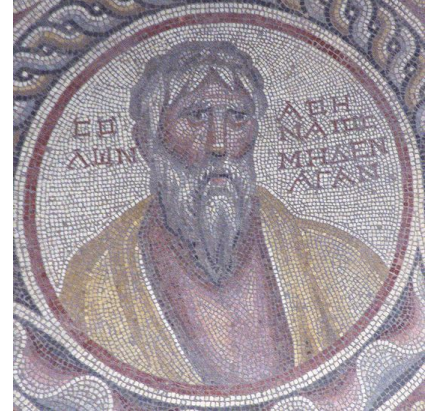


Logical Analysis of Solon's Disjunction

By the time that Komeas had become eponymous archon, Solon had returned home to Athens, and he was quite horrified to discover what had happened to his city while he was out of town. In hopes of preventing an Athenian civil war, Solon met with the leader of each one of the competing political factions, but it was to no avail, because each faction believed that it would be best if the government would be changed so that their faction would be the masters of the factions. When meeting with the leader of each political faction, Solon was welcomed most warmly by his cousin Pisistratus. Yet albeit quite happy to reunite with his cousin, Solon realized that Pisistratus had no qualms about becoming a tyrant. Pisistratus was not a virtuous man, but he was able to imitate virtuous men so well that almost everyone believed that he was a virtuous man as well. Speaking to Pisistratus, Solon said, "If only you were to stop wanting to become a tyrant, you actually would be a virtuous man!" Yet in spite of Solon's remarks, his cousin Pisistratus did *not* become a different person.



Solon often said, "Fiction is poisonous," and his cousin Pisistratus would prove it. After intentionally wounding himself and his mules, Pisistratus drove his chariot into the Athenian marketplace, and he dishonestly claimed that he'd been wounded by his enemies. Asking for protection, he pleaded with the Athenians to provide him with 400 bodyguards, and he even flattered them at the very same time. Speaking to his fellow Athenians, Pisistratus said, "You're a virtuous people, and you'd never stand for an injustice, so please help to protect me from those who are trying to harm me!" Upon hearing that, his cousin Solon was horrified, because Solon knew his cousin's true intentions. Pisistratus wanted to rule Athens as a tyrant.

Standing outside of his house in full armor, Solon said, "My country! I beg you! I implore you! Do not give my cousin Pisistratus what he wants! Pisistratus wants to be a tyrant over you, and if you grant him 400 guards, then he surely shall get what he wants! I wear my armor, but I am unarmed, because I've surrendered my arms to our military's commanders. Yet if you'll join me, I am prepared to defend our country both with my word and with my sword! Unless you prove me wrong, I am wiser than those of you who fail to see that my cousin Pisistratus wants to rule over you as a tyrant, and I am braver (or more courageous) than those of you who, despite knowing my cousin's true intentions, are too cowardly to try to stop him."

Rather than heed his warning, the Athenians thought that Solon was a maniac. Along with how they did not believe that Solon's cousin Pisistratus actually wanted to rule Athens as a tyrant, the Athenians also didn't really mind, and many Athenians even liked the idea. Hence in the end, the Athenians gave Pisistratus the protection of 400 bodyguards, who were armed with clubs (rather than with spears). With his bodyguards, Pisistratus captured the Acropolis, and then he declared himself tyrant. Alas, he was so popular that he even was able to tell the *constitutional* Athenian government what to do, so nothing that he did was *unconstitutional*. Instead, what he did was *extraconstitutional*. Rather than violating the Solonian constitution in any way, Solon's cousin Pisistratus instead had influenced the constitutional government in ways that were *outside* of the purview of the Athenian constitution. As a result, Solon lamented, "My cousin Pisistratus destroyed the democracy of Athens, and the Athenians are his slaves!" Alas, his pleas were of no avail.

Despite how he pleaded with his fellow Athenians to oppose his cousin's tyranny, Solon ultimately failed to convince them to stop Pisistratus. Hence when his pleas went unheeded, Solon became very disappointed in his fellow Athenians, to whom he said, "Those who have influence with tyrants are important *only* when the tyrant *needs* them, and they are unimportant when the tyrant *doesn't* need them. Alas, if you have suffered due to your own wickedness, do not blame the gods. With your pledges to them, you have made your enemies powerful! For this reason, you are now slaves!" After that, Solon left Athens, never to return again.

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In pleading with his fellow Athenians, Solon had made use of the following disjunction: *either* an ordinary Athenian *isn't* wise enough to see that Pisistratus is trying to become a tyrant *or* an ordinary Athenian *isn't* brave enough to try to stop Pisistratus from becoming a tyrant. [Note: "ordinary Athenian" refers to any Athenian other than the cousins Solon and Pisistratus.]

For the sake of clarity, let us define propositions "**P**" and "**Q**".

P: "An ordinary Athenian *is* wise enough to see that Pisistratus is trying to become a tyrant."

Q: "An ordinary Athenian *is* brave enough to try to stop Pisistratus from becoming a tyrant."

Hence in pleading with his fellow Athenians, Solon made use of the disjunction " $\sim P \vee \sim Q$ ".

P	Q	$P \vee Q$	$\sim P$	$\sim Q$	$\sim P \vee \sim Q$
T	T				
F	F				
T	F				
F	T				

Now that we've defined propositions "**P**" and "**Q**", answer the following six questions. If you need to use the truth-table to help you think more clearly about how to answer questions (c) and/or (f), please do so.

(a) Most likely, was “**P**” *true*? Explain.

(b) Most likely, was “**Q**” *true*? Explain.

(c) Hence based on your previous two answers, was “**P** \vee **Q**” *false*? Briefly explain.

(d) Most likely, was “ \sim **P**” *true*? Explain.

(e) Most likely, was “ \sim **Q**” *true*? Explain.

(f) Hence based on your previous two answers, was “ \sim **P** \vee \sim **Q**” *false*? In other words, was Solon presenting a **false dichotomy**? Why or why not? Briefly explain.