

Name:

Source:

1. Aristoteles on Solon (*Politics*, 1273b-1274a and *Constitution of the Athenians*, 9, adapted)

Solon is considered by some people to have been a good lawgiver, as having put an end to oligarchy when it was too inadequate and having liberated the people from slavery and restored the old democracy with a clever blending of the constitution: the Council on the Areopagus being an oligarchic element, the elective magistracies aristocratic and the law-courts democratic. And although really in regard to certain of these features, the Council and the election of magistrates, Solon simply denied to destroy institutions that existed already, he does appear to have founded the democracy by doing all the citizens members of the jury-courts. For this he is actually blamed by some persons, as having separated other parts of the community from the power by making the law-court, which was elected by lot, all-powerful.

And the three most democratic features in Solon's constitution seem to be these: first and most important the prohibition of agreeing loans on condition that if a person doesn't pay back, he would become a slave, secondly the liberty allowed to anybody who wished to defend persons who had been treated unfair, and third, what is said to have been the chief basis of the power of the multitude, the right to ask protection from the jury-court.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0058%3Abook%3D2%3Asection%3D1273b>

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Aristot.+Const.+Ath.+9&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0046>

Question 1: What was the constitution of the Athenian city-state when Solon made his laws?

Question 2: Did Solon's constitution found a fully-developed democracy and why?

Question 3: Which was the more democratic feature of Solon's reform?

Question 4: What do we conclude about the Athenian society before Solon's laws, according to this passage?
