

Student Name: Chan Cheuk Ka

Student ID: 1155174356

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Termapia: A State of Democracy, Equality, and Education

It is on this fateful day that we declare the establishment of the new sovereign state of Termapia, founded upon the core values of democracy, equality, and education.

1 Democracy

For the government to be legitimate, the people must solely hold the power of acceptance or rejection (*The Social Contract*, I, IV:5), and the government must be exclusively comprised of the people, for when united into a body, neither the sovereignty nor the private individuals can be harmed without also affecting the other (*The Social Contract*, I, VIII:4-5). The government must, therefore, be a democracy, for it is the only naturally legitimate form of government.

More specifically, Termapia is to have an allocative democracy. Policies and projects are to be drafted by field professionals. After public consultations and amendments, citizens can vote on the project, but not by simply casting a ballot. Instead, they are allowed to opt in to or out of each project that the government is funding (except basic upkeep costs and treasury reserve savings), in addition to allocating the percentage of their tax each project should receive. Government projects are, hence, allocated varying amounts of resources based on the populace's will.

In this manner, individuals are allowed to participate more directly in the governmental system instead of electing representatives, hoping their decisions will align perfectly. The decrease in the levels of administration between the people and the policies which strengthen governance (*The Social Contract*, II, IX:2-3). Moreover, projects that benefit comparatively fewer people can also be executed only at a slower pace when they would otherwise be rejected entirely via balloting.

Regular democracy suffers from the problem of consent by silence where the people often simply follow the leader with little thought which weakens sovereignty (*The Social Contract*, II, I:3) and allows the vocal minority to form associations to mask the general will (*The Social Contract*, II, III:3). As a citizen, one is obligated to contribute taxes, which means that they are also necessarily involved in decision-making. Since there is no default option that balloting possesses (not voting), this mitigates consent by silence and denies being able to live with political ignorance. The more the people are involved in governance, the more the government is legitimate.

The legislator of good sovereignty should foresee future needs and not merely focus on the present (*The Social Contract*, II, X:2). Under this system, the people are the legislators and must also do the same. The system should thus obligate the people to allocate a minimum proportion to fund both short- and long-term projects. This can coax the populace, particularly the lesser-educated ones, to avoid short-termism.

However, this system of voting via taxation possesses an inherent flaw. Since taxation is based on a proportion of personal income, decision-making power is concentrated towards the wealthy capitalists as they contribute more resources which they can allocate freely according to their will. Projects and policies funded under this system would mostly favour the capitalists, furthering the oppression of the working class. While it is true that the capitalists contribute more numerically individually, they are by far the minority, and decisions made according to their individual will rarely align with the general will.

Considering this, extra nuance is necessary. The allocation profile an individual drafted will affect not only their tax contributions but also those of everyone else. For instance, arbitrarily, half of one's tax contributions would be allocated according to their sole individual will and the other half according to the average profiles of the general populace to represent the general will. Crucially, every individual still can only cast one allocation profile. As a result, capitalists can still exude substantial influence with half of their contribution, but an equally significant influence will be allocated according to the general will. This enhances the outcome of the system to match the general will closely to produce a common good, which was the intention of the institution (*The Social Contract*, II, I:1), by limiting the propagation of private and, particularly, capitalistic interests onto the public sphere. Similarly, despite corporations

contributing tax, they are not given the right to draft allocation profiles since they are not part of the people and thus cannot represent the general will.

Some may argue that this creates an unfavourable atmosphere for companies and thus discourages investment. However, the economy will keep thriving as the market will supplement new companies just as fast as the old and disagreeable ones exit the market, as part of the demand and supply principle.

2 Equality

A coincidental favourable side effect of this nuance is that one's income is no longer the sole deciding factor of whether one's opinion is observed. Unemployed persons with no income can still be of influence with their profile. Notably, their influence is only marginally different from that of a wealthy capitalist since most of one's influence is manifested in the allocation of others' cumulative tax contributions regardless of their own contributions. This can enhance equality since no matter one's socioeconomic strata, everyone has a similar influence over the sovereignty.

On the topic of unemployment, social welfare is also to be of great emphasis in Termopia. Society is obligated to provide for the unemployed since unemployment is usually a failure of the economy and not the individuals (*EPM 1844*, para. 13-27). As part of the social contract, no one gives up their liberty except for their utility (*The Social Contract*, I, II:3), and this is true for the society as well. To discourage unproductivity, welfare is only to be provided for as long as an apparent effort of employment-seeking is shown. This is similarly the case for other welfares since a sovereignty should aim to provide moral and legitimate equality despite imposed inequalities (*The Social Contract*, I, IX:8).

3 Education

Under an authoritarian government or a dictatorship, any disobedience is punished with impunity. Rulers are, therefore, often allowed to reign for a very long time since the oppression allows few ideas of revolution. The flow of information is impeded to limit philosophy and noble thoughts in its subjects since they know that the love for knowledge can arise strength to overthrow the regime (*Symposium 182c*) by opening their eyes (*Genesis 3:5*). Misinformation is also introduced to spread confusion to further retard knowledge (*Genesis 11:6-7*). They prey on the cowardice and mental laziness of the subjects to perpetuate their reign (*The Social Contract*, I, II:8), enslaving them under the pretence of liberating them from troubling thoughts

with direct orders. These practices prevent the people from questioning the regime's powers since they are not even aware that alternatives exist.

With a novel and untested form of democracy, this is particularly paramount for Tempapia since although the governmental structure might and will shift over time according to the general will, it must not be allowed to be veered into malice by unforeseen powers. Therefore, knowledge is a critical component of people's safety. For as long as there are educated people, illegitimacies of any sort will be questioned, and they will not be given a chance to propagate.

To this end, a focus is also placed on education. Citizens are encouraged to climb the ladder of love to pursue higher education and knowledge (Symposium 210b-211c), wherever their interests lie. A voting system, whatever form it may take, is only as effective as the voters – the populace. The only way to vote to produce a positive general will is to have educated voters since ill-educated persons can hardly make well-informed decisions. With the lack of knowledge, voting is likely done not out of reason but by impulse and emotions, voiding the system's effectiveness.

Under allocative democracy, field professionals will draft projects and policies. Importantly, these professionals must be involved in the day-to-day operations of their respective fields instead of mere politicians since politicians with insufficient insights cannot draft plans at the quality that field experts can. Of course, this system would only marginally be distinct from a conventional democracy if only very few draft the plans. Therefore, instead of only the elite, everyone meeting a certain threshold of education and expertise would be allowed to submit plans for public evaluation.

4 Conclusion

The sovereign state of Tempapia is founded upon the principles of democracy, equality, and education. These core values are chosen to supplement each other and are intertwined and built into the government so that it can produce the common good via the general will.

References

- [1] *In Dialogue with Humanity*. 5th ed. Office of University General Education. 2023.