicenna's statement (below, Selection 7) that Plato's Laws treat prophecy and the divine Law.

The Arabic text of Alfarabi's Plato's Laws was first published by F. Gabrieli, *Alfarabius Compendium Legum Platonis* (London, 1952). This publication was examined in detail and additional evidence was presented with a view to a new edition by Muhsin Mahdi, "The Edition of Princeps of Farabi's Compendium Legum Platonis," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, XX (1961), 1-24. The present translation is based on the forthcoming edition by Therèse-Anne Druart. The numbers in brackets in the body of the translation refer to the pages of Gabrieli's text, while those at the beginning of some of the paragraphs refer to the Stephanus pages and page divisions of the Greek text of Plato's Laws.

[Introduction]

1 Whereas the thing due to which man excels all other animals is the faculty that enables him to distinguish among the affairs and matters with which he deals and that he observes, in order to know which of them is useful so as to prefer and obtain it while rejecting and avoiding what is useless; and that faculty only emerges from potentiality into actuality through experience ("experience" means reflection on the particular instances of a thing and, from what one finds in these particular instances, passing judgment upon its universal characteristics)-therefore, whoever acquires more of these experiences is more excellent¹ and perfect in being human. However, t

栏目广告6, 生成文

件 HTDOCS/NEWXX9.HTM 备用,

he one guided by experience may err in what he does and experiences so that he conceives the thing to be in a different state than it really is. (There are many causes of error; these have been enumerated by those who discuss the art of sophistry. Of all people, the wise are the ones who have acquired experiences that are true and valid.) Nevertheless, all people are naturally disposed to pass a universal judgment after observing only a few particular instances of the thing ("universal" here means that which covers all the particular instances of the thing as well as their duration in time); so that once it is observed that an individual has done something in a certain way on a number of occasions, it is judged that he does that thing in that way all the time. For instance, when someone has spoken the truth on one, two, or a number of occasions, people are naturally disposed to judge that he is simply truthful; similarly when someone lies. Again, when someone is observed on a number of occasions to act with courage or as a coward, or to give evidence of any other moral habit,² he is judged to be so wholly and always.

Whereas those who are wise know this aspect of people's natural disposition, sometimes they have repeatedly shown themselves as possessing a certain character so that people will judge that this is how they always are. Then, afterwards, they would act in a different manner, which went unnoticed by people, who supposed they were acting as they had [4] formerly. It is related, for example, that a certain abstemious ascetic was known for his probity, propriety, asceticism and worship, and having become famous for this, he feared the tyrannical sovereign and decided to run away from his city. The sovereign's command went out to search for and arrest him wherever he was found. He could not leave from any of the city's gates and was apprehensive lest he fall into the hands of the sovereign's men. So he went and found a dress worn by vagabonds, put it on, carried a cymbal in his hand and, pretending to be drunk, came early at night out to the gate of the city singing to the accompaniment of that cymbal of his. The gatekeeper said to him, "Who are you?" "I am so and so, the ascetic!" he said jokingly. The gatekeeper supposed he was poking fun at him and did not interfere with him. So he saved himself without having lied in what he said.

² Our purpose in making this introduction is this: the wise Plato did not feel free to reveal and uncover every kind of knowledge for all people. Therefore he followed the practice of using symbols, riddles, obscurity, and difficulty, so that knowledge would not fall into the hands of those who do not deserve it and be deformed, or fall into the hands of someone who does not know its worth or who uses it improperly. In this he was right. Once he knew and became certain³ that he had become famous for this practice, and that it was widespread among people that he expresses everything he intends to say through symbols, he would sometimes turn to the subject he intended to discuss and state it openly and literally; but whoever reads or hears his discussion supposes that it is symbolic and that he intends something different from what he stated openly. This notion is one of the secrets of his books. Moreover, no one is able to understand what he states openly and what he states symbolically or in riddles unless he is trained in that art itself, and no one will be able to distinguish the two unless he is skilled in the discipline that is being discussed. This is how his discussion proceeds in the Laws. In the present book we have resolved upon extracting the notions to which he alluded in that book and grouping them together, following the order of the Discourses it contains, so that the present book may become an aid to whomever wants to know that book

and sufficient for who[m]ever cannot bear the hardship of study and reflection. God accommodates [to] what is right. [5]

First Discourse

1 [624a] A questioner asked about the cause of legislating the laws
4 ("cause" here means the maker, the maker of the laws being the one who legislates them). The interlocutor answered that the one who legislated them was Zeus; among the Greeks, Zeus is the father of mankind who is the last cause.

2 [624a-625b] Then he mentioned another legislation in order to explain that there are many laws and that their multiplicity does not detract from their validity. He supported this by the testimony of generally known and popular poems and accounts in praise of some ancient lawgivers.

3 [625a-627b] Then he alluded to the fact that, because there are some who detract from the validity of the laws and tend to argue that they are foolish, it is right to examine them. He explained that the laws occupy a very high rank and that they are superior to all wise sayings. He examined the particulars of the law that was generally known in his time.

[625b-c] Plato mentioned the cypress trees; he described the path that was being taken by the interlocutor and the questioner and its stations. Most people suppose that underlying this there are subtle notions: that by "trees" he meant "men," and similar difficult, forced, and offensive notions, which it would take too long to state. But the case is not as they suppose. Rather, he meant thereby to prolong the discussion and to connect the literal sense of the discussion with what resembles it, referring to a notion extraneous to his purpose, in order to hide his intention.

4 [625c-e] Then he turned to some of the statutes of that law that was generally known to them, namely, messing in common and carrying light armor; and he examined them, seeking to determine in what way that law was right and whether it agreed with the requirements of sound judgment. He explained that such statutes have many advantages, such as promoting friendship, mutual aid, and protection, and similar things, some of which he mentioned and some he did not; and he explained that they are permitted to carry light armor for yet another reason: because their roads were rugged and most of them were infantrymen rather than cavalrymen.

5 [626a-630d] Then he explained that, because people in general, and those people in particular, are naturally disposed to perpetual war, carrying and acquiring appropriate arms and association and friendship are necessary things. He explained also the advantages reaped from war and gave an exhaustive account of the kinds of war, explaining the specific and general forms of war.

6 [626d-630d] Then the extended discourse on wars led him to mention [6] many aspects of the advantages of the law: it enables a person to control oneself, to pursue the power to suppress evil things (both those in the soul and the external ones), and to pursue what is just. Moreover, he explained in this connection what is the virtuous city and who is the virtuous person. He mentioned that they are the city and the person that conquer by virtue of truth and rightness. He explained also the true need for a judge, the obligation to obey him, and how this promotes common interests. He described who is the agreeable judge, how he ought to conduct himself in suppressing the evil ones and protecting people from wars by gentleness a

and good administration, and that he should begin with what is most needed, namely, the lowest. He explained the true need of people for avoiding wars among themselves and the intensity of their inclination to avoid wars because this promotes their well-being. But this is impossible without adhering to the law and applying its statutes. When the law commands waging wars, it does so in the pursuit of peace, not in the pursuit of war—just as someone may be commanded to do something offensive because its final consequence is desirable. He also mentioned that it is not sufficient for an individual to live in prosperity without security. He supported this statement by the testimony of a poem by a man well known to them, that is, the poem of Tyrtaeus. He explained further that the courageous person who is praiseworthy is not the one who is first to attack in external wars, but he who, in addition, controls himself and manages to uphold peace and security whenever he can. He supported this statement by poems generally known to them.

7 [630d-631d] Then he explained that the purpose of the lawgiver's forbearance and accomplishment is to seek the face of God, the Mighty and Majestic, pursue reward and the last abode, and acquire the highest virtue which is higher than the four moral virtues. He explained that there may be certain people who imitate the legislator's. These are individuals with various purposes who legislate hastily to achieve their bad aims. (His only intention in mentioning these individuals was that people guard against being beguiled by the likes of them.) [7]

He divided the virtues and explained that some of them are human and others are divine; the divine are preferable to the human; and he who has acquired the divine does not lack the human whereas the one who has acquired the human may have missed the divine. The human virtues are the ones such as power, beauty, prosperity, knowledge, and so forth, enumerated in the books on ethics. He mentioned that the true legislator is the one who orders these virtues in a suitable manner leading to the attainment of the divine virtues; for when the human virtues are practiced by the one who possesses them as the law requires, they become divine virtues.

8 [631d-632c] Then he explained that the legislators aim at the means that lead to the attainment of virtues, commanding and impressing on people to follow them, so that, through the realization of these means, the virtues will be realized. Examples of these means are legal marriage, ordering the appetites and pleasures, and indulging in each only to the extent permitted by law. The same applies to fear and anger, base and noble matters, and everything else that serves as a means to the virtues.

9 [632d-634c] Then he explained that Zeus and Apollo⁷ had used all those means in their two laws. He explained the many advantages of each one of the statutes of their Law—for instance, those dealing with hunting, messing in common, war, and so forth. He explained also that war may take place out of necessity or because of appetite and preference. He explained which war stems from preference and is a source of pleasure and which is brought about out of necessity.

He mentioned tacitly in his discussion that the argument running between the speaker and the interlocutor may lead to debasing and degrading certain noble and preferable things; but what is intended by this is to examine and consider them so as to explain their excellence, clear them of suspicion, and ascertain that they are valid a

nd preferable. This is right. He presents this as an excuse for who ever argues for condemning [8] any of the statutes of the law, providing his intention is examination and inquiry, not contention or mischief.

10 [634d-635b] Then he started to condemn certain statutes that were known to them in those laws. He mentioned that to accept such statutes, regardless of one's suspicion from the outset that they may be defective, is to act like children and those who are ignorant; he who is intelligent must examine such statutes in order to overcome his doubt and understand the truth about them.

11 [636a] Then he explained that to carry out what the law requires is one of the most difficult things, while to pretend and make unfounded claims is very easy.

12 [636a-637e] Then he mentioned some of the generally known statutes that had been laid down in earlier laws—for instance, the ones concerning festivals—how they are extremely right because they involve pleasure to which all people are naturally inclined, and how these [ancient lawgivers] legislated the kind of law that renders that pleasure divine. He praised it, approved of it, and explained its advantages. Another example is that of wine drinking and being drunk, their advantages when practiced as the law requires, and their consequences when practiced differently.

13 [638a-b] Then he warned against supposing that the victors are always right and that the vanquished are always wrong. Victory may be due to large numbers, and they may very well be in the wrong; therefore, a human being should not be deluded by the victory but should reflect upon their qualities and the qualities of their laws. If they are in the right, it makes no difference whether they are victors or vanquished. Nevertheless, in most cases the one who is in the right is the victor; it is only accidentally that he is vanquished.

文章添加: [未已](#) 最后编辑:

点击数:1017 本周点击数:1 [打印本页](#) [推荐给好友](#) [站内收藏](#) [联系管理员](#)

相关评论 (只显示最新5条)

[未已](#) 于2006-5-7 20:01:00

Eighth Discourse

1 [828a-c] He had mentioned the matter of festivals in a general way in the beginning of the book; then he now started to mention ordering them. Thus he described a subtle notion that reveals a wonderful advantage of festivals other than the advantage he alluded to in the beginning of the book, namely, exalting the gods and restoring their renown. For exalting [37] and esteeming the gods exalts the traditions and the laws. He mentioned that one should look at the number of gods and for each one institute a festival and sacrifices with which the citizens seek to gain their favor. 2 [828c-829c] Then he mentioned that there are two classes of gods, those in the heavens that are worshipped and those on earth that are esteemed but not worshipped. For each class he should order the appropriate sacrifices and activities required by law. He described that, during these festivals, the youth of the city, after having offered sacrifices, must occupy themselves with exercises useful to them in combat, so that they execute this with cheerfulness. Let him permit them to sing during these festivals the kinds of songs that cons

ist in delivering eulogies and condemnations, in order that this lead them to adhere to tradition with pleasure and cheerfulness. For, when listening to eulogies and condemnations takes place properly and as required by law, it instills in the youth's hearts eagerness to acquire the virtues through combat; their eagerness will increase and augment, their hearts grow stronger, and their sense of indignation intensify. Moreover, from the exercises performed by the youth at those festivals are developed activities performed in combat demanding great valor, which are useful to the city. 3 [831c-833b; 846d-847b?] Then he mentioned another of the notions that the rulers of the city should not neglect, namely, that those who do the slaughtering for these sacrifices as well as the artisans needed to decorate the festivals are also parts of the city. Since they will be busy with their occupations, they will miss²⁷ the benefits from attending the festivals. If they miss these benefits, they become unscrupulous. Now if they are numerous and unscrupulous, this will result in corruption in the city, since they will then form a good part of it. Therefore, the rulers must not allow a plethora of citizens to become such artisans. Let him lay down for them, then, special permits so that the citizens will not be corrupted by this, and let him disclose such base aspects of those arts that, as a result of this disclosure, only people with bad natural dispositions will aspire to practice them. Otherwise this will lead to weakening the matter of traditions.

[38] 4 [829e-834d] Then he came back to mention the exercises performed on festival days. He enumerated them and elucidated the matter, enumerating the advantages derived from them, such as various kinds of horsemanship, practice with weapons, and wrestling, in the manner generally known in those days and times and among those groups. 5 [835b-841a] Then he mentioned that these pleasures associated with festivals enter people's hearts as a result of their being occupied with them during the festivals, so that they become overwhelmingly preoccupied with and attached to them on non-festival days to the point where their preoccupation with them develops into preoccupation with pleasures outside the lawful traditions. Thus, the legislator must be very mindful of this notion, especially in connection with intercourse and the pleasures associated with it, because it is one of the greatest causes of appetites and pleasures. While these things have a great usefulness, their harmfulness is also great. He spoke a great deal about this notion in particular and this subject, was expansive in what he mentioned, and spoke at length until he proceeded to advance beyond it to mentioning temperance. 6 [841a-c] Then he followed this by speaking about the other virtues and the stages of the youth in regard to them. He mentioned further how the virtues creep stealthily into the soul with lawful pleasures and, likewise, the vices with unlawful pleasures, albeit slightly. That is because this notion is one of the most important matters that the legislator should take care of completely. 7 [835d-844d] Then he mentioned the difficulty of this subject and the difficulty of being mindful of and controlling it, because being mindful of and controlling something not distinguishable from its contrary is very difficult. That is because the youth and unscrupulous people adhere to beautiful appearances that lead them to what they want. As a result it is hard for rulers to keep them away from what they cling to; so that soon they reach their bad aims that, ultimately, lead to the city's corruption. Thus the legislator must take care of each and every one of these matters as well as the affairs of the workers, artisans, farmers, and frontier settlers. Let him institute the appropriate traditions for making them upright. Then let him devote most of his effort to preventing changes in the matter of temples and venerated places [39] on earth because changing them will corrupt people's hearts; and corrupting their hearts will, in turn, throw the affair of the city into disorder. The legislator must teach the governors and judges how to administer each group of people so that they follow his way and pursue the correct course in that, thereby preventing dissension from arising as a result of bad administration. He mentioned this notion, gave examples of free people and slaves, and of how people treat bees in beehives—he only meant by this evil people and vagabonds. 8 Then he mentioned that a single governor and administrator will not know the usage[s], rules²⁸ and habits of all the regions. Thus one of them may be skilled in governing one group of people and the inhabitants of a particular country; if he is required to govern other groups, even if, for example, they were fewer in number, he will be unable because of their usage[s], rules, and habits that escape him and that he does not know. For this notion he gave examples drawn from governors at sea and rulers on land. He spoke about this at length. 9 [844d-845d] Then he started to explain two notions in one, namely, the matter of theft and that of property. He mentioned that those who, without permission, take property that is insignificant and that is

impossible to store should not be punished, because to dismiss this is manly and gives the citizens a good name. But in the case of what can be stored and useful later if it is preserved, it is not base but fair to punish those who take them. From this it is clear that whoever takes the likes of the former things from someone else's possessions should not be punished like thieves who take things of value. For this notion he gave examples of fruits and other, similar things. 10 [846d-847b] Then he digressed to mention the arts and crafts. He explained that the citizens must practice the particular art to which they are suited. Whoever [40] would turn to one art from another for fun, diversion, or vanity, without this being called for by necessity, incompetence in performing the first art, or an obvious excuse or reason, then the city's administrator must prevent him. If he should need to punish him for doing so, let him punish and impose a fine on him, because switching from one art to another without an excuse is a powerful cause of confusion and corruption in the proper arrangements. He spoke a great deal further about this notion and about fines for it. 11 [847e-848c] Then he [himself] described the nourishment that is indispensable to the citizens. He mentioned that the governors of cities must have control over this matter and that those who institute traditions should not overlook it. Rather, they should order statutes concerning them to straighten the matter out. These include nourishment for the citizens themselves, then for their slaves, then for their animals and, finally, what is left over—which they will generously offer to each other. 12 [848c-849a] Then he described the matter of sites for worshipping the gods and the matter of citizen assemblies for certain common interests like markets. For the legislator and the rulers of the city must direct their attention to this matter. 13 [849a-850c] Then he explained that looking into the matter of sales and purchases so that they will be conducted properly is required as well; likewise the matter of the equipment needed for bodies, sites, mosques, wars, and the like; next the matter of contracts, registrations, deposits, debts, and deeds—for the legislator may have to take care of all these. He mentioned all these things in a sound discussion at the end of this discourse; the way he meant it will be clear to whoever reflects on it and recognizes his intention that we mentioned.



未已

于2006-5-7 20:00:42

Seventh Discourse

1 He set out in this Discourse to explain the matter of hymns which are indispensable for the legislators to establish so that they will be referred to in their times and after the end of their days. He mentioned that this matter is necessary, discussing this at length. 2 Then he divided them and said, "Some of them are introduced all at once when the legislators begin to reveal their plans; some are introduced piecemeal; and some are introduced collectively at the end when they finish legislating their Laws, ordering their statutes, and establishing their traditions." 3 Then he mentioned that what is introduced all at once is like something counterfeit because of the piecemeal changes and alterations that will be needed, in the manner mentioned some place in this book; and that may become a defect in the eyes of children and people without sophistication in regard to traditions. What is introduced gradually, on the other hand, is fair and noble. What is introduced last is the noblest of all and the precautions taken in it are most effective. 4 Then he mentioned that what is said in them should not belittle the right of anyone who reflects on them and discovers their meanings. 5 Then he gave examples drawn from the statements [35] of poets who related the sayings of some ancient legislators and wondered at the rich meanings contained in those few utterances. 6 Then he began to explain that those sayings may be innovations that the citizens need to learn and work hard to memorize or they may be innovations that citizens already know. He gave examples drawn from ancient books known to them. 7 Then he digressed to mention the classes of things that should be set down in these books. He mentioned²⁴ that the statutes established by the legislator must be stated with the fairest detail and summary possible, followed by exhortations that melt the citizens' hearts upon hearing them, moving them to humility and sorrow, and that foster in their hearts compassion and humility. 8 [799c-d?] Then he introduced parables with which the citizens will admonish themselves, either about bygone peoples whose traces have vanished, leaving only their name, or else about beasts and their conditions, and then about strange matters that leave people's minds perplexed. He described wonderful aspects of the advantages of these strange matters. One is the natural inclination of those who are unsophisticated as well as the majority of people toward what is unintelligible to them, although it is hard for them to perceive its real sense. Another is the wonder they display at the marvelous. Yet another is that it leads to the continued existence of the law due to the people's being

continually engaged in extracting the meanings of those strange matters. 9 [804a?] Then he followed this by mentioning books generally known to the citizens of those cities who were engaged in discussing their meanings; this became so widespread that poets like Homer and others mention it in their poetry. 10 Then he turned to and explained another notion, discussing it at length, namely, that the legislator must require the citizens to preserve and study those sayings and consider this one of the most important statutes of his law so that those sayings will not be obliterated. 11 Then he started to mention another notion with regard to the matter of legislators, namely, that none of them should repudiate anything that the previous legislator[s] introduced. When necessity leads a legislator to change a statute of previous laws, let him repudiate instead the alteration made by the citizens of those cities in what was introduced [36] by their legislators and the distortion of the laws' traditions and usage; then, afterwards, he may start²⁵ to replace with what²⁶ is more appropriate. He spoke at length on this subject. 12 Then he turned to explain the matter of future legislators. He mentioned that, when a legislator declares that someone else will succeed him, the thoughts and hearts of the citizens, especially the unsophisticated ones, become preoccupied with expectation and this diminishes their desire to adhere to what he himself introduces. 13 Then he himself explained that the legislator should be very wary of claiming that he will never have any successor whatsoever. For, if that is publicized and then people see someone else appear sometime after him, this will lead them to reject, disown, and discard all laws: his law, that of his predecessor, and that of his successor. Rather, he must steer a middle course between denying and confirming it. For example, he should declare that someone will appear to defend him and his law when these statutes and traditions are obliterated with the passage of time and people become corrupt. If they ask if the future legislator will be as excellent as he, let him deny it, since it will not harm him. He gave examples drawn from citizens of those cities and their legislators. 14 Then he started after that to explain that there are two classes of traditions. One class applies the Law to each of the legislators in accordance with their need at the time and the conditions of their cities. The second class consists of traditions that do not change or alter, that is, the natural ones. He spoke at length on this subject, giving examples relating to kinsmen, ingratitude for favors, and other things.

未已

于2006-5-7 20:00:26

[744a-745b?] The wise [Plato] spoke at length on this subject and in regard to the legislator's obligation to care for the poor as he does the rich: he must set up traditions to make them upright and to soothe their souls, or else corruption impossible to control or cure will be engendered.

[746d-747d] He must also institute traditions concerning weights and measures, everything in which the people deal in the city, and trading, so as not to disadvantage one group nor allow others to become reckless. He must proceed similarly with regard to the special positions of each of the citizens, rich and poor, so that no class of people remains exempt from a tradition concerning it; for that would lead to corruption of grave proportions and consequence. In short, divine tradition should not contain disparity or disorder. ("Not containing disparity" here means that all those who have the same status as the one who instituted the divine tradition and come after him to look at it will approve and not find fault with it.) Sixth Discourse 1 [751a-c] He had resolved in this Discourse to explain that the virtuous city is the one whose rulers and rule are ordered fairly and naturally—for when the city lacks this element, it will not endure. If the legislator does not order the rulers, judges, and companions naturally, then initially he will be ridiculed [30] and become a laughingstock and, later on, his affairs will become twisted and his law corrupt; and the corruption of laws entails the corruption of cities. 2 [752b-c] Then he set out to explain that, when the citizens of this city are ignorant, unsophisticated, and childish, they rarely accept these regimes and that order introduced by the legislators. 3 [752b-755b] Then he explained a way to contrive their acceptance, pointing out that the city must be either old or new. If it is old, then the legislator's task is easier owing to the previous laws there, traces of which still remain in people's natural dispositions, thus forming a prelude to the recent law. If the city is new, the task is somewhat more difficult because the legislator must choose from the city's men those people with natural dispositions ready to accept the laws. He will then reach an understanding with them as to what he wants, establish the traditions in their souls, and seek their assistance and strengthen himself against the others. And if he should happen upon groups of citizens of another city who had observed and were acquainted with the laws, let him seek their assistance against the citizens of his city (since they are also descendants of the same race) and they will propagate his law in that city itself with [the help of] another city. Similarly with regard to the matter of the elders, he must also seek the assistance of those who are sophisticated and have fine natural dispositions against those who are inferior to them the children and the ignorant. Thus, if the legislator happens upon the likes of these, let him order them where it is most fitting and appropriate and let him entrust each with those traditions that he knows the elder is able and has the ability to fulfill as they require. What we mentioned is the meaning of what he symbolized in those examples about the inhabitants of Crete and other cities that he mentioned, and about tablets, markets, and other things. He spoke at

length about this, mentioning such things as how a city's borders are drawn when it is first established, how to order the people there, how to order their stipends and needs, and how to order their activities [31] in accordance with their ages; for the youth cannot fulfill and are not fit for the tasks and activity of the elderly, and the elderly cannot fulfill and are not fit for the tasks and activity of the youth. He explained this through a lengthy, adequate discussion. 4 [755b-756b] Then he explained that the warriors and their leaders and administrators must be ordered after the citizens; for wars constitute one of the greatest concerns of cities. 5 [755c-d?] Then he mentioned another consideration in connection with the notion of ordering, namely, that the ordering that occurs at the beginning may not be entirely correct. Thus if [the legislator] sees that some ruler is not accomplished in or is unequal to the matter he is to execute and finds someone more skilled and accomplished in the matter, he should not hesitate to dismiss the first and put the second in his place so that the matter will proceed as finely and as properly as possible; for regard for rights²² in such a situation is harmful. 6 Then he alluded to the fact that complete care must be given to the matter of ministers, people with experience, advisors, and administrators, with an eye to times of consultation in war and in peace. For legislators and citizens cannot do without such people; therefore, ordering them is a requirement necessary for the well-being of cities. He explained further that those who are ordered require different honors including a first honor such as glory and veneration of the soul, a second honor like benefit, a third honor like a future promise, and a fourth honor like appearing to be positively disposed and to hold out hope, without actually saying as much. [755b-756b] As for the warriors, they have profitable and financial honors in amounts based on a scale, all of which should be well maintained. [756b-e] He explained further that rulers must combat those who are lazy and stubborn with fines instead of honors in order to straighten out the city's affairs, because honors and fines, when they are not ordered naturally so that everyone deserving receives his due, lead to corruption of the law. 7 [756e-758a] Then he pointed out a subtle notion in connection with ordering, namely, that equality fosters friendship, both of which are to be preferred. Let no one suppose that equality consists in placing slavish and ignoble people [32] on the same level as the free and the virtuous in rank and honors. Rather equality consists in assigning each the status one deserves. This is the equality that fosters affection and friendship. 8 [757d-758a] Then he mentioned another useful notion, namely, that something may happen to a group composed of equals in worth and rank, that necessitates delegating something to one of them rather than another, thereby causing them to quarrel and have a change of heart. In such a situation, one should take advantage of things such as lottery, chance, and the like. The lawgiver ought to take care of this situation completely. 9 Then he explained the matter of generosity and miserliness in connection with expenditures because handing out stipends to people, while taking into account their differences and in proportion to their expenditures and openhandedness, is one of the most difficult concerns of a regime. This is because whoever takes his without spending it and thereby profiting his subordinates and accumulates it for himself instead causes great harm. The rulers must investigate the case of such people—and the case of extravagant people as well—and subtly prevent and obstruct them. He elucidated this notion adequately and explained as well the matter of profligate people who increase their expenditures and stipends because they spend them on what begets very harmful evils in the city and on what is ephemeral and, therefore, of no use. 10 [758a-e] Then he mentioned the matter of the guardians and the custodians. These fall into two groups: one consists of the guardians of the city like soldiers, night watchmen and warriors; the other consists of the custodians of laws and regimes like judges, preachers, administrators, and advisors. He gave as an example a ship at sea. He mentioned further the usefulness of the institution of messengers and how it embodies alertness and eliminates laxness from matters entrusted to those who are ordered and keeps them at their post. This is equitable, because assigning functions is enormously and completely useful. 11 [753b-c?] Then he mentioned the matter of informers and spies who approach and question citizens on behalf of their enemies. He commanded watching this matter closely and being wary of them. 12 Then he digressed to mention the substances of men and commanded something useful, namely, selecting for important and urgent matters those legislators (and also rulers) who are men with some experience in²³ freedom so that, because of their fine natural dispositions, they will be furthest from evils. [33] 13 Then he spoke at length about natural orderings. ("Natural" means an adequate amount in proportion to the situation, the matter, and the condition: if there are a hundred of the latter, then there should be a hundred [ranks]; if ten, then ten; if one, then one.) 14 [776b-778a?] Then he started on the matter of servants, explaining that it is one of the important concerns for the citizens of cities. There are two classes of them: one consists of slaves and handmaidens; the other, animals that the city needs in peace and in war. The legislator and the rulers after him must heed the matter of servants and their administration by instituting traditions for them and concerning them. 15 [761a-c] Then he described the matter of water since the citizens have no way of settling down unless the administration of their water is extremely correct. The legislator and the rulers must take complete care of the matter of water and channeling it so that it is not distributed abundantly in one place and lacking in another, given to some people and kept from others. 16 [761a-c] Then he mentioned the matter of supererogations in connection with sources of water like cisterns and travel facilities for the needy; for that is one of the greatest factors causing cities to exist and to flourish, and their renown to last. The one who institutes

traditions and the judges must look after these facilities closely. 17 [761d-762b] Then he digressed to another notion from among the most important affairs of the city, namely, the taxes that people should be made to pay such as alms, land taxes, and the poll tax. These taxes are of two kinds: one is levied for natural resources and the other for humiliation, in order to keep the juveniles from inclining toward practices other than those of the followers of laws and toward ways of life different from the ways of life and laws of the citizens. 18 [761d-762b?] Then he mentioned the matter of crimes and Punishments. There are two kinds of crimes: one is laxness in obeying; the other is innovating what does not agree with tradition. If it is committed by one of the ruled, the ruler must mete out the punishment laid down for that crime by the supreme legislator. If it is committed by a ruler, the other rulers must [34] convene to discipline and reprimand him as the situation requires. For neglect of that will lead to the city's ruin and corruption. 19 Then he began to mention the citizens' stipends and spoke of it at length, having previously treated similar matters to a large extent. However the former discussion was more general, whereas this one is more specific. 20 [764a-765d] Then he mentioned what should be taken care of with regard to the matter of the leaders of the musicians, because that is also required in every time. However, the care for that was greater in those times. Thus he mentioned that there are two classes of music: one exhorts to combat and the activities of war; the other exhorts and conduces to the activities of peace and joyfulness. The legislator and the rulers must order these leaders as the laws require.

未已

于2006-5-7 20:00:10

Then there is another kind of prelude not belonging to the genus of these three, namely, the commendable and noble moral habits that legislators, their judges, and their followers extol so that the ignorant and children become habituated to them. Once the moral habits become positive dispositions, these people will be led to accept traditions more easily and hasten to adhere to them more quickly, because evil people are not led to good things easily as are moderate people. 17 [724a-b] Then he himself promised to explain later on what is required for the matter of the citizens' soul, their bodies, habits, and characters. Fifth Discourse 1 [726a-727e] He explains in this Discourse that the matter of the soul is the first thing to be cared for because it is the noblest of things and ranks third in divinity. The most worthy kind of care that can be bestowed on it is honor, since contempt of the soul is base. He explained that honor is one of the divine matters and the noblest of them; since the soul is noble, it should therefore be honored. Satisfying the soul's appetite does not honor it since, were this the case, a child and similarly an ignorant person should satisfy the appetites of their souls because they suppose the appetites of their souls to be directed toward fine and preferable things; and yet much harm would result from their satisfying those appetites. On the contrary, honoring the soul consists in disciplining it and satisfying those appetites praised divine traditions. The more the laws condemn them, the more it is an act of honoring the soul to keep it from them, even if this is painful at the moment. Whoever thinks that the body is nobler than the soul on the grounds that the latter could not exist were it not for the former is in error; his error will become clear with the slightest effort. 2 [727e-728a] Then he explained how the soul should be honored in most human activities such as [26] amassing wealth and other things. 3 [728a] Then he pointed out how the soul is honored by saying, "[The citizens] should be made to accept instruction from the legislator because this matter is his affair." 4 [728c-729a] Then he also mentioned that one must honor the body after honoring the soul. He explained that it is not the beautiful, powerful, swift, sound, or fat body that is honorable, but the one that follows commendable and agreeable habits and ways of life in agreement with traditions. The way to honor the body is to follow moral discipline. He explained this notion, discussing it at length and giving useful, clear examples. 5 [729a-c] Then he set out to explain that the traditions for disciplining children to honor the body are the very same as those for disciplining middle-aged and old people when they are ignorant. 6 [729c-730b] Then he explained that the same traditions apply concerning honors for the soul with respect to strangers, kinsmen, and citizens, whereas traditions concerning bodily discipline that are meant for strangers should be distinct from the ones meant for kinsmen, because disciplining bodies includes punishments for crimes. If a stranger and a kinsman are treated equally in this, it will lead to traditions and laws being corrupt. 7 [730b-732b] Then he explained how one should proceed on the path to acquiring the moral virtues and that spending time is indispensable in this because a habit is only formed when practiced over a period of time, in every social situation, and together with all groups; otherwise it will not become a habit. The path to habituation in justice, temperance, courage, and other things is the same; likewise removing blamable things requires time in which a person accustoms himself to abandoning base things. If a human being is not high-minded or has no natural strong indignation, one's soul's training cannot be at all complete because a human being is naturally disposed to overlook most of one's beloved's faults—and there is no beloved more beloved to a person than one's soul. If this is the case, strong indignation is indispensable if one is to restrain one's beloved soul from appetites that are a source of pleasure to one. In this situation, anger alone is useful in keeping one from approving of all one's soul does, accustoming it instead to one's displeasure from the start. 8 [732b-d] Then he explained that people with breeding must

first command their own souls to abandon immoderate actions [27], such as perpetual gladness, excessive laughter, intense sadness, excessive grief, and the like. Once they have commanded their own souls this, they must command it of their subordinates. 9 [732d-734e] Then he mentioned that they must seek the gods' assistance in connection with all these character traits and their acquisition, by beseeching and invoking the gods and asking their assistance in what they are doing so that their undertaking will be in accordance with the law, and commendable and divine. A person must also strengthen one's hope in the gods so that one's existence will be more felicitous and one's way of life more noble. A noble way of life may be noble in the eyes of one group and not another or it may be noble in the eyes of the gods. One must consider this and reflect upon it thoroughly. He spoke about this notion at length and explained the chosen way of life in connection with each moral habit and statute. He enumerated some of them by way of examples until he mentioned temperance. He explained that choosing the pleasurable over the painful is the way of life of compulsion, while choosing the painful over the pleasurable is the way of life of choice. 10 [734e-735a] Then he also mentioned this in connection with health, courage, knowledge, and so one. He mentioned further that the affairs of the city cannot be complete unless the traditions are prepared for by preludes having to do with governances²⁰ so that, once these preludes are established, the great and splendid tradition will perform its function. He gave as an example the warp and the woof of cloth. 11 [735a-c] Then he declared that there are two kinds of such governances. One consists of rulers of tribes and their governance over them; the other consists of traditions instituted by those who lay them down. He mentioned that this notion applies to all cattle and people that are governed. For each class of them has a governor and a usage²¹ different from the other. 12 [735c-e] Then he mentioned another notion useful in this connection, namely, that despotism is needed as a prelude to divine tradition. The need for it results from two considerations: one is for purging—I mean purging the city of those evil people whose diligence, behavior, art, and zeal act in opposition to the rulers—the other is making them a lesson and warning to the good people so that they will easily and cheerfully accept the tradition of those who identify themselves with what is divine. He gave examples of that and summarized all of them eloquently. 13 [735e-736a] Then he explained that, if there is not a genuine and urgent need for something, then the matter will not be [28] extremely well done. He gave as an example migration and poverty that can be made the foundation of a virtuous city on account of the migrants' true need to settle and the true need of the poor for what assures their livelihood. 14 Then he explained that right distribution is the basis of the city's affairs in order to prevent anything from increasing to the point of becoming a preoccupation or from falling below what is necessary and, thereby, causing strife among the citizens. He began by enumerating in that regard first land and territories, then companions and brothers, then provisions and nourishments, then farms, then mosques, and then indispensable storehouses. He mentioned that such distribution, although necessary, is difficult. The one who institutes traditions must set up statutes in the city upon which basis they will build their affairs. He gave examples drawn from what was generally known to them. He mentioned various aspects of the distribution of worldly goods by the legislators among the citizens of cities; his intention will not be hidden from anyone who reads those chapters. 15 Then, finally, he said, "This, then, is the city whose existence we wanted from the start." 16 [741b-741a?] Then he came back to mention how the conditions of the children and youths, and likewise those of the ignorant, should be administered. 17 [741a-e?] Then he followed that with the command to honor traditions and regimes and to look at them with veneration and exaltation. 18 [742a-744a] Then he set out to explain the details of amassing wealth from non-lowly occupations. Thus he mentioned that, when wealth is collected in commendable ways, it is much more excellent than poverty. However, when it is amassed from occupations that taint a human being with various kinds of disgrace, then it is better to abstain from earning it. He spoke at length on this subject and gave examples of commendable ways of amassing wealth drawn from occupations of the Greeks, both commendable and not, such as traveling and commerce, because they were generally known to them. In short, what is earned without harming tradition and character traits that constitute preludes [29] to traditions, and the honor accorded the soul and the body, is very commendable. But if it is harmful in one of these respects, then it is blamable, and it is better to be contented than to engage in any of these things because the purpose intended is to keep discipline and traditions alive. He mentioned that the one who institutes traditions must prohibit all persons of breeding and intelligence as well as those who complied with these traditions from being engaged in such occupations. He must lay down punishments and explain their meanings and consequences so that people adhere to these traditions and do not violate them.

未已

于2006-5-7 19:59:51

Fourth Discourse

1 [704a-705b] He set out now in this Discourse to explain that the true city is neither the place called "city" nor a gathering of people. Rather, it has preconditions which include [the following]. (1) That its citizens accept the traditions of the regimes. (2) That it have a divine administrator. (3) That these citizens manifest commendable and praiseworthy moral habits and customs. And (4) that its territory be naturally suitable [22] for importing the

provisions the citizens need and everything else indispensable to them. 2 (705d-707a) Then he explained another notion, namely, that the law legislated for the citizens is not merely for the purpose of being heard and obeyed; rather it is also for the purpose of engendering commendable moral habits and agreeable customs. He mentioned another notion, namely, that a person whose customs and moral habits are not in accordance with the law, noble, and agreeable, will always be deteriorating and regressing; and it is base for a person to regress as he gets older. He gave as an example courageous persons who neglect to exercise to the point where they are forced to take up lowly arts and occupations such as sailing and the like. He gave an example drawn from a poem of Homer that was generally known to them and one about a lion that neglected itself to the point where its courage slipped away and it came to fear mountain goats, 3 [709b-e] Then he started to explain this notion in relation to an entire city. He also explained that it is good fortune¹⁷ for a city if the one who institutes its traditions is skilled, knowledgeable, and well trained with regard to all instances of good fortune connected with prosperity and other things; and, further, that it is good fortune for the legislator to have citizens who listen, obey, and are ready to accept the traditions embodied in regimes. 4 [709e-712b] Then he set out to explain the matter of despotism; that there may be a need for it when the citizens are not good persons with fine natural dispositions; and that despotism is only blamable when the ruler is naturally disposed to be despotic and uses despotism to satisfy his appetites, not because he needs to do so for the sake of the citizens. For when the city is such that the governor cannot dispense with coercing it, and so he does that and institutes there traditions that are divine, then this is very commendable and agreeable. 5 [710e-711d] Then he explained that the despotism that takes place in this manner is more appropriate and easier in many respects than [the way of] choice since, by confronting the citizens with despotism, the one who institutes traditions can make them upright in the shortest time. In contrast, the one who [23] is not despotic, but proceeds in accordance with the way of freedom, cannot dispense with being gentle; and to proceed gently requires a long time. 6 Then he explained that despotism and coercion are extremely bad for those who are free and virtuous just as they are extremely fine for those who are slaves and evil. He gave examples of the Cnossans¹⁸ and citizens of other cities generally known to them. 7 [713a-714a?] Then he explained that, the better the citizens are, the more divine is their ruler (and, therefore, their ruler is much more excellent than the rulers of a less excellent city); so that this situation may develop to the point where the administrator of a city will partake of the genus of divine beings and have little in common with those humans. He gave as an example of this notion the citizens of a city generally known to them. 8 [714b] Then he explained that the kinds of regimes correspond numerically to the kinds of traditions, because regimes conform to traditions inasmuch as they draw their strength from them and are constructed on the basis of them; further, the kinds of rule and ways of life also correspond to them numerically; if the one is fine, then so is the other; if bad, then bad; and if superior, then superior—with only a slight discrepancy in truth. 9 [714c-716b] Then he explained that the vain ruler who cherishes his own beauty, wealth, lineage, or any of his virtues is not commendable or agreeable since the greatest concern of the ruler should be the well-being of those who are ruled. He who is arrogant is only concerned with himself and his own fate and thereby incurs the gods' displeasure; and whoever incurs their displeasure will not receive their support, without which he will not leave a noble and agreeable heritage. 10 [716c-718c] Then he set out to describe him and to explain the things he should care for. He should begin with the fate of the body, next that of the soul, and then external things in that order. He gave examples and spoke at length on this subject because of its great usefulness. He ended up with a discussion of the rights and duties of sons and fathers, how to fulfill them, what these are when they start out in life and what they are when they reach the end of their days. [24] 11 [718d-719a] Then he explained what both the difficulty and the ease of this virtuous path consist in, giving an example drawn from a generally known poem. 12 [719b-e] Then he explained that a poet, a disputant, and a discussant may say both a thing and its contrary, whereas the one who attends to the traditions should only defend the one thing that is useful to him. 13 Then he gave an example of that drawn from some rules of Laws, namely, burying and shrouding the dead; how the legislator should command these practices; and how those others, whom we enumerated, 19 tend to talk about them. 14 [719e-720e] Then he explained how the law should be instilled in people's hearts, giving as an example a doctor who treats children with kindness. He mentioned that doctors have servants who imitate them. Likewise there are judges who emulate legislators in giving guidance. They must employ extreme kindness in restoring traditions and in preserving them for the people. 15 [720e-722c] Then he explained that the city only begins to flourish as a result of the law concerning marriage and procreation. Therefore that law must be extremely refined and precise. He mentioned certain things—like the fines and punishments embodied in those traditions generally known in those times—in connection with how wrong it is to neglect this point. 16 [722c-723b] Then he set out to explain that, for traditions to become established in the citizens' hearts, preludes must be made prior to instituting the traditions. Of these preludes, some are accidental and depend on good fortune, others are imposed, and still others are natural. The accidental preludes are like a mishap that befalls the citizens and corrupts the relations among them, so that they are impelled to adopt a tradition that brings them together and unites their concerns and their views. Natural preludes are like the corruption that comes about as a result of the passage of long and extended periods

of time and because of the weariness that affects people because they are naturally disposed to it. Imposed preludes are like proclamations effected through discussion and clarifications by means of arguments. Thus, if these three [kinds of] preludes take place [25], people's desire to follow traditions will be genuine and they will be impelled toward them so that, when they find them, they will accept them cheerfully.

[更多评论>>](#)

[加入收藏](#) | [关于我们](#) | [投稿须知](#) | [版权申明](#) |

| [设为首页](#) |

[思问哲学网](#) Copyright (c) 2002—2005

四川大学哲学系·四川大学伦理研究中心 主办

蜀ICP备05015881号