

Plato on Moderation and Justice

1 Moderation

Are the productive classes moderate because they are *controlled* by the guardians?

“the desires of the inferior many are controlled by the wisdom and desires of the superior few” (431d).

Or are they moderate because they *agree* that the guardians should be in charge?

“unlike courage and wisdom, each of which resides in one part, making the city brave and wise respectively, moderation spreads throughout the whole. It makes the weakest, the strongest, and those in between ... all sing the same song together. And this unanimity, this agreement between the naturally worse and the naturally better as to which of the two is to rule both in the city and in each one, is rightly called moderation” (432a)

2 Justice

“the city was thought to be just when each of the three natural classes within it did its own work” (435b).

“the principle that it is right for someone who is by nature a cobbler to practice cobblery and nothing else, for the carpenter to practice carpentry, and the same for the others is a sort of image of justice — that’s why it’s beneficial” (443c).