
THE STRUCTURE OF TRANSCENDENCE WITHIN THE CITY

Book Six of the Laws moves from a concern with the household out to the general controlling structures of the city. The Stranger describes this as a mythic discourse which must be completed by supplying the head so that it does not remain shapeless. The first order of business is the election of the thirty-seven Guardians of the Law. Nineteen of these are to come from Knosis, and the rest from the rest of the cities underwriting the new colony. The description of the election of this most important office is of interest.

Eligibility to share in the selection of the magistrates is to be extended to all who possess heavy weapons, cavalry or infantry, as well as to those who have taken part in war as long as the capacity of their age allowed. The selection is to be carried out in the temple which the city considers most honorable. Each is to carry to the altar of the god a little tablet on which he has written the name of the candidate, his father's name, his tribe's name, and the name of the

district where the candidate resides. Adjacent, each is to write his own name in the same way. *Then, during a period of not less than thirty days, anyone who wishes may remove and set out in the marketplace any of the written tablets that doesn't please him.* From the tablets that have thus been judged suitable, the magistrates are to take the first three hundred and display them for the whole city to see; from these the city is to select again, in the same way, each carrying up whoever he prefers. After this second round, they are to display to everybody again the one hundred preferred names. In the third round, anyone who wishes should carry up his preference from among the hundred, by walking between the parts of a sacrificial animal. The thirty-seven who receive the most votes, after being scrutinized, are to be appointed to office.¹

Notice that this voting procedure is deterministic and will be contrast to others in which there is use of the lottery. The significant features of the election is that there is a positive and negative vote. Each person can place a tablet and carry one away. Tablets are taken from the temple and displayed in the market, and then on each round new tablets are taken into the temple. Thus, there is a dialectic set up between the temple and the agora.

1. Laws; Plato; page 138-9; 753b-e

This is emphasized because on the last vote the voter walks between the parts of a sacrificed animal. In each case, the voter's choice is connected directly to the one for whom he is voting and it is no secret. Taking a tablet from the temple and placing it in the market strikes at a particular man's vote. Everyone knows who voted for whom. Each successive vote is a filtering process until the final thirty-seven are produced, with the highest vote on round three. So here we see Plato's idea of how the city as a teleonomic system moves toward the Good, in each case reducing the pool of possible selection. The process includes the concept of cancellation where individual voters may cancel each other's votes. One may imagine a voter seeing his vote in the marketplace and finding out who did the going and getting of that person's vote and purposely cancelling it. The cancellation of opposites leads toward a middle way in the voting process. It is unclear whether cancellation occurs at all three steps, but it at least appears at the first step as an integral part of the voting procedure. Contrast this with the voting for the Council.

The council is to number thirty twelves, for three hundred sixty would be an appropriate number for the subdivisions. By dividing the number into four parts of ninety each, there will be ninety councilmen elected from each of the classes. The first vote will be for men from the highest class,

and all are to be compelled to vote: he who doesn't obey must pay the appointed fine. When the voting is completed, the names voted for are recorded. Then, on the next day, they are to vote for men from the second class according to the same procedures as on the day before. On the third day, anyone who wishes may vote for men from the third class; while the upper three classes are to be compelled to vote, anyone who belongs to the fourth and lowest class and doesn't wish to vote is to be let off free of any fine. On the fourth day, everyone is to vote for men from the fourth and lowest class, but there is to be no fine for anyone from the third or fourth class who doesn't wish to vote, while anyone belonging to the second and first classes who fails to vote must pay a fine. In the case of someone from the second class, it will be triple the first fine and, in the case of someone from the first class, quadruple. On the fifth day, the magistrates will display the recorded names for all the citizens to see, and every man must vote on this list or pay the first fine. One hundred eighty are to be elected from each class; *half of these are then to be chosen by lot*, and after being scrutinized, these are to be the Councilmen for a year.²

2. Laws; Plato; page 142-3; 756b-e

Notice in the election of the Council, there is a similar progression through three stages in which each class elects some number which are then reduced to 180, and these are further reduced by lot. Thus, the extra element here, which is chance, and comes at the end as cancellation, came at the beginning of the other voting process. In both cases, there is a showing of the shortlist to the whole body of citizens. However, in this later procedure, there is a division of the city along class lines that did not exist in the former procedure. Between these two very specific procedures there is the election of the generals which is done by a show of hands.

Now voting is very important in the city of the Laws. It is what distinguishes this city as a democracy. By voting, everyone takes a hand in guiding the city on its course. The voting process in each case reduces the field, and thus the possibilities, until the requisite number of offices have been filled. Three hundred and sixty in the case of the Council, and thirty-seven in the case of the guardians of the laws. The Generals are three with twelve Rank Commanders, one for each tribe, that are elected by a show of hands. In voting, the citizens are displaying themselves to the whole city. Either by show of hands or writing their name on a tablet, they are making their presence known. Those who are nominated for office are also being presented in the limelight before their fellow

citizens. Their names appear on the short lists displayed in the market. Progressively, they are weeded out by their fellow citizens, so in the end, everyone knows what everyone thinks of the candidates. By this selection, the city is picking from its possible human servants and actualizing a certain set of possibilities. This selection will determine the course of events for the next year or few years, depending on the office. However, because groups of men and not a single man are being chosen, in each case the make up of the team will tend to balance things out, and the self of no one person will be imprinted on the city. This is very unlike the household where the husband's self form is dominant. Here the structure of the political system prevents tyranny, but in each case it calls for those elected to work together, which may or may not occur smoothly.

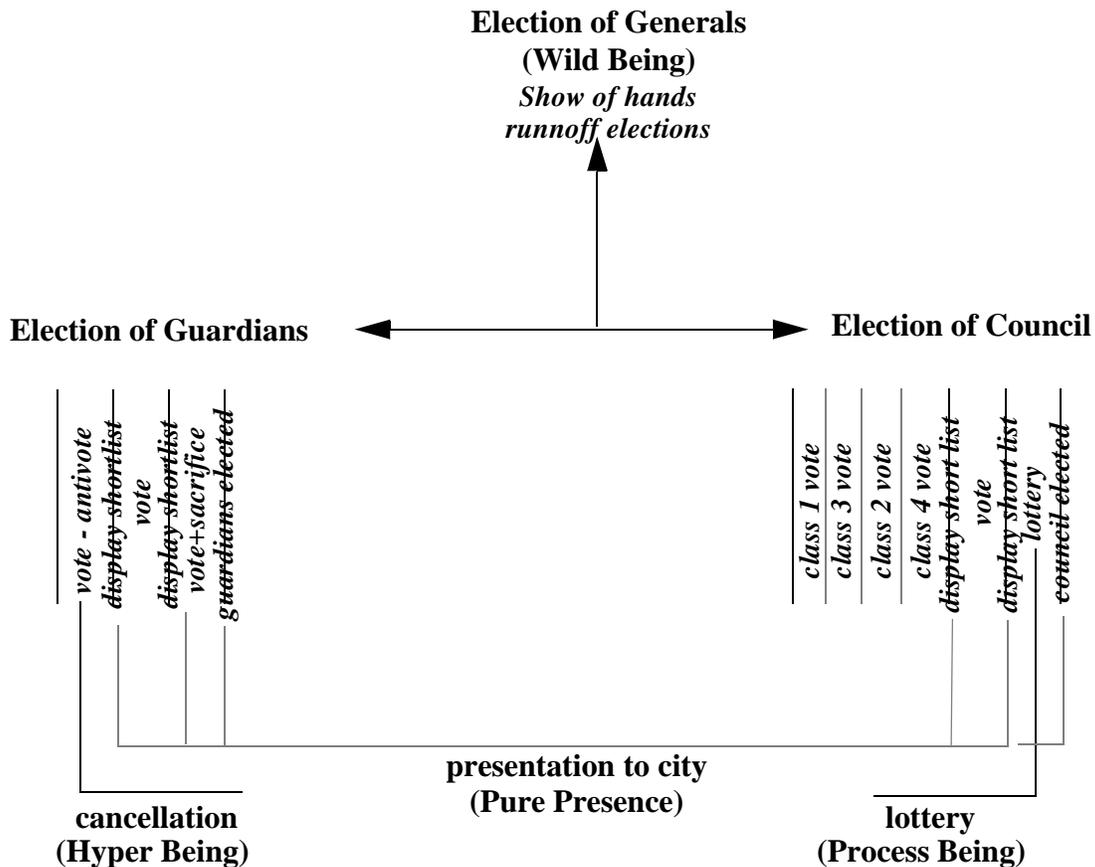
But let us look at the mechanism of the election process. Plato has very carefully structured these so they unify, yet at the same time separate the people of the city. Between the two formal procedures, there is an informal way of selecting the Generals. What can we make of the inclusion of cancellation and the lottery within the two procedures? Their strangeness draws attention to these aspects of the voting process which otherwise is very normal. Well of course, we shall fall back on the ontological interpretation of voting. This procedure for

voting is the process by which the transcendental power structures that dominate the city are set up. We might expect them to be an ontological statement as well as a political one. We already know that the ontological categories suffuse everything. Now we first notice that the showing of the names on the shortlist at every stage is important, and this is easily related to the present-at-hand modality of Being. That written notice is a pointing at certain individuals within the city. Now voting itself is a process which has stages that end in the presentation of the shortlists. In the end, the process ends up with a determinate set of elected officials. Thus, there are a set of progressive presentations leading toward a final presentation. This progression is a filtering where the city acts as its own teleonomic filtering device. Teleonomic filtering is the action of a structural system which determines its own future in a piecemeal fashion, not knowing where it is going, but slowly reducing possibilities. This teleonomic filtering is indicative of the ready-to-hand modality of Process Being. Now we are presented with two opposite filtering processes. One looks to the long-term and elects the Guardians of the Laws. The other looks to the short-term and elects the Council. The long term procedure uses cancellation in the voting process and unifies the electorate. The short term procedure uses a lottery and splits the electorate along class boundaries. These are means of augmenting

the filtering process to introduce random mutations. This is known as a genetic algorithm. Not only are small genetic changes produced by the voting process itself, but through the unexpected actions of cancellation and lottery, unexpected results may appear. Now in the case of lottery, the aspects of chance coincides with the nature of Process Being. However, cancellation points toward a different kind of Being called Hyper Being. Hyper Being is the realm of cancellation. When nihilistic opposites cancel, it results in the manifestation of Hyper Being (called by Heidegger ~~Being~~ crossed out). Thus, the quirks in the opposed voting procedures contrasts unity with Hyper Being to class separation with Process Being. This suggests that the procedures are attempting to reach higher and higher meta-levels of Being. In many ways, the selection of the Generals and Rank Commanders are the most important decisions that the men of the city can make together. We suspect that the show of hands with its lack of formality is meant to represent Wild Being. It is Wild Being that manifests in war as the mele of battle. The show of hands is certainly more natural than the other voting procedures. It is closer to the way decisions would be made by troops on the move. It is informal and represents what is left when the two opposite voting procedures that frame it cancel each other out. In the midst of the city is the army of men who protect it. They bear an informal relation toward each other which grows

out of suffering the rigors of battle together. Around these, a structure is projected which shows us the other types of Being which appears as a superstructure of transcendence within the city that is ultimately dependent on the informal relations between warriors. Thus, we see here Wild Being as the root from which the formal structure of Process, Hyper and Pure Presence, as types of being, unfold. So at the heart of the city, we see the structure of the whole city repeated. We see it in the coming into being of the officers of the city.

FIGURE 68 Types of Election in relation to kinds of Being.



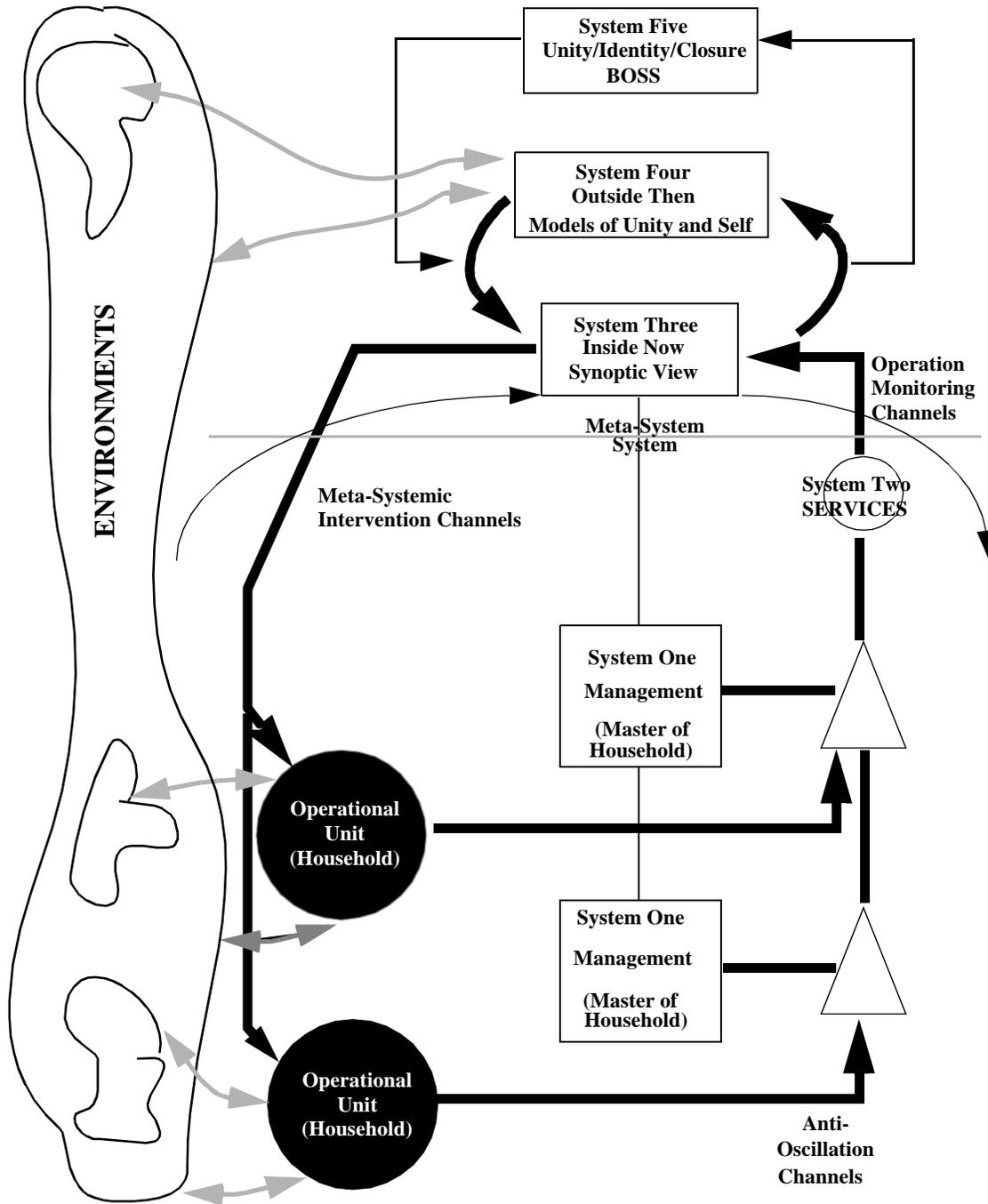
The Athenian Stranger goes on to emphasize the point by declaring the difference between two types of equality. One type makes everything exactly equal by measure, weight and number. The second type gives the greater more and the lesser less in proportion to its nobility. “It gives due measure to each according to their nature.” He says the selection procedure attempts to strike a balance between these two types of equality in order to balance the monarchic against the democratic. He says it is necessary for every city to blur the distinction between these two to avoid civil war. In cancellation, every man is equal, and all the citizens are considered as a pure plenum of humanity. Each man can cancel the vote of another and open himself to having his own vote canceled. This is perfect equality in number. It applies to long-term offices, and thus, long term goals of the city. In selecting the Council, each class votes for its own representatives. The upper classes are given an advantage by being required to vote. The apparent concession to the lower classes actually weakens their hand in politics. But the advantage given to the upper classes is restricted by making the lottery choose in the final runoff. Thus, there is a balance between the two types of equality in the election and an overall balance between classes on the Council.

The lottery gives some leeway for the gods to intervene

in the affairs of men. Their oracles are seen many times in chance events like the actions of birds. This shows us the blindness of statistics. Statistics assumes you do not know what is really going on. It sticks to blindness, and based on, that attempts to draw conclusions about the form that actualizations will take. However, we see that this blindness is the way that the universe is imposed, and the creatures of the pluriverse are excluded from our world. Those who watch for omens attempt to read meaning into particular incidents and their attributes. But this merely lays a level of interpretation on top of the knack of paying attention to particularities and accidents of existence. Through these, the Ancient Greeks allowed the jinn to steer their souls. The Stranger says that they can prey that the gods will steer the city toward what is best through the lottery.

FIGURE 69

Stanford Beer's Cybernetic Management Meta-levels



Plato goes through a whole set of offices, their rules of

election and their duties. These offices are transcendental structures that appear between the limits of oikos and polis. It is interesting to compare them to the structures discussed by Stanford Beer in his cybernetic management book called The Heart Of Enterprise. In this book, he produces a set of meta-level structures that he says every viable system must have in order to steer itself in the world. It is interesting to note how close Plato's offices come to this theoretical ideal. By comparison, we are able to see how the structure of transcendence works within the city. Transcendence is not a monolithic structure, but a series of metalevel systems that interlock to make the city as a whole viable. Without this structure of transcendence, the city could not be a cybernetic unit that steered itself through the world. The whole idea for having offices is to allow the city to act as a single entity instead of a horde or swarm. It is precisely the constellation of households which acts as a set of semi-independent series that is turned into an institution that has a monolithic action within the world. There are a discrete series of functions that must be performed by any such meta-system for it to work. Beer comes closest to identifying the purely theoretical function of these structures, and here we will note the correspondences so that we might come to an appreciation of just how far-sighted Plato's management structures are. This indicates that they deserve deep contemplation rather

than being dismissed as anachronism. Plato was the first to understand the nature of the fine structure of transcendence. In the beginning of the tradition, these Greek thinkers were far more far-sighted than we. We need to think hard about how that can be.

Notice that the core of Beer's description of management structures are three elements:

Local Management

Operations Unity (Muddy Box)

Appropriate Environment

These building blocks form the descriptive elements by which any human system is constructed, including the polis. For the city in the Laws, the operational unit is clearly the Oikos. It is, as Stanford Beer describes it, a "muddy box" mostly opaque to those outside it including the management which is mostly concerned with inputs and outputs. We have seen in Xenophon's work that the Greek man was indeed interested in the input-output matrix of the household and arranging things so that it increased rather than decreased. It is indeed muddy because it is a mixture of the negative and positive fourfold. It is the place where everything is swept under the carpet. Clearly, every household has its own particular environment consisting of the other households

and the other aspects of the city. Also, there is a global environment which is the city itself which is the total system which all the operational units compose. The management of the Oikos is the Greek man who was master of his household.

One of the most interesting points that Beer makes is that Humans are producers of variety. He elaborates on Ashby's law of "requisite variety," and shows that every system produces the necessary variety to be complementary with their environment. Thus, the household is producing not just a profit, but also variety in its differences from all the other households. Each environment is different, and each household's adaptation to its environment is unique. The household is a cornucopia of the production of differences which, as Plato says in relation to the Real city, needs to be adapted to a common culture that reduces the variety within the city. Variety is also damped through anti-oscillatory channels which appear as public services. The differentiation of work within the city dampens the oscillations of the system by centralizing whatever work may be brought together into a specialized service. Specialization, like the common culture, serves to reduce variety. Individual sub-systems are not faced with an infinite variety of choices. Choices are deliberately reduced by the overall system. This system of

distribution channels and centers of production is called by Beer, System Two. In the body, it corresponds to the digestive, blood, respiratory, lymphatic and other body regulatory systems.

The rest of the systems that Beer introduces are all meta-systems. They control the controllers of the operational units. The most direct of these controllers is System Three that is concerned with getting a holistic or synoptic view of what is happening *inside* and *now*. It monitors all the individual management units and will make meta-systemic interventions directly in the affairs of the operational units, if necessary, or, more likely, along the chain of command. The next meta-level, System Four, is the opposite of the last one. It is, instead, concerned with what is *outside* and *then* (past or future). It interacts with its own external environment to check for itself the conclusions of local management. It also monitors the global environment not considered by the local operational units. It has an model of how the system is operating and of the system's goals and ideal functioning. It constantly compares the functioning of the system to those goals and makes adjustment in what System Three is doing right now to the local sub-systems in order to steer it toward the global or long-term goals. Finally, System Five mediates between System Three and Four. It is the symbolic unity of the system as a whole and

represents closure, making all ultimate decisions that cannot be made in the system itself.

This structure of transcendence allows the cybernetic system to maintain its viability which means its independence of action. All organizations which remain viable over long periods of time must exemplify this fine structure of transcendence. However, that may be done in a myriad of ways, and all the regimes that Plato discusses are ideal types of different ways of providing these functions. We are not so interested in how this is done specifically, but more interested in the fact that transcendence can be seen to have a specific fine structure, and that these functions are identified and taken care of by Plato in his lower utopian city. This finally shows that Plato is projecting the whole of the transcendental complex which is explored piecemeal throughout the rest of the metaphysical tradition. Thus, it is true what Whitehead said about the whole of the metaphysical tradition being a footnote to Plato. So when we have dealt with Plato, we have, in effect, dealt with the whole of the tradition of Western metaphysics. All the other subsequent philosophical positions may be seen as surface phenomena. The surface phenomena is the working out of the dialectic of opinions within the Western tradition. They all take place within the realm of the unfolding of Ontological Monism as the history of the

interpretation of Self-grounding transcendence. However, this realm is always dogged by the shadow of the negative fourfold, what Nietzsche calls the Dionysian side of philosophy. This dialectic between the foreground of the positive fourfold and the background of the negative fourfold, gives rise to an infinite variety of opinions and descriptions of transcendence within the Western scientific and philosophical tradition. Once we grasp the central problematic, then it is not necessary to follow all the nuances of its unfolding. We can, instead, turn to deeper problems of the structure of the underpinnings of this formation of self-grounding. In fact, it is exactly these foundations that will occupy the later parts of this series of essays.

This structure of self-grounding transcendence is autopoietic. That means for human organizations which pattern themselves, the meta-system must have a certain formation. That formation, at the same time, produces its products and its own organization by which it is renewed. System Three, with its operation monitoring channels and meta-systematic intervention channels, forms the closed autopoietic ring out of the network of partial sub-systems. That network is homeostatic and will tend to right itself around its own internal variables, no matter what the outside influences are. The homeostatic aspect of the system is represented by System Two which allows the

network to cross-communicate outside the normal structures via the use of services. It is, in effect, a closed system impervious to the environment unless it is strongly perturbed. It is System Four that appears as if it is reacting to the environment. For human systems, part of the environment is itself, and the cognitive dimension is irrevocably welded to the living aspect, not merely isolated in the observer. System Four is the open system, recognizing inputs and outputs from the environment. System Five welds the cognitive side of the autopoietic ring together with the blind side. It welds together the windegg (amphora) and the birds (bees). It is the point of illusory continuity, the symbolic generalized other. It is ultimately an illusion, and thus, like all mirages, is empty. However, autopoietic ring as a whole, which melds the closed nature with the scattered network, is an important image of self-grounding transcendence. It summarizes an important paradoxical structure which pervades all of Western metaphysics and fascinates us, even today, with expositions of it such as that in Godel, Escher, Bach: The Eternal Golden Braid. The Social Autopoietic system in which Cognition and Life are fused, is the secret heart of the city, the intersubjective unity that projects the *uni*-verse and structures the world in which we live. Going back to Plato, we can see it more clearly, now for the first time. Ontological Monism and Dualism are nihilistic opposites. Either the positive fourfold ignores the

negative fourfold and swallows its own tail like the snake at the edge of Ocean in Norse myth, or it recognizes the negative fourfold and calls it unknowable immanence, as does Henry, the other mystics of the ilk of Meister Eckhart. However, by going back into the history of the Greek worldview that we have inherited and elaborated, we have been able to see that the positive and negative fourfold do commingle in the household and in the third best city, Atlantis. This can lead to cancellation and self-destruction which means the manifestation of the Abyss within transcendence. But it also leads to the non-nihilistic distinction of marriage which represents the sacred blending of these powerful opposites. In fact, this blending itself is the source of riddles that we will discover later and has a fine structure of its own, more interesting than the fine structure of transcendence. Transcendence is the gloss of Conceptual Being. That gloss has a substructure and foundation that is now hidden to us and which we must explore in depth. If we continue with the rest of the history of Western philosophy, we will never approach that depth and its profound nature. Our quest is not with the superficial aspects of what has been called Ontological Difference within which the forgetfulness of Being occurs. Being as manifestation, i.e. Process Being, calls up its opposite Nothingness and cancels. Nothingness must appear between each gestalt of a new interpretation of Being in

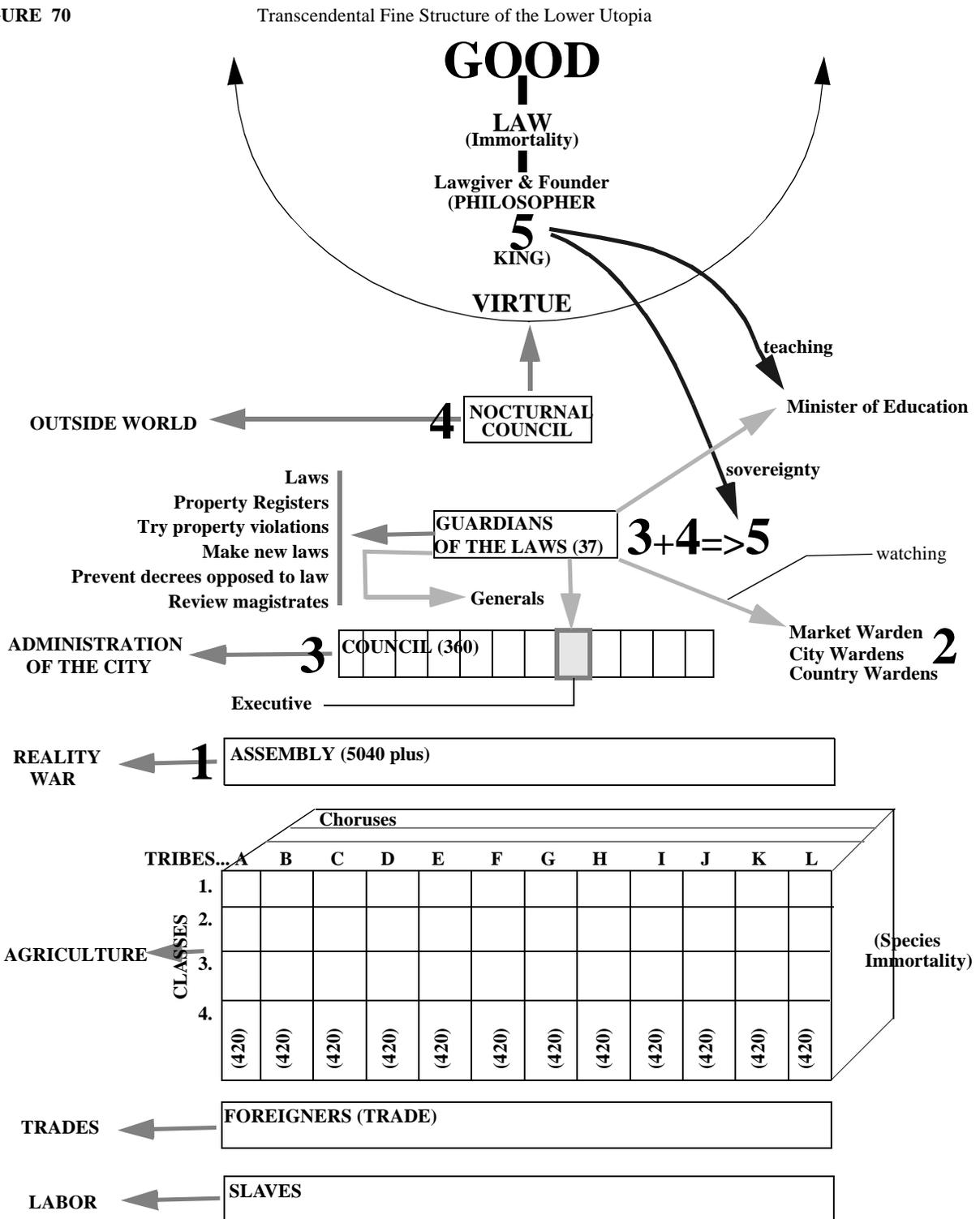
the history of metaphysics. The very fact that Being may be reinterpreted means it is not ultimate. Once Being fragmented, then we knew that the End of Metaphysics had occurred. But no one knew what was next. It is only walking out into Wild Being that appears after that cancellation occurs and looking out over the edge into the Void that it is possible to see what lies beyond the metaphysical.

[What lies beyond may be the era of the Dajall, the anti-Jesus, who appears as the one who can give life. This is the end of history from the Islamic perspective. Or again, some other epoch may intervene between the end of this epoch and that ultimate end, only Allah knows. But within the monolith of the United States, are the empty ones. In them the will to power of self-grounding transcendence and its shadow have cancelled, and only emptiness remains. They are idle, because they are idel (Old English for *empty*). Buddhism has taken root here. Islam is making inroads. Within the heart of the Beast is its opposite, so the time is nigh for the monster to vanish in a torrent of cancellation, leaving the land weary of its heavy hands, making our bodies wild again.]

When we look at the offices of Plato's lower utopia, it is clear that all the systems mentioned by Beer are present. For instance, as has been mentioned, the households are

the operational units, and the householders are the equivalent of local management. The various wardens for the market, city and country districts represent the System Two structures. The Council and its monthly rotating Executive Committee clearly represents System Three, concerned with what is going on here and now. On the other hand, the Nocturnal Council, with its spies to the outside world and its discussions of virtue, is clearly the embodiment of System Four. System Five is a problem for Plato. He clearly prefers the model of the Philosopher King as detailed in the Republic. However, in the lower utopia, this power and wisdom combination needs to be broken up. So he creates the Guardians of the Law which have some of the functions of System Three and Four and gives them Sovereignty from the Philosopher King. He also creates the Minister of Education and imparts the Wisdom to this most important function within the state.

FIGURE 70



So each kind of management system that Beer identifies

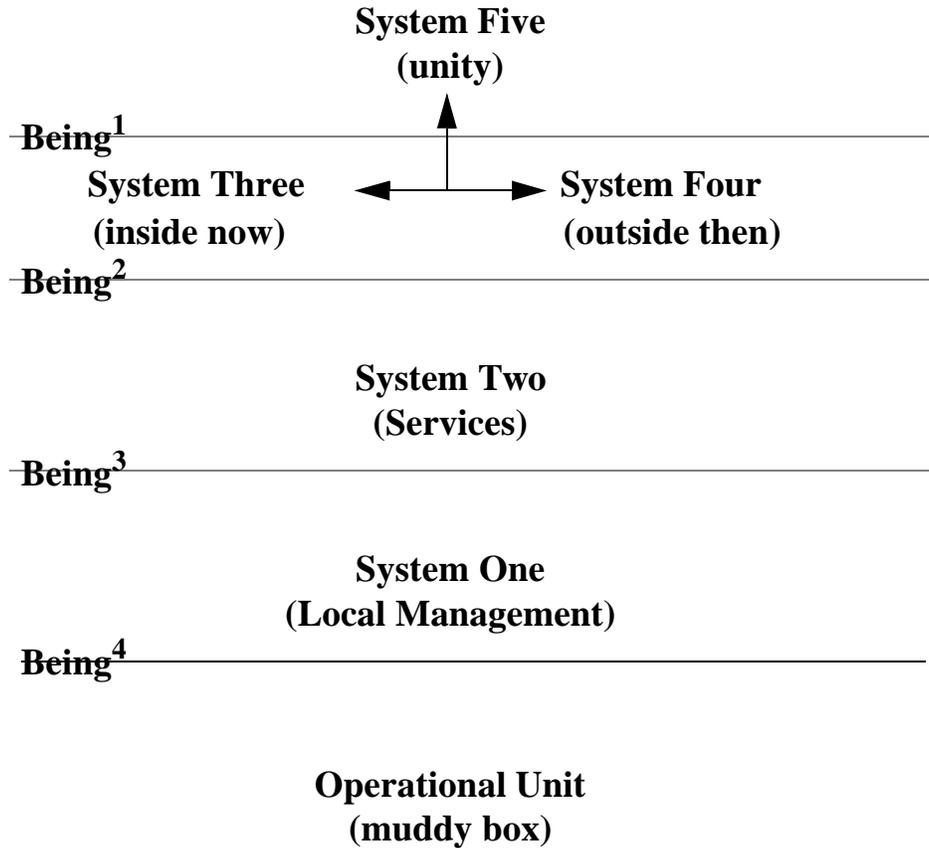
in his ideal model is present. The Guardians of the Laws mediate between the Nocturnal Council and the Daylight Council. This is where Plato makes room for the operation of the negative fourfold within the city. The nocturnal council are the ones pulling the strings behind the external events within the city. They never appear, but are the real source of direction for the whole polis. They are looking at the world situation and what is occurring in other cities which may be a threat. They are exploring the nature of virtue. They are the ones capable of looking at the dark side of the city and attempt to keep the world of light afloat on the waters of the abyss. They are the ones who have, through the elder chorus, become acquainted with Dionysus, whereas a good number of those within the Daylight Council will be from the Apollian chorus. The Guardians mediate between these two forces, and because they guard the law, forming new laws as the situation demands, they are the ones who are the meta-level watchers and actors within the city. They also have sovereignty because they make the laws and make sure everyone else executes them. They have a model of what the system should be in the Laws and a model of the city as it is now in the registers of wealth. This makes them a System Four activity. Their synoptic view of what is occurring within the city makes them a System Three activity. The fact that they have sovereignty makes these two attributes weld together to

make them the embodiment of System Five, mediating between the Nocturnal and Daylight Councils, between the action of the positive and negative fourfolds on the city.

This whole structure is present at hand. There is no depth to the portrayal of transcendence here, as is normal for a representation locked into Ontological Monism. We will have to look deeply to find the traces of the fragmentation of Being. It is there in the lingering differences between the classes. It is there between the different types of systems and meta-systems. It is there in the interstices in Plato's model, but unless we look closely, it is easy to miss it. However, it is exactly these interstices that must be delved into. There, the mixture of positive and negative fourfolds are played out. The Guardians of the Laws are there to prevent the negative fourfold from inundating the lower utopian city which has rejected the sea and attempted to embrace Ontological Monism. But beneath the surface, Ontological Dualism is recognized and a place left for it so it will not overwhelm the city completely. However, the unwritten task of the Guardians of the Laws is to keep balancing the positive and negative fourfolds so the regime of the positive fourfold does not become inundated by the feminine element.

FIGURE 71

How meta-levels of Being relate to the five levels of system.



Now that we have an overview of the structure of transcendence within the city and how it relates to the ideal forms presented by Stanford Beer, we can return to look at the rest of the points Plato makes in this book. He uses the analogy of a ship for describing the need for someone to be constantly alert with the city's interests at heart. One twelfth of the council performs this job and may be said to exercise the executive powers for the city. It is their job to interact with the representatives of other cities or other people from abroad wanting to transact

business with the city.

They will also be ready to contend at anytime with the innovations that are constantly wont to occur in cities everywhere; if possible they'll forestall them, but if they can't, they will at least see to it that the city knows about them as soon as possible, and can cure the sickness. That is why this presiding part of the city must always have the authority to convoke and dissolve the public meetings -- both those that meet regularly according to the laws, and those the city needs on sudden notice.³

The autopoietic system which Plato outlines is frozen, attempting to forestall all change. It can do that because it has the structure of emergence itself. Emergence does not occur within the autopoietic system from its own nature, as it does in other cities. Rather, emergence can only occur due to the natural production of variety by human beings and random mutations. But unlike the Real city, this lower utopia attempts to prevent all innovations because they will cause it to deviate from its autopoietic form.

The focus next moves to the country wardens. They are the secret service for the city. Each group handles a slice

3. Laws; Plato; page 144; 758c-d

of the land for a month, and then they rotate. It is seen as a two-year tour of duty in which the young warriors are initiated into manhood. Three are five Field Regulators with twelve young men each for each section of land. These men and boys do public works and oversee the farms of the populace. They are rotated so they become familiar with all the land. They eat common meals together and may not leave without permission. They are considered to be in slavery to the city. About this, Plato says the following:

Indeed, every real man must understand that no human being would ever become a praiseworthy master unless he has been a slave, and that one should be more attentive to the adornment that comes from a noble enslavement than that which comes from a noble rule. The first enslavement is to the laws (for this is really an enslavement to the gods), and the next is that of the young to their elders at all times, and also to those who have lived honorable lives.

In the next place, someone who has served his two years among the Field Regulators should have developed a taste for a daily ration of humble and uncooked food. For once, the sets of twelve have been chosen and put together with the sets of five,

they must resolve that since they themselves are like domestic servants they will not have their own domestic servants and slaves; they won't use the servants belonging to the other farmers and villagers for private tasks, but only for public tasks. When it comes to the rest, they must resolve that they are going to live by their own efforts and as their own servants. In addition, they are to scout over the whole country with their heavy weapons, summer and winter, so as constantly to guard and get to know all the districts. It's likely that no learning they pursue is more important than that which gives all of them accurate knowledge of their own country. It's for this reason, as much as for the rest of the pleasure and benefit such activities bring to everyone, that a young man should go in for hunting with hounds and the rest of hunting. Now these men -- they and their functions -- can be called the Secret Service, or the Field Regulators, or whatever one likes; whatever it's called, this is the service that every real man, everyone who's going to defend his city adequately, should serve in, with an eager spirit and to the best of his ability.⁴

The “Secret Service” which was mentioned in an earlier book is the locus for the initiation of the young warriors.

4. Laws; Plato; page 149-150; 762e-763c

The exact nature of this initiation is unknown, but it is in some way equivalent to the nocturnal council within the city. Both are hidden and secret, but one is inside the city and the other is outside the city. This is in contradistinction to the Republic's higher utopia which brings the same group within the city and unifies them into what are called the ruling Guardians and their auxiliaries. We do not know the nature of their initiation by any explicit text, but only by various allusions in mythology. However, this initiation outside the city is what the rest of this series of essays will focus on, attempting to delve deeper and deeper into its structure. This initiation ritual outside the city was the basis for all the structures within the city. One place where the illusion to the initiation is strongest is when Odysseus tells how he received his scar in the *Odyssey*.

Years before, Odysseus had received a wound from the white tusk of a boar when on a visit to Autolycus and his sons. This nobleman, his mother's father, was the most accomplished thief and liar of his day. He owed his pre-eminence to the god Hermes himself, whose favour he sought by sacrificing lambs and kid in his honour, and in whom he secured a willing confederate. He went over once to the rich island of Ithica, where he found that his daughter had just given birth to a son. Eurycleia put the baby on his grandfather's

knees as he finished supper, and said: “Autolycus, perhaps *you* can think of a name to give your daughter’s son, whom we have so long been praying for.”

By way of answer, Autolycus turned to his son-in-law and daughter and said: “Yes, let me be his godfather. In the course of my lifetime I have made enemies of many a man and woman up and down the wide world. So let this child be called Odysseus, ‘the victim of enmity.’ And when he has grown up and comes to his mother’s old home at Parnassus, where I keep my worldly goods, I will give him a share of them and send him back a happy man.”

This led in due course to a visit from Odysseus, who went over to receive his grandfather’s gifts. Autolycus and his sons gave him a friendly welcome. They shook him warmly by the hand, and his grandmother, Amphithee, threw her arms round his neck and kissed him on the forehead and on both his eyes. Autolycus told his sons to make preparations for the banquet. Nothing loath, they quickly brought in a five-year-old bull, which they flayed and prepared by cutting up the carcass and deftly chopping it into small pieces. These they pierced with spits, carefully roasted, and served in portions. And so they banqueted for the rest of the

day till sunset, all sharing alike and all contented with their share. When the sun sank and darkness fell, they went off to their beds to enjoy the blessing of sleep.

Early next day at the first blush of dawn Autolycus' sons accompanied by the good Odysseus set out for the chase with a pack of hounds. Climbing the steep and wooded heights of Parnassus, they soon found themselves on the windswept folds of the mountain; and it was just as the Sun, fresh from the deep and quiet Stream of Ocean, was touching the plough-lands with his first beams that the beaters reached a certain wooded glen. The hounds, hot on a scent, preceded them. Behind came Autolycus' sons, and with them the good Odysseus, close up on the pack and swinging his long spear. It was at this spot that a mighty boar has his lair, in a thicket so dense that when the winds blew moist, not a breath could get inside, nor could rain soak right through to the ground, which moreover was littered with an abundance of dead leaves. However, the boar heard the footfalls of the men and hounds as they pressed forward in the chase. He sallied out from hidden and with bristling back and eyes aflame, he faced the hunt. Odysseus was the first to act. Poising his long spear in his great hand, he rushed in, eager to score a hit. But the

boar was too quick and caught him above the knee, where he gave him a long flesh wound with a cross lunge of his tusk, but failed to reach the bone. Odysseus' thrust went home as well. He struck him on the right shoulder, and the point of his bright spear transfixed the boar, who sank to earth with a grunt and there gave up his life. Autolycus' son took charge of the carcass. They also carefully bandaged the brave young prince's wound, stanching the dark blood with a spell; and before long they were back at home.

Under the care of Autolycus and his sons, Odysseus recovered from his injury and in due course, loaded with presents, was given a happy send-off to his own home in Ithica. His father and his gentle mother were delighted to see him back. They asked him all about his adventures, in particular how he had come by his scar, and Odysseus told them how in the course of the chase he had been gnashed by a boar's tusk on the expedition to Parnassus with Autolycus' sons.⁵

This is all we hear of Odysseus' initiation. We are alerted because his grandfather is called "Wolfman" or "self-wolf" and he is characterized as a thief and liar. Notice here the resonance with auto-production. Self-wolf is the mythopoeitic era's precursor to self-production in the

5. *Odyssey*; Homer; page 298-300

metaphysical era. In the mythopoietic the major transformation is of the human through the stages of life where as in the metaphysical it is the transformation of the other than human, the physical or practico-inert under the dominance of the *meta*. Self-wolf is self-transformation though the encounter with the liminal, in Odysseus' case the boar. Notice that in the night raid in the Iliad Odysseus dons a helmet passed down from his grandfather and when he returns he wears the wolf-skin taken from his enemy. Here the training of the grandfather manifests in Battle as the only night raid. It is seen as justified since both sides engage in the same ruse. However, raids at night is against the code of war and manifests the "lawless" tactics of the Secret Service. Those within the secret service are not just beyond the city but beyond the law. They have obtained a transcendental position which is the prototype for all dualistic relations within the city. Also, the initiation occurs while they are hunting in the wilds. Odysseus' name means "man of pain," and the initiation gave that name meaning. The initiation gave him a wound⁶ by which he might be recognized. We will delve deeper into this initiation process as it appears in other sources later in this series of essays. But here we note that Plato's Secret Service gives the young warriors the same kind of

6. See Michael Mead *Men and the Water of Life* (San Francisco: Harper 1993) concerning the importance of wounds in initiations for men. In effect the wound causes the boy to bleed like his sister who begins menstruation.

experience as Odysseus received from his grandfather the wolfman. We note also, that in giving him his name, there is some transfer of guilt occurring whereby the Grandfather is magically making the grandson suffer the punishment for his crimes. This transfer of guilt was also an Indo-European tradition. It explains why his suffering is so great when his own crimes are so little. He is suffering the retribution against his grandfather, who pays him with many gifts on his visit to the island. Thus, whatever the initiation ceremony is it involves the transfer of guilt. Walter Burkhardt in Homonecans speaks of the transfer of corporate guilt for human sacrifices practiced among the Indo-Europeans. We have already seen that this occurs in the Cheos ceremony with regard to Dionysus, the god who is killed. The wolfmen were hunters who operated in the wilderness and preyed on strangers and other cities, who were, in effect, lawless bandits and thieves. They followed no law but their own. Both Homer and Plato refer to this important part of the city and the young warriors' initiation only obliquely. It remains a puzzle that we must piece together ourselves.

The Stranger goes on to discuss the other appointments of the Magistrates until he gets to the Minister of Education which he calls the greatest office in the city.

For everything that grows the initial sprouting, if nobly directed, has a sovereign influence in

bringing about the perfection in virtue that befits the thing's own nature. This holds for the other growing things, and for animals -- tame, wild, and human. The human being, we assert, is tame; nevertheless, though when it happens upon a correct education, and lucky nature, it is want to become the most divine and tamest animal, still, when its upbringing is inadequate or ignoble, it is the most savage of the things that the earth makes grow. This is why the lawgiver must not allow the upbringing of children to become something secondary or incidental, and since the one who is going to supervise them should begin by being chosen in a fine way, the lawgiver should do all he possibly can to insure that he provides them with a supervisor to direct them who is the best person in the city, in every respect. ⁷

The minister of education performs the role of one half of the philosopher king. In the higher utopia, sovereignty and wisdom is united, whereas in the lower utopia, sovereignty and wisdom is split. The Minister of education retains the portion of wisdom, and sovereignty is given to the guardians of the laws. This is an example of how the lower utopia is backed off of complete unity which the higher utopia is posited to have achieved. Notice that education is seen as a question of taming of

7. Laws; Plato; page 153; 765e-766a

the children. But the men cannot be too tame or danger results. So the initiation of the young warriors is meant to sanction lawless and wild behavior necessary in the defenders of the city. So too the young women are seen to need to become wild as well. Ken Dowden tells the tale of their initiations in his brilliant study called Death And The Maiden⁸. Taming and rendering wild are the two poles of behavior that the city is built around. The rendering wild of the young men makes it possible for them to defend the city. The rendering wild of the young women makes them more interesting for their husbands and makes it possible to endure their life-long imprisonment.

The Stranger discusses the setting up of the Law Courts, then he pauses in his discourse to discuss the fact that the laws being promulgated are incomplete. Like a painting, they may need touching up occasionally. Since the lawgiver does not live forever, he will have to teach the Guardians of the Laws how to make changes which are improvements. So the Guardians of the Laws become lawgivers as well. This means that the Founder hands over sovereignty to them. This is done upon extracting an agreement from the Guardians of the Laws:

“Dear Saviors of the laws, we will leave out many things as regards each to the matters for which we

8. (Routledge 1989)

have established laws. This is inevitable. Still, in all but the small points, at least, and on the whole, we will do all we can not to leave the outline sketch, as it were, unfinished. You must hear now where you should look when you carry out this task. Megillus here, and I, and Kleinias, have said the same things to one another not infrequently, and we are in agreement and your attention as our pupils, so that you will look to the things we have agreed together should be looked to by a Guardian of the Laws and a giver of the laws.”

“In brief, this was the substance of the agreement: in whatever way a member of the community, whether his nature be male or female, young or old, might ever become a good man, possessing in virtue of soul that befits a human being -- whether this be as a result of some practice, or some habituation, or some possession, or desire, or opinion, or certain things learned at some time -- toward this, which we are describing, every serious effort will be made throughout the whole of life; no one of any sort is to be seen giving precedence in honor to any of the other things that are impediments, *not even, finally to the city* if it appears necessary that the alternative to its destruction is either willingly tolerating the slavish yoke of being ruled by worse men or departing from the city in exile. All such things

must be borne, and suffered, rather than allowing the regime to be changed into one whose nature is to make human beings worse.”

“These are the things we agreed to in our previous discussions, and now you must look to both these goals of ours as you pass our laws in review. You should blame those that aren’t capable of effecting these goals, but those that are capable, you should welcome and, gladly adopting them, live under them. As for other pursuits that aim at other things among those that are said to be good, you must proclaim good-bye to them.”

The Guardians agree to fill in the outline only and to always orient the laws toward what will produce good in human beings. The Guardians will make sure that no one gives precedence to anything else other than virtue, not even the city itself. The city must fight until its dissolution to preserve the order that is imposed on it by the founder, and never suffer, allowing the regime to be changed into one that will make human beings worse. The autopoietic unity is the best organization that human beings may hope to attain. It must be preserved at all costs. All other things held to be good must be forgotten, and the Guardians must have a single-minded purpose of preserving the Laws that make the autopoietic unity possible. This agreement of the Guardians is like the

marriage vow; it is a contract that puts the laws into force.

Once the laws have been set up and the Guardians have made their vow, then we see the autopoietic ring set in motion. This is done by setting up a rotation of monthly twin sacrificial processions. The 5040 households are divided by the 12 tribes and 12 parts of the city. Altars are set up and visited in rotations to two per month. This makes the number 5040 be diminished by two each month which renders it 5038 which is divisible by eleven. The number 5040 is divisible by every number up through twelve except eleven (5040 is also seven factorial as well as ten things taken four at a time). This rendering sacred of two hearths a month allows the number to be divided by eleven also. But the divisibility by eleven adds a dynamism to the autopoietic ring. The prime number eleven acts as the third thing setting the wheel of 5040 divisions in motion. Within the sections of the city within the tribe, two households are visited. When 5040 is divided by 12 and then 12 again, this leaves 35. There are thirty-five households that share an alter. Any one of these households may be chosen for the honor, and, in fact, the honor probably rotates among them. Two out of the 144 divisions are chosen each month, probably also by rotation. Thus, like the Mayan calendar system we see wheels within wheels. The Mayan calendar system, was based on 20 day names and

13 sacred places. The places and days would rotate so that on a particular day one would go sacrifice at a particular sacred place. After 260 days, one had gone around the entire circuit. Plato is suggesting something similar here. He has a similar wheel of pairs of houses which are rotating around the city, bringing sacred processions to all parts of the city, one after another. This reveals in succession each face and facet of the city.

This is similar to the manifestation of the faces of Aphrodite from out of the autopoietic ring. That ring has five faces. This structure is equivalent to the Pentahedron in four dimensional space. It is a hyper tetrahedron composed of five tetrahedrons, ten triangles, ten lines and five points. It has a group structure identical to that of the Icosahedron⁹ which is the very embodiment of the golden section and which has 60 elements called A5. This polytope in four-dimensional space is composed of two intertwined mobius strips. As such, it is the perfect model of the fusion of life and cognition in the social autopoietic system. This group structure appears from the fusion five minimal systems into a single higher dimensional entity. That is one minimal system for each breakout of the ring to reveal a different face. We noted that Plato attempts to get a number (5040) that is divisible by every number between one and twelve. He uses a ruse

9. (dodecahedron too)

to get this number to be divided by eleven. Eleven is an odd number prime, and therefore apt to be the number that sets the autopoietic ring in motion. That motion shows two different ones of the 144 facets each month. One household is chosen on the basis of the rotation within the city and the rotation with the tribe. But perhaps the other rotation is chosen on the basis of the 60 cycle group of the icosahedron and the pentahedron. This cycle would break up the city into groups of 84 houses. It would tie the city to the autopoietic ring directly. This is the number of the wardens (5 times 12) for each of the parts of the country. They rotate around the city once in one direction, and then back in the other direction for two years. Given the normal rough but ideal figuring that a year is 360 days, this is 720 days. This is also the number of men for all twelve territories ($12 * 60 = 720$). The number 720 is the amount of angular momentum in each type of minimal system: knot, mobius strip, tetrahedron, and torus. The 720 men rotating around the city, and the 720 days of their stint, suggests that there is a correspondence between space and time being suggested here. The same object has two projections, one into space and the other into time. Similarly, in the movement of the sacrifices, there is a relation between the 144 altars and the progression of the year. It takes 210 years for the complete circuit of all the households to occur. It only take six years for all the altars to be used. The dual

mobius strips of the pentahedron in four dimensional space is a fitting embodiment of this dual projection. Each mobius strip alone has 720 degrees of angular momentum. But both mobius strips cannot be seen in three dimensional space at the same time. Thus, the higher dimensional figure has two separate projections. One of these may be seen as the mobius figure itself in space. The other may be seen as the transformation between the two mobius figures which would result in a change in time. The 720 degrees is twice around the 360 degrees represented by the council in the laws and which from Babalonian times represented the standard division of the circle. The number 360 is 60 squared. There are 360 cells in the matrix that is needed to represent the group operations of the group A5. The Babalonians had a numbering system with a base of 60. It was the basis of their counting. In order for the other movement of the altar to visit all the households, a second cycle must be added. Two cycles of 60, one inside each other like the two cycles of 12, would divide the households into groups of 14. Since there are 35 households per altar, this means two such groups would be equivalent to five groups of 14.

This arrangement is, of course, a speculation as Plato does not say how the two special households are chosen. It merely shows that the key cycle of 60 may easily be

fitted into the structure that Plato does describe. And the reason for wanting to do that is to fit the structure of the Autopoietic ring directly into the cycling of the network of households. If there are two households singled out a month, we can guess that it is started by some random selection. We would expect the two cycles to be different but complementary. The cycle described by Plato of two cycles of 12 within each other represents the structure of the city around the pattern of the gods. The second hypothetical set of revolving circle within a circles fits the description of the revolving of the wardens and the relation of the council to the degrees of the circle. The first creates a smallest cycle of households with a size of 35. The second hypothetical one creates a smallest cycle of 14. In both of these, the number seven is prominent. There are seven 720s in 5040. So we see that the households might, by this way, be divided by the number of days in the week to produce pairs or groups of five. Of course, pairs of households are produced by marriage, and five is a prominent number in relation to the offices of the city, like the number of country wardens for instance. The set of five households is, in miniature, an example of the autopoietic form underlying the whole city. The pairs of households allow the five to become the ten which makes the self-dual pentahedron able to manifest. A pentahedron is composed of ten pairings of five things. This is the number of relations between any

five things. The number seven appears to be the pivot of the twofold cyclical system, just as the number 11 decenters it and sets it in motion.¹⁰

Whether both cycles are identical, or we admit that there may be another different cycle for one of the houses chosen for the procession that allows the network of households to be directly related to the structure of the autopoietic form, is actually not relevant to the crucial question of why multi-division into whole parts is a sought-after quality of the city. Plato says it is necessary in order for the city to know itself.

Let's make sacrificial processions to two of these altars. Each mount twelve for the divisions within the tribe and twelve for the divisions of the city. We should do this first for the sake of pleasing the gods and the things connected with the gods, and second we would assert, for the sake of every sort of intercourse.¹¹

The city is the embodiment of the positive fourfold: Heaven, Earth, Men and Immortals. Nothing so perfectly embodies this positive fourfold than the sacrifice in which animals are dedicated to the gods, their flesh eaten by men and their bones given to the jinn. The twice monthly sacrifices are the occasion for this ritual that

10. This section on numbers above needs to be reworked.

11. Laws; Plato; 159; 771d

takes place on the altar of earth, looking up to heaven, giving to the immortals in exchange for their gifts performed by mortals. In this positive fourfold, everyone is manifest to everyone else, and they all get to know each other in this epitome of social events. Plato makes these occasions the dynamism of the city. Each household has its chance to be the one leading the sacrifice. Every month there is a gathering at two of the 144 altars in the city. And although this process of manifestation of the households supports all kinds of intercourse, the most important that it supports is marriage.

For indeed, with regard to community and commingling of those who are married, it is necessary to dispel the ignorance concerning the bride's people, the bride herself, and the people to whom they are giving her. Everything possible must be done, to the best of one's ability, to prevent any mistakes at all being made in such affairs. To achieve such a serious goal, play must be devised that consists of choral dancing by the boys and girls, where they can see and be seen, in a reasonable way and at an occasion that offers suitable pretexts. Both sexes should be naked, within the limits of a moderate sense of shame sets for each. The supervisors and regulators of all these matters ought to be those who rule over

and give laws to the choruses; in cooperation with the guardians of the Laws they can arrange whatever we have left out.

Plato goes on to speak of marriage . . .

So when anyone anywhere has passed twenty-five years of age, has observed and been observed by others, and trusts that he has found someone who pleases him and is appropriate for sharing and procreating children, let him marry. And everyone is to do so by the age of thirty-five. First, however, let him hearken to an account of how he should seek what is fitting and harmonious. For it is necessary, as Kleinias asserts, to preface each law with its own prelude.

KL: You've reminded us in a very splendid way, stranger, by choosing what seems to me to be an opportune and especially well measured moment in the argument.

Well spoken. "My lad" (lets address someone who has grown from good parents), "one should make a marriage of the kind that is held in good repute by prudent men, who would counsel you not to avoid someone of poor parents nor to pursue especially someone of rich parents, but, other things being equal, always to give precedence in honor to the less highly placed of

your prospective partners. For this would be in the interest of the city, and also of the hearths that are being united; for the even-keeled and the commensurable are distinguished ten thousandfold from the unrestrained when it comes to virtue. A man who knows himself to be too impatient and hasty in all his affairs should be eager to become related by marriage to orderly parents, and one whose natural disposition is the opposite should proceed to ally himself with the opposite sort of in-laws. In general, there be one myth regarding marriage: in each marriage what must be wooed is not what is most pleasant for oneself, but what is in the interests of the city. It is according to nature that everyone always be somehow attracted to what is most similar to himself, and because of this the city as a whole becomes uneven as regards wealth and the dispositions of characters. The consequences of this, which we wish to avoid for ourselves, are very prevalent in most cities.

To enact by law, through discourse, that a rich man is not to marry from the rich, and a man capable of doing many things is not to marry someone similar to himself -- and to compel those of hasty dispositions to join in marriage with those who are more phlegmatic, and the more phlegmatic with the hasty-- besides being

laughable, would stir up the spiritedness of many. For it is not easily understood that a city should be mixed, just like the drinker's bowl: the wine, when poured in, is throbbing with madness, but under the chastening of another, sober god, it forms a noble partnership that creates a good and measured drink. No one, so to speak, can perceive that this also holds of the commingling that produces children. That is why it is necessary to leave such things out of the law, and instead try to use enchanting song to persuade them that each should value more the similarity of their children than the equality in marriage which is insatiable in money. One must use blame to dissuade anyone who is seriously bent on getting money through marriage; but one shouldn't apply force through written law.

So let these things be said to encourage marriage, in addition to what was said a while ago, to the effect that one must partake of the eternal coming-into-being of nature by always leaving behind children of children, whom one leaves as one's successors in serving the god. So someone would say all these things and yet more about marriage, about how it is necessary to marry, if one were giving a prelude in the correct way.¹²

12. Laws; Plato; 159-161; 771d-774a

Plato moves from the manifestation of the autopoietic ring within the network of households that forms the actual structure of the autopoietic network back to marriage. As has been noted, the autopoietic ring is the projection of the marriage ring upon the city as a whole. Kleinias says that this is an opportune and especially well-measured moment to speak of marriage. In that speech, he says the arrangement of marriage is beyond the law, but that ideally, that marriage should seek to iron out inequalities of all sorts within the city. He likens marriage to the mingling of wine and water. Wine is water that has “spirit” in it. This spirit may be either on the man or the woman’s side, but it should be evened out by bringing together opposites rather than likes. Bringing together likes is, in fact, social disaster and causes great imbalances in the city. The boys and girls must be made visible to each other as naked as possible. The light of the positive fourfold allows each one to see the other and find the one he or she desires. This display reminds us of the group marriages recorded in Greek mythology in which groups of 50 would be married at one time. The myth of the Dannids is a prominent example of this ancient practice. But Plato does not mention group marriage. But he puts marriage outside the law. It is the refusal to marry he punishes. Marriage is an essential part of the lower utopia as it is outlawed in the higher utopia. It is outside the law because it is the source of the

other wing of immortality that the city depends upon for its existence. The law of nature that makes procreation possible is sanctioned by the law of the city. But unlike the higher utopia, this law does not regulate procreation. In the higher utopia, the law of nature has become controlled by the law of man. In the lower utopia, they are still separate. The law of nature has its own separate basis which is dependent on human desires rather than some eugenics program.

As for walls, Megillus, for my part I would go along with Sparta, and leave the walls sleeping in the earth, and not set them up. The reasons are these. It's a fine poetic argument that people sing about them, to the effect that walls should be made of bronze and iron rather than earth. What is more our plan would justly incur much ridicule--the plan to send the young out into the countryside in yearly relays, making trenches and ditches and certain buildings to thwart enemies, as if they weren't going to let them cross the borders--if we were still to put up a wall, when a wall is, first, not at all beneficial to cities from the point of view of health, and in addition, usually instills a certain habit of softness in the souls of those who dwell within it. The wall tempts men to flee within it instead of standing against the enemies, and makes them think they needn't always keep

up a guard, night and day, in order to thus obtain safety, but can have the means for real security by going to sleep fenced in behind walls and gates. They think they were born not to toil, and knowing that ease really comes as the result of toils. And the fact is, I believe, that toils naturally reappear as a result of shameful ease and softness of spirit.

But if some wall is necessary for humans, then it ought to be created by constructing the private homes at the beginning so as to form the whole city into one wall, with the evenness and uniformity of all the houses as they face the street providing good defense. In presenting the appearance of one house, it would not be unpleasant to look at, and would on the whole make a difference in every way as regards the ease of guarding and providing security.¹³

From the wedding ring we move to the walls that ring the city. This concept of all the houses of the city arranged in such a way to make up the wall of the city themselves, so that the wall is no different from the households of the city itself, is the an amazing image of the autopoietic ring. Each household is part of the wall which is the autopoietic ring that is identical with the city itself. Need we go any further to demonstrate that Plato had the

13. Plato LAWS; page 167 778d-779c

autopoietic ring structure in mind when designing his lower utopia? The wall that separated the houses from the outside of the sacred city in Plato's city becomes one with the houses of the city. This unification of the houses and wall is mirrored by the splitting of the land beyond the walls into near and far allotments. Deftly, Plato maintains the internal balance of the sacred city but changes the structure slightly to embody the autopoietic ring.

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