Among the political writings of Plutarch is a fragmentary treatise, entitled ΠΕΡΙ ΜΟΝΟΧΡΩΜΑΤΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΔΗΜΟΧΡΩΜΑΤΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΛΙΓΟΧΡΩΜΑΤΙΑΣ (De unius in re publica dominatione, populari statu et paucorum imperio). Plutarch's authorship of this treatise has been denied as well as defended with various arguments. According to M. Pohlenz, the fragment formed part of the literary estate left by Plutarch 1), and E. N. Tigerstedt 2) sees no reason to consider it spurious. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf 3) and H. Wegehaupt 4) think that it is part of the two books on Politics mentioned in the catalogue of Lamprias (nr. 52); according to v. Wilamowitz, it belonged to the fragments and excerpts left by Plutarch and was edited after his death with some rewriting 5). Others, like J. J. Hartman 6), K. Ziegler 7) and H. N. Fowler 8), consider it spurious. According to F. H. Sandbach 9), it is an excerpt from a work of

Plutarch, partly reproducing Plutarch’s words literally, partly summarizing them with additions by the adapter.

The treatise *De Unius* as we have it is certainly incomplete. In the beginning there seems to be missing some introductory phrase or phrases, possibly, as Wegehaupt supposes 10), a quotation from which the author started. The fragment breaks off without enlarging upon the depraved forms of constitution which have been mentioned earlier, and without offering the precepts of statecraft announced in the beginning (826 bc). Thus our fragment seems to be only a rather small part of a larger treatise on politics, possibly only an unfinished beginning of such a treatise.

At the opening the author says that he will now follow up his exhortation to political activity held the day before by political precepts. For this it will be useful to consider which is the best form of government. After some remarks about the various meanings of the word *politeia*, the author offers his classification of constitutions: the three basic forms of government, kingship, oligarchy and democracy, with their depraved counterparts, tyranny, δυναστεία and ὕλοκρατία. A good politician may successfully conduct affairs in an oligarchic or a democratic constitution, but the author prefers, with Plato, kingship.

This short fragment does not contain novel ideas about politics. That kingship is the best form of government is hardly more than a commonplace in Greek literature since Hellenistic times. Nor is there anything remarkable in the moralizing tendency of the treatise or in its many reminiscences of Greek history and literature. In addition to quotations from Homer, Pindar, Herodotus, Plato, and Aeschylus I mention especially the classification of constitutions, the phrase ἔστι καὶ δῆμος ἡ πολιτεία βίως (826 c), which reminds us of Aristotle, *Pol. IV*, 1295 b 1 ἡ γὰρ πολιτεία βίως τίς ἔστι πόλεως 11), and the plurals αἱ λεγόμεναι τυραννίδες καὶ δυναστείαι καὶ ὕλοκρατίαι (826 f), where we should rather expect singulars as

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