

History Reading #2 – From Socrates to Alexander

Plato – Protagoras (two selections)

'Last night, or rather very early this morning, Hippocrates, the son of Apollodorus and the brother of Phason, gave a tremendous thump with his staff at my door; someone opened to him, and he came rushing in and bawled out: Socrates, are you awake or asleep?

I knew his voice, and said: Hippocrates, is that you? and do you bring any news?

Good news, he said; nothing but good.

Delightful, I said; but what is the news? and why have you come hither at this unearthly hour?

He drew nearer to me and said: Protagoras is come.

Yes, I replied; he came two days ago: have you only just heard of his arrival?

Yes, by the gods, he said; but not until yesterday evening.

At the same time he felt for the truckle-bed, and sat down at my feet, and then he said: Yesterday quite late in the evening, on my return from Oenoe whither I had gone in pursuit of my runaway slave Satyrus, as I meant to have told you, if some other matter had not come in the way;--on my return, when we had done supper and were about to retire to rest, my brother said to me: Protagoras is come. I was going to you at once, and then I thought that the night was far spent. But the moment sleep left me after my fatigue, I got up and came hither direct.

I, who knew the very courageous madness of the man, said: What is the matter? Has Protagoras robbed you of anything?

He replied, laughing: Yes, indeed he has, Socrates, of the wisdom which he keeps from me.

But, surely, I said, if you give him money, and make friends with him, he will make you as wise as he is himself.

Would to heaven, he replied, that this were the case! He might take all that I have, and all that my friends have, if he pleased. But that is why I have come to you now, in order that you may speak to him on my behalf; for I am young, and also I have never seen nor heard him; (when he visited Athens before I was but a child;) and all men praise him, Socrates; he is reputed to be the most accomplished of speakers. There is no reason why we should not

go to him at once, and then we shall find him at home. He lodges, as I hear, with Callias the son of Hipponicus: let us start.

I replied: Not yet, my good friend; the hour is too early. But let us rise and take a turn in the court and wait about there until day-break; when the day breaks, then we will go. For Protagoras is generally at home, and we shall be sure to find him; never fear.

Upon this we got up and walked about in the court, and I thought that I would make trial of the strength of his resolution. So I examined him and put questions to him. Tell me, Hippocrates, I said, as you are going to Protagoras, and will be paying your money to him, what is he to whom you are going? and what will he make of you? If, for example, you had thought of going to Hippocrates of Cos, the Asclepiad, and were about to give him your money, and some one had said to you: You are paying money to your namesake Hippocrates, O Hippocrates; tell me, what is he that you give him money? how would you have answered?

I should say, he replied, that I gave money to him as a physician.

And what will he make of you?

A physician, he said.

And if you were resolved to go to Polycleitus the Argive, or Pheidias the Athenian, and were intending to give them money, and some one had asked you: What are Polycleitus and Pheidias? and why do you give them this money?--how would you have answered?

I should have answered, that they were statuaries.

And what will they make of you?

A statuary, of course.

Well now, I said, you and I are going to Protagoras, and we are ready to pay him money on your behalf. If our own means are sufficient, and we can gain him with these, we shall be only too glad; but if not, then we are to spend the money of your friends as well. Now suppose, that while we are thus enthusiastically pursuing our object someone were to say to us: Tell me, Socrates, and you Hippocrates, what is Protagoras, and why are you going to pay him money,--how should we answer? I know that Pheidias is a sculptor, and that Homer is a poet; but what appellation is given to Protagoras? how is he designated?

They call him a Sophist, Socrates, he replied.

Then we are going to pay our money to him in the character of a Sophist?

Certainly.

But suppose a person were to ask this further question: And how about yourself? What will Protagoras make of you, if you go to see him?

He answered, with a blush upon his face (for the day was just beginning to dawn, so that I could see him): Unless this differs in some way from the former instances, I suppose that he will make a Sophist of me.

By the gods, I said, and are you not ashamed at having to appear before the Hellenes in the character of a Sophist?

Indeed, Socrates, to confess the truth, I am.

But you should not assume, Hippocrates, that the instruction of Protagoras is of this nature: may you not learn of him in the same way that you learned the arts of the grammarian, or musician, or trainer, not with the view of making any of them a profession, but only as a part of education, and because a private gentleman and freeman ought to know them?

Just so, he said; and that, in my opinion, is a far truer account of the teaching of Protagoras.

I said: I wonder whether you know what you are doing?

And what am I doing?

You are going to commit your soul to the care of a man whom you call a Sophist. And yet I hardly think that you know what a Sophist is; and if not, then you do not even know to whom you are committing your soul and whether the thing to which you commit yourself be good or evil.

I certainly think that I do know, he replied.

Then tell me, what do you imagine that he is?

I take him to be one who knows wise things, he replied, as his name implies.

And might you not, I said, affirm this of the painter and of the carpenter also: Do not they, too, know wise things? But suppose a person were to ask us: In what are the painters wise? We should answer: In what relates to the making of likenesses, and similarly of other things. And if he were further to ask: What is the wisdom of the Sophist, and what is the manufacture over which he presides?--how should we answer him?

How should we answer him, Socrates? What other answer could there be but that he presides over the art which makes men eloquent?

Yes, I replied, that is very likely true, but not enough; for in the answer a further question is involved: Of what does the Sophist make a man talk eloquently? The player on the lyre may be supposed to make a man talk eloquently about that which he makes him understand, that is about playing the lyre. Is not that true?

Yes.

Then about what does the Sophist make him eloquent? Must not he make him eloquent in that which he understands?

Yes, that may be assumed.

And what is that which the Sophist knows and makes his disciple know?

Indeed, he said, I cannot tell.

Then I proceeded to say: Well, but are you aware of the danger which you are incurring? If you were going to commit your body to some one, who might do good or harm to it, would you not carefully consider and ask the opinion of your friends and kindred, and deliberate many days as to whether you should give him the care of your body? But when the soul is in question, which you hold to be of far more value than the body, and upon the good or evil of which depends the well-being of your all,--about this you never consulted either with your father or with your brother or with any one of us who are your companions. But no sooner does this foreigner appear, than you instantly commit your soul to his keeping. In the evening, as you say, you hear of him, and in the morning you go to him, never deliberating or taking the opinion of any one as to whether you ought to intrust yourself to him or not;--you have quite made up your mind that you will at all hazards be a pupil of Protagoras, and are prepared to expend all the property of yourself and of your friends in carrying out at any price this determination, although, as you admit, you do not know him, and have never spoken with him: and you call him a Sophist, but are manifestly ignorant of what a Sophist is; and yet you are going to commit yourself to his keeping.

When he heard me say this, he replied: No other inference, Socrates, can be drawn from your words.

I proceeded: Is not a Sophist, Hippocrates, one who deals wholesale or retail in the food of the soul? To me that appears to be his nature.

And what, Socrates, is the food of the soul?

Surely, I said, knowledge is the food of the soul; and we must take care, my friend, that the Sophist does not deceive us when he praises what he sells, like the dealers wholesale or retail who sell the food of the body; for they praise indiscriminately all their goods, without

knowing what are really beneficial or hurtful: neither do their customers know, with the exception of any trainer or physician who may happen to buy of them. In like manner those who carry about the wares of knowledge, and make the round of the cities, and sell or retail them to any customer who is in want of them, praise them all alike; though I should not wonder, O my friend, if many of them were really ignorant of their effect upon the soul; and their customers equally ignorant, unless he who buys of them happens to be a physician of the soul. If, therefore, you have understanding of what is good and evil, you may safely buy knowledge of Protagoras or of any one; but if not, then, O my friend, pause, and do not hazard your dearest interests at a game of chance. For there is far greater peril in buying knowledge than in buying meat and drink: the one you purchase of the wholesale or retail dealer, and carry them away in other vessels, and before you receive them into the body as food, you may deposit them at home and call in any experienced friend who knows what is good to be eaten or drunken, and what not, and how much, and when; and then the danger of purchasing them is not so great. But you cannot buy the wares of knowledge and carry them away in another vessel; when you have paid for them you must receive them into the soul and go your way, either greatly harmed or greatly benefited; and therefore we should deliberate and take counsel with our elders; for we are still young--too young to determine such a matter. And now let us go, as we were intending, and hear Protagoras; and when we have heard what he has to say, we may take counsel of others; for not only is Protagoras at the house of Callias, but there is Hippias of Elis, and, if I am not mistaken, Prodicus of Ceos, and several other wise men.

To this we agreed, and proceeded on our way until we reached the vestibule of the house; and there we stopped in order to conclude a discussion which had arisen between us as we were going along; and we stood talking in the vestibule until we had finished and come to an understanding. And I think that the door-keeper, who was a eunuch, and who was probably annoyed at the great inroad of the Sophists, must have heard us talking. At any rate, when we knocked at the door, and he opened and saw us, he grumbled: They are Sophists--he is not at home; and instantly gave the door a hearty bang with both his hands. Again we knocked, and he answered without opening: Did you not hear me say that he is not at home, fellows? But, my friend, I said, you need not be alarmed; for we are not Sophists, and we are not come to see Callias, but we want to see Protagoras; and I must request you to announce us. At last, after a good deal of difficulty, the man was persuaded to open the door.

When we entered, we found Protagoras taking a walk in the cloister; and next to him, on one side, were walking Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and Paralus, the son of Pericles, who, by the mother's side, is his half-brother, and Charmides, the son of Glaucon. On the other side of him were Xanthippus, the other son of Pericles, Philippides, the son of Philomelus;

also Antimoerus of Mende, who of all the disciples of Protagoras is the most famous, and intends to make sophistry his profession. A train of listeners followed him; the greater part of them appeared to be foreigners, whom Protagoras had brought with him out of the various cities visited by him in his journeys, he, like Orpheus, attracting them his voice, and they following (Compare Rep.). I should mention also that there were some Athenians in the company. Nothing delighted me more than the precision of their movements: they never got into his way at all; but when he and those who were with him turned back, then the band of listeners parted regularly on either side; he was always in front, and they wheeled round and took their places behind him in perfect order.

After him, as Homer says (Od.), 'I lifted up my eyes and saw' Hippias the Elean sitting in the opposite cloister on a chair of state, and around him were seated on benches Eryximachus, the son of Acumenus, and Phaedrus the Myrrhinusian, and Andron the son of Androtion, and there were strangers whom he had brought with him from his native city of Elis, and some others: they were putting to Hippias certain physical and astronomical questions, and he, *ex cathedra*, was determining their several questions to them, and discoursing of them.

Also, 'my eyes beheld Tantalus (Od.);' for Prodicus the Cean was at Athens: he had been lodged in a room which, in the days of Hipponicus, was a storehouse; but, as the house was full, Callias had cleared this out and made the room into a guest-chamber. Now Prodicus was still in bed, wrapped up in sheepskins and bedclothes, of which there seemed to be a great heap; and there was sitting by him on the couches near, Pausanias of the deme of Cerameis, and with Pausanias was a youth quite young, who is certainly remarkable for his good looks, and, if I am not mistaken, is also of a fair and gentle nature. I thought that I heard him called Agathon, and my suspicion is that he is the beloved of Pausanias. There was this youth, and also there were the two Adeimantuses, one the son of Cepis, and the other of Leucolophides, and some others. I was very anxious to hear what Prodicus was saying, for he seems to me to be an all-wise and inspired man; but I was not able to get into the inner circle, and his fine deep voice made an echo in the room which rendered his words inaudible.

No sooner had we entered than there followed us Alcibiades the beautiful, as you say, and I believe you; and also Critias the son of Callaeschrus.

On entering we stopped a little, in order to look about us, and then walked up to Protagoras, and I said: Protagoras, my friend Hippocrates and I have come to see you.

Do you wish, he said, to speak with me alone, or in the presence of the company?

Whichever you please, I said; you shall determine when you have heard the purpose of our visit.

And what is your purpose? he said.

I must explain, I said, that my friend Hippocrates is a native Athenian; he is the son of Apollodorus, and of a great and prosperous house, and he is himself in natural ability quite a match for anybody of his own age. I believe that he aspires to political eminence; and this he thinks that conversation with you is most likely to procure for him. And now you can determine whether you would wish to speak to him of your teaching alone or in the presence of the company.

Thank you, Socrates, for your consideration of me. For certainly a stranger finding his way into great cities, and persuading the flower of the youth in them to leave company of their kinsmen or any other acquaintances, old or young, and live with him, under the idea that they will be improved by his conversation, ought to be very cautious; great jealousies are aroused by his proceedings, and he is the subject of many enmities and conspiracies. Now the art of the Sophist is, as I believe, of great antiquity; but in ancient times those who practised it, fearing this odium, veiled and disguised themselves under various names, some under that of poets, as Homer, Hesiod, and Simonides, some, of hierophants and prophets, as Orpheus and Musaeus, and some, as I observe, even under the name of gymnastic-masters, like Iccus of Tarentum, or the more recently celebrated Herodicus, now of Selymbria and formerly of Megara, who is a first-rate Sophist. Your own Agathocles pretended to be a musician, but was really an eminent Sophist; also Pythocleides the Cean; and there were many others; and all of them, as I was saying, adopted these arts as veils or disguises because they were afraid of the odium which they would incur. But that is not my way, for I do not believe that they effected their purpose, which was to deceive the government, who were not blinded by them; and as to the people, they have no understanding, and only repeat what their rulers are pleased to tell them. Now to run away, and to be caught in running away, is the very height of folly, and also greatly increases the exasperation of mankind; for they regard him who runs away as a rogue, in addition to any other objections which they have to him; and therefore I take an entirely opposite course, and acknowledge myself to be a Sophist and instructor of mankind; such an open acknowledgement appears to me to be a better sort of caution than concealment. Nor do I neglect other precautions, and therefore I hope, as I may say, by the favour of heaven that no harm will come of the acknowledgment that I am a Sophist. And I have been now many years in the profession--for all my years when added up are many: there is no one here present of whom I might not be the father. Wherefore I should much prefer conversing with you, if you want to speak with me, in the presence of the company.

As I suspected that he would like to have a little display and glorification in the presence of Prodicus and Hippias, and would gladly show us to them in the light of his admirers, I said: But why should we not summon Prodicus and Hippias and their friends to hear us?

Very good, he said.

Suppose, said Callias, that we hold a council in which you may sit and discuss.--This was agreed upon, and great delight was felt at the prospect of hearing wise men talk; we ourselves took the chairs and benches, and arranged them by Hippias, where the other benches had been already placed. Meanwhile Callias and Alcibiades got Prodicus out of bed and brought in him and his companions.

When we were all seated, Protagoras said: Now that the company are assembled, Socrates, tell me about the young man of whom you were just now speaking.

I replied: I will begin again at the same point, Protagoras, and tell you once more the purport of my visit: this is my friend Hippocrates, who is desirous of making your acquaintance; he would like to know what will happen to him if he associates with you. I have no more to say.

Protagoras answered: Young man, if you associate with me, on the very first day you will return home a better man than you came, and better on the second day than on the first, and better every day than you were on the day before.

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Then now, I said, I will endeavour to explain to you my opinion about this poem of Simonides. There is a very ancient philosophy which is more cultivated in Crete and Lacedaemon than in any other part of Hellas, and there are more philosophers in those countries than anywhere else in the world. This, however, is a secret which the Lacedaemonians deny; and they pretend to be ignorant, just because they do not wish to have it thought that they rule the world by wisdom, like the Sophists of whom Protagoras was speaking, and not by valour of arms; considering that if the reason of their superiority were disclosed, all men would be practising their wisdom. And this secret of theirs has never been discovered by the imitators of Lacedaemonian fashions in other cities, who go about with their ears bruised in imitation of them, and have the caestus bound on their arms, and are always in training, and wear short cloaks; for they imagine that these are the practices which have enabled the Lacedaemonians to conquer the other Hellenes. Now when the Lacedaemonians want to unbend and hold free conversation with their wise men, and are no longer satisfied with mere secret intercourse, they drive out all these laconizers, and any other foreigners who may happen to be in their country, and they hold a

philosophical seance unknown to strangers; and they themselves forbid their young men to go out into other cities--in this they are like the Cretans-- in order that they may not unlearn the lessons which they have taught them. And in Lacedaemon and Crete not only men but also women have a pride in their high cultivation. And hereby you may know that I am right in attributing to the Lacedaemonians this excellence in philosophy and speculation: If a man converses with the most ordinary Lacedaemonian, he will find him seldom good for much in general conversation, but at any point in the discourse he will be darting out some notable saying, terse and full of meaning, with unerring aim; and the person with whom he is talking seems to be like a child in his hands. And many of our own age and of former ages have noted that the true Lacedaemonian type of character has the love of philosophy even stronger than the love of gymnastics; they are conscious that only a perfectly educated man is capable of uttering such expressions. Such were Thales of Miletus, and Pittacus of Mitylene, and Bias of Priene, and our own Solon, and Cleobulus the Lindian, and Myson the Chenian; and seventh in the catalogue of wise men was the Lacedaemonian Chilo. All these were lovers and emulators and disciples of the culture of the Lacedaemonians, and any one may perceive that their wisdom was of this character; consisting of short memorable sentences, which they severally uttered. And they met together and dedicated in the temple of Apollo at Delphi, as the first-fruits of their wisdom, the far-famed inscriptions, which are in all men's mouths--'Know thyself,' and 'Nothing too much.'

Plato - Critias

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE: Critias, Hermocrates, Timaeus, Socrates.

TIMAEUS: How thankful I am, Socrates, that I have arrived at last, and, like a weary traveller after a long journey, may be at rest! And I pray the being who always was of old, and has now been by me revealed, to grant that my words may endure in so far as they have been spoken truly and acceptably to him; but if unintentionally I have said anything wrong, I pray that he will impose upon me a just retribution, and the just retribution of him who errs is that he should be set right. Wishing, then, to speak truly in future concerning the generation of the gods, I pray him to give me knowledge, which of all medicines is the most perfect and best. And now having offered my prayer I deliver up the argument to Critias, who is to speak next according to our agreement.

CRITIAS: And I, Timaeus, accept the trust, and as you at first said that you were going to speak of high matters, and begged that some forbearance might be shown to you, I too ask the same or greater forbearance for what I am about to say. And although I very well know that my request may appear to be somewhat ambitious and discourteous, I must make it

nevertheless. For will any man of sense deny that you have spoken well? I can only attempt to show that I ought to have more indulgence than you, because my theme is more difficult; and I shall argue that to seem to speak well of the gods to men is far easier than to speak well of men to men: for the inexperience and utter ignorance of his hearers about any subject is a great assistance to him who has to speak of it, and we know how ignorant we are concerning the gods. But I should like to make my meaning clearer, if you will follow me. All that is said by any of us can only be imitation and representation. For if we consider the likenesses which painters make of bodies divine and heavenly, and the different degrees of gratification with which the eye of the spectator receives them, we shall see that we are satisfied with the artist who is able in any degree to imitate the earth and its mountains, and the rivers, and the woods, and the universe, and the things that are and move therein, and further, that knowing nothing precise about such matters, we do not examine or analyze the painting; all that is required is a sort of indistinct and deceptive mode of shadowing them forth. But when a person endeavours to paint the human form we are quick at finding out defects, and our familiar knowledge makes us severe judges of any one who does not render every point of similarity. And we may observe the same thing to happen in discourse; we are satisfied with a picture of divine and heavenly things which has very little likeness to them; but we are more precise in our criticism of mortal and human things. Wherefore if at the moment of speaking I cannot suitably express my meaning, you must excuse me, considering that to form approved likenesses of human things is the reverse of easy. This is what I want to suggest to you, and at the same time to beg, Socrates, that I may have not less, but more indulgence conceded to me in what I am about to say. Which favour, if I am right in asking, I hope that you will be ready to grant.

SOCRATES: Certainly, Critias, we will grant your request, and we will grant the same by anticipation to Hermocrates, as well as to you and Timaeus; for I have no doubt that when his turn comes a little while hence, he will make the same request which you have made. In order, then, that he may provide himself with a fresh beginning, and not be compelled to say the same things over again, let him understand that the indulgence is already extended by anticipation to him. And now, friend Critias, I will announce to you the judgment of the theatre. They are of opinion that the last performer was wonderfully successful, and that you will need a great deal of indulgence before you will be able to take his place.

HERMOCRATES: The warning, Socrates, which you have addressed to him, I must also take to myself. But remember, Critias, that faint heart never yet raised a trophy; and therefore you must go and attack the argument like a man. First invoke Apollo and the Muses, and then let us hear you sound the praises and show forth the virtues of your ancient citizens.

CRITIAS: Friend Hermocrates, you, who are stationed last and have another in front of you, have not lost heart as yet; the gravity of the situation will soon be revealed to you; meanwhile I accept your exhortations and encouragements. But besides the gods and goddesses whom you have mentioned, I would specially invoke Mnemosyne; for all the important part of my discourse is dependent on her favour, and if I can recollect and recite enough of what was said by the priests and brought hither by Solon, I doubt not that I shall satisfy the requirements of this theatre. And now, making no more excuses, I will proceed.

Let me begin by observing first of all, that nine thousand was the sum of years which had elapsed since the war which was said to have taken place between those who dwelt outside the pillars of Heracles and all who dwelt within them; this war I am going to describe. Of the combatants on the one side, the city of Athens was reported to have been the leader and to have fought out the war; the combatants on the other side were commanded by the kings of Atlantis, which, as I was saying, was an island greater in extent than Libya and Asia, and when afterwards sunk by an earthquake, became an impassable barrier of mud to voyagers sailing from hence to any part of the ocean. The progress of the history will unfold the various nations of barbarians and families of Hellenes which then existed, as they successively appear on the scene; but I must describe first of all the Athenians of that day, and their enemies who fought with them, and then the respective powers and governments of the two kingdoms. Let us give the precedence to Athens.

In the days of old, the gods had the whole earth distributed among them by allotment. There was no quarrelling; for you cannot rightly suppose that the gods did not know what was proper for each of them to have, or, knowing this, that they would seek to procure for themselves by contention that which more properly belonged to others. They all of them by just apportionment obtained what they wanted, and peopled their own districts; and when they had peopled them they tended us, their nurselings and possessions, as shepherds tend their flocks, excepting only that they did not use blows or bodily force, as shepherds do, but governed us like pilots from the stern of the vessel, which is an easy way of guiding animals, holding our souls by the rudder of persuasion according to their own pleasure;--thus did they guide all mortal creatures. Now different gods had their allotments in different places which they set in order. Hephaestus and Athene, who were brother and sister, and sprang from the same father, having a common nature, and being united also in the love of philosophy and art, both obtained as their common portion this land, which was naturally adapted for wisdom and virtue; and there they implanted brave children of the soil, and put into their minds the order of government; their names are preserved, but their actions have disappeared by reason of the destruction of those who received the tradition, and the lapse of ages. For when there were any survivors, as I have already said, they were men who dwelt in the mountains; and they were ignorant of the art of writing, and had

heard only the names of the chiefs of the land, but very little about their actions. The names they were willing enough to give to their children; but the virtues and the laws of their predecessors, they knew only by obscure traditions; and as they themselves and their children lacked for many generations the necessaries of life, they directed their attention to the supply of their wants, and of them they conversed, to the neglect of events that had happened in times long past; for mythology and the enquiry into antiquity are first introduced into cities when they begin to have leisure, and when they see that the necessaries of life have already been provided, but not before. And this is the reason why the names of the ancients have been preserved to us and not their actions. This I infer because Solon said that the priests in their narrative of that war mentioned most of the names which are recorded prior to the time of Theseus, such as Cecrops, and Erechtheus, and Erichthonius, and Erysichthon, and the names of the women in like manner. Moreover, since military pursuits were then common to men and women, the men of those days in accordance with the custom of the time set up a figure and image of the goddess in full armour, to be a testimony that all animals which associate together, male as well as female, may, if they please, practise in common the virtue which belongs to them without distinction of sex.

Now the country was inhabited in those days by various classes of citizens;--there were artisans, and there were husbandmen, and there was also a warrior class originally set apart by divine men. The latter dwelt by themselves, and had all things suitable for nurture and education; neither had any of them anything of their own, but they regarded all that they had as common property; nor did they claim to receive of the other citizens anything more than their necessary food. And they practised all the pursuits which we yesterday described as those of our imaginary guardians. Concerning the country the Egyptian priests said what is not only probable but manifestly true, that the boundaries were in those days fixed by the Isthmus, and that in the direction of the continent they extended as far as the heights of Cithaeron and Parnes; the boundary line came down in the direction of the sea, having the district of Oropus on the right, and with the river Asopus as the limit on the left. The land was the best in the world, and was therefore able in those days to support a vast army, raised from the surrounding people. Even the remnant of Attica which now exists may compare with any region in the world for the variety and excellence of its fruits and the suitability of its pastures to every sort of animal, which proves what I am saying; but in those days the country was fair as now and yielded far more abundant produce. How shall I establish my words? and what part of it can be truly called a remnant of the land that then was? The whole country is only a long promontory extending far into the sea away from the rest of the continent, while the surrounding basin of the sea is everywhere deep in the neighbourhood of the shore. Many great deluges have taken place during the nine

thousand years, for that is the number of years which have elapsed since the time of which I am speaking; and during all this time and through so many changes, there has never been any considerable accumulation of the soil coming down from the mountains, as in other places, but the earth has fallen away all round and sunk out of sight. The consequence is, that in comparison of what then was, there are remaining only the bones of the wasted body, as they may be called, as in the case of small islands, all the richer and softer parts of the soil having fallen away, and the mere skeleton of the land being left. But in the primitive state of the country, its mountains were high hills covered with soil, and the plains, as they are termed by us, of Phelleus were full of rich earth, and there was abundance of wood in the mountains. Of this last the traces still remain, for although some of the mountains now only afford sustenance to bees, not so very long ago there were still to be seen roofs of timber cut from trees growing there, which were of a size sufficient to cover the largest houses; and there were many other high trees, cultivated by man and bearing abundance of food for cattle. Moreover, the land reaped the benefit of the annual rainfall, not as now losing the water which flows off the bare earth into the sea, but, having an abundant supply in all places, and receiving it into herself and treasuring it up in the close clay soil, it let off into the hollows the streams which it absorbed from the heights, providing everywhere abundant fountains and rivers, of which there may still be observed sacred memorials in places where fountains once existed; and this proves the truth of what I am saying.

Plato, *The Seventh Letter*

In my youth I went through the same experience as many other men. I fancied that if, early in life, I became my own master, I should at once embark on a political career. And I found myself confronted with the following occurrences in the public affairs of my own city. The existing constitution being generally condemned, a revolution took place, and fifty-one men came to the front as rulers of the revolutionary government, namely eleven in the city and ten in the Peiraeus—each of these bodies being in charge of the market and municipal matters—while thirty were appointed rulers with full powers over public affairs as a whole. Some of these were relatives and acquaintances of mine, and they at once invited me to share in their doings, as something to which I had a claim. The effect on me was not surprising in the case of a young man. I considered that they would, of course, so manage the State as to bring men out of a bad way of life into a good one. So I watched them very closely to see what they would do.

And seeing, as I did, that in quite a short time they made the former government seem by comparison something precious as gold—for among other things they tried to send a friend of mine, the aged Socrates, whom I should scarcely scruple to describe as the most upright

man of that day, with some other persons to carry off one of the citizens by force to execution, in order that, whether he wished it, or not, he might share the guilt of their conduct; but he would not obey them, risking all consequences in preference to becoming a partner in their iniquitous deeds-seeing all these things and others of the same kind on a considerable scale, I disapproved of their proceedings, and withdrew from any connection with the abuses of the time.

Not long after that a revolution terminated the power of the thirty and the form of government as it then was. And once more, though with more hesitation, I began to be moved by the desire to take part in public and political affairs. Well, even in the new government, unsettled as it was, events occurred which one would naturally view with disapproval; and it was not surprising that in a period of revolution excessive penalties were inflicted by some persons on political opponents, though those who had returned from exile at that time showed very considerable forbearance. But once more it happened that some of those in power brought my friend Socrates, whom I have mentioned, to trial before a court of law, laying a most iniquitous charge against him and one most inappropriate in his case: for it was on a charge of impiety that some of them prosecuted and others condemned and executed the very man who would not participate in the iniquitous arrest of one of the friends of the party then in exile, at the time when they themselves were in exile and misfortune.

As I observed these incidents and the men engaged in public affairs, the laws too and the customs, the more closely I examined them and the farther I advanced in life, the more difficult it seemed to me to handle public affairs aright. For it was not possible to be active in politics without friends and trustworthy supporters; and to find these ready to my hand was not an easy matter, since public affairs at Athens were not carried on in accordance with the manners and practices of our fathers; nor was there any ready method by which I could make new friends. The laws too, written and unwritten, were being altered for the worse, and the evil was growing with startling rapidity. The result was that, though at first I had been full of a strong impulse towards political life, as I looked at the course of affairs and saw them being swept in all directions by contending currents, my head finally began to swim; and, though I did not stop looking to see if there was any likelihood of improvement in these symptoms and in the general course of public life, I postponed action till a suitable opportunity should arise. Finally, it became clear to me, with regard to all existing communities, that they were one and all misgoverned. For their laws have got into a state that is almost incurable, except by some extraordinary reform with good luck to support it. And I was forced to say, when praising true philosophy that it is by this that men are enabled to see what justice in public and private life really is. Therefore, I said, there will be no cessation of evils for the sons of men, till either those who are pursuing a

right and true philosophy receive sovereign power in the States, or those in power in the States by some dispensation of providence become true philosophers.

For the one thing which is wholly right and noble is to strive for that which is most honourable for a man's self and for his country, and to face the consequences whatever they may be. For none of us can escape death, nor, if a man could do so, would it, as the vulgar suppose, make him happy. For nothing evil or good, which is worth mentioning at all, belongs to things soulless; but good or evil will be the portion of every soul, either while attached to the body or when separated from it.

And we should in very truth always believe those ancient and sacred teachings, which declare that the soul is immortal, that it has judges, and suffers the greatest penalties when it has been separated from the body. Therefore also we should consider it a lesser evil to suffer great wrongs and outrages than to do them. The covetous man, impoverished as he is in the soul, turns a deaf ear to this teaching; or if he hears it, he laughs it to scorn with fancied superiority, and shamelessly snatches for himself from every source whatever his bestial fancy supposes will provide for him the means of eating or drinking or glutting himself with that slavish and gross pleasure which is falsely called after the goddess of love. He is blind and cannot see in those acts of plunder which are accompanied by impiety what heinous guilt is attached to each wrongful deed, and that the offender must drag with him the burden of this impiety while he moves about on earth, and when he has travelled beneath the earth on a journey which has every circumstance of shame and misery.

It was by urging these and other like truths that I convinced Dion, and it is I who have the best right to be angered with his murderers in much the same way as I have with Dionysios. For both they and he have done the greatest injury to me, and I might almost say to all mankind, they by slaying the man that was willing to act righteously, and he by refusing to act righteously during the whole of his rule, when he held supreme power, in which rule if philosophy and power had really met together, it would have sent forth a light to all men, Greeks and barbarians, establishing fully for all the true belief that there can be no happiness either for the community or for the individual man, unless he passes his life under the rule of righteousness with the guidance of wisdom, either possessing these virtues in himself, or living under the rule of godly men and having received a right training and education in morals. These were the aims which Dionysios injured, and for me everything else is a trifling injury compared with this.

One should show such men what philosophy is in all its extent; what their range of studies is by which it is approached, and how much labour it involves. For the man who has heard this, if he has the true philosophic spirit and that godlike temperament which makes him a kin to philosophy and worthy of it, thinks that he has been told of a marvellous road lying

before him, that he must forthwith press on with all his strength, and that life is not worth living if he does anything else. After this he uses to the full his own powers and those of his guide in the path, and relaxes not his efforts, till he has either reached the end of the whole course of study or gained such power that he is not incapable of directing his steps without the aid of a guide. This is the spirit and these are the thoughts by which such a man guides his life, carrying out his work, whatever his occupation may be, but throughout it all ever cleaving to philosophy and to such rules of diet in his daily life as will give him inward sobriety and therewith quickness in learning, a good memory, and reasoning power; the kind of life which is opposed to this he consistently hates. Those who have not the true philosophic temper, but a mere surface colouring of opinions penetrating, like sunburn, only skin deep, when they see how great the range of studies is, how much labour is involved in it, and how necessary to the pursuit it is to have an orderly regulation of the daily life, come to the conclusion that the thing is difficult and impossible for them, and are actually incapable of carrying out the course of study; while some of them persuade themselves that they have sufficiently studied the whole matter and have no need of any further effort. This is the sure test and is the safest one to apply to those who live in luxury and are incapable of continuous effort; it ensures that such a man shall not throw the blame upon his teacher but on himself, because he cannot bring to the pursuit all the qualities necessary to it.

Thus much at least, I can say about all writers, past or future, who say they know the things to which I devote myself, whether by hearing the teaching of me or of others, or by their own discoveries—that according to my view it is not possible for them to have any real skill in the matter. There neither is nor ever will be a treatise of mine on the subject. For it does not admit of exposition like other branches of knowledge; but after much converse about the matter itself and a life lived together, suddenly a light, as it were, is kindled in one soul by a flame that leaps to it from another, and thereafter sustains itself.

Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (Book I, chapters 3-6)

3

Of the first philosophers, then, most thought the principles which were of the nature of matter were the only principles of all things. That of which all things that are consist, the first from which they come to be, the last into which they are resolved (the substance remaining, but changing in its modifications), this they say is the element and this the principle of things, and therefore they think nothing is either generated or destroyed, since this sort of entity is always conserved, as we say Socrates neither comes to be absolutely

when he comes to be beautiful or musical, nor ceases to be when loses these characteristics, because the substratum, Socrates himself remains. Just so they say nothing else comes to be or ceases to be; for there must be some entity-either one or more than one-from which all other things come to be, it being conserved.

Yet they do not all agree as to the number and the nature of these principles. Thales, the founder of this type of philosophy, says the principle is water (for which reason he declared that the earth rests on water), getting the notion perhaps from seeing that the nutriment of all things is moist, and that heat itself is generated from the moist and kept alive by it (and that from which they come to be is a principle of all things). He got his notion from this fact, and from the fact that the seeds of all things have a moist nature, and that water is the origin of the nature of moist things.

Some think that even the ancients who lived long before the present generation, and first framed accounts of the gods, had a similar view of nature; for they made Ocean and Tethys the parents of creation, and described the oath of the gods as being by water, to which they give the name of Styx; for what is oldest is most honourable, and the most honourable thing is that by which one swears. It may perhaps be uncertain whether this opinion about nature is primitive and ancient, but Thales at any rate is said to have declared himself thus about the first cause. Hippo no one would think fit to include among these thinkers, because of the paltriness of his thought.

Anaximenes and Diogenes make air prior to water, and the most primary of the simple bodies, while Hippasus of Metapontium and Heraclitus of Ephesus say this of fire, and Empedocles says it of the four elements (adding a fourth-earth-to those which have been named); for these, he says, always remain and do not come to be, except that they come to be more or fewer, being aggregated into one and segregated out of one.

Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, who, though older than Empedocles, was later in his philosophical activity, says the principles are infinite in number; for he says almost all the things that are made of parts like themselves, in the manner of water or fire, are generated and destroyed in this way, only by aggregation and segregation, and are not in any other sense generated or destroyed, but remain eternally.

From these facts one might think that the only cause is the so-called material cause; but as men thus advanced, the very facts opened the way for them and joined in forcing them to investigate the subject. However true it may be that all generation and destruction proceed from some one or (for that matter) from more elements, why does this happen and what is the cause? For at least the substratum itself does not make itself change; e.g. neither the wood nor the bronze causes the change of either of them, nor does the wood manufacture a

bed and the bronze a statue, but something else is the cause of the change. And to seek this is to seek the second cause, as we should say,-that from which comes the beginning of the movement. Now those who at the very beginning set themselves to this kind of inquiry, and said the substratum was one, were not at all dissatisfied with themselves; but some at least of those who maintain it to be one-as though defeated by this search for the second cause-say the one and nature as a whole is unchangeable not only in respect of generation and destruction (for this is a primitive belief, and all agreed in it), but also of all other change; and this view is peculiar to them. Of those who said the universe was one, then none succeeded in discovering a cause of this sort, except perhaps Parmenides, and he only inasmuch as he supposes that there is not only one but also in some sense two causes. But for those who make more elements it is more possible to state the second cause, e.g. for those who make hot and cold, or fire and earth, the elements; for they treat fire as having a nature which fits it to move things, and water and earth and such things they treat in the contrary way.

When these men and the principles of this kind had had their day, as the latter were found inadequate to generate the nature of things men were again forced by the truth itself, as we said, to inquire into the next kind of cause. For it is not likely either that fire or earth or any such element should be the reason why things manifest goodness and, beauty both in their being and in their coming to be, or that those thinkers should have supposed it was; nor again could it be right to entrust so great a matter to spontaneity and chance. When one man said, then, that reason was present-as in animals, so throughout nature-as the cause of order and of all arrangement, he seemed like a sober man in contrast with the random talk of his predecessors. We know that Anaxagoras certainly adopted these views, but Hermodotus of Clazomenae is credited with expressing them earlier. Those who thought thus stated that there is a principle of things which is at the same time the cause of beauty, and that sort of cause from which things acquire movement.

4

One might suspect that Hesiod was the first to look for such a thing-or some one else who put love or desire among existing things as a principle, as Parmenides, too, does; for he, in constructing the genesis of the universe, says:—

Love first of all the Gods she planned.

And Hesiod says:—

First of all things was chaos made, and then
Broad-breasted earth...
And love, 'mid all the gods pre-eminent,

which implies that among existing things there must be from the first a cause which will move things and bring them together. How these thinkers should be arranged with regard to priority of discovery let us be allowed to decide later; but since the contraries of the various forms of good were also perceived to be present in nature-not only order and the beautiful, but also disorder and the ugly, and bad things in greater number than good, and ignoble things than beautiful-therefore another thinker introduced friendship and strife, each of the two the cause of one of these two sets of qualities. For if we were to follow out the view of Empedocles, and interpret it according to its meaning and not to its lispng expression, we should find that friendship is the cause of good things, and strife of bad. Therefore, if we said that Empedocles in a sense both mentions, and is the first to mention, the bad and the good as principles, we should perhaps be right, since the cause of all goods is the good itself.

These thinkers, as we say, evidently grasped, and to this extent, two of the causes which we distinguished in our work on nature-the matter and the source of the movement-vaguely, however, and with no clearness, but as untrained men behave in fights; for they go round their opponents and often strike fine blows, but they do not fight on scientific principles, and so too these thinkers do not seem to know what they say; for it is evident that, as a rule, they make no use of their causes except to a small extent. For Anaxagoras uses reason as a deus ex machina for the making of the world, and when he is at a loss to tell from what cause something necessarily is, then he drags reason in, but in all other cases ascribes events to anything rather than to reason. And Empedocles, though he uses the causes to a greater extent than this, neither does so sufficiently nor attains consistency in their use. At least, in many cases he makes love segregate things, and strife aggregate them. For whenever the universe is dissolved into its elements by strife, fire is aggregated into one, and so is each of the other elements; but whenever again under the influence of love they come together into one, the parts must again be segregated out of each element.

Empedocles, then, in contrast with his precessors, was the first to introduce the dividing of this cause, not positing one source of movement, but different and contrary sources. Again, he was the first to speak of four material elements; yet he does not use four, but treats them as two only; he treats fire by itself, and its opposite-earth, air, and water-as one kind of thing. We may learn this by study of his verses.

This philosopher then, as we say, has spoken of the principles in this way, and made them of this number. Leucippus and his associate Democritus say that the full and the empty are the elements, calling the one being and the other non-being-the full and solid being being, the empty non-being (whence they say being no more is than non-being, because the solid no more is than the empty); and they make these the material causes of things.

Regarding the two causes, then, as we say, the inquiry seems to have been pushed thus far by the early philosophers.

5

Contemporaneously with these philosophers and before them, the so-called Pythagoreans, who were the first to take up mathematics, not only advanced this study, but also having been brought up in it they thought its principles were the principles of all things. Since of these principles numbers are by nature the first, and in numbers they seemed to see many resemblances to the things that exist and come into being—more than in fire and earth and water (such and such a modification of numbers being justice, another being soul and reason, another being opportunity—and similarly almost all other things being numerically expressible); since, again, they saw that the modifications and the ratios of the musical scales were expressible in numbers;—since, then, all other things seemed in their whole nature to be modelled on numbers, and numbers seemed to be the first things in the whole of nature, they supposed the elements of numbers to be the elements of all things, and the whole heaven to be a musical scale and a number. And all the properties of numbers and scales which they could show to agree with the attributes and parts and the whole arrangement of the heavens, they collected and fitted into their scheme; and if there was a gap anywhere, they readily made additions so as to make their whole theory coherent. E.g. as the number 10 is thought to be perfect and to comprise the whole nature of numbers, they say that the bodies which move through the heavens are ten, but as the visible bodies are only nine, to meet this they invent a tenth—the ‘counter-earth’. We have discussed these matters more exactly elsewhere.

From these facts we may sufficiently perceive the meaning of the ancients who said the elements of nature were more than one; but there are some who spoke of the universe as if it were one entity, though they were not all alike either in the excellence of their statement or in its conformity to the facts of nature. The discussion of them is in no way appropriate to our present investigation of causes, for they do not, like some of the natural philosophers, assume being to be one and yet generate it out of the one as out of matter, but they speak in another way; those others add change, since they generate the universe, but these thinkers say the universe is unchangeable. Yet this much is germane to the present inquiry: Parmenides seems to fasten on that which is one in definition, Melissus on that which is one in matter, for which reason the former says that it is limited, the latter that it is unlimited; while Xenophanes, the first of these partisans of the One (for Parmenides is said to have been his pupil), gave no clear statement, nor does he seem to have grasped the nature of either of these causes, but with reference to the whole material universe he says the One is God. Now these thinkers, as we said, must be neglected for the purposes of the

present inquiry-two of them entirely, as being a little too naive, viz. Xenophanes and Melissus; but Parmenides seems in places to speak with more insight. For, claiming that, besides the existent, nothing non-existent exists, he thinks that of necessity one thing exists, viz. the existent and nothing else (on this we have spoken more clearly in our work on nature), but being forced to follow the observed facts, and supposing the existence of that which is one in definition, but more than one according to our sensations, he now posits two causes and two principles, calling them hot and cold, i.e. fire and earth; and of these he ranges the hot with the existent, and the other with the non-existent.

From what has been said, then, and from the wise men who have now sat in council with us, we have got thus much-on the one hand from the earliest philosophers, who regard the first principle as corporeal (for water and fire and such things are bodies), and of whom some suppose that there is one corporeal principle, others that there are more than one, but both put these under the head of matter; and on the other hand from some who posit both this cause and besides this the source of movement, which we have got from some as single and from others as twofold.

Down to the Italian school, then, and apart from it, philosophers have treated these subjects rather obscurely, except that, as we said, they have in fact used two kinds of cause, and one of these-the source of movement-some treat as one and others as two. But the Pythagoreans have said in the same way that there are two principles, but added this much, which is peculiar to them, that they thought that finitude and infinity were not attributes of certain other things, e.g. of fire or earth or anything else of this kind, but that infinity itself and unity itself were the substance of the things of which they are predicated. This is why number was the substance of all things. On this subject, then, they expressed themselves thus; and regarding the question of essence they began to make statements and definitions, but treated the matter too simply. For they both defined superficially and thought that the first subject of which a given definition was predicable was the substance of the thing defined, as if one supposed that 'double' and '2' were the same, because 2 is the first thing of which 'double' is predicable. But surely to be double and to be 2 are not the same; if they are, one thing will be many-a consequence which they actually drew. From the earlier philosophers, then, and from their successors we can learn thus much.

6

After the systems we have named came the philosophy of Plato, which in most respects followed these thinkers, but had peculiarities that distinguished it from the philosophy of the Italians. For, having in his youth first become familiar with Cratylus and with the Heraclitean doctrines (that all sensible things are ever in a state of flux and there is no knowledge about them), these views he held even in later years. Socrates, however, was

busying himself about ethical matters and neglecting the world of nature as a whole but seeking the universal in these ethical matters, and fixed thought for the first time on definitions; Plato accepted his teaching, but held that the problem applied not to sensible things but to entities of another kind—for this reason, that the common definition could not be a definition of any sensible thing, as they were always changing. Things of this other sort, then, he called Ideas, and sensible things, he said, were all named after these, and in virtue of a relation to these; for the many existed by participation in the Ideas that have the same name as they. Only the name ‘participation’ was new; for the Pythagoreans say that things exist by ‘imitation’ of numbers, and Plato says they exist by participation, changing the name. But what the participation or the imitation of the Forms could be they left an open question.

[T]he theory is not a reasonable one. For they make many things out of the matter, and the form generates only once, but what we observe is that one table is made from one matter, while the man who applies the form, though he is one, makes many tables.

Isocrates, *Panegyricus*

28. In the first place, then, the first need of our nature was supplied by the agency of our state; for even though the story is a mythical one, yet it is fit to be told even at the present day. When Demeter came into the country in her wandering, after the rape of Persephone, and was kindly disposed to our forefathers on account of the services they rendered her, which can be told to none but the initiated, she bestowed two gifts which surpass all others: the fruits of the earth, which have saved us from the life of wild beasts, and the mystic rite, the partakers in which have brighter hopes concerning the end of life and the eternity beyond,--

[NOTE: The literary source for these sacred rites, called the **Eleusinian Mysteries**, is the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*:

	she revealed to them the way to perform the sacred rites, and she pointed out the ritual to all of them
	--the holy ritual, which it is not at all possible to ignore, to find out about,

	or to speak out. The great awe of the gods holds back any speaking out.
480	Blessed [<i>olbios</i>] among earth-bound mortals is he who has seen these things.
	But whoever is uninitiated in the rites, whoever takes no part in them, will never get a share [<i>aisa</i>]
	of those sorts of things [that the initiated get],
	once they die, down below in the dank realms of mist.]

29. under these circumstances Athens showed such love for men, as well as for the gods, that, when she became mistress of these great blessings, she did not grudge them to the rest of the world, but shared her advantages with all. Now as to the festival, we to this day celebrate it every year; and as to the fruits of the earth, Athens has once for all taught the uses to which they can be put, the operations which they require, and the benefits which arise from them. 30. Indeed no one will venture to disbelieve this statement, after I have made a few additional remarks. For in the first place, the very considerations which would lead a man to despise the story on account of its antiquity, would give him probable reason to suppose that the events had actually happened; for that many have told the story of these events, and all have heard it, should make us regard it, though not recent, yet as worthy of belief. In the second place, we can not only take refuge in the fact that we have received the tradition and rumour from a distant period, but we can also produce greater proofs than this of these things. 31. For most of the cities of Hellas, as a memorial of our old services, send to us each year first-fruits of their corn, and those that omit to do so have often been commanded by the Pythia to pay the due proportion of their produce and perform their ancestral duties to our state. Yet can anything have stronger claims on our belief than that which is the subject of divine ordinance and of widespread approval in Hellas, where ancient story bears common witness to present deeds, and modern events agree with the legends of men of old? 32. Besides this, if we leave all this out of consideration and take a survey from the beginning, we shall find that those who first appeared upon the earth did not at once find life in its present condition, but little by little procured for themselves its advantages. Whom then should we think most likely either to receive it as a gift from the gods or to win it by their own efforts? 33. Surely those who are admitted to have been the

first to exist, and are at once most highly gifted for the pursuits of life and most piously disposed towards the gods. Now what high honour ought to accrue to those who have produced such great blessings, it were a superfluous task to point out; for no one could find a reward commensurate with what has been achieved.

34. So much then concerning the greatest of our good works, first accomplished and most universal in its effects. But, in the same period, Athens, seeing the barbarians occupying the greater part of the country, and the Hellenes confined in a small space and driven by scarcity of land into intestine conspiracies and civil wars, and perishing, either from want of daily necessities or in war, **35.** was not content to leave things so, but sent forth leaders into the states who took those most in need of subsistence, made themselves their generals and conquered the barbarians in war, founded many states on both continents, colonized all the islands, and saved both those who followed them and those who stayed behind; **36.** For to the latter they left the home country sufficient for their needs, and the former they provided with more territory than they already possessed; for they acquired all the surrounding districts of which we are now in occupation. In this way too they afforded great facilities to those who in later times wished to send out colonists and to imitate our state; for it was not necessary for them to run risk in acquiring new territory, but they could go and live on land which we had marked out. **37.** Now who can show a leadership more ancestral than one which arose before most Hellenic cities were founded, or more beneficial than one which drove the barbarians from their homes, and led on the Hellenes to such prosperity?

38. Yet, after aiding in the accomplishment of the most pressing duties, Athens did not neglect the rest, but deemed it the first step only in a career of beneficence to find food for those in want, a step which is incumbent upon a people who aim at good government generally, and thinking that life which was limited to mere subsistence was not enough to make men desire to live, she devoted such close attention to the other interests of man, that of all the benefits which men enjoy, not derived from the gods but which we owe to our fellow-men, none have arisen without the aid of Athens, and most of them have been brought about by her agency. **39.** For finding the Hellenes living in lawlessness and dwelling in a scattered fashion, oppressed by tyrannies or being destroyed by anarchy, she also released them from these evils, either by becoming mistress of them or by making herself an example; for she was the first to lay down laws and establish a constitution. **40.** This is clear from the fact that, when men in the earliest times introduced indictments for homicide, and determined to settle their mutual disputes by argument and not by violence, they followed our laws in the mode of trial which they adopted.

Nay more, the arts also, whether useful for the necessities of life or contrived for pleasure, were by her either invented or put to proof and offered to the rest of the world for their

use. **41.** In other respects, moreover, she ordered her administration in such a spirit of welcome to strangers and of friendliness to all, as to suit both those who were in want of money and those who desired to enjoy the wealth they possessed, and not to fail in serving either the prosperous, or those who were unfortunate in their own states, but so that each of these classes finds with us a delightful sojourn or a safe refuge. **42.** And further, since the territory possessed by the several states was not in every case self-sufficing, but was defective in some products and bore more than was sufficient of others, and much embarrassment arose where to dispose of the latter, and from whence to import the former, she provided a remedy for these troubles also; for she established the Piraeus as a market in the centre of Hellas, of such superlative excellence that articles, which it is difficult for the several states to supply to each other one by one, can all be easily procured from Athens.

43. Now those who established the great festivals are justly praised for handing down to us a custom which leads us to make treaties with one another, to reconcile the enmities that exist among us, and to assemble in one place; besides that, in making common prayers and sacrifices we are reminded of the original bond of kinship between us, and are more kindly disposed towards each other for the future, we renew old friendships and make new ones, **44.** and neither for ordinary men nor for those of distinguished qualities is the time idly spent, but by the concourse of Hellenes opportunity arises for the latter to display their natural excellences, and for the former to be spectators of their mutual contests, and neither spend their time dissatisfied, but each has whereof to be proud, the spectators when they see the competitors toiling on their behalf, and the competitors when they think that everyone has come to look at them. Great then as are the benefits we derive from the assemblies, in these respects, too, our state is not left behind. **45.** For indeed she can show many most beautiful spectacles, some passing all bounds in expenditure, others of high artistic repute, and some excelling in both these respects; then, the multitude of strangers who visit us is so great, that if there is any advantage in mutual intercourse, that also has been compassed by her. In addition to this, you can find with us the truest friendships and the most varied acquaintanceships; and, moreover, see contests not merely of speed and strength, but also of oratory and mind, and in all other productions of art, and for these the greatest prizes

46. For in addition to those which the state herself offers, she also helps to persuade others to bestow the like; for those recognised by us receive such credit as to be universally approved. Apart from this, whereas the other festivals are assembled at long intervals and soon dispersed, our state, on the contrary, is for those who visit her one long festival without ceasing.

47. Practical philosophy, moreover, which helped to discover and establish all these institutions, which at once educated us for action and softened our mutual intercourse, which distinguished calamities due to ignorance from those which spring from necessity, and taught us to avoid the former and nobly to endure the latter, was introduced by Athens; she also paid honour to eloquence, which all men desire, and begrudge to those who are skilled in it: 48. for she was aware that this is the only distinguishing characteristic which we of all creatures possess, and that by this we have won our position of superiority to all the rest of them; she saw that in other spheres of action men's fortunes are so capricious that often in them the wise fail and the foolish succeed, and that the proper and skilful use of language is beyond the reach of men of poor capacity, but is the function of a soul of sound wisdom, 49. and that those who are considered clever or stupid differ from each other mainly in this respect; she saw, besides, that men who have received a liberal education from the very first are not to be known by courage, or wealth, or such-like advantages, but are most clearly recognised by their speech, and that this is the surest token which is manifested of the education of each one of us, and that those who make good use of language are not only influential in their own states, but also held in honour among other people. 50. So far has Athens left the rest of mankind behind in thought and expression that her pupils have become the teachers of the world, and she has made the name of Hellas distinctive no longer of race but of intellect, and the title of Hellene a badge of education rather than of common descent.

Lysias, "Against the Grain Merchants"

Members of the jury, many people have come to me expressing surprise that I have made an accusation against the grain merchants in the Boule. They say that, no matter how certain you may be of their guilt, you are likely to consider those who make speeches against them as slanderers [i.e., who bring charges against the unpopular grain-dealers in the hope of being bought off by them]. For this reason I would like to speak first about the reasons why I find it necessary to accuse them.

When the Committee presented this case in the Boule there was such anger against the grain merchants that some of the speakers called for them to be handed over without trial to the Eleven so that they might be put to death. I, however, thought it would be a terrible thing for the Boule to become involved in such a thing, and so I stood and said that it seemed to me that we should try the grain merchants in accordance with the law. My thinking was that if they had committed acts deserving of death you would be just as able as the Boule to render justice and that, if they were innocent, it would not be right for them to die without a trial. The Boule was persuaded by my remarks, but then attempts were

made to discredit me by saying that my purpose in speaking had been to save the grain merchants. When the case came before the Boule for a preliminary hearing, I defended myself against my detractors in the following way: while everyone else remained silent, I stood and accused the merchants, making it clear to everyone that what I had said earlier was not in defense of these men but in support of the established laws. So, it was fear of these accusations that led me to begin this business. And now I think it would be disgraceful for me to abandon it before you have voted to judge them in whatever way you wish.

[Speaking to one of the grain merchants.]

First of all, sir, please take the stand. Now, tell me, are you a resident alien?

Yes, I am

Do you live here in order to obey the city's laws, or to do whatever you like?

To obey.

Shouldn't you expect to be put to death if you have committed a crime that carries the death penalty?

I should.

Then tell me, do you admit to buying up more than the fifty measures of grain allowed under the law?

Yes, but I bought it on order of the archons.

Well then, members of the jury, if he can demonstrate that there is a law which requires the merchants to buy up grain on an order from the archons you must acquit him. If he cannot, then you must condemn him. For we have produced to you the law which forbids anyone in the city to buy up more than fifty measures of grain.

Gentlemen, my accusation should be sufficient to condemn this man, for he admits that he bought up the grain even though the law forbids him to do so, and you have sworn to judge him in accordance with the law. But in order for you to be persuaded that the grain merchants are lying about the archons we must say something more about the latter. Since the merchants pinned the blame on them, we called the archons before us and questioned them. Two of them claimed they had no knowledge of this matter. But Anytus said that during the previous winter, when the price of grain was high and the merchants were outbidding each other and fighting among themselves, he had urged them to end their rivalry so that, for the sake of their customers, they would be able to buy grain at the lowest

possible price; for they were allowed to sell it for no more than an obol above the market rate. I am prepared to call Anytus himself to testify that he did not order the merchants to buy up grain to hold until the rate rose, but only advised them not to drive up the price by bidding against each other. Anytus made these statements during the term of the previous Boule, while these merchants appear to have bought up the grain during the term of this one.

So, now you have heard that the merchants did *not* buy up the grain on an order of the archons. In my opinion, even if they are telling the truth in saying that they did, they are not clearing themselves but only accusing the archons. For in the case of those laws which apply in this matter, surely there should be punishment both for those who break them and for those who order them to do so...

Demosthenes, *Third Philippic*

Men of Athens, at almost every meeting of the Assembly speeches are made about the crimes which Philip has been perpetrating since the Peace was concluded, crimes committed not against you alone, but against the other cities as well. I know that all the speakers would say, though they may not *domuch*, that the aim of both our words and deeds must be to put a stop to his insolence and to make him pay for it. However, I see that all our interests have deteriorated to the point where I fear a blasphemous statement may nevertheless be true: that even if all those who speak to you had wanted to propose measures designed to plunge our affairs into the worst possible condition, and if you had wanted to vote for such measures, I do not think that they could have been made worse than they already are. There may be many reasons for the decline of our interests to their present condition, and not just one or two, but if you look at the matter carefully you will discover that the blame lies primarily with those who seek to win your approval instead of giving you the best advice. Men of Athens, some of these men want only to maintain a system which gives them power and prestige, and so they have no real concern for the city's future. And there are others who, by falsely accusing and slandering those who are at work in public office, are keeping the city occupied with the punishment of its own citizens and thereby allowing Philip the freedom to say and do whatever he wants. Political practices like these are customary among you, but they are the cause of your present problems. So I think I have a right, men of Athens, to speak freely and tell you certain truths without your becoming angry with me for doing so. Look at it this way. In all other areas of public life you believe it is so necessary to extend freedom of speech to everyone in the city that even foreigners and slaves share in it. Many household servants can be seen in public saying whatever they wish with greater liberty than is enjoyed by citizens in some of

the other cities, and yet you have completely eliminated this freedom in the area of political discussion. The result is that in the meetings of the Assembly you put on airs and listen only to what is flattering and pleasing, while circumstances and events are even now putting you in the greatest danger. I have nothing to say to you if you still have this attitude, but if you are willing to hear something useful, something other than flattery, I am ready to speak. Our position is weak in every way, and much has already been sacrificed, but it is still possible to set everything right if you will only resolve to do what must be done. Now, what I am about to say may seem paradoxical, but it is true. The worst feature of our past will be our greatest boon in the future. And what is this feature? It is that you do not do the things, both great and small, which are required of you, and this is why your affairs are in such a miserable state; for it is certain that if your condition remained the same even in spite of doing all that you should there would be no hope of improving it. But, as things stand now, it is your laziness and indifference that Philip has overcome; but he has not conquered your city. Nor have you been vanquished – you haven't made even the slightest effort.....

If it is possible for Athens to remain at peace, and if this decision is ours to make (and I will begin my argument with this), then I say we should make it; and if there is any man here who says that this can indeed be done, I ask him to write and propose a resolution, and not to trick us [by suggesting a measure which he is not willing to support actively]. But if there is another party with weapons in his hands and a powerful army at his command who proposes peace, though in name only, while all the while he commits acts of war, what choice do we have but to defend ourselves? If you wish to pretend, in the same way that he does, that peace exists, I will not argue with you. If anyone really believes that peace is a state of affairs in which Philip can take everything else and then march against us, then, in the first place, that man is out of his mind; and, secondly, this peace he speaks of is one which you observe towards Philip, though he does not honour it in his dealings with you. This is the favourable position which Philip is buying with all the money he is spending: he is at war with you, but you are not at war with him.

If we are waiting for him to admit that he is at war with us we are the most naive people of all. Indeed, if we are to judge by the way he has treated other cities, he wouldn't admit he is at war with us even if he were to invade Athens itself, and the Piraeus.....