

## ABSTRACT

### Force And Persuasion In Plato's *Republic*

Lewis Takashi Pearson

Committee Chairperson: Anne-Marie Bowery, Ph.D.

Plato's *Republic* begins with an act of force (327b) and ends with an act of persuasion (621c). Between these two bookends, force and persuasion appear well over one hundred more times, permeating the dialogue as recurring themes. Force and persuasion are present in the dialogue primarily as a means for Socrates to provide his interlocutors a proper understanding of human nature, which when fully explicated includes an account of the nature of reality and the good. For the reader, the presence of force and persuasion throughout the dialogue is a constant reminder of its importance as a hermeneutical key for properly interpreting the content and purpose of Socrates' speech. By focusing on the use and discussion of force and persuasion throughout Plato's *Republic*, I argue that Socrates attempts "truly to persuade" his interlocutors "that it is in every way better to be just rather than unjust" (357b), primarily by correcting their misconceptions of human nature. To persuade his interlocutors, Socrates makes visible the invisible soul through the extensive use of images and analogies. I show that one can use Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and wizardry as a hermeneutical key for interpreting all of the major themes, images, and analogies of the *Republic*.

Force And Persuasion In Plato's *Republic*

by

Lewis Takashi Pearson, B.A., B.A., B.A., B.A., B.S., M.A.

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Michael D. Beaty, Ph.D., Chairperson

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Approved by the Dissertation Committee

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Anne-Marie Bowery, Ph.D., Chairperson

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Douglas V. Henry, Ph.D.

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Robert C. Miner, Ph.D.

---

Alexander R. Pruss, Ph.D.

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Michael P. Foley, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School  
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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

The introduction has four sections: (i) Thesis, (ii) Major Terms, (iii) Methodology, and (iv) Chapter Divisions.

#### *i. Thesis*

Plato's *Republic* begins with an act of force (327b) and ends with an act of persuasion (621c). Between these two bookends, force and persuasion appear one hundred twenty-two more times, permeating the dialogue as recurring themes. Yet, Plato's *Republic* is not primarily about force and persuasion. Rather, force and persuasion are present in the dialogue primarily as a means for Socrates to provide his interlocutors a proper understanding of human nature, which when fully explicated includes an account of the nature of reality (the context in which human nature is found) and the good (the source of orderliness toward which human nature must be oriented if one is to live the happy life). For the reader, the presence of force and persuasion throughout the dialogue is a constant reminder of its importance as a hermeneutical key for properly interpreting the content and purpose of Socrates' speech.

By focusing on the use and discussion of force and persuasion throughout Plato's *Republic*,<sup>1</sup> I argue that Socrates attempts "truly to persuade" his interlocutors "that it is in

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<sup>1</sup> Among the many works which comment on the philosophical implications of the use of force in the narrated frame of Plato's *Republic*, see Leo Strauss' *The City and Man* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), Stanley Rosen's *Plato's Republic: A Study* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), Allan Bloom's *Interpretive Essay in The Republic of Plato*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. by Plato, Trans. by Allan Bloom (Basic Books, 1991), Seth Benardete's *Socrates' Second Sailing: On Plato's Republic* (Chicago:

every way better to be just rather than unjust” (357b),<sup>2</sup> primarily by correcting their misconceptions of human nature. Socrates must persuade his interlocutors that human nature consists of both body and soul, and that the good of the soul is the good of that which is most one’s own and so is more important than the good of the body. To persuade his interlocutors, Socrates makes visible the invisible soul through the extensive use of images, metaphors, and analogies. Further, I show that one can use Socrates’ definitions of force (*bia*), persuasion (*peitho*), and wizardry (*goeteia*) (an imitation of both force and persuasion combined), as a hermeneutical key for interpreting all of the major themes, images, and analogies of the *Republic*.

## ii. Major Terms

The major terms of my dissertation are as follows: (1) The body (*sōma*) is the visible part of a person (*horaton*). (2) The soul (*psuchē*) is the intelligible part of a person (*noeton*). (3) Force (*bia*) affects the spirited part of the soul (*thumoeides*). (4) Persuasion affects the calculating part of the soul (*logistikon*). (5) Wizardry (*goeteia*),

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University of Chicago Press, 1992), Ruby Blondell’s *The Play of Characters in Plato’s Dialogues* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), David Roochnik’s *Beautiful City: The Dialectical Character of Plato’s Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), Drew Hyland’s *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), and Claudia Baracchi’s *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato’s Republic* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> I focus on Socrates’ arguing for the profitability of justice because Socrates’ main argument with Thrasymachus begins with a disagreement over whether injustice is more profitable than justice (345a), and ends on the same subject (354a). Glaucon and Adeimantus reinstate Thrasymachus’ argument and the question about whether the just life or the unjust life is more profitable (361b-362a).

I use the term “preferability” as shorthand for every way in which justice is better than injustice (or vice versa), as Glaucon puts it (357b). The motif of whether the just life or the unjust life is preferred continues throughout the dialogue. In fact, by Book X, Socrates stresses the greatness of the contest between these two lives, and which is to be preferred to the other: “For the contest is great, my dear Glaucon,” I said, “greater than it seems – this contest that concerns becoming good or bad – so we mustn’t be tempted by honor or money or any ruling office or, for that matter, poetry, into thinking that it’s worthwhile to neglect justice and the rest of virtue” (608b).

which is a kind of imitation of both persuasion and force, affects the desiring part of the soul (*epithumetikon*).

### iii. Methodology

Plato's *Republic* is one of five dialogues narrated by Socrates. As narrator (327a),<sup>3</sup> Socrates describes himself in interaction with other characters. Like many scholars working on Plato today, I take the literary features of the text into account in my analysis of its philosophical content.<sup>4</sup> Along with these scholars, my interpretive assumption is that the dialogue form must be accounted for in coming to a complete understanding of the philosophical content of Plato's *Republic*. Plato chose to write in dialogue form, and the dialogues themselves show clear signs of design (e.g., the chiasmic structure of the *Republic*<sup>5</sup>). To ignore these authorial choices and yet take the authorial choice of argumentative content seriously enough to warrant extensive analysis and commentary is an interpretive inconsistency that leads to problematic interpretations, including a school of interpretation based on the "developmental thesis."<sup>6, 7, 8, 9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> I owe my use of this distinction of Socrates as narrator to Anne Bowery.

<sup>4</sup> See Ruby Blondell's "Letting Plato Speak for Himself: Character and Method in the *Republic*" in *Who Speaks for Plato*, ed. by Gerald A. Press (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 127-146; Blondell's *The Play of Character in Plato's Dialogues*; Diskin Clay's "Reading the *Republic*" in *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings*, ed. by Charles L. Griswold, Jr. (New York: Routledge, 1988), 19-33, 269-272; Michel Despland's *The Education of Desire* (Buffalo: University of Toronto, 1985); Charles L. Griswold, Jr.'s "Plato's Metaphilosophy: Why Plato Wrote Dialogues" in *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings*, ed. by Charles L. Griswold, Jr. (New York: Routledge, 1988), 143-167, 286-293; Hyland's *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues*; and Hyland's "Why Plato Wrote Dialogues" in *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968) 38-50.

<sup>5</sup> I discuss the chiasmic structure of the *Republic* in Chapter Four, where I provide a new construal of the widely-recognized symmetrical shape of the dialogue.

<sup>6</sup> Julia Annas is an excellent scholar of the developmentalist school of interpretation. Oddly, she admits the faults of the thesis, and yet continues to use it solely because of its prevalence among scholars today. See Julia Annas, *Platonic Ethics, Old and New* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

The dialogue form is centrally important to my thesis since I argue that Socrates' speech in the *Republic* is best understood as a response to his interlocutors' request to be persuaded. Most of the secondary literature I cite is written by scholars who approach the Platonic dialogues with the same general interpretive assumptions.<sup>10</sup> When quoting from

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For another source on historical interpretations see Harold Tarrant, *Plato's First Interpreters* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000). For an example of a unitarian interpretation, see Paul Shorey, *The Unity of Plato's Thought* (Archon Books, 1968). For examples of the work of developmentalists see Gregory Vlastos, *Socrates, Ironist and Moral Philosopher* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); and Nickolas Pappas, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Plato and the Republic: 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Paul Friedländer, *Plato: Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. by Hans Meyerhoff (New York: Pantheon Books Inc, 1958); and Friedländer, *Plato: Volume 3: The Dialogues: Second and Third Periods*, trans. by Hans Meyerhoff (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969).

<sup>7</sup> In his *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues*, Drew Hyland provides some of the developmentalists' justification for their position in his discussion of Aristotle's understanding of Plato's "Theory" of the forms (169-170), and proceeds to expose a serious flaw in this justification. The legacy of 19<sup>th</sup> century systematizers (as Hyland identifies it) that dominates Platonic scholarship today insists that the dialogue form of Plato's work is superfluous to forming an accurate understanding of its philosophical content. Part of the justification developmentalists have for their interpretive assumptions is that Aristotle seems to agree with them in his understanding of Plato's teachings and "theories." Hyland exposes a small part of the way in which system-centered interpreters misunderstand and misrepresent Aristotle to make more plausible their claim that Aristotle confirms their approach to the dialogues. Hyland's work weakens the plausibility of system-centered interpreters' claims that their hermeneutical assumptions provide them with fruitful and accurate interpretations of the philosophical content of Plato's dialogues. By implication, the interpretive assumptions Hyland and I share are made more plausible, or in any case, more defensible.

<sup>8</sup> For a helpful summary of the most prominent schools of interpretation in Plato scholarship, see Alan C. Bowen, "On Interpreting Plato," in *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings*, ed. by Charles L. Griswold, Jr. (New York: Routledge, 1988), 49-65, 275-277.

<sup>9</sup> For an excellent summary and critique of the historical and philosophical untenability of developmentalism (and by implication, for a defense of the kinds of interpretive assumptions I hold), see Jacob Howland's "Re-Reading Plato: The Problem of Platonic Chronology" in *Phoenix* (1991) 45(3), 189-214. Howland attacks on several fronts the inadequacies of developmentalism, or as he calls it, the developmental thesis. Howland discusses in detail the plausibility of all of the interpretive assumptions of the standard view, showing that each of them is very likely false, and taken altogether they do no better. Further, even granting the possibility that one or all of the assumptions of the standard view are true, Howland goes on to show that all the external (historical, testimonial) and internal (stylo-metric analysis) evidence one has for giving a chronological order to the Platonic dialogues is insufficient for establishing any such order. Thus, even if the developmental thesis were true, since there is no way to establish a chronological order to Plato's corpus, one is left with the conclusion that there is no way to understand the content of Plato's dialogues. Indeed, one is left wondering whether there is anything worthwhile about the dialogues at all.

<sup>10</sup> For more on why one should consider the dialogue form an essential feature without which one cannot properly understand the content of Platonic dialogues, see: James Arieti's "How to Read a Platonic Dialogue" in *The Third Way*, ed. by Francisco J. Gonzalez (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield,



Plato's *Republic* I refer to Allan Bloom's translation.<sup>11</sup> I prefer this translation largely because the secondary sources I most engage use this translation. I provide the original Greek for words or phrases from Plato's *Republic* when an issue requires further clarification than Bloom's translation offers (for instance, in distinguishing between two kinds of love, *philia* and *erōs*).<sup>12</sup>

#### iv. Chapter Divisions

The chapters are as follows: (1) Introduction; (2) Force and Persuasion among Socrates' Interlocutors; (3) Force and Persuasion; (4) The Preservation of One's Own; and (5) Conclusion.

In Chapter One, I provide my thesis, major terms, methodology, and chapter divisions. I explain that though the many topics of the dissertation chapters may appear in some ways quite disparate, nevertheless, taken together they comprise a compelling illustration of the scope and explanatory power one has when one uses force, persuasion, and wizardry as a hermeneutical key for unlocking the content of Socrates' speech in the *Republic*. I also give a summary of the content of my dissertation, chapter by chapter.

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1995), 119-132. James Arieti argues that the developmentalist project is historically ungrounded, philosophically untenable, and that relying on it is "as likely to contaminate understanding as to promote it" (121). Arieti uses particular details in several different dialogues to make his point. He also poses persuasive rhetorical questions about ways in which the works of poets and playwrights are interpreted, and whether the ways in which the works of Plato should be treated similarly (121). In the end Arieti says that one must be, "to be sure, interested in what Plato had to say – to the extent that we can make sense of it – but we are still more interested in the truth of the matter," and that "the dialogues thus become not ends in themselves, but a means to further philosophical reflection" (132).

<sup>11</sup> Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. by Allan Bloom, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Basic Books, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> I use the 2003 edition of Oxford University Press' *Platonis Respublica* as my reference for the original Greek text of the *Republic*.

In Chapter Two, I draw out Socrates' interlocutors' opinions about human nature by focusing on their use and discussion of force and persuasion. Before Socrates can persuade his interlocutors that "it is in every way better to be just rather than unjust (357b)," he must first discern, and then engage and correct, his interlocutors' mistaken opinions about human nature. In conclusion, I discuss Socrates' speech about the body and the soul, showing that while he clearly prioritizes the good of the soul over the good of the body, nevertheless he maintains that human nature in its fullness is a unity of body and soul.

In Chapter Three, I examine Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and a third thing called wizardry, which is an imitation of both force and persuasion. I show how Socrates uses and discusses force, persuasion, and wizardry, to lead his interlocutors to a proper understanding of human nature as being constituted by both body and soul, with the good of the soul being more important than that of the body. I support my thesis by showing that one can use Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and wizardry as a hermeneutical key to interpret several major images, analogies, and stories of the *Republic*, such as the allegory of the cave from Book VII, the chimaera picture of the soul from Book IX, and the myth of Er from Book X.

In Chapter Four, I apply Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and wizardry in analyses of the noble lies from Book III, the allegory of the cave from Book VII, the degeneration of regimes in Book VIII, and the account of imitation in Book X. Through these analyses, I demonstrate that a central theme of the *Republic* is Socrates' arguing for the importance of the preservation of what is most one's own, that being the good of one's soul. Since Socrates uses and speaks about force and persuasion as part of his

night-long attempt to persuade his interlocutors of the preferability and profitability of justice, one should expect that the images, analogies, and stories he also uses in this attempt can be best understood in light of his treatment of force, persuasion, and wizardry. Further, since much of Socrates' persuasive work for the night involves correcting his interlocutors' mistaken opinions about human nature, one should also expect his treatment of human nature to be a predominant – and perhaps the central – theme of his speech. Continuing the work of Chapter Three, in Chapter Four I show that both these expectations are warranted. I confirm the validity of the first expectation once again by using Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and wizardry as an interpretive key for the rest of his speech, and I confirm the validity of the second expectation by showing that the symmetrical structure of the *Republic* indicates that the literal and thematic center of Socrates' speech for the night is his description of human nature in its most proper ordering and orientation, the philosophic nature. In Chapter Four I also discuss the prominence of *philia* in the *Republic*, as well as its relation to the preservation of what is most one's own. I discuss this topic because when Socrates defines force, persuasion, and wizardry, he does so in the context of explaining how a true guardian of conviction must be able to withstand force, persuasion, and wizardry, preserving in love that which she holds to be most her own, namely, the good of her soul. Thus, by focusing on Socrates' use and discussion of force and persuasion, one may readily see that the *Republic* is not primarily about *erōs* and the striving after what one lacks, but rather, about *philia* and the preservation of what is most one's own.

Finally, in Chapter Five I briefly review the topics covered in the previous three chapters. I point out that my meditation on the themes of force and persuasion in the

*Republic* has proven to be quite fruitful, and that the interpretive harvest to be reaped from the use of force and persuasion as a hermeneutical key promises to yield even more fruit with more extensive applications to Plato's *Republic*. In addition, I suggest that a meditation on the use and discussion of force and persuasion in other Platonic dialogues, and in particular Plato's *Symposium*, may be similarly fruitful.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Force and Persuasion among Socrates' Interlocutors

Plato's *Republic* begins with an act of force (327b) and ends with an act of persuasion (621c). Between these two bookends, force and persuasion appear one hundred twenty-two more times, permeating the dialogue as recurring themes. Yet, Plato's *Republic* is not primarily about force and persuasion. Rather, force and persuasion are present in the dialogue primarily as a means for Socrates to provide his interlocutors a proper understanding of human nature, which when fully explicated includes an account of the nature of reality (the context in which human nature is found) and the good (the source of orderliness toward which human nature must be oriented if one is to live the happy life). For the reader, the presence of force and persuasion throughout the dialogue is a constant reminder of its importance as a hermeneutical key for properly interpreting the content and purpose of Socrates' speech.

By focusing on the use and discussion of force and persuasion throughout Plato's *Republic*, I argue that Socrates attempts "truly to persuade" his interlocutors "that it is in every way better to be just rather than unjust" (357b) by correcting their misconceptions of human nature. Socrates must persuade his interlocutors that human nature consists of both body and soul, and that the good of the soul is the good of that which is most one's own and so is more important than the good of the body. To persuade his interlocutors, Socrates makes visible the invisible soul through the extensive use of images, metaphors, and analogies. I use Socrates' own definitions of force (*bia*), persuasion (*peitho*), and

wizardry (*goeteia*) (an imitation of both force and persuasion combined), as a hermeneutical key for interpreting all of the major themes, images, and analogies of the *Republic* in prosecution of my argument.

In the course of Plato's *Republic*, Socrates inquires extensively into the nature of "what is" to determine ultimately the nature of justice.<sup>1</sup> I propose that Socrates makes these extensive inquiries because his interlocutors misunderstand human nature in a way that prevents them from being persuaded by Socrates' stated views about justice.<sup>2</sup>

Socrates argues (1) that human nature consists of both body and soul, (2) that neither body nor soul is reducible to the other, and (3) that the soul is more important than the body.<sup>3</sup> Socrates' conversation partners, on the other hand, speak as if human nature consists solely or primarily of the bodily. As for the soul, either they do not believe the soul to be a part of human nature (but rather something like a hidden aspect of the body, e.g. the body's "fine-tuning"), or they have a wrong opinion regarding the soul's importance in human nature. Given their misconceptions regarding the soul, Socrates' interlocutors have difficulty accepting Socrates' claims that the soul is part of the whole that constitutes a human being (and not just another way of talking about the body or its hidden aspects), and that the soul is the most important part of the whole. Consequently, the interlocutors have difficulty in accepting Socrates' definition of justice, which

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, see Socrates' extended discussion of knowledge, the good, and "that which is" at 477b-511e and 521d-541b.

<sup>2</sup> For a treatment of a related topic see John M. Cooper, "The Psychology of Justice in Plato," in *Plato's Republic: Critical Essays*, ed. by Richard Kraut (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), 17-30.

<sup>3</sup> One cannot infer the dispensability (or "badness") of the body from the prioritizing of the soul over the body. I discuss this invalid inference in Chapter Two, section vi: Body and Soul.

assumes a priority of the soul over the body, or more accurately, a priority of the intelligible over the visible.<sup>4</sup> For Socrates to succeed in persuading his interlocutors to accept his definition of justice and “that it is in every way better to be just rather than unjust,” he must first persuade them of the reality and the importance of the soul.

In and of themselves, there is nothing inherently good or bad about the use of either force or persuasion. If force primarily engages the body and persuasion primarily engages the soul,<sup>5</sup> and if human nature consists of body and soul, then force and persuasion both, in their own ways, affect different parts of the human being. Both are effective methods of interacting with others in their respective ways, all other things being equal. That said, a consideration of the nature of “the good” is necessary for evaluating whether the use of force or persuasion in a given circumstance is just or unjust. Generally speaking, the use of either force or persuasion is more or less just depending on (1) how well the means of one’s use of either force or persuasion is properly ordered based on the ordering source of the good, and (2) how directly the end of one’s use of either force or persuasion involves a turning toward the good. Socrates spends much of his time discussing not only the use, but also the experience of undergoing force and persuasion. The just person who is a reliable guardian of her convictions regarding the priority of the good of her soul and its orientation towards the

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<sup>4</sup> My use of “visible” and “intelligible” derives from Socrates’ discussion of them at the end of Book VI. When explaining the nature of “the good,” Socrates says that reality contains both a visible and an intelligible region, and that the intelligible is ordered as superior to the visible. See 508b-511e.

<sup>5</sup> Both force and persuasion engage – and originate in – the soul. In the introductory chapter, I noted that force engages the spirited part of the soul (*thumoeides*), and persuasion engages the calculating part of the soul (*logistikon*). I explain these relationships in greater detail in Chapter Three: Force and Persuasion. Discussing force and persuasion in terms of the parts of the soul they engage assumes Socrates’ description of the tripartite soul in Book IV. This current chapter explores the opinions of Socrates’ interlocutors, most of which are given in the first two books of Plato’s *Republic*. Hence, although it is misleading to discuss force and persuasion as if they primarily engage the body and soul, respectively, I do so in this chapter since Socrates’ interlocutors discuss force and persuasion in terms of body and soul.

good, will be able to withstand the pressures of persuasion, force, and a third method Socrates names “wizardry,” which simulates the effects of both force and persuasion.

Socrates’ discussion of the nature of the good<sup>6</sup> makes clear the importance of prioritizing the soul over the body. To order oneself so that one’s parts are related in a harmonious whole – in other words, to be just – one must take into account the whether one is further related harmoniously to the whole of the greater context in which one lives as a part. The greater context of a private citizen’s life is the family in which he is a father, a husband, and a son. The greater context of a public citizen’s life is the city in which she lives. And the ultimate context in which all people live are the visible and intelligible regions whose ordering source is the good.

In this chapter, I examine Socrates’ interlocutors and their opinions about human nature which prevent them from being persuaded to accept Socrates’ stated views on justice. Force and persuasion, not only as topics of conversation but also as stated influences upon the conversation itself, appear in Plato’s *Republic* to an extent that suggests their importance as key themes on which to focus in understanding the dialogue. I discern Socrates’ interlocutors’ opinions about human nature by carefully marking and analyzing the ways in which they use and discuss force and persuasion. I discuss Socrates’ interlocutors individually in the following five sections: (i) Cephalus, (ii) Polemarchus, (iii) Thrasymachus, (iv) Glaucon, (v) Adeimantus.<sup>7</sup> I discuss the interlocutors and Socrates together in the sixth section, (vi) Body and Soul.

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<sup>6</sup> Again see 508b-511e.

<sup>7</sup> For historical details of these characters, see Debra Nails, *The People of Plato: A Prosopography of Plato and Other Socratics* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishers, 2002).



*i. Cephalus*

The interlocutor Cephalus differs from the other interlocutors in that his speech is a foreshadowing of Socrates' speech for the remainder of the dialogue. Cephalus needs no correction regarding his understanding of human nature. Instead he provides the corrections to the opinions of the many, establishing the model in speech upon which Socrates builds his speech in the *Republic*. In paying careful attention to Cephalus' interaction with Socrates, which occupies the first few pages of *The Republic*, I argue that one may discern an interpretive template for anticipating and understanding the form and content of the rest of the dialogue.<sup>8</sup> No one before has made such an argument. Further, while the character Cephalus has been defended as a man of conventional piety and virtue, no one has defended or identified the virtues, attitudes, and actions of the character Cephalus in the way I do in my reading below.

Cephalus' speech serves well as the introduction to justice in the *Republic* because (a) *the form and content of Cephalus' speech prefigure that of Socrates' for the rest of the dialogue*, and because (b) *Cephalus' interlocutor (Socrates) redirects the conversation* through questions about sex, child-rearing, money, and the afterlife (328c-331d), prefiguring the redirections of Socrates' own interlocutors for the rest of the dialogue after Socrates inherits Cephalus' place in the conversation as the main

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<sup>8</sup> For more on what can be learned from Cephalus, see Patrick McKee's "A Lesson from Cephalus" in *Teaching Philosophy* (2003) 26(4), 361-366. Also see McKee's "Surprise Endings: Cephalus and the Indispensable Teacher of Republic X" in *Philosophical Investigations* (2008) 31(1), 68-82. In both articles McKee argues that Cephalus' reflection on his life experience is a valuable source of moral insight. However, at worst McKee's reading runs the risk of elevating Cephalus and parts of Book X at the cost of denigrating the remainder of the *Republic*. At best, McKee's reading still fails to account for as much of the *Republic's* content as my reading.

interlocutor.<sup>9</sup> If a reader fails to see Cephalus' speech as a prefiguring of Socrates' speech, that reader's understanding of the philosophical content of Plato's *Republic* is likely to be inaccurate, incomplete, or both. Insofar as a reader condemns or ignores the form or content of any part of Cephalus' speech, since Cephalus' speech is a precursor to Socrates' speech, that reader is in danger of condemning or ignoring the analogous form or content of Socrates' speech.<sup>10</sup> For instance, if one fails to understand Cephalus' discussion of *erōs*, one is likely to misunderstand Socrates' discussion of *erōs* as well. Misunderstanding the role and treatment of *erōs* in the *Republic* is one of the most egregious errors in reading made by scholars who fail to interpret properly the character Cephalus.<sup>11</sup>

(a) *The Form and Content of Cephalus' Speech*

Like Socrates, Cephalus speaks of human nature as consisting of both soul and body, and of the soul as more important than the body. Their shared understanding of human nature makes possible an easy, almost complicit agreement between them about the nature of justice, namely that it is in every way better to be just than to be unjust.

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<sup>9</sup> Contrary to what I argue in this paper, David Roochnik provides an almost completely negative view of Cephalus in his *The Beautiful City: The Dialectical Character of Plato's Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 51-57. I take Roochnik's view of Cephalus to be unfair ultimately, and not well-supported by textual references. Stanley Rosen presents the virtuous and vicious sides of Cephalus quite well in chapter 1 of his *Plato's Republic: A Study* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). Ruby Blondell provides a very convincing reading of Cephalus as a less-than-virtuous character in her *The Play of Characters in Plato's Dialogues* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 165-189.

<sup>10</sup> Supposing a reader condemns or ignores the philosophical merit of the form and content of Cephalus' speech, but manages to understand the form and content of Socrates' speech, nevertheless, that reader still betrays an incomplete or inconsistent understanding of the philosophical merit of Socrates' speech since she does not recognize it when spoken by some character other than Socrates.

<sup>11</sup> For a representative example of a misreading of the role of *erōs* in the *Republic*, see Chapter 2 (entitled "Eros") of Roochnik's *Beautiful City*, 51-77.

Below I present twelve features of the text that demonstrate the similarity in speech and character between Socrates and Cephalus, as well as Socrates' role in the dialogue as heir of Cephalus' case for justice, made possible by their shared understanding of human nature as consisting of body and soul.

1) *Cephalus' claims are not the mere assertion of opinion, but rather he uses reasoning to explain or arrive at his opinions, much like Socrates.* Cephalus determines that it is not old age that is the cause of misery, as his age-mates believe. He does not rely on ancestral piety or the poets to come to this conclusion, but rather he relies on reason. Cephalus recognizes that the cause of misery has not been identified properly, because "if this were the cause, I too would have suffered these same things insofar as they depend on old age and so would everyone else who has come to this point in life" (329b). Cephalus has not suffered these same things. Therefore, old age is not the cause.

2) *Cephalus simulates his reasoning process in speech through a monologue of simulated dialogue, which is what Socrates the narrator is doing in the entire Republic.* When Cephalus reproduces for Socrates the conversation he overheard between Sophocles and another man (329b-c), he speaks in the dialogue form, imitating the two men's speech, just as Socrates the narrator does in telling the whole of the *Republic* to his unnamed auditor. The only other character in the *Republic* who has a monologue in which he simulates dialogue is Adeimantus. Cephalus' use of the dialogue form is more genuine than Adeimantus' use of it, for where Adeimantus represents the dialogue form by talking to himself, Cephalus represents the dialogue form by reporting the words of other people whom he names, in the same way that Socrates the narrator and Plato the

author do. Plato writes the *Republic* as a narrated dialogue in which Socrates narrates events that transpired the night before. The narrator Socrates becomes a character in his own story. Given Socrates' story, Cephalus' dialogue imitating two men's speech chronologically precedes the entirety of the *Republic*, which is being narrated by Socrates on the following day. Socrates' narrated dialogue follows the model provided by Cephalus the night before. Thus, Plato writes the *Republic* so that the form of Socrates' speech models that of Cephalus' speech.

3) *Cephalus quotes many poets as part of his methods of persuasion (as does Socrates), but is willing to admit that the poets are wrong and hear no more from them when appropriate (as is Socrates).* Cephalus names and quotes several poets and statesmen in his speech – Sophocles (329b-d), Themistocles (329e-330a), and Pindar (331a) – setting the stage for Socrates (and Adeimantus) to do the same later in the dialogue. Cephalus even quotes Sophocles from hearing the poet speak firsthand (329b-c). As the dialogue unfolds, Socrates later makes clear in his discussion of narrative and imitation the importance of proximity between “what is” and any given report of “what is” (392d-397b), especially if that report is poetical (595a-608a).<sup>12</sup> When other interlocutors (including Socrates) quote other poets, none makes explicit his proximity to the poet he quotes, and even so none would be able to surpass Cephalus' proximity to the poet he quotes as a firsthand listener. Thus, Cephalus not only sets the stage for the use of poets in conversation, but in terms of proximity to the poets he also uses them best.

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<sup>12</sup> In (595a-608a), Socrates focuses on the *poet's* lack of proximity to “what is” in his discussion of imitation, but the discussion is relevant and applicable to *Socrates and his interlocutors' own uses of the poets* in their communal pursuit of an account of “what is” with regards to justice.

Cephalus also disregards the poets when appropriate. He leaves the argument to Socrates to prosecute against Polemarchus when Polemarchus interrupts them, citing the authority of Simonides on his behalf against the shared opinion of his father and Socrates that justice is not paying what is owed and telling the truth (331d).

4) *When Cephalus' interlocutor says the many would not accept the claim that good character is the cause of his happiness, Cephalus ultimately responds by ending his part in the conversation with a tale that recommends a virtuous life as the way to avoid fears about what terrible fates may await the unjust man in the afterlife (much as Socrates does in ending his part in the conversation of the Republic).* After Cephalus extols the benefits of good character, Socrates tells his auditor he was “full of wonder” at Cephalus’ words,<sup>13</sup> and wanting to “stir him up,” Socrates goes after Cephalus by saying that “the many” think Cephalus “bear[s] his old age so easily” not because of his character, but because of his wealth (329d-e).<sup>14</sup> Cephalus says in response, “What you say is true. They do not accept them” (329e). Cephalus admits that wealth makes bearing old age easier, but he still insists that character is the primary cause of contentment, saying “the decent man would not bear old age with poverty very easily, nor would the one who is not a decent sort ever be content with himself even if he were wealthy” (330a). Rather than following up this claim by asking about the nature of a decent character, Socrates remains focused on Cephalus’ wealth. Socrates wonders that

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<sup>13</sup> In Plato’s *Theaetetus*, the character Socrates says that philosophy begins in wonder: “For this is an experience which is characteristic of a philosopher, this wondering: this is where philosophy begins and nowhere else. And the man who made Iris the child of Thaumasp was perhaps no bad genealogist” (155d).

<sup>14</sup> Those who claim Socrates does not question Cephalus, or that Cephalus does not respond well to the sometimes rude promptings of Socrates’ elenctic questioning, need look no further than this passage for a counterexample to their claims.

Cephalus does not seem “overly fond of money” (330b-c), and asks Cephalus what is the “greatest good that you have enjoyed from possessing great wealth” (330d). Cephalus says “What I say wouldn’t persuade many perhaps” (330d), but he answers Socrates nonetheless with a speech about unjust deeds, fear, nightmares, Hades, and the possible fates that await men after death (330d-331b). Cephalus’ speech (1) bears an uncanny similarity to Socrates’ later description of the waking and dreaming life of the tyrant in Book IX (571a-576c)<sup>15</sup> and (2) serves as prelude and complementary bookend to Socrates’ concluding tale about the afterlife in Book X (614b-621d).

Several commentators use Cephalus’ speech about fear and the afterlife to argue that Cephalus’ piety is based in fear of the punishment in afterlife. In *Beautiful City: The Dialectic Character of Plato’s Republic*, David Roochnik says flatly that Cephalus’ piety originates in whatever allows him to sleep well at night.<sup>16</sup> In her *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato’s Republic*, Claudia Baracchi condemns Cephalus for being unfit for philosophy due to his being an almost ethereal being who unfortunately attends only to the physical.<sup>17</sup> Thus her criticism of Cephalus as vicious is almost Gnostic in its formulation. I maintain that these commentators’ claims go wrong on four important points, as follows.

(1) Cephalus’ stage of life (on the “threshold of old age” as Socrates puts it) is being used to interpret his words uncharitably. Compare Cephalus’ remarks about the

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<sup>15</sup> See David Gallop, “Dreaming and Waking in Plato,” in *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1972), 187-201.

<sup>16</sup> Roochnik’s *Beautiful City*, 53.

<sup>17</sup> See Claudia Baracchi’s *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato’s Republic* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002).

body and the soul to those of Socrates in the *Phaedo*, the dialogue in which Socrates' execution is imminent. Commentators sensitive to the literary context of the dialogues note that Socrates denigrates the body most in the *Phaedo* due to the demands of the situation at hand in that dialogue, namely Socrates' need to console his friends, many of them Pythagoreans, on the occasion of his impending death.<sup>18</sup> Yet many of these same commentators fail to account for the context in which Cephalus speaks.<sup>19</sup> Consistency in interpretation should lead an interpreter either to condemning both Socrates in the *Phaedo* and Cephalus in the *Republic* for their assertions and arguments regarding the body, or to lauding both men for their insistence on attending to the needs of their interlocutors in discussing the nature of the body. Praising one man and condemning the other betrays a bias unsupported by interpretive assumptions.

(2) Cephalus tells a tale about fear and the afterlife only because Socrates insists that the many (*hoi polloi*) would not accept Cephalus' claim that his happiness comes from his good character, but would insist instead that his happiness comes from his wealth. When Socrates becomes the main interlocutor in the conversation, he, too, resorts to providing "second best" alternatives to the best motives for living justly after his conversation partners repeatedly object to his speech by saying the many (*hoi polloi*) would not accept what he says. When asked to defend themselves against the opinion of

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<sup>18</sup> Drew Hyland makes this observation in his *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995). As careful as Hyland is in noting the literary features of the *Republic* to construe Socrates' words and character most charitably, he fails to do the same as fully in his treatment of Cephalus (31-2).

<sup>19</sup> The work of commentators who do not consistently apply their interpretive assumptions for a full and charitable treatment Cephalus and Socrates alike includes Roochnik's *The Beautiful City*, Ruby Blondell's *The Play of Characters in Plato's Dialogues*, and Baracchi's *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato's Republic*.

the many, as opposed to explaining themselves earnestly, both Cephalus and Socrates resort to different tacks of persuasion, and both resort finally to stories about the afterlife. Commentators who cite Cephalus' speech about the afterlife against his character miss the motive and dialogical need Cephalus has when he is asked to respond to the opinion of the many.

(3) Cephalus' speech about the afterlife is about what is likely for "a man" when he is near death – not about what Cephalus himself necessarily perceives. Cephalus' speech about the man who becomes just out of fear is narrative in form (3<sup>rd</sup> person, or "talking about"), not imitative (1<sup>st</sup> person, or "talking as"). One may insist that Cephalus speaks of himself, but such a claim is unnecessary, and further the form of Cephalus' speech does not support it.

(4) Cephalus' speech about the afterlife occurs at the end of his part in the conversation, just as Socrates' tale about the afterlife occurs at the end of the *Republic*. The order of Cephalus' speech prefigures the order Socrates' speech for the rest of the dialogue. Since both men leave the conversation on a similar (supposedly non-philosophical) note, commentators who insist on denigrating Cephalus' character due to his speech about the afterlife must do the same to Socrates, else explain why one should infer different things about two speakers whose speeches are similar in form and content. The order of their speeches is parallel, which suggests the burden of proof is on the interpreter who wishes to treat the speeches differently.

5) *Cephalus (like Socrates) begins and ends his part in the dialogue in some form of interaction with the divine.* Socrates introduces Cephalus as a religiously observant man: "He was seated on a sort of cushioned stool and was crowned with a wreath, for he



had just performed a sacrifice in the courtyard” (328c). Socrates the narrator introduces *himself* in a similar fashion at the beginning of the *Republic*, saying he and his companion were coming back from the Piraeus where they had gone “to pray to the goddess” (327a). And in Book V, when Socrates complains that his interlocutors ask him to start the conversation over and begin again (450a), Socrates hesitates “for fear that the argument might seem to be a prayer” (450c-d), and so he says, “I prostrate myself before Adrasteia, Glaucon, for what I’m going to say” (451a). Finally, at the end of Book X, just as Cephalus left for the sacrifices after telling a tale about how to leave for the afterlife without fear, Socrates tells a tale of similar content with a similar point, ending the tale with an entreaty that his auditors be “persuaded by me” so that they all “shall fare well (621b-d). Some commentators insist that one character’s relationship with and references to the divine are ironic (i.e., Socrates’), while another character’s (i.e., Cephalus’) are not, or that one character’s relation to the divine is unreflectively conventional (Cephalus) while another character’s relation is acquired and maintained philosophically (Socrates).<sup>20</sup> The text does not clearly support such distinctions.

6) *The restart/recapitulation of Book I in Book V suggests Socrates has taken Cephalus’ place.* By the time Book V begins, based on the time it would take for Socrates to tell his story to his unnamed auditor, it has been four or five hours since Cephalus left for the sacrifices. Polemarchus and Thrasymachus, two characters who appear substantively in Book I, make their only other appearance in Book V. Cephalus is the only character who remains missing. The fact that every character save Cephalus is

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

present in book V may be taken to imply that Socrates has taken Cephalus' place. Many scholars have noted that Book V is in several ways a recapitulation of the events of Book I. One need look no further than Socrates' own words: "How much discussion you've set in motion, from the beginning again as it were..." (450a). What follows is a discussion of the ways in which the similarities between Book I and Book V imply that Socrates has taken Cephalus' place in the conversation.

In Book V, when Socrates defends his having skipped over part of the argument, he uses a metaphor of murder and unintentional deceit: "I prostrate myself before Adrasteia, Glaucon, for what I'm going to say. I expect that it's a lesser fault to prove to be an unwilling murderer of someone than a deceiver about fine, good, and just things in laws" (451a). This prayer and metaphor in Book V are prefigured in Book I by the double event of Socrates' counterexample of withholding weapons from an insane friend (who would probably use them to murder) and Cephalus' attending to his sacrifices when he leaves (331c-d).

Socrates says he would rather be an unwilling murderer than a deceiver of friends in matters about fine, good, and just things.<sup>21</sup> If one may refer to the sacrifice of an animal in a religious observance as "unwilling murder," one could rephrase Socrates words as follows: If Socrates had the choice, he would prefer to be an unwilling murderer – one who sacrifices – and omit an inquiry into fine, just things – leave the conversation behind. Cephalus does both these things when he leaves for the sacrifices the moment Socrates brings up the question of justice, using an example that itself

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<sup>21</sup> Polemarchus' definition of justice also shows up in Socrates' apology, where he explains he would prefer to run the risk of committing either crime in the company of enemies, rather than among friends.

prefigures the problem of what one must do when truth-telling and giving what is owed is an unjust thing to do. Socrates also sets apart the occasion of restarting the dialogue with his supplication to Adrasteia (451a).

Another parallel between Books I and V is their treatment of the “female drama.”<sup>22</sup> Book V’s coverage of the female drama is obvious given Socrates’ explicit reference to it at 451c.<sup>23</sup> I suggest that in the restart of the discussion in Book V, Socrates is following the lead that Cephalus establishes in Book I in discussing the female drama. In Book I, Cephalus says at 329d, “But of these things, and of those things that concern relatives, there is one just cause. Not old age, Socrates, but the character of human beings.” Translator Allan Bloom renders *anthrōpos* as “human beings,” and writes the following in an endnote regarding his translating choice:

The Greek word is *anthrōpos*, the generic word for a member of the human species. The word for a male human being is *anēr*. This is an important distinction in Greek and allows for considerable subtlety in the use of the terms. On the first level, *anthrōpos* is clearly the lower term; it signifies the mere participation in the minimal qualities of the species, whereas an *anēr* is distinctly a real man, one who has developed his male humanity and can participate in the highest functions of a man, politics, and war. But, on a second level, the full or final end of humanity may transcend mere maleness and include activities different from, and contrary to, those of the real man [...] In this sense, *anthrōpos* would be the deeper and more meaningful term. In book V Socrates suggests that the best regime, and implicitly the best human being, is a combination of male and female.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The “female drama” refers to Socrates’ suggestion in Book V that if a woman has the same nature as a man with respect to some job, then woman and man alike will be trained in and perform the same job. Socrates introduces this topic at 451b-c, “However, maybe it would be right this way – after having completely finished the male drama, to complete the female, especially since you are so insistent about issuing this summons.” See 451b-457c for Socrates’ entire treatment of this subject.

<sup>23</sup> See Gerasimos Santas, “Justice, Law, and Women in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Philosophical Inquiry* (2006) 28(1-2), 91-103.

<sup>24</sup> Allan Bloom, notes to Plato’s *The Republic of Plato*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., trans. by Allan Bloom (Basic Books, 1991), 441-2, endnote 14.

Based on Bloom's discussion of the differences between *anēr* and *anthrōpos*, I suggest that Cephalus' referring to the character of "human beings," as opposed to the character of "men," is significant, and that it could be considered a kind of foreshadowing of the complete male and female drama Socrates provides in Book V.

In Book I at 329a Cephalus' discussion of the trials of old age begins with a reminiscence of the feasts and sex that accompanied youth (which look much like the festivals arranged in Book V). Cephalus mentions immediately afterward the abuse the elderly receive at the hands of relatives: "Some also bewail the abuse that old age receives from relatives, and in this key they sing a refrain about all the evils old age has caused them" (329b). He ends by saying that "of these things and those things that concern relatives," it is the good character of a "human being" that is the one just cause of bearing all such evils well (329d). In Book V, Socrates calls the communality of women and children in the city "its greatest strength" (464b), in part because of its protection of the elderly from abuse and from defending themselves against penury alone in court.

In Books I and V, and indeed in the whole of the *Republic*, Socrates and company continually ask what belongs to a person, in terms of possessions, in terms of character traits and dispositions of the soul, in terms of family, and in terms of goals and loves. What is it that people hold in common, what is it that people hold privately, what is it that people *wish* to hold in common and privately, and what is it that is *possible or impossible* to hold in common or privately? Both wealth and good character make healthy the body and the soul, but straightening out the tangle that often results from a disordered pursuit of either is the task that Cephalus hands on to Socrates for the bulk of the *Republic*.

7) *Cephalus verbally passes on his part of the conversation to Socrates.* When Cephalus leaves the conversation, he passes on to Socrates his part as the main contributor. While Polemarchus is heir to Cephalus' wealth, unfortunately he is not necessarily heir to what is the "one just cause" of Cephalus' happiness, namely his good character. Thus when Polemarchus objects to Cephalus leaving his part of the conversation to Socrates, protesting "Am I not the heir of what belongs to you?" Cephalus laughs, because a properly ordered soul is not the kind of thing that can be inherited in the same way that bodily possessions can be.<sup>25</sup>

During the brief time Cephalus speaks, he characterizes human nature as consisting of soul and body with the soul ordered higher. For the remainder of the *Republic*, following Cephalus' lead, Socrates makes a case for the same characterization of human nature.<sup>26</sup> Socrates is Cephalus' heir in conversation. He supplements Cephalus' argument where Cephalus leaves off so that Cephalus may attend the sacrifices. While Cephalus is allowed to leave, Socrates is the man who must remain behind and "enter the cave," to refer to the allegory from Book VII. Using the analogy of the luxurious city in speech, I suggest that Socrates is the guardian whom Cephalus has chosen to teach his sons virtue. Plato, in writing the *Republic*, begins an inquiry which leads his reader down the path of loving and attaining virtue. Cephalus as a character in the dialogue does the same, leaving Socrates as guardian over his sons to complete the work. Cephalus' heir in speech is Socrates, the man who continues and completes the

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<sup>25</sup> Compare this to Socrates' lament in the *Symposium* at 175d that wisdom cannot be passed from one person to another the way water can pass along a thread between two bodies. The goods of the soul do not follow the same laws as the goods of the body due to their difference in nature.

<sup>26</sup> Socrates' following Cephalus' conversational lead does not imply that Socrates learned his view of human nature from Cephalus, either during this conversation or any other.

inquiry into justice for the sake of Cephalus' heir in body and possessions, Polemarchus. In leaving Socrates in charge of his son as if Polemarchus were Socrates' "own," Cephalus hopes that Polemarchus may become his true, full heir in both body and soul, so that what is most Cephalus' own can become Polemarchus' own.

Claudia Baracchi accuses Cephalus of being vicious for leaving his sons in the company of Thrasymachus.<sup>27</sup> On the contrary, I argue that Cephalus is virtuous since he remains with his sons while Thrasymachus is with them, and only after Socrates arrives does Cephalus leave. Remember Cephalus' entreaty to Socrates when he first arrived, "Now do as I say. Be with these young men, but come here regularly to us as friends and your very own kin [i.e., as one's own]" (328d). One of these young men, Polemarchus, finally enters the conversation. Cephalus answers Socrates' questions on arriving as any good host would, but once one of the young men begins to speak, Cephalus may allow the conversation to unfold as he had initially requested. In other words, he had indeed desired that Socrates be present to speak with his son.

When Cephalus leaves the conversation, he leaves in agreement with Socrates about how his counterexample disproves the definition of justice as telling the truth and giving back what one has taken. Cephalus agrees with Socrates, but his son Polemarchus does not. Polemarchus enters the conversation by interrupting Socrates:

"[Justice] most certainly is [paying what is owed]," interrupted Polemarchus," if Simonides is to be believed at all."  
"Well then," said Cephalus, "I hand down the argument to you."  
"Am I not the heir of what belongs to you?" said Polemarchus.  
"Certainly," Cephalus said and laughed. (331d)

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<sup>27</sup> See, for instance, endnote 12 on p. 60 in Claudia Baracchi's *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato's Republic* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002).

Typically Polemarchus' insistence on his birthright is read with something like the following emphasis: "Am I *not* the heir of what belongs to you?" In other words, "Of course you're handing the argument down to me, father. After all, I am your son and thus your heir." But why should Polemarchus insist on his birthright if it has already been given him? I suggest reading his words with something like the following emphasis: "Am I *not* the heir of what belongs to you?" As in, "Why have you handed down the argument to Socrates, and not to me? After all, is it not *I* who is your heir?"<sup>28</sup>

Cephalus says, "I hand down the *argument* to you." There is no argument, or rather, there is no disagreement, between Socrates and Cephalus. The disagreement arises when Polemarchus disagrees with both Socrates and his father. To whom else could Cephalus pass down the argument other than to Socrates, since the two of them are of one mind on the issue at hand, against Polemarchus? Interpreting Cephalus as handing on his part in the conversation to Socrates makes more sense of the text than interpreting otherwise.

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<sup>28</sup> The Greek text in S. R. Slings' *Platonis Respublica* (Oxford 2003) at 331d reads as follows:  
 Και μεντοι, εφη ο Κεφαλος, και παραδιδομι υμιν τον λογον δει γαρ με ηδη των ιερων επιμεληθηναι.

Ουκουν, εφη, εγω, ο Πολεμαρχος, των γε σων κληρονομος;

Πανυ γε, η δ'ος γελασας, και αμα ηει προς τα ιερα. (7)

Bloom's translation of 331d8 – "Am I not the heir of what belongs to you?" said Polemarchus" (7) – serves well, though if one were to translate more literally according to the order of words at 331d8, the line could be rendered, "Well,' he said, 'is it not I, Polemarchus, who is indeed the inheritor of what is yours?" In a footnote to 331d8 Slings (*Platonis Respublica*, 7) references a variation in the text which reads "Ουκουν, εγω εφη..." instead of "Ουκουν, εφη, εγω..." though this variation does not substantially change the meaning of the phrase here. The 1947 Loeb Classical Library edition of the text records yet another variation at 331d8, "Ουκουν, εφην εγω..." (20) Paul Shorey translates this line as being spoken by Socrates: "'Well,' said I, 'is not Polemarchus the heir of everything that is yours?'" (21) Even so, my point about emphasis holds across all these variations in translation. One may interpret the speaker of this line – whether it be Polemarchus or Socrates – as pointing out, in a playful way, the impropriety of Cephalus handing on his share of the conversation to anyone other than his lawful heir. I am grateful to Alexander Pruss for drawing my attention to the textual issues here.

A further point may be made here. The counterexample that precedes Polemarchus' interruption has to do with whether or not giving back what someone is owed is just when that person is not in his right mind. Imagine being the son of a weaponsmith (a shield maker),<sup>29</sup> and hearing the man agree with Socrates that he would think it unjust to hand over what is owed to someone (like weapons, or inheritance) if that person proved not to be of sound mind. In other words, imagine being Polemarchus and hearing your father admit that there are conditions under which it would not be considered just (even if it would still be considered lawful) to hand over something that is owed, for instance, one's birthright inheritance. One wonders if there hasn't been some conspiring between Socrates and Cephalus so that their conversation went exactly so, through a discussion of wealth and inheritance (both brought up by Socrates) to a counterexample that discusses the justice of handing such things over (also brought up by Socrates). A father worried about the prudence (financial and otherwise) of his son would most likely be very desirous of such a conversation taking place in such a way that his son can benefit from it.

Some scholars have argued for Cephalus' being a virtuous character.<sup>30</sup> R. L. Nettleship even says, "In Cephalus' simple utterances some of the philosophical results of the body of the *Republic* are anticipated" such as the tyrannical love of Book IX and the view that "character is the arbiter of happiness."<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless most who defend

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<sup>29</sup> See Debra Nails, *The People of Plato*, 84-5.

<sup>30</sup> See C. D. C. Reeve's *Philosopher Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1988, 5-7, and John Beversluis' *Cross-Examining Socrates: A Defense of the Interlocutors in Plato's Early Dialogues* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 189-197.

<sup>31</sup> See R. L. Nettleship's *Lectures on the Republic of Plato* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1963), 15-16.



Cephalus do so on the basis of his virtue being “conventional” or “ancestral” in nature. Even Nettleship calls Cephalus’ experience “simple” and “undemonstrated.” He refers to Cicero’s remark that “it would have been inappropriate for Socrates to question Cephalus,” and adds, “Accordingly, when the criticism begins and the experience is to be analyzed, Cephalus gives way to his son.”<sup>32</sup> Nettleship gives away too much with this comment since Socrates does not spare Cephalus a cross-examination, and since Cephalus does not give way to his son for the sake of avoiding criticism and analysis, but because with the entrance of his son into the conversation he has his wish fulfilled that Socrates “be with these young men” this night.

More contemporary scholars continue to misidentify Cephalus as a simple yet conventionally virtuous man, only to indict him as an unphilosophic and provincial man to be scorned. These scholars argue that Cephalus is conventionally pious and morally upright out of fear and lack of *erōs* at best,<sup>33</sup> and at worst that he is vicious.<sup>34</sup> Allan Bloom for instance, cites Cephalus’ lack of *erōs* as the reason he leaves. Bloom specifically says Cephalus becomes uncomfortable when Socrates has succeeded in having him admit that what is just and what is lawful can be separated, since Cephalus stands for ancestral piety and conventional lawfulness.<sup>35</sup> I submit that it is just as likely, if not more so, that Polemarchus is more worried about where the conversation is headed than is Cephalus. Polemarchus’ self-interest is made apparent when he follows up the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 15

<sup>33</sup> Ruby Blondell claims that Cephalus responds to Socrates’ elenchus with “boredom or loss of attention.” See Blondell’s *The Play of Characters in Plato’s Dialogues*, 166.

<sup>34</sup> See Roochnik’s *The Beautiful City* and Baracchi’s *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato’s Republic*.

<sup>35</sup> Allan Bloom, “An Interpretive Essay” in *The Republic of Plato*.

successive topics of conversation on wealth, inheritance, and the injustice of handing over what is owed, with the double objection that justice is indeed giving back what is owed, and that he is the rightful heir to Cephalus in all things.

One of the over-arching themes of Plato's *Republic* is that while patrimony includes the material inheritance that fathers leave their sons for the care of their sons' bodily needs, material inheritance is not the primary part of patrimony. Rather, the primary part of patrimony is soulcraft: how fathers have aided in the internal ordering and external orienting of their sons' souls. One problem with the dual nature of patrimony (material inheritance for the body, soulcraft for the soul) is that the material inheritance that fathers leave to their sons often obscures or undermines the success of their soulcraft, insofar as material inheritance can supplant "the good" as the focus of orientation for one's soul.<sup>36</sup> From the beginning of Plato's *Republic* to the end, and all throughout, the effects that fathers have on their sons,<sup>37</sup> in the care and cultivation of both body and soul, dominate much of the dialogue.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> This understanding of soulcraft derives largely from Socrates' story of the cave-prisoners at 514a-518e, which he tells to explain the true nature of education.

<sup>37</sup> Baracchi deals with the issues of child-rearing and birthing extensively in *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato's Republic*. For more on these "generational" issues, see also Kateri Carmola's "Noble Lying: Justice and Intergenerational Tension in Plato's *Republic*" in *Political Theory* (2003) 31(1), 39-62. Finally, Rosen gives what I take to be the best account for how *erōs* comes to be connected with the generational issues in his *Plato's Republic*, 27-8.

<sup>38</sup> The dialogue (1) *begins* in Book I with a slave boy arresting Socrates and Glaucon (327b), (2) "*restarts*" in Book V (450a) with an extended discussion of the nature of child-birthing and rearing (457c-461e), (3) *ends* in Book X with a story of a man who chooses to be reborn into a life in which he will eat his own children (619b-d) in the context of a larger story about the rebirth of an entire generation (617d-621d), and (4) between each of these sets of bookends, there is extensive discussion of the nature of education, child-rearing, and child-birthing. In Book II, Adeimantus' concern that the many believe injustice to be profitable because they have not been told otherwise "from youth onwards" (366e-367a) establishes the groundwork for the interlocutors' project of building a city in speech in which the education of youth may be regulated to address this problem. Book III has to do primarily with the education of the youth in the luxurious city in speech. Socrates' story of the cave-dwellers in Book VII is a story about people who have been in chains "since childhood" (514a). Socrates' story of the degeneration of the

8) *Cephalus and Socrates share the same views on justice.* Socrates' formulations of justice as a harmony and ordering of the soul as described in Book IV, as an ordering of the soul toward the idea of the good in Books VI and VII,<sup>39</sup> and as the practice of philosophy which will safeguard a man's choices and fate after death in the myth he tells to conclude the *Republic*, resonate with Cephalus' claim that an orderly soul is the cause of "great peace and freedom."

Socrates says telling the truth and returning to people what is owed cannot be an adequate definition of justice, and Cephalus agrees. Socrates' claim is not only compatible with what Cephalus has said so far, but it also follows from Cephalus' speech. Cephalus admits that the intelligent man can make good use of wealth, and that the decent man will bear old age more easily with wealth, but the intelligent man makes good use of wealth because of his intelligence, and the decent man bears old age with peace (rather than ease) because of his character. In other words, Cephalus admits that wealth and property have value, and they have a place in the life of the decent man, but wealth and property are neither the cause of a man's decency, nor the things valued most highly by the decent man, nor the things for which a man strives to be decent. Since character is the primary cause of "great peace and freedom" according to Cephalus, and since Socrates' goal in the *Republic* is to support this claim by persuading those present that it

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luxurious city in speech spanning Books VIII and IX is a tale of fathers and sons, with each successive generation becoming worse than the last because of a son's turning away from the order of his father's soul. The list of examples of this "generational theme" (as I call it) in Plato's *Republic* could go on, since many such examples abound throughout the dialogue.

<sup>39</sup> For more on this topic see William Charlton, "Goodness and Truth," in *Philosophy* (2006) 81(318), 619-632.

is always in every way better to be just than not, the full nature of justice must be found with an inquiry into the nature of soul.

*9) Both Cephalus and Socrates argue that human nature consists of soul and body. Both argue that the soul is more important than the body. Both argue that the good of the soul is its proper ordering. Finally, even though both argue the soul is more important than the body, nevertheless both argue the good of the body is important.*

When Cephalus insists that one is likely to be miserable if one lacks either good character on the one hand or sufficient wealth to meet one's needs and debts on the other (329e-330a),<sup>40</sup> he anticipates Socrates' speech regarding the human being as consisting of both body and soul, and the importance of the soul over the body.

Cephalus argues that human nature consists of soul (*psuchē*) and body (*sōma*). In explaining to Socrates why he is happy in old age while his age-mates are miserable, he cites his good character (the proper ordering of his soul) as the cause. When Socrates rebuts by saying that the many would hold Cephalus' wealth to be the cause of his happiness, Cephalus responds by saying that they do have something, but not nearly as much as they think. He does not repudiate the value of his wealth, but rather admits it is useful for his dealings with men and gods, in not lying and in paying what he owes to men and gods. In other words, as a human being who has a body as part of his nature, Cephalus admits his wealth allows him to administer to the needs of his body.

In making his point about the benefits of both wealth and good character, Cephalus uses a saying from Themistocles about a Seriphian claiming Themistocles'

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<sup>40</sup> H. P. P. Lotter explores the theme foreshadowed here in "The Significance of Poverty and Wealth in Plato's *Republic*" in *South African Journal of Philosophy* (2003) 22(3), 189-206.

fame is due purely to the illustriousness of his hometown, Athens. Themistocles admits that the Seriphian has something, but not nearly so much as he might think, in saying that he would not have made a name for himself had he not been an Athenian, but being an Athenian is not essential to making a name, since the Seriphian would not have been famous had he been born in Athens. Two things are worth noting here: (1) Cephalus' use of a saying regarding how much a man's worth is due to his city foreshadows the city-soul analogies that guide the conversation for the rest of the *Republic*, and (2) Cephalus affirms human nature as being partly body and partly soul when explaining his use of Themistocles' saying, "...the decent man would not bear old age with poverty very easily, nor would the one who is not a decent sort ever be content with himself even if he were wealthy" (330a). Restating Cephalus' words to emphasize the difference: the *decent man without wealth* would find happiness with *difficulty*, but it would be *impossible* for the *indecent man with wealth* to find happiness. Here Cephalus prioritizes the soul over the body by saying that while happiness is possible though difficult without wealth (where wealth is used for the good of the body), happiness is simply impossible without decency (which is for the good of the soul).

10) *Cephalus characterizes a life of pursuing and indulging erotic desires as a life in slavery to many mad masters, which Socrates also argues throughout the Republic, especially in Book IX.* Cephalus agrees with Sophocles that sex, and "drinking bouts and feasts and all that goes with things of that sort" (329a), all have a tyrannical effect on the soul. Socrates later demonstrates his agreement with both Cephalus and Sophocles when he, too, refers to sexual desire and other appetites as sometimes potential (and often

actual) tyrants of the soul, over and over again in his extended interlocution with Glaucon.

Although Cephalus says that “old age brings great peace and freedom from such things,” he insists that old age is not the cause of this peace, but rather “the character of human beings” had when “they are orderly and content with themselves” (329e). As Socrates points out in Book VI, the philosophical nature goes wrong when one’s good traits are not ordered by one’s love of truth, courage, justice, and moderation. Thus a person who has a *philia* of the good is properly erotic; one without such a *philia* is perversely erotic, or controlled by the tyrant drone *erōs*. After Socrates takes over the conversation for the remainder of the *Republic*, he speaks extensively of the place that *philia* has in guiding and regulating *erōs* in the city in speech they build (compare 412d to 485c, followed by 487a). Socrates’ picture of the soul as a chimaera in Book IX reveals that the just man is happy because he rules and orders his soul, “making [the parts of his soul] friends with each other and himself” (589b), and that the unjust man is miserable because he enslaves himself with his “licentiousness” (590a).

*11) Cephalus avoids the excesses of both wealth and poverty, which is the attitude Socrates recommends for the citizens of the luxurious city in speech.* When Socrates asks whether Cephalus earned or inherited most of his possessions, Cephalus explains that his grandfather, “whose namesake I am, inherited pretty nearly as much substance as I now possess, and he increased it many times over,” but his father “used it to a point where it was still less than it is now” (330b). Cephalus says he will be “satisfied if I leave not less, but rather a bit more than I inherited, to my sons here” (330b). Socrates in his turn confesses the reason behind his inquiry:

“The reason I asked, you see,” I said, “is that to me you didn’t seem overly fond of money. For the most part, those who do not make money themselves are that way. Those who do make it are twice as attached to it as the others. For just as poets are fond of their poems and fathers of their children, so money-makers too are serious about money – as their own product; and they also are serious about it for the same reason other men are – for its use. They are, therefore, hard even to be with because they are willing to praise nothing but wealth.” (330b-c)

Cephalus embodies the kind of attitude toward wealth that Socrates recommends for the citizens of the luxurious city in speech, being neither overly fond of money, nor mistaking his money as his own in the same way he considers his sons to be his own, but at the same time being serious about money “for its use.” In the city in speech, citizens will avoid excessive wealth since it often leads to laziness, but knowing the use of wealth, they will also avoid poverty, for without a minimum of wealth to buy worthwhile supplies, craftsmen will be unable to make quality artifacts for use in the city (421c-422c). Given that human nature is partly bodily in nature, wealth is useful for the acquisition of goods necessary for bodily health. However, given that human nature is not entirely bodily in nature, one does well to avoid the belief that making of money is equivalent to having offspring, as well as the belief that goods useful to the body alone are what one should consider most properly “one’s own.”

*12) Cephalus’ views on what is one’s own and what one owes prefigure Socrates’ speech on the same.* In his greeting to Socrates, Cephalus identifies Socrates as his own: “Now do as I say: be with these young men, but come here regularly to us as to friends and your very own kin” (328d). Socrates wrestles with the proper way to define what counts as “one’s own” with each and every one of his interlocutors, whether it’s determining one’s friends (and enemies) with Polemarchus (334c-335e), one’s advantage with Thrasymachus (339c-342e), or one’s fellow citizens with Glaucon and Adeimantus

(375c-376c, 389b-c). In fact, Socrates proposes the “noble lie to persuade, in the best case, even the rulers, but if not them, the rest of the city” that all the citizens of the city are one’s kin (414b-415d) – one’s own – for a just man would care for family with the same passion and intensity that he does for his own self-interest (412c-e). In Book IV, Socrates’ definition of justice as “the practice of minding one’s own business” relies on a proper understanding of what “one’s own” means (433b).

Neither a selfish man in a healthy city of need (369e-370a) nor a great man in a sickly and wild city (496d) do well in practicing Socrates’ definition of justice. The selfish man in the healthy city cannot ascertain what is properly his own, while the great man in the wild city cannot pursue it. In Book V, in explaining the “family drama,”<sup>41</sup> Socrates refers time and again to how a proper understanding of what and whom count as “one’s own” is “the greatest strength” of the city in speech he builds with his conversation partners (462c, 462e, 463b, 463e, 464c-d). Ultimately Socrates argues that “one’s own” is properly understood when one counts the idea of the good as one’s own (443c-d, 490b, 500c-d, 505a-b, 505d-506a, 518d-519c, 519e-520d, 590d-e). Granted, Socrates is not synonymous with the idea of the good, nevertheless Cephalus could hardly choose more wisely than he does in regarding Socrates as his “very own kin.”

*(b) Cephalus’ interlocutor redirects the conversation*

If one chooses to look for Cephalus’ definition of justice, it is more appropriate to look at his discussion of orderliness as the cause of a soul’s peace and freedom than to

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<sup>41</sup> By “family drama,” I mean to refer to Socrates’ suggestion in Book V that children be had and reared communally through temporary marriages which are (1) for the sake of procreation, and (2) all arranged secretly by the guardians of the luxurious city. See 457c-461e.



look elsewhere – for instance, at the end of Cephalus’ speech when he is clarifying for Socrates the use of wealth to an intelligent man. Socrates denies that justice can be “speaking the truth and giving back what one takes” (331d), and one may (and many do) infer that Socrates denies this definition because Cephalus defines justice in this way. The inference is unwarranted, but it is understandable since the auditor follows Socrates’ lead. From beginning to end, when talking with Cephalus, Socrates’ leads are more misleading than not. In the beginning, Socrates misses Cephalus’ point about the importance of an orderly of the soul, and redirects the discussion, inquiring repeatedly into Cephalus’ wealth and asking him to persuade against the opinion of the many that this is the true cause of Cephalus’ peace.<sup>42</sup> In the end, when Socrates culls a definition from Cephalus’ speech, in a sense, he gets things backwards. Cephalus says his wealth helps him to avoid lying and to give what he owes to men and to gods. Socrates, in turn, asks if truth-telling (as opposed to not lying) and giving back what one has taken (as opposed to giving what one owes) amount to justice. Cephalus need not admit that one should tell truth simply because one wishes to avoid lying, nor need he concede that what he owes is owed because he had first taken it.

As Cephalus’ interlocutor, Socrates prefigures the behavior and speech of his own interlocutors later in the dialogue. Just as Socrates fails to inquire into Cephalus’ opinion about character and the orderliness of the soul and instead inquires into the opinion of the many, so, too, do Socrates’ interlocutors fail repeatedly to inquire into Socrates’

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<sup>42</sup> I leave it an open question why Socrates misses Cephalus’ point and redirects in this fashion. He could have been sloppy in listening, he could be playing the fool for the sake of argument, he could even be play-acting his way through a script that he and Cephalus devised for the purpose of drawing Cephalus’ sons into conversation for the benefit of their character. (I included this last possibility for those who prefer the appropriate use of conspiracy and “noble lies” in education.) Any number of explanations is possible, and many are consistent with my overarching interpretation of the scene.

discussion about “what is” and instead inquire into topics which they already covered or which have become irrelevant to the discussion at hand. Representative examples of these recurring digressions include Adeimantus’ objection at the beginning of Book IV about the guardians not being happy due to the prohibition on their owning private property (419a); Polemarchus and Adeimantus’ objection at the beginning of Book V that something about the communality of women and children has been left out (449a-450a); and the entire company’s repeated request that Socrates discuss the possibility of making real their city built in speech, no matter how often and how clearly Socrates tells them that such inquiries miss the point of the discussion they agreed to undertake together (450c, 458a, 470d, 471c-473a). Just as Socrates sidetracks from Cephalus’ speech about the cause of happiness to focus instead on the opinion of the many regarding wealth and its consolations, so too do Socrates’ interlocutors focus on the opinion of the many regarding wealth and its consolations to sidetrack from the project they have agreed to undertake with Socrates, namely determining the nature of justice and whether the just life is always and everywhere the happy (or happier) life.

If one sees how Cephalus is a prefiguring of Socrates in Plato’s *Republic*, one may use Cephalus’ speech and behavior as an interpretive template to anticipate and understand the form and content of the remainder of the dialogue. Noting Cephalus’ importance as an interpretive template may aid even the most careful readers of Plato in discerning more nuances in the philosophical themes of the dialogue. In addition, having such a template for the sake of comparison may help a reader see whether she is applying her interpretive assumptions uniformly in her reading of the characters, and not unwittingly favoring one (e.g., Socrates) over the others without explicitly stated reasons.

## ii. Polemarchus

In this section, I discuss Polemarchus' conception of human nature and determine where Socrates' difficulties in persuading Polemarchus lie.<sup>43</sup>

In the opening scene of the dialogue, I argue that Polemarchus and Socrates pose the question of whether the majority rule of democracy is based on the visible or the intelligible.<sup>44</sup> Socrates tells his unnamed auditor that Polemarchus orders his slave boy to detain Socrates and Glaucon, who are walking back up to Athens from the Athenian port of Piraeus (327a). After arriving on the scene with his sizeable entourage, Polemarchus tells Socrates, "...either prove stronger than these men or stay here." In response, Socrates asks Polemarchus, "Isn't there still one other possibility... our persuading you that you must let us go?" (327b)<sup>45</sup> When Polemarchus arrives he points out the fact that there are more with him than there are with Socrates. In other words, if their encounter is being run democratically, Polemarchus, as majority leader, will have his say carried out. When Polemarchus says that Socrates must prove stronger than the men with him, else stay, Polemarchus implies, even if playfully, that his majority rule is based in force, or put another way, based in the visible. Socrates, in turn, when asking whether there's another possibility, namely persuading them to let him go, suggests in his way that

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<sup>43</sup> Blondell's *The Play of Characters in Plato's Dialogues*, 165-189; Rosen's *Plato's Republic*, 19-37; and Seth Benardete's *Socrates' Second Sailing: On Plato's Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 16-19, offer insightful treatments of Polemarchus' character.

<sup>44</sup> Allan Bloom points out in an endnote to this scene that, "At the end of the scene, which is a dramatic prefiguration of the whole political problem, Socrates uses this word as it was used in the political assembly to announce that the sovereign authority had passed a law or decree. It is the expression with which the laws begin, "It is resolved by [literally, 'it seems to'] the Athenian people...." (441, endnote 6).

<sup>45</sup> Polemarchus' exact words are, "Ἡ τοίνυν τούτων, εφη, κρειττοῦς γενεσθε ἢ μενετ αὐτοῦ." Socrates' response is, "Οὐκ οὐν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ἐτι ἐλλείπεται τὸ ἦν πεισῶμεν ὑμᾶς ὡς χρῆ ἡμᾶς ἀφείναι;" *Platonis Respublica*, 327c.

perhaps whatever decision they come to as a group may be reached after the effects of persuasion have been implemented. In other words, democracy, in this case, is based on persuasion, or put another way, based in the intelligible.

If majority rule is based on the visible, as Polemarchus' words and actions suggest, then the use of numerically superior physical force is the more appropriate and effective method of governance.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, if the appeal to majority rule is based on the intelligible, as Socrates may hope given his entreaty to persuade Polemarchus to let him go, then persuasion is the more appropriate and effective method of governance. Ultimately, finding out whether a human being is solely or primarily visible or intelligible in nature will aid in determining what method of governance is more appropriate and effective. As long as Polemarchus believes the human being is solely or primarily visible (i.e., physical) in nature, Socrates will have difficulty in persuading him that justice, whatever else it is, cannot be defined as giving to each what is owed, nor as doing good to friends and harm to enemies.

To put the point of this scene in other terms, which is the philosophical justification for governance in a democracy, force or persuasion? If democracy is a preferable form of governance because it best captures and harnesses force, then there should be no philosophical objection against a tyranny if it can use physical force more effectively to govern. On the other hand, if a democracy is a preferable form of governance because it is based on a common grasp of what is true, and a common grasp of what is true is brought about by persuasion, then a different problem emerges, namely

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<sup>46</sup> Regarding physical force in connection with both Polemarchus' and Thrasymachus' speeches in Book I, see Lycos' *Plato on Justice and Power: Reading Book I of Plato's Republic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987).

the one Polemarchus points out. If a democracy is philosophically justified by its effectiveness in gathering common opinion around what is true, primarily through the use of freedom of speech, then governance becomes incapacitated when people do not listen. Not only is Polemarchus free to withhold assent in the face of persuasion, he is free to be irrational. Worse still, Polemarchus can refuse to listen. Worst of all, Polemarchus is not alone and speaks for others. To sum, if force justifies democracy, there is no reason why one should not prefer a tyranny if it can use force to greater effect in governance. On the other hand, if persuasion justifies democracy, the entire system breaks down when people refuse to listen so as to be persuaded. Either way, democracy faces a problem.<sup>47</sup>

Polemarchus sends his slave boy ahead to stop Socrates at the beginning of the *Republic*. Socrates does not narrate (presumably because he did not overhear) what Polemarchus' orders to his slave boy were. Whether Polemarchus gave specific orders that the slave boy physically grab and detain Socrates, or whether by training or influence the slave boy had learned to execute his orders in such a fashion, one sees in the slave boy an extension of Polemarchus' will, and possibly also of Polemarchus' character.

Polemarchus displays his forceful tendencies once more in Book V, when the conversation, in a sense, starts over. Adeimantus speaks up to interrupt the conversation, but Socrates narrates enough of the details to expose Polemarchus' part in it. Socrates asks what it is they will not let go, and Adeimantus responds by saying, "You" (449a-c). In Book V, Polemarchus uses Adeimantus in a similar way he used his slave boy in Book

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<sup>47</sup> Socrates' interaction with Polemarchus and his friends in Book I foreshadows Socrates' critique of democracy in Book VIII. One need not infer from this observation that Plato's *Republic* is primarily pro-democracy or anti-democracy in its conclusions, and I make no claim either way on the matter.

I. In other words, Polemarchus treats his friend the same way he treats his slave, as an extension of his will in arresting Socrates.

When the company arrives at Cephalus' house, Socrates and Cephalus lead the conversation. Polemarchus enters the conversation when Cephalus agrees with Socrates that the definition of justice cannot be telling the truth and giving back what one has taken (331d). Polemarchus interrupts Socrates after Cephalus agrees with him, insisting not only that this is the definition of justice, but also that he is the heir of Cephalus – the one to whom Cephalus will someday give what is owed, namely, his birthright inheritance. Polemarchus quotes the poet Simonides and says "...it is just to give to each what is owed" (331e), saying further that Simonides "supposes that friends owe it to friends to do some good and nothing bad" (332a). When Socrates asks if enemies must also be given what is owed them, Polemarchus says, "That's exactly it, just what's owed to them. And I suppose that an enemy owes his enemy the very thing which is also fitting: some harm" (332b). Socrates asks about the just man, "in what action and with respect to what work is he most able to help friends and harm enemies," and Polemarchus replies "In my opinion it is in making war and being an ally in battle" (332e). In explaining himself, Polemarchus makes clear his view that justice, at bottom, is a matter of force – that which directly affects the visible – for the just man is the one who "owes" war to enemies and aid in battle to friends. And in peacetime, Polemarchus says that justice is useful in acquiring contracts or partnerships (333a), and concerning money (334a-b). Polemarchus' examples are primarily visible (as opposed to intelligible) in nature.

Not long after, Socrates questions Polemarchus about his definition of justice. Polemarchus discredits himself when he insists on maintaining his opinion about justice even though he no longer knows what he meant when he stated his opinion. He admits to being an irrational conversation partner. Polemarchus' definition of justice seems to imply finally that justice is "a certain art of stealing, for the benefit, to be sure, of friends and the harm of enemies" (334b). "The just man," says Socrates, "as it seems, has come to light as a kind of robber, and I'm afraid you learned this from Homer. For he admires Autolycus, Odysseus' grandfather on his mother's side, and says he surpassed all men 'in stealing and in swearing oaths'" (334a-b). Remarkably, when Socrates asks if Polemarchus means for justice to be a kind of stealing, Polemarchus swears an oath, "No, by Zeus" and continues, "But I no longer know what I did mean. However, it is still my opinion that justice is helping friends and harming enemies" (334b).

Although Polemarchus admits to knowing that he does not know, he is not reduced to the kind of unknowing or *aporia* that sees "no way," for Polemarchus says he still believes in his original definition of justice. Polemarchus reveals a stubbornness of character that foreshadows Thrasymachus' stubbornness of character. Just as Polemarchus does here, later in Book I Thrasymachus maintains his opinion about justice time and again, no matter how often Socrates demonstrates in speech that Thrasymachus' definitions of justice and injustice fall in upon themselves or are inadequate. Because persuasion requires a listener's acquiescence, a persuader's rhetoric and reasoning are never necessarily binding or coercive. This lack of necessary coercion does not mean the position of persuasion is hopeless in the face of disbelief, it means only that the

persuader's job is a difficult one, since his success is not solely up to him. Socrates' initial failures to persuade both Polemarchus and Thrasymachus attest to this difficulty.

### *iii. Thrasymachus*

Thrasymachus forces his way into the conversation with Socrates, foreshadowing and symbolizing in action the definition of justice he gives in speech: “‘Now listen,’ he said, ‘I say that the just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger’” (338c).<sup>48</sup> Thrasymachus gives examples of what he means by the advantage of the stronger, and all of his examples are physical – that is, visible. Justice as the advantage of the stronger is the ability to acquire money, property, and people (344a-c). Thrasymachus' definition of justice implies that force – the method by which one takes what one will or does what one will to others in the visible region – is the ruling principle behind all human interaction and discourse. Socrates responds by pointing out to Thrasymachus that a whole (whether a person or a city) governed by such a definition of justice cannot prevent its disintegration, and further that disintegration is inevitable under such a definition of justice (351c-354c). Socrates shows that Thrasymachus' definition of justice is logically incoherent at worst, and unlivable at best. Socrates says that even if there were a person who could perpetrate perfect injustice<sup>49</sup> “either by stealth or by fighting out in the open,”

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<sup>48</sup> For alternate treatments of Thrasymachus, see F. E. Sparshott, “Socrates and Thrasymachus,” in *The Monist* 50, (1966), 421-459; Cary Nederman's “Giving Thrasymachus His Due: The Political Argument of Republic I and Its Reception” in *The Journal of the Society for the Study of Greek Political Thought* (2007) 24(1), 26-42; William Welton's “Thrasymachus vs. Socrates: What Counts As a Good Answer to the Question ‘What Is Justice?’ (Republic 336b-9b)” in *Apeiron* (2006) 39(4), 293-318; Erich Freiberger's “Thrasymachus' Perverse Disavowal” in *Florida Philosophical Review* (2006) 6(1), 31-42; and Mark Piper's “Doing Justice to Thrasymachus” in *Polis* (2005) 22(1), 24-44.

<sup>49</sup> When Socrates refers to injustice perpetrated with “free rein” and no hindrance, I assume he means by this “perfect injustice,” since Socrates disavows belief in Thrasymachus' position and Thrasymachus uses the phrase “perfect injustice” (την τελεωτατην αδικιαν) (344a) in discussing the person who is most happy.



Socrates would remain unconvinced “that this is more profitable than justice” (345a-b). To persuade Thrasymachus of the same (over and above refuting Thrasymachus’ claims), Socrates would have to change Thrasymachus’ view of the human person as solely visible in nature. Thrasymachus’ definition of justice either ignores the harmony of parts that constitute the whole of a person, or it suggests that the harmony in a person called justice may be established through acquisition in the visible region.

When Thrasymachus says “that the just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger,” Socrates asks Thrasymachus to clarify what he means by “stronger.” Thrasymachus responds initially not with an answer but with obvious mistrust: “‘You are disgusting, Socrates,’ he said. ‘You take hold of the argument in the way you can work it the most harm’” (338d). Thrasymachus then attempts to clarify what he means by “advantage of the stronger,” but he himself does not seem clear on what he means by “stronger,” or at least he does not explain himself clearly. Thrasymachus seems to equate “the stronger” with “the one who rules” (338d-e, 340e-341a), which introduces an ambiguity to his definition. If “the one who rules” and “the stronger” are not equivalent terms, but instead are related to one another as cause and effect, treating the terms as equivalent leaves open the question which term is the cause, and which term is the effect. By saying the stronger is the one who rules, does Thrasymachus mean that the one who rules is stronger *because he rules*, or does Thrasymachus mean that one rules *because he is stronger*? Socrates does not formulate the ambiguity so clearly in own elenctic questioning, but the ambiguity allows for the line of questioning that Socrates does employ in refuting Thrasymachus’ definition for the first time (339b-340c).

Thrasymachus responds to Socrates' first refutation with an insult – “That’s because you’re a sycophant in arguments, Socrates” (340d) – and Thrasymachus makes plain that he views their argument solely in terms of strength and weakness, telling Socrates that “You won’t get away with doing harm [to my argument] unnoticed and, failing to get away unnoticed, you won’t be able to overpower me in the argument” (341a-b). After another exchange in which Socrates refutes Thrasymachus’ second attempt at a definition of justice, Thrasymachus once more responds with an insult (343a) and finally explains very baldly and vituperatively, and as clearly as he can, what he means by justice and injustice, ruler and ruled, and the advantage of stronger (over the weaker).

Thrasymachus gives up defining justice as the advantage of the stronger, and now says that the advantage of the stronger, call it what one will (for he calls it both justice and injustice (344c)), is that which all wish to have since it is profitable. “The tyranny,” or the rule of the stronger, can “by stealth and force take away what belongs to others (344a).” Every component of this definition of tyranny is important, and Socrates inverts every component by the end of the dialogue. He replaces “stealth and force” with visibility and persuasion; “taking away” with minding, providing for, and edifying; and the focus on “what belongs to others” with a lengthy discourse on the nature of what is properly understood to be one’s own. One only need compare Thrasymachus’ definition of tyranny given here to Socrates’ definition of justice given in Book IV to see Socrates’ inversion of Thrasymachus’ definition at its most obvious: “But in truth justice was, it seems, something of this sort; however, not with respect to a man’s minding his external

business, but with respect to what is within, with respect to what truly concerns him and his own” (443c-d).

Returning to Thrasymachus’ speech, the “stronger” man who perpetrates “partial injustice” is called a temple robber, a thief, and a kidnapper, depending on the kind of partial injustice he perpetrates (344a-b). Thrasymachus’ examples make clear his opinion that the “stronger” is the one who can “by stealth and force” take away physically other people’s money and property. The strongest person can by stealth and force perform “perfect injustice” to take away even the other people *themselves* by kidnapping and enslaving them (344b-c). Every one of Thrasymachus’ examples of injustice and advantage is a physical example (the acquisition of money, property, people).

Ultimately, by “stronger” Thrasymachus means “physically stronger,” or to use a term Socrates uses extensively later in the conversation, stronger in “the visible region.” The methods of “the stronger” – stealth and force – are ultimately physical/visible in nature, and according to Thrasymachus they are used to take physical property (by stealth)<sup>50</sup> and to take property physically (by force). When Thrasymachus says “the just is the advantage of the stronger, and the unjust is what is profitable and advantageous for oneself,” one could restate Thrasymachus’ definition in a manner consistent with all his physical examples by saying equivalently that “the just is the prerogative of the person who controls the physical, and the unjust is the acquisition of whatever physical property one deems worth acquiring according to one’s prerogative.” Under this definition, physical force – the method by which one takes what one will or does what one will to

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<sup>50</sup> “Stealth” could here refer to persuasion, since persuasion is that method by which one “robs” a person “unawares” (413b). I discuss further the relationship of persuasion to hiddenness in Chapter Three. The goods which Thrasymachus identifies as being acquired by stealth are physical in nature, thus the point stands.

others – is the primary, the fundamental, the ruling principle at the bottom of all human interaction and discourse. All laws concerning property are fiats declared by the stronger, and all honest discourse on justice must recognize this.

Socrates tells his auditor that after Thrasymachus speaks his piece, “he had it in mind to go away, just like a bathman, after having poured a great shower of speech into our ears all at once. But those present didn’t let him and forced him to stay put and present an argument for what had been said” (344d). Thrasymachus once again interrupts the conversation physically by attempting to leave. His attempted departure mirrors the nature of his entry into the conversation when he interrupted Socrates and Polemarchus physically, “fling[ing] himself at us as if to tear us to pieces” (336b). And just as Socrates the narrator tells his auditor that others had been restraining Thrasymachus before his bursting into the conversation, Socrates now tells his auditor that when Thrasymachus tries to leave, “those present didn’t let him and forced him to stay put (344d).” It is both ironic and fitting that Thrasymachus is treated by others according to his own standard, and by his own standard he proves to be the weaker in the end. The character interaction here illuminates not only the nature of Thrasymachus’ character, but also the nature of his position when he believes and applies it in an every day situation.

In addition to the forceful treatment Thrasymachus receives at the hands of those present, Socrates says that “I, too, on my own begged him” to explain himself further (344d). Socrates responds to Thrasymachus’ diatribe with an entreaty to be persuaded (344d-345b). Socrates says that even if there were a person who could perpetrate perfect injustice “either by stealth or by fighting out in the open,” Socrates would remain unconvinced “that this is more profitable than justice” (345a-b). Not only does Socrates

tell Thrasymachus that persuasion will be the only method by which he can change Socrates' mind, Socrates also coaches Thrasymachus in the art of persuasion. When Thrasymachus is at a loss because his arguments have not persuaded Socrates, and he asks if Socrates would like a "forced feeding" of the argument (345b), Socrates declines the offer and instead tells Thrasymachus to be clear in his arguing, and to avoid deception. Socrates recommends metaphorical visibility of argument on Thrasymachus' part. Presumably this will allow Thrasymachus' listeners better and easier access to his argument, and hopefully this increased quality of access will provide his listeners with sufficient illumination to change their minds for themselves and agree with Thrasymachus.

Thrasymachus' desire to change Socrates' mind is frustrated because no one but Socrates can change Socrates' mind. However, Thrasymachus' desire that *Socrates* change Socrates' mind may be satisfied provided Thrasymachus can *persuade* Socrates to do so. The persuader insists on making himself clear and avoiding deception not only because he concedes and must engage the reality of his listener's freedom to be persuaded or not, but also because openly acknowledging his listener's freedom may increase his likelihood of persuading his listener.<sup>51</sup> Clarity and honesty engender trust in a listener and increase a listener's quality of accessibility to a persuader's premises and reasoning, all of which gives a listener increased ability to consider well what his persuader proposes.

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<sup>51</sup> In his book *Therapeia: Plato's Conception of Philosophy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1958), Robert Cushman claims that Plato realized there is nothing psychologically necessary in dialectical reasoning itself, or in reasoning of any kind, that requires a person to accept its conclusions, since one is always free to accept or withhold belief in any given premise, including those which provide the framework in which dialectical reasoning can occur (219-22). For a related account see also David N. McNeill's "Human Discourse, Eros, and Madness in Plato's *Republic*," in *The Review of Metaphysics* 55, 2 (Dec 2001), 235-268.

Just after Thrasymachus' entrance into the conversation, and before he gives his definition of justice, Socrates narrates, "...Thrasymachus evidently desired to speak so that he could win a good reputation, since he believed he had a very fine answer. But he kept up the pretense of wanting to prevail on me to do the answering" (338a). Socrates then says he will praise Thrasymachus if he speaks well and teaches him the nature of justice, to which Thrasymachus replies, "I say that the just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger. Well, why don't you praise me? But you won't be willing" (338c). Thrasymachus' speech and behavior both here and throughout the dialogue give Socrates good reason to view Thrasymachus as an honor-lover. If Thrasymachus is not, it becomes very difficult to explain why he blushes after Socrates confounds him once more at 350d. Socrates' chooses wisely, then, in beginning his inquiry into Thrasymachus' opinions about justice and injustice by disavowing belief in them. Merely by voicing his disavowal, Socrates shows immediately that for Thrasymachus in particular, and for the honor-lover in general, one must rely on more than force when one desires to change the minds of others for the sake of honor and reputation.<sup>52</sup> This conclusion becomes possible for one such as Thrasymachus only if one can conceive and take seriously the claim that human nature consists of more than just the bodily, or the visible.

#### *iv. Glaucon*

In this section, I explain how Glaucon reveals his opinion that a human being is solely visible in nature. This opinion prevents him from being "truly persuaded" by

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<sup>52</sup> Later in the dialogue one sees that force affects the spirited part of the soul, and that the spirited part of the soul loves honor.

Socrates regarding the nature of justice. In his story about the unjust man with the just reputation, Glaucon accounts for the difference between appearance and reality as the difference between what is visible and what is hidden (but would otherwise be visible) (359c-361d).<sup>53</sup> Socrates must convince Glaucon that the difference between appearance and reality in the unjust man with the just appearance is better accounted for in terms of that which is visible and that which is intelligible.

When resurrecting Thrasymachus' argument for the profitability of injustice, Glaucon argues that with a ring which can make its wearer invisible, anyone with such a ring would inevitably commit every kind of evil possible, from seduction, to conspiracy, to theft, to rape, and finally to murder (359c-361d).<sup>54</sup> Being invisible allows one to do what one wishes without the fear of punishment, because one's unjust actions have been hidden from view. For this reason, the hidden, or invisible, is superior to the visible. But Glaucon's argument that the invisible is superior to the visible is not the same as an argument which says that the intelligible is superior to the visible, since a visible thing is not made intelligible simply by being made invisible.

At the beginning of the dialogue, Glaucon speaks as one who is convinced that human nature is visible only. All of Glaucon's words are words of acquiescence in the face of physical restraint and physical threats – jocular though they may be – from men with greater number and strength. When Polemarchus' slave boy orders Socrates and Glaucon to wait, Glaucon answers for both of them, "Of course we'll wait" (327b).

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<sup>53</sup> For another take on Glaucon's views, see Alessandra Fussi's "Inconsistencies in Glaucon's Account of Justice" in *Polis* (2007) 24(1), 26-42.

<sup>54</sup> For the role Glaucon's story of the ring of the ancestor of Gyges has in his account of justice, as well as the role storytelling in general has throughout the dialogue, see Jacob Howland's "Storytelling and Philosophy in Plato's *Republic*" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* (2005) 9(2), 297-315.

When Polemarchus asks if Socrates could persuade him and his company if they don't listen, Glaucon interrupts and answers in Socrates' stead, "There's no way" (327c). And when Polemarchus tells Socrates, "So stay and do as I tell you," once more Glaucon interrupts and answers for Socrates, saying, "It seems we must stay" (328b). However, after the discussion on justice begins in earnest, Glaucon does not speak as one who is convinced that human nature is visible only. When Thrasymachus forcibly enters the conversation, Glaucon is preeminent among those who beg on Socrates' behalf that Thrasymachus speak and provide his definition of justice (337d, 338a). Glaucon even offers to pay Thrasymachus, if only he does as Socrates asks and speaks (337d). After Thrasymachus answers at length, Glaucon says he is not persuaded by Thrasymachus' claims (348a). Nonetheless, at the beginning of Book II Glaucon says he is not yet persuaded by Socrates either (357b). He cannot decide between the two accounts of justice: Glaucon admits that things cannot be as Thrasymachus says they are, yet he is not convinced that things are as Socrates says they are. In response to Glaucon's request in Book II to be truly persuaded (357a-b), Socrates must provide Glaucon with another way of understanding human nature before Glaucon can agree that it is always better to be just.

Glaucon's perplexity is not unlike Polemarchus' previous perplexity when Polemarchus insisted on maintaining belief in his definition of justice though he no longer knew what he meant by it. Glaucon's perplexity is also not unlike Thrasymachus' frustration in defending his definitions of justice and injustice. In all three cases, because of Socrates' elenctic questioning the interlocutor admits (grudgingly or otherwise) things cannot be as he says they are, nonetheless the interlocutor wishes still to believe he



speaks truly of things as they are.<sup>55</sup> The interlocutor is stuck believing in, or believing in between, two mutually exclusive beliefs. The way Glaucon puts the matter, although he is willing to listen, he is unable to listen because he has “been talked deaf by Thrasymachus and countless others” (358c). For persuasion to have the possibility of being efficacious, the listener must have the ability to hear – a possibility which diminishes when people like Thrasymachus pour “great shower[s] of speech into our ears all at once” (344d). If Glaucon is deaf to new arguments, he is worse off than those who refuse to listen because he is *unable* to refuse to listen. One’s ability to hear, then, depends not only on one’s willingness to listen. If the ability to hear is diminished by too much talk of a certain stripe or volume, as Glaucon suggests, censorship of some kind may serve as a kind of antidote. The seeming paradox is that censorship may preserve a person’s freedom to listen, or refuse to listen.

Glaucon begins his restoration of Thrasymachus’ argument by telling the story of the ring of Gyges’ ancestor,<sup>56</sup> a ring which turns its wearer invisible when its collet is turned inward (359c-362c).<sup>57</sup> Glaucon’s story highlights the importance of stealth in the visible region. Glaucon’s perfectly unjust man achieves perfect injustice through

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<sup>55</sup> The interlocutors take the appearance of things to be their reality, and so because of their inverted understanding of appearance and reality they feel duped when Socrates argues on behalf of the reality they have failed to notice so that he *appears* to have gained their acquiescence through his elenctic questioning. The interlocutors’ feelings of *really* disagreeing with Socrates while *appearing* to agree may be something which Socrates can use to good persuasive effect in showing how unsatisfactory appearance bereft of reality can be.

<sup>56</sup> Every scholar who refers to the ring of the ancestor of Gyges refers to it simply as “the ring of Gyges” (*sans* the ancestor). This phrase reduction is unwarranted, and prevents one from tracking the possible contribution to the “generational questions” (grandfathers, fathers, sons) this story may be making. I discuss these generational questions in Chapter Four.

<sup>57</sup> See Michael Davis, “The Tragedy of Law: Gyges in Herodotus and Plato,” in *The Review of Metaphysics* (2000) 53(3), 635-654 for another take on Gyges.

invisibility – bodily hiddenness. When Socrates responds, he asks his conversation partners to construct a city in speech, to make it as large as necessary and as visible as possible so that they may glimpse in the city the nature of justice. The city in speech, Socrates’ analogies in Book VI comparing the good to the sun (507b-509c) and reality to a line of divided ratios (509d-511e), and Socrates’ image in Book VII of prisoners in a cave (514a-521c), all stress the importance of visibility in coming to see and understand the true nature of not only justice and injustice, but all things as they are. Socrates’ visibility-oriented stories and analogies directly engage the hidden-orientedness of Glaucon’s story.

Socrates’ response to Glaucon makes clear that those who are convinced that human beings are visible in nature only, mistake soul for body, the invisible for the visible, and the greatest for the least goods. Mistaken conclusions about the greatest goods lead to unjust lives, and consequently to disoriented, unhappy lives and frustrated desires. In Book VII, Socrates explains that people who are convinced that they are no more than the shadows and dust one might find at the bottom of a cave misunderstand the nature of things because their souls are *turned away* from things as they *are*. Things as they are appear inverted because of the inversion of these persons’ souls, and these turned-around persons must undergo conversion if they are to be turned with and turned toward things as they *are* (518c-d). Socrates identifies this converting, persuading art as education as above at times, and as philosophy at others: “Then, as it seems, this wouldn’t be the twirling of a shell but the turning of a soul around from a day that is like night to the true day; it is the ascent to what *is* which we shall truly affirm to be philosophy” (521c).

In response to Glaucon's request in Book II to be truly persuaded, Socrates spends most of his time in the *Republic* in conversation with Glaucon. As a response to Glaucon's request, one sees that Socrates' conversation with Glaucon is an extended, elaborate act of persuasion. Socrates even cares about fulfilling Glaucon's most seemingly insignificant requests. When Socrates offers the healthy city in speech, Glaucon calls it a "city of sows" and asks for couches in speech on which the citizens in the city in speech may recline (372d). Near the end of their conversation, in ultimate response to Glaucon's request, after having provided Glaucon with the couches he asked for in speech, Socrates takes them away and give Glaucon something more (in this particular instance, the *idea* of a couch) (596c).<sup>58</sup> Socrates responds to Glaucon's requests both great and small, attending to him from first to last.

Glaucon is the first and last character mentioned in the *Republic*. Socrates the narrator mentions Glaucon at the beginning of the *Republic*, and Socrates the character directs his speech at Glaucon by name at the end (621b-d). In the beginning and in the end of the *Republic*, Socrates counts Glaucon as his own, more so in the end by putting together their salvation. When Socrates asks Glaucon whether he has considered "that our soul is immortal and never destroyed," Socrates narrates that "he looked me in the face with wonder and said, 'No, by Zeus, I haven't. Can you say that?'" (608d). Socrates responds to Glaucon's incredulity by providing an argument for the immortality

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<sup>58</sup> I argue that Socrates' use of a couch in his discussion of imitation at the beginning of Book X is no arbitrary choice, but rather serves as a bookend to Glaucon's request for couches in Book II. These references to couches serve as bookends of sorts, and are but one of the many bookends that demarcate a chiasmic structure to the *Republic*. For one scholar's take on the chiasmic structure of the *Republic*, see Kenneth Dorter's "The Divided Line and the Structure of Plato's *Republic*" in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* (2004) 21(1). 1-20. In Chapter Four I make a stronger, more textually and thematically specific case than does Dorter for the chiasmic structure of the dialogue.

of the soul based on what is alien to the soul and what goods and evils are most the soul's own, and then by telling a tale that is most commonly referred to by Plato scholars as the myth of Er. After telling this tale, Socrates provides the moral, and he ends by saying that he and Glaucon can be saved from defiling "our soul" by the tale that was saved "if we were persuaded by it" (621b-c). Socrates then says "that soul" will "fare well" "if we are persuaded by me" (621c-d). In both cases, salvation comes through being persuaded to "practice justice with prudence in every way" (621c).

*v. Adeimantus*

In this section, I explain how Adeimantus' speech in Book II provides Socrates with (1) the basic demand that must be met if Socrates is to truly persuade his interlocutors of the preferability and profitability of justice, and (2) the framework for the project of city-building and child-rearing in which this demand can be met.

A brief discussion of Glaucon's distinction among goods (357b-d) will provide a helpful preface for my treatment of Adeimantus' speech. Glaucon explains that things may be called good for their consequences only, for their own sakes only, or for both their consequences and their own sakes. Glaucon provides these categories to help clarify his request that Socrates truly persuade them that justice is always better than injustice. The many consider justice a good only for its consequences, but Socrates says justice is also good for its own sake (358a). Glaucon tells a story of an unjust man who has a reputation for being just to illustrate the truth of the opinion that justice is good for its consequences only (359c-361d).

Adeimantus completes Glaucon's tale<sup>59</sup> of the unjust man with a just reputation by saying that the unjust man will carry off his evil-doing and avoid punishment through a clever use of persuasion in some circumstances and force in others (365d). When he finishes his addendum to Glaucon's tale,<sup>60</sup> Adeimantus tells Socrates the reason why he and his brother have difficulty accepting Socrates' opinions about justice, and what it would take to change their minds:

... there is not one who has ever blamed injustice or praised justice other than for the reputation, honors, and gifts that come from them. But as to what each itself does with its own power when it is in the soul of a man who possesses it and is not noticed by gods and men, no one has ever, in poetry or prose, adequately developed the argument that the one is the greatest of evils a soul can have in it, and justice the greatest good. For if all of you had spoken in this way from the beginning and persuaded us, from youth onwards, we would not keep guard over each other for fear injustice be done, but each would be his own best guard,<sup>61</sup> afraid that in doing injustice he would dwell with the greatest evil. (366e-367a)

In this speech, Adeimantus identifies the basic demand that must be met if Socrates is to truly persuade his interlocutors of the preferability and profitability of justice, and by virtue of this identification, suggests the framework for the project of city-building and child-rearing in which this demand can be met.

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<sup>59</sup> Rosen in his *Plato's Republic*, 60-76; G. R. F. Ferrari in his *City and Soul in Plato's Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 11-34; and Blondell in her *The Play of Characters in Plato's Dialogues*, 199-227, do a good job of separating the characters of Adeimantus and Glaucon and explaining their roles in forwarding the conversation at hand. Roochnik also separates the characters well in his *Beautiful City*, 51-77, but he is more heavy handed in the inferences he draws from the difference between the brothers as far as their erotic natures (or lack thereof, in the case of Adeimantus) may go.

<sup>60</sup> With regard to the difficulty in sometimes separating out the contributions of the two brothers: Roochnik mistakenly gives Glaucon credit for lots of things that Adeimantus is actually responsible for. See Roochnik's *Beautiful City*, 46-57.

<sup>61</sup> Adeimantus here foreshadows the definition of justice as "minding one's own business" as given in Book IV: "But in truth justice was, it seems, something of this sort; however, not with respect to a man's minding his external business, but with respect to what is within, with respect to what truly concerns him and his own" (443c-d). Remember from a footnote above, Thrasymachus' definition of justice served as an earlier, inverted foreshadowing of this definition of justice.

Adeimantus concludes his speech with three points. First, he reminds Socrates that their argument is a reinstatement of Thrasymachus' position (367a). Second, he suggests that Thrasymachus' position results from an inversion of one's "powers" (367a), thus anticipating Socrates' discussion of an inverted order of one's soul as the cause of tyranny and unhappiness in Books VI through IX. Third, he claims metaphorical visibility in his speech (367b), despite his speech completing Glaucon's speech which begins with the story of an unjust man who profits through the use of a ring that makes him invisible.

In response, Socrates suggests that his difficulty in inspecting the two men that Glaucon and Adeimantus have proposed is much like the difficulty of a near-sighted man trying to read small text (368c-d). Socrates uses this analogy of vision to justify building a city in speech, which will allow him to inquire into the nature of justice. He tells the brothers Glaucon and Adeimantus, "It looks to me as though the investigation we are undertaking is no ordinary thing, but one for a man who sees sharply" (368c). By building a city in speech, Socrates seeks to uncover that which is hidden or invisible, including the nature of the body (made invisible by Gyges' ancestor's ring), the nature of the soul, and the nature of justice. Through the laws governing child-rearing in their city in speech (376d-417b), Socrates also explores the ways in which force and persuasion aid or hinder one in properly understanding the nature of the body, the soul, and justice.<sup>62</sup>

Adeimantus appears early in Book I of the *Republic* as a companion of Polemarchus. Socrates the narrator tells his auditor that Adeimantus is Glaucon's brother, and that Adeimantus comes along with Polemarchus, who had his slave boy

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<sup>62</sup> I discuss this topic in Chapter Three.

arrest Socrates and Glaucon (327c). Socrates' introduction portrays Adeimantus as a character whose loyalties may be split between his companion Polemarchus and his brother Glaucon. On three occasions – when Polemarchus asks Socrates to prove stronger than his company or remain with them, when Polemarchus asks if Socrates can persuade if his company refuses to listen, and when Glaucon answers for Socrates that there is no way – Adeimantus says nothing. In the opening scene of the *Republic*, Adeimantus speaks only after Polemarchus and Glaucon have had their say, and when he speaks he changes the subject: “Then Adeimantus said, ‘Is it possible you don’t know that at sunset there will be a torch race on horseback for the goddess?’” (328a)

Adeimantus' first words are an attempt at persuasion, but persuasion aimed at maintaining Polemarchus' arrest of Socrates. Adeimantus may recognize the party will have more success in convincing Socrates to stay with the promise of an exciting horseback relay torch race than they will with the threat of their greater number and strength. After they succeed in getting Socrates to go with them to Cephalus' house, when the pursuit for a definition of justice begins, Adeimantus once more uses persuasion to attack Socrates' arguments that the just life is happiest and most profitable. In Book II, after Glaucon reinstates Thrasymachus' argument that the unjust man has the happier and more profitable life, Adeimantus remarks, “You surely don't believe, Socrates, that the argument has been adequately stated?” (362d). He then gives the longest uninterrupted speech in the *Republic* so far (362e-367e) – longer than Glaucon's preceding speech (358e-361d), and longer than any other speech given for the rest of the *Republic* until Socrates' final tale at the end of Book X (614b-621d).

Three features of Adeimantus' speech are remarkable: his prodigious knowledge of and appeal to poets; his focus on education, the effect of stories on children, and differences in behavior due to differences in upbringing; and his speech's dialogue form. In all three points, Adeimantus seeks to characterize as perverse any position which claims that justice practiced for its own sake leads to profit and happiness. Thrasymachus, Polemarchus, and Glaucon all make a similar claim, but none makes it as clear and explicit as Adeimantus, whose presentation focuses on the nature and effects of persuasion in the discussion of the nature and effects of justice. What makes the above three features of Adeimantus' speech so remarkable is that they are features shared in common with Socrates' speech, even though Socrates' speech opposes Adeimantus' speech in its ultimate aim.

Regarding the first remarkable feature of Adeimantus' speech, Adeimantus' references to poets outweigh the references to poets made by Thrasymachus, Polemarchus, and Glaucon combined. Polemarchus quotes and mentions Simonides by name (331d-e). Glaucon quotes and mentions Aeschylus by name (361b, 362a-b). Adeimantus, by contrast, quotes and/or cites by name Hesiod and Homer (363a-c, 364c-364e), Musaeus and his son (363c-d), Orpheus (364e-365a), Pindar (365b), Antilochus (365c), and poets in general (363e, 364c, 365e, 366b). With each reference, Adeimantus strengthens the claim that persuasion's effect on the nature of justice is always one of perversion. If the world is visible in nature only, then persuasion is a species of force, and it has no purpose other than engaging the visible world in an indirect, and often underhanded, way. Through "sacrifices and incantations," "pleasures and feasts," "certain evocations and spells," and "pleasurable games," "not only private persons, but



cities as well” can receive “deliverances and purifications,” no matter how unjust the private citizens or cities may be (364b-365a). Adeimantus cites numerous poets as his authorities for these claims. In so doing, Adeimantus follows the precedent Socrates set in Book I in referring to so many poets. In Book I, when Polemarchus refers to the poet Simonides to give some authority to his definition of justice, Socrates in his refutation of Polemarchus’ definition refers to Homer (334a-b); Bias, Pittacus, and Periander (335e); and Perdiccas, Xerxes, and Ismenias the Theban (336a). As a follow up to his use of the poets, Adeimantus claims that if the poets he cites are wrong, then they can be dismissed. Either the gods exist, and can be swayed as the poets say, or the gods do not exist, and “thus we’ll get the better and not pay the penalty” (365d-e). Socrates’ speech concerning censorship, the poets, and the power of poetry in the remainder of the *Republic* is, in large part, a direct response to Adeimantus’ dual use and dismissal of the poets in defense of the profitability of injustice in a purely visible world.

Regarding the second remarkable feature of Adeimantus’ speech, in showing his concern for the effect of education and upbringing on the young, Adeimantus complains to Socrates, “with all these things being said – of this sort and in this quantity – about virtue and vice and how human beings and gods honor them, what do we suppose they do to the souls of the young men who hear them?” (365a) Adeimantus insists that they cannot be persuaded by Socrates in claiming justice to be good in itself apart from its consequences because they themselves were not properly raised (366e-367a).

Adeimantus worries about the effect of the parent generation on the child generation, recognizing the responsibility of the parent generation when he says “No doubt, fathers say to their sons and exhort them, as do all those who have care of anyone, that one must

be just” (362e-363a), and again when he considers the claim that “... in Hades we'll pay the penalty for our injustices here, either we ourselves or our children's children” (366a).

Socrates spends the preponderance of his speech in Books II-X of the *Republic* addressing Adeimantus' concerns regarding the upbringing of citizens.<sup>63</sup>

The third remarkable feature of Adeimantus' speech is its simulated dialogue form. Adeimantus, in the midst of his speech to Socrates and the rest, begins to speak to himself, as if recounting for his listeners a dialogue. Adeimantus' speech is quoted in full below for the sake of observing its simulated dialogue form:

‘But,’ says someone, ‘it’s not always easy to do bad and get away with it unnoticed.’ ‘Nothing great is easy,’ we’ll say. ‘But at all events, if we are going to be happy we must go where the tracks of the arguments lead. For, as to getting away with it, we’ll organize secret societies and clubs; and there are teachers of persuasion who offer the wisdom of the public assembly and the court. On this basis, in some things we’ll persuade and in others use force; thus we’ll get the better and not pay the penalty.’<sup>64</sup> ‘But it surely isn’t possible to get away from the gods or overpower them.’ ‘But, if there are no gods, or if they have no care for human things, why should we care at all about getting away? And if there are gods and they care, we know of them or have heard of them from nowhere else than the laws and the poets who have given genealogies; and these are the very sources of our being told that they are such as to be persuaded and perverted by sacrifices, soothing vows, and votive offerings. Either both things must be believed or neither. If they are to be believed, injustice must be done and sacrifice offered from the unjust acquisitions. For if we are just, we won’t be punished by the gods. That is all. And we’ll refuse the gains of injustice. But if we are unjust, we shall gain and get off unpunished as well, by persuading the gods with prayers when we transgress and make mistakes.’ (365c-366a)

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<sup>63</sup> Glaucon's being Socrates' main interlocutor for most of the *Republic* does not preclude Socrates spending much of his time in speech addressing Adeimantus' concerns regarding censorship, the power of poetry, or the upbringing of citizens, nor must Socrates divert the conversation from one brother to the other to do so. In short, Socrates need not address Adeimantus directly to address Adeimantus' concerns. Leon Harold Craig insists that Socrates addresses the concerns of both brothers while maintaining a separation between the ways in which he responds to each of them in conversation. See Craig's *The War Lover* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1994), 45-6.

<sup>64</sup> Compare Adeimantus' appeal to the use of force and persuasion here to Socrates' appeal to the use of “persuasion and compulsion” in the city in speech at 519e-520a.

By speaking in dialogue form, Adeimantus imitates the speaking style of Socrates the narrator and the writing style of Plato the author. Plato, by writing Adeimantus' speech as he does, and Socrates the narrator, by recounting Adeimantus' speech in this way, thus mark it as the most dangerous account in opposition to Socrates' view of justice because it is most easily mistaken for his view, given the similarity of form. The appearances of the two speeches are similar, though the realities they communicate are radically different. Adeimantus' speech is dangerous insofar as people are prone to take appearance for reality. Adeimantus' speech stands as an example of how persuasion, when not guided and ordered by the good, may be used to pervert understanding.

Adeimantus' dialogue with himself is similar in form to Socrates' dialogue with himself in the *Gorgias* (506c-509c), a dialogue in which Socrates denigrates rhetoric as a "knack" as opposed to a true skill or craft such as dialectic, comparing the pair of activities to that of a pastry-maker and a physician, respectively.<sup>65</sup> The rhetorician and pastry-maker sell their wares easily, for their services and products are "concerned with pleasure," but they may not (and often are not) in reality good (*Gorgias*, 500b). Adeimantus' speech may fit under the category of "wizardry," which is an imitation of true persuasion, having the appearance but not the reality of argument ordered toward truth.<sup>66</sup>

Adeimantus ends his speech by reiterating Glaucon's request to hear justice for its own sake extolled, but Adeimantus completes Glaucon's request (a) by reminding Socrates that their argument is a reinstatement of Thrasymachus' position; (b) by

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<sup>65</sup> For more on this topic, see Thomas Smith's "Rhetoric and the Defence of Philosophy in Plato's *Gorgias*," in *Polis* (2003) 20(1-2), 62-84.

<sup>66</sup> I discuss wizardry at length in Chapters Three and Four.

suggesting that Thrasymachus' position results from an inversion of one's "powers," thus anticipating Socrates' discussion of inverted perspective as the cause of tyranny and unhappiness in Books VI through IX, and (c) by claiming metaphorical visibility in his speech, despite his speech completing Glaucon's speech which begins with the story of an unjust man who profits through the use of a ring that makes him invisible.

Adeimantus concludes:

This, Socrates, and perhaps yet more than this, would Thrasymachus and possibly someone else say about justice and injustice, vulgarly turning their powers upside down, in my opinion at least. But I – for I need hide nothing from you – out of my desire to hear the opposite from you, speak as vehemently as I can. (367a-b)

Socrates gathers himself after being "at a loss" (368b), and in response to Glaucon and Adeimantus' request to speak on behalf of justice in the face of their invisible men, he uses an analogy of vision to justify building a city in speech to inquire into the nature of justice (368b-369a). Socrates tells the brothers, "It looks to me as though the investigation we are undertaking is no ordinary thing, but one for a man who sees sharply" (368c). One certainly needs to see sharply if one is trying to see invisible men, and especially if the invisible men have an eloquent cohort who insists that he has nothing to hide. Socrates' project to build a city in speech is a project of uncovering that which is hidden, be it justice, be it a man's body, or be it the convictions, hopes and fears that a man hides in his soul "about the most sovereign things to what is most sovereign in himself" (382a).

#### *vi. Body and Soul*

For the remainder of this chapter, I discuss the nature of the body and the soul as they are described by Socrates. His discussion is both direct, in explicit speeches about

the nature of the body and the soul, and indirect, in speeches about the use of force, persuasion, and wizardry, three ways in which human beings may affect one another's body and soul.<sup>67</sup> The direct speech about the body and the soul in the *Republic* can be divided into two classes: (1) speech about the embodied soul, and (2) speech about the disembodied soul. Pertaining to the first class of speech, Socrates and company talk a great deal about the training of the body (*sōma*) with gymnastic and the training of the soul (*psuchē*) with music (376a-378a, 392b-397d, 398c-402a, 402e-409d), and eventually about how both gymnastic and music are mixed pursuits that both affect the soul, making sure it's neither "too soft" nor "too hard" (410a-412a). Pertaining to the second class of speech, the inquiry into the nature of justice is born out of Cephalus' ruminations of what happens to people after they die (330d-331b), a discussion that makes sense only if one assumes there is something which can undergo certain terrible fates in Hades after the body dies. The entire dialogue ends after a brief argument for the immortality of the soul based in part on the evils of the body being alien to the soul (608c-611d), when Socrates

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<sup>67</sup> My treatment of this topic remains rooted solely in a consideration of the way in which Socrates and his interlocutors discuss the body and the soul in Plato's *Republic*. See the following works for related treatments of this topic: Scott Hammond's "Spiritedness Incarnate and the Unity of the Soul in Plato's *Republic*" in *Polis* (2005) 22(1), 60-84; Diana Paun's "The Idea of Evil in Perspective of the Soul-Body: Relationship in Plato's Philosophy" in *Revista de Filosofie* (2002) 49(5-6), 483-492; Jennifer Hansen's "Written on the Body, Written by the Senses" in *Philosophy and Literature* (2005) 29(2), 365-378; Matthew Coutinho's "Plato and the Immortality of the Soul" in *Divyadaan* (2003) 14(2), 191-216; James Robinson's "The Nature of the Soul in *Republic X*" in *Poiesis* (1991) 16, 214-215; Lloyd Gerson's "Platonic Dualism" in *The Monist* (1986) 69(3), 352-369; and Charles Taliaferro's "The Virtues of Embodiment" in *Philosophy* (2001) 76(295) 111-125.

Also, without going too far afield into a tangential though related matter, for more on an understanding of the body and the soul outside the context of Plato's *Republic*, see following works: Ilham Dilman's "Body and Soul" in *Philosophical Investigations* (2002) 25(1), 54-66; Filip Karfik's "What the Mortal Parts of the Soul Really Are" in *Rhizai* (2005) 2(2) 197-217; David Claus' *Toward the Soul: An Inquiry into the Meaning of Psyche Before Plato* (New Haven: Yale, 1981); W. K. C. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy: Vol. III: The Fifth-Century Enlightenment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1969); Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy, vol. IV: Plato: The Man and his Dialogues: Earlier Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); and Kevin Robb's "Psyche and Logos in the Fragments of Heraclitus: The Origins of the Concept of Soul" in *The Monist* (1986) 69(3), 315-351.

tells the tale of a man whose soul goes on a fantastic journey while his body lay waiting to be burned on a funeral pyre (614b-621b).

(a) *The Ordering of the Soul as Higher than the Body*

In the ten books of Plato's *Republic*, Socrates and his interlocutors mention the soul twice as often as they mention the body, music twice as often as gymnastic, and persuasion twice as much as force.<sup>68,69</sup> In noting this recurring ratio, one may not infer necessarily that the soul is twice as important as the body, that music is twice as important as gymnastic, and that persuasion is twice as important as force. Nevertheless, the regularity of the recurrent ratio of 2:1 in three separate pairs of conversation topics whose complementary terms "go together" so to speak (soul/body, music/gymnastic, persuasion/force) is suggestive at least of the importance of these pairs of concepts, and the order of importance of the concepts within each pair.

At numerous points during the night's conversation, Socrates describes the priority of the soul over the body. This does not imply, however, that the body is bad. If anything, Socrates' discussion of the greater importance of the good of the soul makes clear the importance of the good of the body in three ways: (1) one praiseworthy effect

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<sup>68</sup> More precisely, the ratio of soul:body references is 261:125, the ratio of music:gymnastic references is 88:53, and the ratio of persuasion:force references is 86:37. I get these numbers by counting the words "soul," "body" and its variants (e.g., "bodily"), "music" and its variants (e.g., "musical"), "gymnastic" and "gymnasiums," "persuasion" and its variants (e.g., "persuaded"), and "force" and its variants (e.g., "forcibly") in Bloom's translation of the *Republic*. One note on the above statistics: I included the nine occurrences of the word "unmusical" in my tally of the 88 occurrences of "music" and its variants.

<sup>69</sup> For comparison, the word "good" occurs 352 times, the word "injustice" or "unjust" or "unjustly" occurs 270 times, and the word "justice" or "just" or "justly" or (in one instance) "justified" occurs 416 times. 154 of these instances occur in Book I, and 73 in Glaucon and Adeimantus' joint thought experiment in the beginning of Book II, meaning the word "justice" and its variants occur fewer times in the rest of the dialogue (189 times) than in these first two parts (227 times).

of a soul's being good is its causing a body's being good, (2) a good body is recommended as helpful (if not necessary) for its use in pursuing the good of the soul, and (3) Socrates communicates the importance of the good of the soul by claiming that it is more important than the good of the body, a comparison which successfully relays Socrates' point because of its clear and uncontroversially accepted assumption that the good of the body is a worthwhile good.

In the context of describing the childhood education of the guardians in his city in speech, Socrates says, "It doesn't look to me as though it's a sound body that by its virtue makes the soul good, but the opposite; a good soul by its own virtue makes the body as good as it can be" (403d). Socrates' observation makes it clear that the soul has a kind of causal primacy over the body. At the same time, Socrates also realizes the relationship is not unidirectional. When revisiting the rearing of the youth in the city in speech in Book III, Socrates says, "When they are youths and boys they ought to take up an education and philosophy suitable for youths, and take very good care of their bodies at the time when they are growing and blooming into manhood, thus securing a helper for philosophy" (498b). Thus, while it is not through the transfer of virtue that a body can bring about the good of the soul, nevertheless a good body can be of great help in pursuing the good of the soul.

One of the clearest extended passages in which Socrates describes the priority of the soul over the body occurs at the end of Book IX (591a-d), when Socrates sums up part of the answer he has finally made to Glaucon's challenge given at the beginning of Book II (358b-362c). The person whose soul is "brought to its best nature" gains "a habit more worthy of honor than the one a body gains with strength and beauty accompanied

by health, in proportion as soul is more honorable than body” (591b). This person will “not even look to health, nor give precedence to being strong, healthy, or fair unless he’s also going to become moderate as a result of them; rather he will always be seen adjusting the body’s harmony for the sake of the accord in the soul” (591c-d). “Accord in the soul” is the ultimate goal, and the harmony of the body is instrumental in achieving it. Though the soul is more honorable than the body, the body is nonetheless something worthy of honor. Further, Socrates communicates the honor of the soul through a comparison of proportion to the honor of the body. If the honor of the body were not very great, in turn the soul’s honor would not be so great since the soul’s honor is measured in proportion to body’s honor.

*(b) The Unity of the Body and the Soul*

One would be mistaken to infer that Socrates takes the body not to be good, or that he takes the body to be dispensable, on the basis of his ordering the soul as higher than the body. Socrates frequently conjoins his discussions of the body and of the soul, indicating the importance of a unity of the two, and thus the indispensability of both to human nature in its fullness. The two words “body” and “soul” occur in conjunction of some kind forty times throughout the *Republic*.<sup>70</sup>

While the body and the soul are conceptually separable – as well as actually separable, in the accounts of the afterlife in the *Republic* – by and large Socrates treats them as inseparable actually and, in some cases, inseparable conceptually. This treatment

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<sup>70</sup> The following is a list of excerpts from the *Republic* in which body and soul are mentioned together: 366b-c, 375b, 376e, 377b-c, 380e-381a, 402d-e, 403c-d, 404e, 408d-409b, 409e-410a, 410b-c, 411e-412a, 442a-b, 444c, 445a-b, 455b-c, 462c-d, 485d-e, 494a-b, 495b-e, 496a-497a, 497e-498c, 518b-519b, 525c-e, 530a-c, 532b-d, 535a-536a, 536d-537b, 539d-540c, 545d-547c, 556b-c, 557e, 559a-e, 566a-c, 584c, 585a-586b, 591a-d, 608d-611a, 611b-612b, 614b-616a, 617e-618b, 620e-621b.



emphasizes the unity of body and soul throughout the dialogue, counter to those who would contend that either the soul or the body is focused upon to the exclusion of the other. In fact, when Socrates is not speaking about soul and body together as a topic, but instead speaking solely about the body in particular or solely about the soul in particular, somehow the other (body or soul, whichever is not the topic at hand) manages to appear regardless. And in several instances, Socrates speaks of the soul in bodily terms, or vice versa. Near the end of Book II, Socrates suggests that music and gymnastic comprise the education of the guardians: music for the soul, and gymnastic for the body (376d-378a). Yet, by the end of Book III, Socrates says that both music and gymnastic are for the formation of the soul, so that it might not be too “hard,” nor too “soft” (410a-412a).

In Book IV, after having discerned the definition of justice in the city and the soul as “minding one’s own business and not being a busybody,” Socrates uses an analogy to explain the definition of justice in different terms.<sup>71</sup> The analogy is that virtue is to the soul as health is to the body (444b-445b). Socrates trades on the common understanding of health as the proper ordering of the body and sickness as various disorders of the body to communicate the idea that virtue in the soul is also a proper ordering of the soul and that vices are various disorders of the soul. In short, Socrates decides to explain the nature of the soul by appealing to the nature of the body. When explaining the meaning of his image about enchained cave-dwellers in the beginning of Book VII, Socrates describes what one must do with one’s soul using yet another bodily analogy, saying that “just as an eye is not able to turn toward the light from the dark without the whole body,”

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<sup>71</sup> For another account see James Butler, “Justice and the Fundamental Question of Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Apeiron* (Mar 2002) 35(1), 1-17.

so, too, the soul “must be turned around from that which *is coming into being*” toward “that which *is* and the brightest part of that which *is*” (518c).<sup>72</sup>

Socrates gives his most explicit description of the soul in bodily terms in his tale of the afterlife witnessed by Er. In this tale, Er says that disembodied souls whose previous lives are being judged enter heaven by going “right and upward” or enter earth by going “left and down.” That is, they move in space and have spatial direction. The disembodied souls have fronts and backs: for those that enter heaven, the judges “attached signs of the judgments in front of them;” and for those that enter earth, “they had behind them signs of everything they had done.” These disembodied souls can also get dirty: “As to the other two openings, souls out of the earth, full of dirt and dust, came up from one of them...” The disembodied souls presumably have no bodily eyes, yet those which come down from heaven talk about the “sights” of “inconceivable beauty” they have seen, and those which come up from earth talk about the “terrible sights” they have seen. (614c-616a)

Concerning the terrible sights seen under the earth, Er overhears one man who had come from under the earth telling about a sight he saw just as he reached the opening to leave the earth after his one thousand years’ punitive journey. The opening to the surface roared when some men approached it, not allowing them to leave (615e):

‘There were men at that place,’ he said, ‘fierce men, looking fiery through and through, standing by and observing the sound, who took hold of some and led them away, but who bound Ardiaeus and others hands, feet, and head, threw them down and stripped off their skin. They dragged them along the wayside, carding them like wool on thorns; and they indicated to those who came by for what

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<sup>72</sup> I discuss the allegory of the cave throughout my dissertation on the following pages: 30 (footnote), 54, 70, 74, 100, 107-8, 112, 120, 125, 131, 137, 151, 157-161, 166.

reason this was done and that these men would be led away and thrown into Tartarus.’ (615e-616a)

Just as Er’s body lies newly slain on a battlefield for ten days and on a funeral pyre for two days (614b), presumably these men left their dead bodies behind a thousand years previous and came as disembodied souls to the place of judgment where they were sent under the earth for a thousand years. And yet, these souls have hands, feet, and heads, and skin that can be stripped off.

Socrates’ insistence on using bodily language in his discussion of the soul – even the disembodied soul – mitigates against construing his prioritizing the soul over the body as a denigration of the body. One who would choose to read Socrates as a proto-Gnostic<sup>73</sup> would be at a loss in explaining Socrates’ speech above. Further, such a reading could not explain Socrates’ use and discussion of force and persuasion. Though both force and persuasion are ways of engaging one’s soul, and though Socrates insists that force and persuasion are best used in pursuit of the good of one’s soul, nevertheless force and persuasion are mediated necessarily by the bodily. Socrates’ interlocutors must be persuaded that human nature consists of both body and soul before they can be persuaded of the preferability and profitability of justice. While the interlocutors have difficulty in accepting Socrates’ account of human nature because of their dismissal of the soul as real, distinct from the body, and primary in importance, a Gnostic dismissal of the body would also prevent one from accept Socrates’ account of human nature. Without an understanding of human nature as consisting of body and soul, one cannot

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<sup>73</sup> Perhaps it would be more chronologically fitting for me to say that one may read Socrates as a “perduring Pythagorean,” as opposed to a “proto-Gnostic.” Nevertheless, I take “proto-Gnostic” to be a clearer term than “perduring Pythagorean” for referring to a person who denigrates the bodily.

understand the nature of justice, since it is exercised and experienced through the use of force and persuasion, and force and persuasion engage human nature in its fullness. I explain these observations more fully in the next chapter, Chapter Three: Force and Persuasion.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Force and Persuasion

Plato's *Republic* is not primarily about force and persuasion, despite their ubiquitous presence throughout the dialogue. Rather, force and persuasion are present in the dialogue primarily as a means for Socrates to provide his interlocutors a proper understanding of human nature, which when fully explicated includes an account of the nature of reality (the context in which human nature is found) and the good (the source of orderliness toward which human nature must be oriented if one is to live the happy life). For the reader, the presence of force and persuasion throughout the dialogue is a constant reminder of its importance as a hermeneutical key for properly interpreting the content and purpose of Socrates' speech.

In this chapter, I provide Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and a third thing called wizardry, which is an imitation of both force and persuasion. I show how Socrates uses and speaks about force and persuasion, as well as the imitation of both in the form of wizardry, to lead his interlocutors to a proper understanding of human nature as being constituted by both body and soul, with the good of the soul being more important than that of the body. I also show that one can use Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and wizardry as a hermeneutical key to interpret several major images, analogies, and stories of the *Republic*, such as the allegory of the cave from Book VII, the chimaera picture of the soul from Book IX, and the myth of Er from Book X.

In Book II of the *Republic*, Adeimantus tells Socrates the reason why he and his brother have difficulty accepting Socrates' opinions about justice (366e-367a), and what it would take to change their minds:

... if all of you had spoken in this way from the beginning and persuaded us, from youth onwards, we would not keep guard over each other for fear injustice be done, but each would be his own best guard, afraid that in doing injustice he would dwell with the greatest evil. (367a)

In the previous chapter, I noted that in this speech, Adeimantus (1) identifies the basic demand that must be met if Socrates is to truly persuade his interlocutors of the preferability and profitability of justice, and by virtue of this identification, (2) suggests the framework for the project of city-building and child-rearing in which this demand can be met. After saying this, Adeimantus concludes (i) by reminding Socrates that their argument is a reinstatement of Thrasymachus' position (367a); (ii) by suggesting that Thrasymachus' position results from an inversion of one's "powers" (367a), thus anticipating Socrates' discussion of an inverted order of one's soul as the cause of tyranny and unhappiness in Books VI through IX, and (iii) by claiming metaphorical visibility in his speech (367b), despite his speech completing Glaucon's speech which begins with the story of an unjust man who profits through the use of a ring that makes him invisible. In response, Socrates suggests that his difficulty in inspecting the two men that Glaucon and Adeimantus have proposed is much like the difficulty of a near-sighted man trying to read small text (368c-d). (It would be more accurate to say that the present difficulty is the far less hopeful case of a near-sighted man trying to see what is invisible by its very nature.) Socrates uses this analogy of vision to justify building a city in speech, which will allow him to inquire into the nature of justice. He tells the brothers Glaucon and Adeimantus, "It looks to me as though the investigation we are undertaking

is no ordinary thing, but one for a man who sees sharply” (368c). By building a city in speech, Socrates seeks to uncover that which is hidden or invisible, including the nature of the body (made invisible by Gyges’ ancestor’s ring), the nature of the soul, and the nature of justice. Through the laws governing child-rearing in their city in speech (376d-417b), Socrates also explores the ways in which force and persuasion aid or hinder one in properly understanding the nature of the body, the soul, and justice.

The presence of force and persuasion throughout the dialogue points to the dual nature of human beings as body and soul. If body or soul were reducible one to the other, presumably force or persuasion would in turn be reducible one to the other. However, one does not find any such argument for reduction anywhere in the *Republic*. In fact, just at those moments in the conversation where an interlocutor either concludes or assumes that a human being is by nature body only or soul only, both force and persuasion are reintroduced either as explicit themes of conversation or in the narrated interaction among the interlocutors, thereby denying in speech or in deed the truth or tenability of such a reduction of human nature. Socrates’ interlocutors cannot agree that it is always better to be just than unjust so long as they misapprehend human nature. To persuade his interlocutors of the preferability and profitability of justice, Socrates must instill in his interlocutors a proper understanding of human nature. This will require instilling in them also a proper understanding of nature at large (the whole of the visible and invisible universe in which human beings find themselves) and the ordering principle behind it (the good) toward which the human soul must be oriented if a person is to live well.

In the previous chapter, I discerned the opinions of Socrates’ interlocutors about human nature through an examination of their words and actions. These opinions, which

hold human nature to be solely or primarily bodily in nature, prevent the interlocutors from being persuaded by Socrates' claims about justice. In the current chapter, I show how Socrates' discussion and use of force and persuasion are meant to correct the various inaccurate opinions of Socrates' interlocutors regarding human nature so that they come to see it as consisting of body and soul.

*i. Force and Persuasion in ancient Greek literature*

Force and persuasion are a pair of common themes that appear together throughout ancient Greek poetry, plays, and literature. In his book *Persuasion in Greek Tragedy*, R. G. A. Buxton notes that “the main polarity in which *peitho* [persuasion] figured” was in “that which opposed it to *bia* (‘force’ or ‘violence’).”<sup>1</sup> Buxton discusses the treatment that force and persuasion receive at the hands of Lysias, Plato, Isokrates, and Kritias:

It will be recalled how in Lysias' *Funeral Oration* (18-19) *peitho* is represented as a characteristic which distinguishes men from (violent) beasts; whereas in Plato's *Kriton* the use of *peitho* is applauded, while that of *bia* is argued to be morally reprehensible. [...] In his *Antidosis* (293-4) Isokrates dwells on a geographical distinction between *peitho*-using and *peitho*-lacking societies: Greeks employ *peitho*; those outside – barbarians – do not. By contrast, in a passage from Kritias (DK fr. 25, esp. 10) *pre-civilized* life is described as being subservient to brute force.<sup>2</sup>

In summary, these ancient Greek writers typically associate *peitho* with positive or desirable concepts, and *bia* with negative ones.

An important distinction is needed to properly interpret Buxton's observation above about the treatment of *bia* and *peitho* in Plato's *Crito*. *Bia* is not argued to be

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<sup>1</sup> R. G. A. Buxton, *Persuasion in Greek Tragedy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 58-66.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.



morally reprehensible as such, but in context is only declaimed when used against father and mother, or against the laws of a city, which are like father and mother to the citizens which it raises and protects. This judgment holds true in the *Republic* as well. Parents can use *bia*; children cannot. The only just recourse for a child in responding to his father or mother is *persuasion* on the one hand, and *obedience* on the other. Those who rule may use either force or persuasion. Those who obey may not use force, at least not against their rulers. Throughout the *Republic*, Socrates describes the injustice of a child's use of force against a parent in various scenarios: the abuse that the elderly receive at the hands of their younger relatives (329a-b); the anarchy of democracy (560e-561a, 562d-563b), characterized by the physical abuse of one's parents (574a-c); and the total slavery of tyranny (579d-580a), characterized by parricide (569b-c). At the same time, there are limits to the use of force, even in the hands of those who properly rule, including parents. In the final tale of the afterlife that Socrates tells, the man who chooses first is the man who picks a life of great tyranny in which he will eat his children (619b-d). Thus, *bia* in the hands of rulers (in this final case, in the hands of a tyrant) can be misused.

Buxton notes a similarity between persuasion and justice, and a similarity between force and injustice, in passages from works by Theognis, Herodotus, Homer, and Hesiod.<sup>3</sup> Thus it should come as no surprise that force and persuasion would occur as prominent themes in Plato's *Republic*, an ancient Greek dialogue about justice which quotes extensively from both Homer and Hesiod. After canvassing the work of a few more ancient Greek authors (including Aeschylus), Buxton provides the following list of "polarities which may be seen as homologous with *peitho/bia*":

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 59-60.

<i>peitho</i>	<i>bia</i>
civilized	uncivilized
inside polis	outside polis
<i>nomos</i>	absence of <i>nomos</i>
<i>dike</i> [justice]	absence of <i>dike</i>
mankind	animals
Greeks	barbarians <sup>4</sup>

Buxton warns not to take these polarities at face value, asserted univocally by all Greeks, and rigidly defined. On the contrary,

So far from being rigid, the distinctions we have pointed to were supple and manipulable. *Peitho* and *bia* are usually opposed to one another; yet a poet can, if he wishes, speak of a violent *peitho* (A. Ag. 385-6). *Nomoi* usually exclude *bia*; yet Hippias can assert (Pl. *Prt.* 337d) that *nomos* is a ‘tyrant’ that forces (*biazetai*) people to act against their nature. ‘Greeks’ and ‘barbarians’ are usually opposed to one another, yet we have the remarkable passage in Plato’s *Statesman*, where distinguishing humanity into Greeks and barbarians is likened to separating ‘number’ into ‘10,000’ and ‘all other numbers’ – and might not cranes split the world into ‘cranes’ and ‘all other creatures (including mankind)’? (262d-263d). In all three cases, the effect of what is being said depends on the fact that an expected opposition is being challenged. [...] All our table is intended to be is a heuristic device which draws attention to certain parallelisms and analogies frequently found in Greek thought. *Peitho/bia* and its homologues are evidenced from a very wide range of contexts, and they tell us a good deal about discriminations which were important in Greek culture.<sup>5</sup>

Polemarchus’ definition of justice (332d), as well as the training of the guardians of the luxurious city to be gentle with their fellow citizens and harsh with foreigners (375c), both match up well with the list of homologous polarities provided above. Nevertheless, Polemarchus’ definition of justice is not the last word on justice in the dialogue – it is actually close to the first word. If the above polarities were commonplace in ancient Greek thought, it makes sense that Polemarchus’ definition would be offered among the

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 62-3.

first, so that further developments in understanding the nature of justice could depart from this familiar starting point. And this is exactly what one sees in Plato's *Republic*.

Two of Buxton's three examples of ancient Greek authors' challenging common polarities come from Platonic dialogues (*Protagoras*, *The Statesman*). The treatment of force and persuasion in Plato's *Republic*<sup>6</sup> proves no exception to Plato's penchant for engaging and analyzing the polarities of human experience<sup>7</sup>: visible and intelligible, force and persuasion, body and soul, nature and convention, one and many, and so on. In the *Republic*, Plato shows through his characters' words and interaction that persuasion can be violent, and force can be persuasive. Socrates describes Thrasymachus' speech and attempted exit in Book I as a case of violent persuasion: "... he had it in mind to go away just like a bathman, after having poured a shower of speech into our ears all at once" (344d). In Book II, Glaucon affirms the violent, physical effect that Thrasymachus' words have had on him: "I've been talked deaf by Thrasymachus and countless others" (358c). On the other hand, Thrasymachus experiences the use of

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<sup>6</sup> For more on the concepts and the presence of force and persuasion in Plato's *Republic*, see Glenn Morrow's "Plato's Conception of Persuasion" in *The Philosophical Review* (1953) 62(2), 234-250; K. Lycos' *Plato on Justice and Power: Reading Book I of Plato's Republic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987); Christopher Shields' "Forcing Goodness in Plato's *Republic*" in *Social Philosophy and Policy* (2007) 24(2), 40-69; Thom Brooks' "Knowledge and Power in Plato's Political Thought" in *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* (2006) 14(1), 51-77; Marina McCoy's "Sophistry and Philosophy in Plato's *Republic*" in *Polis* (2005) 22(2), 265-286; Ellen Wagner's "Compulsion Again in the *Republic*" in *Apeiron* (2005) 38(3), 87-101; Adi Ophir's *Plato's Invisible Cities: Discourse and Power in the Republic* (Savage, MD: Barnes & Noble, 1991); Nicholas Smith's "Plato on Knowledge as a Power" in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (2000) 38(2), 145-168; and Eric Brown's "Justice and Compulsion for Plato's Philosopher-Rulers" in *Ancient Philosophy* (2000) 20(1), 1-17.

<sup>7</sup> For more on force and persuasion in other Platonic dialogues, see Christopher Bobonich's "Persuasion, Compulsion and Freedom in Plato's *Laws*" in *The Classical Quarterly* (1991) 41(2), 365-388; Dustin Gish's "Rivals in Persuasion: Gorgianic Sophistic versus Socratic Rhetoric" in *Polis* (2006) 23(1), 46-73; Robert Mayhew's "Persuasion and Compulsion in Plato's *Laws* 10" in *Polis* (2007) 24(1), 91-111; Dale Jacqueline's "Socrates on Persuasion, Truth, and Courtroom Argumentation in Plato's *Apology*" in *Inquiry* (Sum 2003) 22(4), 33-41; Roslyn Weiss' "Oh, Brother! The Fraternity of Rhetoric and Philosophy in Plato's *Gorgias*" in *Interpretation* (Spr 2003) 30(2), 195-206; and Thomas Smith's "Rhetoric and the Defence of Philosophy in Plato's *Gorgias*" in *Polis* (2003) 20(1-2), 62-84.

persuasive force when he attempts to leave: "... those present didn't let him and forced him to stay put and present an argument for what had been said" (344d). One should expect this mixture of force and persuasion given that human beings are embodied souls. Human nature thus does not prove invalid the commonly held belief that force and persuasion form a polarity. Rather, human nature reaffirms the polarity of force and persuasion while it simultaneously emphasizes the tension between the two poles, as follows.

A human being is an embodied soul. In other words, a human being is a unity of two parts (so to speak): a body and a soul. Referring to a human being as a unity is an acknowledgement of those things which it unites. To say that a human being is an embodied soul is not to blur the distinction between body and soul but rather to clarify it, and in so doing show that the difficulty in understanding human nature as body and soul is not a conceptual one, but an existential or experiential one. Similarly, to say or show that force can be persuasive, or that persuasion can be violent, is not to blur the distinction between the poles of force and persuasion, but rather to clarify it, or in other words, to highlight the tension between the two poles. Force and persuasion are two ways in which one may interact with a human being. Force as such engages the body as such, and persuasion as such engages the soul as such. However, since human beings are a unity of body and soul, both force and persuasion always engage both the body and the soul. This is true for both the one who forces or persuades and the one who is forced or persuaded. Thrasymachus' threat to persuade Socrates by "tak[ing] the argument and giv[ing] [his] soul a forced feeding" (345b) illustrates this point well.

All forms of persuasion are mediated through the sensible (532b-533c, 539a). Words and actions are needed to excite ears and eyes, which in turn inform the soul which is to be persuaded. In turn, all forms of force begin as operations of the soul of the one who forces. Intending to use force is an operation of the soul. Attempting to differentiate between force and persuasion based on the ultimate aims behind their use turns out to be unhelpful since force is sometimes used with the aim of affecting the intelligible (for instance, physically beating someone in hopes of having the person obey future commands out of fear of future beatings), and persuasion is sometimes used with the aim of affecting the visible (for instance, talking to someone in hopes of convincing the person to use his physical goods for some specified purpose). There are clear-cut cases where it is relatively easy to identify an act as one of force or of persuasion, but much of human experience involves a mixture of the two. Given that the human being is both sensible and intelligible in nature, the commonality of the experience of force and persuasion as mixed should come as no surprise. I argue that the common experience of this mixture combined with the difficulty in conceptually separating force and persuasion contribute to Socrates' interlocutors' misunderstanding of human nature, such that they believe either that the soul is bodily in nature, or that if the soul is different from the body, it is inferior to the body in order of importance. These difficulties of isolating force from persuasion aside, Socrates does provide some markers for identifying force and persuasion, as well as definitions of force and persuasion in terms of the parts of the soul which they affect.

ii. *Definitions of Force and Persuasion in Plato's Republic*

Socrates' conversation partners see both force and persuasion as different means to the same end, attaining what one desires. For the interlocutors, the means (force or persuasion) make no difference; the end is what matters. For instance, Glaucon and Adeimantus describe the unjust man with the ring of the ancestor of Gyges as using both force and persuasion to gain what he desires from both men and gods (361a-b, 364b-365a, 365c-366b). Socrates' challenge is to show them that the different means reflect the nature of the human being as an embodied soul, and that this proper understanding of human nature illuminates the nature of the sought-after end. Knowing that human nature is comprised of both body and soul is a prerequisite for understanding how the two are related both to each other as well as to the world in which the person lives.

Understanding human nature properly will enable Socrates' interlocutors to discern whether what they desire will result in the happy life, and if not, how to discern what the happy life is. Thus, a meditation on force and persuasion as the means to the end of the preferable, profitable life is the first step in coming to know what that life is.

Socrates and his conversation partners indicate a few markers for distinguishing cases of force from cases of persuasion. *The effect of persuasion on the soul is marked by petition, attractiveness, playfulness, and argument. The effect of force on the soul is marked by pain, grief, and necessity.*<sup>8</sup> Socrates himself sums up the difference between

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<sup>8</sup> The following is a list of excerpts from the *Republic* in which the identifying markers or effects of force and persuasion are illustrated: 327c, 330d-331a, 336a-b, 344a, 344d, 345a-b, 347e-348a, 350c-e, 357a-b, 359b-c, 360c, 361a-b, 364b-365a, 365c-366b, 366d-367a, 368a-b, 377b-c, 378c-d, 388c-e, 390d-e, 391c-392a, 399a-c, 401b-d, 403b-c, 405b-c, 408b-c, 410a-b, 411c-412a, 412e-413c, 414b-415d, 420c-421c, 424c, 427b-c, 429e-430b, 436e-437a, 440a-b, 458c-d, 461b-c, 471d-e, 476d-e, 479e-480a, 488b-d, 489a-b, 490c-d, 492d-e, 494d-495a, 498c-499a, 501b-c, 501e-502a, 503b, 515e-516a, 519e-520a, 525b-c, 528b-c, 530a-c, 536d-537a, 537e-539a, 545a-b, 548b-c, 550a-b, 552d-e, 553e-554c, 554c-d, 558c-d, 560c-d, 563b-e, 568b-d, 569a-c, 573e-575a, 577e, 584b-c, 589a-e, 600d-e, 603c-d, 604b-c, 606a-b, 621b-d.

force and persuasion in Book III, at a pivotal moment in the dialogue. Socrates explains as follows, quoted at length within its full context:

“Then, in my opinion, they must be watched at every age to see if they are skillful guardians of this conviction and never under the influence of wizardry or force forget and thus banish the opinion that one must do what is best for the city.”

“What do you mean by ‘banishment?’” he [Glaucou] said.

“I’ll tell you,” I said. “It looks to me as though an opinion departs from our minds either willingly or unwillingly; the departure of the false opinion from the man who learns otherwise is willing, that of every true opinion is unwilling.”

“I understand the case of the willing departure,” he said, “but I need to learn about the unwilling.”

“What?” I said. “Don’t you too believe that human beings are unwillingly deprived of good things and willingly of bad ones? Or isn’t being deceived about the truth bad, and to have the truth good? Or isn’t it your opinion that to opine the things that are, is to have the truth?”

“What you say is correct,” he said, “and in my opinion men are unwillingly deprived of true opinion.”

“Don’t they suffer this by being robbed, bewitched by wizards, or forced?”

“Now I don’t understand again,” he said.

“I’m afraid I am speaking in the tragic way,” I said. “By the robbed I mean those who are persuaded to change and those who forget, because in the one case, time, in the other, speech, takes away their opinions unawares. Now you surely understand?”

“Yes.”

“And, then, by the forced I mean those whom some grief or pain causes to change their opinions.”

“I understand that too,” he said, “and what you say is correct.”

“And, further, the bewitched you too, I suppose, would say are those who change their opinions either because they are charmed by pleasure or terrified by some fear.”

“Yes,” he said, “that’s because everything that deceives seems to bewitch.” (412e-413c)

Persuasion is described as robbery – it is stealthy, insofar as it acts on a person without her awareness. Force, on the other hand, is effective because of a person’s awareness of its presence. In Thrasymachus’ description of the perfectly unjust man who can achieve perfect injustice, the life of the perfectly unjust man “is tyranny, which by stealth and force takes away what belongs to others, both what is sacred and profane, private and

public, not bit by bit, but all at once” (344a). Socrates describes here the guardian, who will be able to resist both stealth (the robbery of persuasion) and force in preserving what he takes to be most his own, an understanding that is informed by love (*philia*) of his own. Socrates’ description of the guardian, and eventually of the just man, is an inversion of Thrasymachus’ perfectly unjust man who acquires what belongs to others, rather than preserves what is most his own.

Socrates’ discussion of persuasion, force, and wizardry occurs immediately *after* he explains that the city must be guarded and guided by those who care for it and love (*philia*) everyone in the city as their own (412c-e), and immediately *before* he explains that the true guardians of the city will not be those who fight to acquire physical goods (the luxuries which necessitated a warrior profession) and preserve the city physically, but rather, the true guardians are those who acquire “the truth” and to preserve the convictions of the city by which they maintain their hold of that truth. This understanding of “true guardians” over and against the guardians they had groomed to fight for the city leads to Socrates renaming the warrior profession “auxiliaries or helpers” and calling “guardians” this newly instituted profession whose aim is to seek and acquire truth and guard the city’s “convictions” (413d-414b). At the beginning of the discussion on the nature of justice, Socrates’ interlocutors all referred to the use of force and persuasion, paying little attention to either of these means because of their concern over the end in sight, which was invariably described in bodily terms. When Socrates defines force and persuasion at this point in the dialogue, he does so to describe the nature of the person who can withstand both for the sake the good of the soul.



In addition to providing some defining characteristics for distinguishing force from persuasion, Socrates also names a third way of changing one's convictions that he calls "wizardry" (*goeteia*). This third form appears to be a mixture of both force and persuasion. It both "charm[s] by pleasure" and "terrifie[s] by some fear" (413c). This is not a summary way of referring to force and persuasion, but is actually a reference to some third thing, as Socrates makes clear immediately following, when he says that they must choose for their guardians the men who are best at three different kinds of competitions: (1) having good memories and being "hard to deceive," (2) enduring "labors, pains, and contests in which these same things must be watched," and (3) succeeding in "a competition for the third form, wizardry" (413c-d). In the competition testing for resistance to wizardry, "... these men when they are young must be brought to terrors and then cast in turn into pleasures, testing them far more than gold in fire" (413d-e).

While force and persuasion constitute one of the central polarities explored by ancient Greek literature, John Kirby argues that force (*bia*) and persuasion (*peitho*) often appear together in ancient Greek literature with a third term, *erōs*. This "particular constellation of concepts" constitute what Kirby calls "the Great Triangle" of ancient Greek literature.<sup>9</sup> Although Socrates has not yet discerned the parts of the soul by this point in the dialogue, when he does (436a-444a) it will become clear that (1) *persuasion affects the calculating part (logistikon)*, (2) *force affects the spirited part (thumoeides)*,

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<sup>9</sup> John Kirby, "The 'Great Triangle' in Early Greek Rhetoric and Poetics," in *Landmark Essays on Classical Greek Rhetoric*, ed. by Edward Schiappa (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1994), 3-15, 3.

and (3) wizardry affects the desiring part (*epithumetikon*) of the soul.<sup>10</sup> Thus persuasion, force, and wizardry respectively engage, as Leon Craig phrases and summarizes them, “the soul’s three distinguishable motors (*logos, thumos, and erōs*).”<sup>11</sup>

The calculating part of the soul is affected by argument, and is attracted to truth and to verisimilitude (the appearance of truth). Deceptive argument and verisimilitude are those methods of persuasion by which a person may be robbed unawares of his convictions. The first tests of the guardians’ ability to preserve their convictions are of this kind. A citizen who weathers these trials should be well-equipped to withstand the persuasive words of opportunistic conspirators that may await him (494d-495a). The guardian may come through these attempts at persuasion with his convictions intact, but persuasion is only the first tactic of his conspiratorial former comrades, for “when they fail to persuade in speech, [...] they punish the man who’s not persuaded with dishonor, fines, and death” (492d). The second category of tests subjects the guardians’ spirit to the pains and labors associated with the use and experience of force. When he establishes and discusses the nature of the different parts of the soul, Socrates defines the spirited part of the soul in terms of its relation to force, explaining of the spirited man “he’ll undergo these very [gymnastic] exercises and labors looking less to strength than to the spirited part of his nature and for the purpose of arousing it, unlike the other kinds of contestants who treat diets and labors as means to force” (410b).

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<sup>10</sup> In Book IX the person ruled by the calculating part of the soul is said to have a learning- or wisdom-loving soul, the person ruled by the spirited part is said to have a victory- or honor-loving soul, and the person ruled by the desiring part is said to have a money- or gain-loving soul. The root word for “loving” in all three cases is *philia* (581a-b).

<sup>11</sup> Leon Harold Craig, *The War Lover: A Study of Plato’s Republic* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 92.

If both persuasion and force as such fail, wizardry remains. Wizardry stirs up the desiring part of the soul, and through its engagement of the soul's desires, acts on the soul through a mixture of both force and persuasion, "charm[ing] by pleasure or terrif[ying] by some fear" (413c). Throughout the dialogue, Socrates gives speeches in which he explains the nature of wizardry and its association with the desiring part of the soul (e.g., 440a-b, 560c-d). Of particular note is his speech from Book X, when he explains that the imitative art of the poets is wizardry (606a-b). The effects of the verisimilitude of the poet's imitative art are similar to the effects of argument used in persuasion (606a-b). The vicarious nature of the poet's art causes a person to consider the pains of others (rather than one's own pain) (606b), and its effects are similar to the effects of pains and labors on the spirited part of the soul used in force.

Socrates' description of the effects of wizardry (*goeteia*) in Book III prefigures his description of the deleterious effects of *erōs* in Books VIII and IX. In fact, the descriptions of their effects are similar enough to suggest that the two terms (*goeteia* and *erōs*) may be functionally equivalent for Socrates' purposes in the discussion at hand. At this point, near the end of Book III, Socrates describes the guardian as resistant to force and persuasion, as well as a third thing which resembles a mixture of the first two. When describing the degeneration of the just regime and just soul in Books VIII and IX,<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> For other treatments of the degenerate regimes see Rod Jenks, "The Machinery of the Collapse: On *Republic* VIII," in *History of Political Thought* (2002) 23(1), 21-29; G. R. F. Ferrari, *City and Soul in Plato's Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Stuart Hampshire, "Justice is Strife," in *Philosophy and Social Criticism* (2002) 28(6), 635-645; Waller R. Newell, *Ruling Passion: The Erotics of Statecraft in Platonic Political Philosophy* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000); Devin Stauffer, *Plato's Introduction to the Question of Justice*, (Albany: State University New York Press, 2001); Leo Strauss, *Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983); Jonathan Lear, "Inside and Outside the Republic," in *Plato's Republic: Critical Essays*, ed. by Richard Kraut (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), 61-94; Paul Gooch, "Plato on Philosophy and Money," in *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* (2000) 7(4), 13-20; and H. P. P. Lotter,

Socrates paints the tyrannical man as one who has been charmed by a particular desire, or *erōs*. The tyrant's life is one of insatiability and fear, and the tyrant has no friends, being slave or master to all, plying those who are his masters with persuasion, and using force on those who are his slaves (575e-576a, 578a). Whatever else one may gather from the similarity between Socrates' descriptions of the effects of both *erōs* and wizardry, certainly the danger of *erōs* is clear. If *erōs* has no redeeming qualities, then defining it solely in terms of something to which a guardian must be resistant is sufficient.

However, if there are some worthwhile uses or experiences of *erōs*, then more must be said about its place in the life of the guardian. More must also be said about the guardian's worthwhile uses of force and persuasion. The next two sections deal with each of these topics.

*iii. The Problem of Force and Persuasion in the Republic: Acquisition and Preservation*

Socrates describes the true guardian of their city in speech as one who preserves his convictions, and so is resistant to the use of either force or persuasion in robbing him of his charge. The problem Socrates faces is explaining how a guardian can be amenable enough to force or persuasion to come to hold the proper convictions, but then resistant enough to force and persuasion never to let go of those convictions once held. Socrates addresses this problem explicitly in Book VI when he identifies a tension between two characteristics of the philosophic nature. This tension illuminates the distinction between *philia*, which is related to preservation, and *erōs*, which is related to acquisition. The *Republic* is a dialogue concerned primarily with *philia*, and secondarily with *erōs*. This

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"The Significance of Poverty and Wealth in Plato's *Republic*," in *South African Journal of Philosophy* (2003) 22(3), 189-206.

is because the dialogue is about fathers and sons, and the love proper to the father-son relationship. The *Republic* is the story of how a father properly rears his son so that his son may preserve the fullness of his inheritance, both body and soul. The *Republic* is also the story of how a son comes to see that the crown jewel of his inheritance, or what is truly most his own, is the good of his soul.<sup>13</sup>

Socrates first institutes the guardian profession as a professional army to accommodate Glaucon's desire for luxuries in their city in speech. Socrates points out that the city's land may have had enough resources to meet the necessary desires of its citizens, but if they desire more than this they will have to "cut off a piece of our neighbor's land" (373d).<sup>14</sup> Following the reasoning behind their "one man, one art" principle in the founding of their city, they realize they must have a professional army to pursue effectively the acquisition of the land of their neighbors, while at the same time preserving the city's land from retaliation or unprovoked acts in kind of said neighbors "if they let themselves go to the unlimited acquisition of money, overstepping the boundary of the necessary" (373d). In sum, the primary reason guardians arise in discussion is to address Glaucon's desire for luxury, thus the primary purpose of the guardians is acquisition. Socrates realizes that their city's neighbors may be taken over by a similar desire for the unnecessary, and so he observes that the guardians will have a useful auxiliary function in preserving the city.

As the dialogue unfolds, Socrates gently puts aside the matter of acquisition, indicating instead that the primary function of the guardians is one of preservation. He

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<sup>13</sup> I discuss the claims in this paragraph further in Chapter Four.

<sup>14</sup> Trade with other cities will not provide for the desired luxury if, as Socrates stipulates, the city's land is sufficient only for the citizens' necessary desires.

does this in two ways. First, in Book III, after stating that the guardians of the city must be resistant to force and persuasion, Socrates calls “true guardians” those who preserve the convictions of the city, and those who preserve the city’s physical well-being are renamed “helpers, or auxiliaries and helpers of the rulers’ convictions” (414b). Thus he makes those warriors who acquired luxury for the city secondary to those rulers about whom he says it is “truly most correct to call these men complete guardians” (414b). Second, in Book IV, when Socrates locates virtues in and among the parts of their city in speech, he characterizes the auxiliaries not as those who acquire for the city, nor even as those who primarily preserve the city’s physical well-being, but rather as those who preserve the city’s opinions (429b-d)! Socrates calls courage “a certain kind of preserving,” and a city “is also courageous by a part of itself, thanks to that part’s having in it a power that through everything will preserve the opinion about which things are terrible—that they are the same ones and of the same sort as those the lawgiver transmitted in the education” (429b-c). Glaucon asks Socrates what he means by saying that courage is a kind of preserving, and Socrates responds by saying that courage is “The preserving of the opinion produced by law through education about what—and what sort of thing—is terrible. And by preserving through everything I meant preserving that opinion and not casting it out in pains and pleasures and desires and fears” (429c-d). To recall the language of Book III, courage has the power to preserve opinion in the face of force, persuasion, and wizardry. The auxiliaries’ virtue – that which makes an excellent auxiliary – is defined as a preserving power.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Angela Hobbs, *Plato and the Hero: Courage, Manliness and the Impersonal Good* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Socrates' recommendations for how the auxiliaries are to conduct themselves in war and negotiations directly oppose the auxiliaries' original purpose, which was to acquire goods from neighboring lands for their fellow citizens' desire for luxury. When asking neighboring cities to join them as allies in battle, they will say, "We make use of neither gold nor silver, nor is it lawful for us, while it is for you. So join us in making war and keep the others' property" (422d). As for the spoils of war, the guardians will not take any Greeks as slaves (469b-c), they will not take any plunder from the corpses of defeated foes (469c-e), they will not take anything from the temples of defeated cities (469e-470a), and when fighting fellow Greeks, at most all they will take after a victory is the year's harvest (470a-e). Socrates says they will call the hatred between their city and barbarians as the war of enemies (470c), but he does not say what the guardians will take as spoils of war from them. If they are to take no more from defeated barbarians than they do from defeated Greeks, it would hardly seem possible to feed a city that desires luxury on the harvests of some defeated lands. They cannot feed the desire for luxury in their city based on the destruction of barbarians, either. Socrates does not say that they will take slaves from defeated barbarians, nor whether they will take more than the year's harvest. If they do take more from defeated barbarian foes than they do from fellow Greeks, it is telling that Socrates does not discuss any policies that would explain the extent to which plundering of barbarians would be allowable and fitting, when he goes to great lengths to describe so many other policies concerning the conduct, acquiring, and retribution associated with warfare.

After a lengthy discussion of the policies for conducting war and limiting the destruction, plundering, and retribution associated with the aftermath of war, one

wonders what has happened to the acquisitive function of the city's professional army. Their acquisitive function may still be present, but Socrates makes no mention of it. If the auxiliaries do plunder their defeated barbarian foes, it is taken for granted, but not explicitly stated. Glaucon makes clear his desire that the city's auxiliaries ravage and plunder their barbarian enemies when he says of the soldiers that "toward the barbarians they must behave as the Greeks do now toward one another" (471b). Socrates does not respond to Glaucon's desire, but instead asks whether they will "give this law to the guardians – neither waste countryside nor burn houses" (471b-c).

Moving on to the truly named guardians – the rulers of the city who preserve the convictions of the city – the question remains whether and how far their character and function are defined by acquisition as opposed to preservation. Another way of stating the question is whether and how far the character and function of the true guardians are defined by *erōs* as opposed to *philia*. Socrates addresses the tension between *erōs* and *philia* in the latter half of Book VI, when he asks whether two of the qualities of the philosophic nature itself threaten to undermine one another (503b). Socrates begins Book VI by describing the philosophic nature. A person with this nature is "by nature a rememberer, a good learner, magnificent, charming, and a friend and kinsman of truth, justice, courage, and moderation" (487a). Later, Socrates explains that the philosophic nature is rare because its parts "grow forcibly separated from each other" (503b):

You know that natures that are good at learning, have memories, are shrewd and quick and everything else that goes along with these qualities, and are as well full of youthful fire and magnificence—such natures don't willingly grow together with understandings that choose orderly lives which are quiet and steady. (503c)

This speech is surrounded by requests for and acts of remembrance. Prior to pointing out this tension within the philosophic nature, in reference to their discussion of the guardians



from Book III, Socrates tells Glaucon, “We were saying, if you remember, that they must show themselves to be lovers of the city, tested in pleasures and pains, and that they must show that they don’t cast out this conviction in labors or fears or any other reverse” (502e-503a). Glaucon assures Socrates that he does remember (503b). Socrates then gives the above speech, and afterward, in reference to Book IV Socrates asks Glaucon if he remembers their discussion regarding the four virtues in the soul. Glaucon rhetorically replies, “If I didn’t remember [...] it would be just for me not to hear the rest” (504a). Socrates pushes back by asking Glaucon if he remembers what was said before that, and Glaucon answers once more with an equally ambiguous, “What was it?” (504a). Glaucon doesn’t exactly admit his forgetting, but neither does he demonstrate his remembering. He may be “full of youthful fire and magnificence,” but his steadiness is doubtful.

Socrates explains that their guardians must have natures that are both easily moved by studies toward orderly lives on the one hand, and on the other hand they must have natures that are unmovable from such orderly lives once chosen (503c-d). The guardians must be erotic, meaning that they are motivated by an acquisitive passion to pursue that which their passion tells them they lack.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, when they no longer lack, but have what they require to be effective and trustworthy guardians, they must have a protective love of what they have that enables them to preserve it at all costs. That is to say, they must be “friends (*philos*) and kinsmen of truth, justice, courage, and

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<sup>16</sup> See John Russon, “Eros and Education: Plato’s Transformative Epistemology,” in *Laval Theologique et Philosophique* (2000) 56(1), 113-125; Oscar Gonzalez-Castan, “The Erotic Soul and Its Movement towards the Beautiful and the Good,” in *Daimon* (2000) 21, 75-86; and Geoffrey Hinchliffe, “Plato and the Love of Learning,” in *Ethics and Education* (2006) 1(2), 117-131; Drew Hyland’s “Eros, Epithumia, and Philia in Plato” in *Phronesis* 13:32-46; and Stanley Rosen’s essay “The Role of Eros in Plato’s *Republic*” reprinted in *The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry: Studies in Ancient Thought* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 102-118.

moderation” (487a). Socrates’ point is that the abilities which enable one to acquire such a friendship do not naturally “grow” toward this friendship, and in fact they mitigate against the preservation of such a friendship if it has been acquired. The erotic part of the philosophic nature may be necessary for a person’s fulfilling her nature and *becoming* a philosopher, but its continued presence is a danger to a person’s *being* a philosopher.<sup>17</sup> This is because, as stated earlier, the effects of *erōs* are in many ways indistinguishable from the effects of the wizardry which a guardian must be able to resist. Wizardry changes one’s opinions by charming through pleasure and by terrifying through fear – tactics which appear to be a mixture of force and persuasion. The guardian must be resistant to them all.

*iv. The Use of Force and Persuasion in Plato’s Republic: Educating the Interlocutors and the Children of the City in Speech*

Socrates’ presence and speech at Cephalus’ house are the result of a series of attempts at force and persuasion by various interlocutors. In the first two books alone, Polemarchus’ slave boy seizes Socrates (327b), Polemarchus threatens him with the strength of his numerically superior entourage (327c), Adeimantus attempts to entice him to stay with them to see a torch relay race on horseback (328a), Cephalus entreats him to stay with the young men in his house and talk to them as to friends and his very own kin (328d), and Glaucon asks him to truly persuade all present that justice is always preferable to and more profitable than injustice (358b-d). In turn, Socrates agrees to Cephalus’ request to stay and talk, as well as to Glaucon’s request to try and truly

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<sup>17</sup> The tension between the *erōs* which enables one to pursue philosophy and the *philia* which preserves (and indeed is an instantiation of) one’s love of and friendship with wisdom is not irresolvable, as I explain in Chapter Four.

persuade him that justice is to be praised over injustice. In fact, one may view the entirety of the *Republic* as Socrates' attempt to answer the oft-repeated request that he persuade those present (and perhaps most especially Glaucon) of the praiseworthiness of justice. Socrates himself concludes the dialogue as if his part in the night's conversation were one extended speech of persuasion, saying, "... if we are persuaded by me [...] we shall always keep to the upper road and practice justice with prudence in every way so that we shall be friends to ourselves and the gods [...] And so here and in the thousand year journey that we have described we shall fare well" (621c-d). In between these bookends, both narrative and dramatic references to Socrates and his interlocutors acting on one another with force and persuasion abound.<sup>18</sup>

When forming their city in speech, Socrates and company devote the overwhelming bulk of their speech to proposals regarding the rearing and education of the citizens.<sup>19</sup> Throughout these proposals, the use of force and persuasion constitute a dominant theme. The need for an account of education in the city first arises when Socrates realizes in Book II that it will take a special kind of training to ensure that their newly created professional soldiers are "gentle to their own and cruel to their enemies," and never the reverse (375b-376d).<sup>20</sup> Socrates talks as if he and his interlocutors may interact directly with the citizens of their city in speech, saying, "... we must supervise the makers of tales," and "We'll persuade nurses and mothers to tell the approved tales to

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<sup>18</sup> See footnote 8 of this chapter.

<sup>19</sup> See Eric Sanday, "Philosophy As the Practice of Musical Inheritance: Book II of Plato's *Republic*," in *Epoche* (2007) 11(2), 305-317; and Richard Parry, *Plato's Craft of Justice* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

<sup>20</sup> See David L. Roochnik, "Socrates' Use of the *Techné*-analogy," in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 24, 1986, 295-310.

their children and to shape their souls with tales more than their bodies with hands” (377b-c). Socrates and his interlocutors will “persuade them that no citizen ever was angry with another and that to be so is not holy” and by necessity Socrates and his interlocutors will compel (*anagkasteon*) the poets to write stories that say the same (378c-d). Because of the strange way in which Socrates phrases his speech, he and his interlocutors become related to the poets in the city in a double fashion. On the one hand, they are partners of the poets in persuading the citizens to hold certain opinions. On the other hand, they are the rulers of the poets, compelling the poets to write certain stories for them.

Since Socrates talks about the citizens in the city in speech as if they and he and his interlocutors can interact with one another, their attempts to persuade the citizens of the city in speech, and Socrates’ attempts to persuade his interlocutors, become intertwined. Socrates maintains this manner of speaking to and about the citizens of the city in speech throughout the dialogue. And the intertwining does not stop there. Socrates also speaks as if the citizens can (and do) talk back to him and his interlocutors. For instance, when he argues that the gods do not change shape, he says of the poets who tell tales of shape-changing gods, “... let them not lie to us in many other such ways. Nor should the mothers, in their turn, be convinced by these things and frighten the children with tales badly told” (381e). Socrates’ interlocutors also speak to the citizens. When Socrates asks Adeimantus to persuade “that man who wonders at the philosophers’ not being honored in the cities [...] that it would be far more to be wondered at if they were honored,” Adeimantus replies by saying, “I shall teach him” (489a-b).

Socrates sums up the education of the guardians in two words: music and gymnastic. Initially, the two forms of education are proposed for the proper cultivation of the soul and the body, respectively (376e, 404e). However, Socrates later admits that both studies are for the sake of the soul, saying of the guardian who realizes the true purpose of his education that “he’ll undergo these very exercises and labors looking less to strength than to the spirited part of his nature and for the purpose of arousing it, unlike the other kinds of contestants who treat diets and labors as means to force” (410b-c), and that “The man who makes the finest mixture of gymnastic with music and brings them to his soul in the most proper measure is the one of whom we would most correctly say that he is the most perfectly musical and well harmonized” (412a). The guardian is not being educated in gymnastic primarily “as a means to force,” but rather for the sake of learning how to withstand force in the preservation of his convictions (429e-430b).

In addition to establishing the content of the stories they will allow in the city, Socrates and company discuss the manner in which these stories may be told, referring to rhythm, mode, and melody. Concerning mode, the two modes of speech that Socrates allows in the city correspond to force and persuasion, one of the modes being a “violent” one for “a man who is courageous in warlike deeds and every violent work,” and the other mode being a “voluntary” one “for a man who performs a peaceful deed [...] either persuading someone of something and making a request [...] or, on the contrary, holding himself in check for someone else who makes a request or instructs him or persuades him to change” (399a-c). Socrates’ description makes clear that the “violent” mode corresponds to both the use and experience of force, and he states explicitly that the “voluntary one” corresponds to the use and experience of persuasion.

Socrates explains that all childhood studies should be presented under an aspect of playfulness rather than compulsion, because “no forced study abides in a soul” (536d-537a). Those who are educated by force and not persuasion end up neglecting argument and “running away from the law like boys from a father” (548b-c) because they were discouraged from the study of philosophy by their inability to pursue it adequately due to youth, inexperience, and lack of preparation (497e-498a). Childhood studies should not only playful, but preparatory, for the musical and gymnastic education of adulthood will be far more intense. A young guardian in training will care for his body so that it may be a “helper for philosophy” when he approaches those studies (498-c). After a childhood of playful, preparatory music and gymnastic, between the ages of 17-20 years old, a time during which Socrates says it is impossible to teach anything because of the student’s propensity toward sleep and weariness (537b-c), the student will be released from “compulsory gymnastic” and tested for his ability to complete the far more difficult adult studies of music and gymnastic. This training will take thirty years to complete (522c-540a), and Socrates says that this education will be characterized by annoyance, confusion, and extreme pain (515c-516a). In his tale about the cave-dwellers, which he says is a picture of education, Socrates describes the experience for the student metaphorically as being “dragged... by force along the rough, steep, upward way” (516a), implying that those who teach will do so through force (i.e., through pains and labors).

Education through force and persuasion has a dual purpose. Firstly, education brings about a harmony among the parts of a whole, whether those parts are the soul and body of person which must be “tuned to the proper degree of tension and relaxation”

(411e-412a), or whether those parts are the citizens of a city in speech<sup>21</sup> who are “harmoniz[ed] by persuasion and compulsion” so that they “share with one another the benefit that each is able to bring to the commonwealth” (519e-520a).<sup>22</sup> Secondly, education properly orients a person (or a city) toward that which it is most proper to contemplate (518b-d), namely “the divine and the orderly,” so that one may keep company with and imitate it (500b-d).<sup>23</sup> This second effect of education actually fulfills the first effect, insofar as the harmony of the parts of a whole depend on their being properly ordered not only internally with respect to one another, but also externally with respect to the order of the cosmos in which they reside. In being turned by education toward the source of order, namely, the good, which is the divine and the orderly source of knowledge and truth itself (508e-509b), one may imitate what one sees and so be properly “harmonized.”

Since Socrates’ persuading his interlocutors as well as the citizens in their city in speech are intertwined acts of persuasion, often if Socrates has failed to persuade his interlocutors (because they have forgotten or misunderstood his speech), this entails the citizens’ remaining unpersuaded. In other words, the policies and organization of the city

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<sup>21</sup> For more on the citizens in the city in speech, see Nikos Kakalis, “Just City and Just Individuals in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Skepsis* (2001) 12, 50-64; Andrea Veltman, “The Justice of the Ordinary Citizen in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Polis* (2005) 22(1), 45-59; and Catherine Pickstock, “Justice and Prudence: Principles of Order in the Platonic City,” in *Heythrop Journal* (2001) 42(3), 269-282.

<sup>22</sup> See Julius Moravcsik, “Inner Harmony and the Human Ideal in *Republic* IV and IX,” in *Journal of Ethics* (2001) 5(1), 39-56; R. K. Bentley, “Ruling Oneself: Platonic Hedonism and the Quality of Citizenship,” in *Polis* (2003) 20(1-2), 85-107; and Aryeh Kosman, “The Faces of Justice: Difference, Equality, and Integrity in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* (2004) 20, 153-168, and Mary-Hannah Jones, “Commentary on Kosman,” in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* (2004) 20, 169-175.

<sup>23</sup> See Rafael Ferber, “The Absolute Good and the Human Goods,” in *Philosophical Inquiry* (2003) 25(3-4), 117-126.

in speech depend on the ability of Socrates' interlocutors to properly understand the content and import of his speech. The "family drama" of Book V is a clear example of this connection. In the second wave of difficulty of Book V (otherwise known as the "family drama"), Socrates proposes that procreation in the city be regulated secretly by the guardians. They will eugenically breed citizens the way one breeds livestock with an eye toward desired characteristics.<sup>24</sup> Children will then be raised communally according to their professional abilities (457c-461e). Socrates says these policies in particular will be "the cause of the greatest good for our city" (464b) because they will cause all the citizens to consider one another as family (463c-d), "a community of pleasure and pain" (462b) where each considers the same things to be one's own (462c, 463e-464a). The benefits of the family policies that Socrates names in Book V are the same as those benefits he names in Book III for the "Phoenician" things he calls "noble lies." Thus, the family policies of Book V would have been unnecessary if Socrates' interlocutors had remembered and properly understood the effects of the noble lies at the end of Book III.

David Roochnik says that the noble lies of Book III were obviously insufficient for persuading the citizens of their common membership in a city-wide family, otherwise Socrates would not have thought necessary the policies of Book V. However, because of the intertwined acts of persuasion taking place in the dialogue, it is more accurate to say that the noble lies of Book III were insufficient for convincing Socrates' interlocutors of the citizen's family bond, as opposed to convincing the citizens themselves. The stories

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<sup>24</sup> For an extended engagement of the three waves of difficulty see Stephen Halliwell's introduction, translation, and commentary to *Plato: Republic 5*, by Plato (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1988). For a treatment of two of the three waves of difficulty see Catherine Gardner, "The Remnants of the Family: The Role of Women and Eugenics in *Republic V*," in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* (2000) 17(3), 217-235.



and policies that would persuade Adeimantus and Glaucon were they children in the city in speech are not necessarily identical to those stories and policies that would persuade the children in the city in speech as such. Adeimantus and Glaucon speak for the citizens as best they can by assuming that what they find persuasive is indicative of what others will find persuasive. Due to the conversational limitations and necessities at hand, Socrates can persuade the citizens in their city in speech only insofar as he can persuade those who speak for them, namely his interlocutors. Thus it is not the citizens of the city in speech who require the family policies of Book V to be persuaded of their kinship, but rather Socrates' interlocutors. The noble lies of Book III persuade the citizens of their common membership in a family. When Socrates first proposes these stories, his interlocutors agree about their effectiveness in instilling mutual family feeling among all the citizens of the city in speech. However, the interlocutors' assent does not last. By the beginning of Book V, the interlocutors do not remember what compelled their previous assent to Socrates' provisions. Thus, Socrates must give the family policies of Book V, which force the citizens to be members of a family in flesh and blood. Socrates' interlocutors find it more persuasive that these bodily policies will instill in the citizens the mutual family feeling crucial to the proper functioning of the city. This is not surprising given the interlocutors' opinions about human nature (discussed in the previous chapter). Nevertheless, Socrates claims that the greatest effects of the procreative and rearing policies of Book V are still for the soul, insofar as they convince the citizens to care for one another as one's own.

v. *The Philosophic Nature as the Flourishing of Human Nature*

In his attempt to persuade his interlocutors that human nature consists of body and soul, with the good of the soul being more important than the good of the body, Socrates completes his account with a description of the philosophic nature. This description provides the pattern for the life which Socrates ultimately describes as the most gracious, most beautiful, most virtuous, most pleasant, and happiest life (580b-c, 583c, 586d-e, 588a). Through his description of the philosophic nature, Socrates explains to his interlocutors why the good of the soul is more important than the good of the body, and why the many fail to understand this priority. Human nature flourishes when it seeks out, keeps company with, imitates, and befriends the good, and the philosophic nature is the particular expression of human nature that best fulfills these tasks. Force and persuasion may help or hinder one in perfecting the philosophic nature, depending on whether they are used to orient one's soul toward reality or towards mere appearance, respectively. In this section, I present Socrates' description of the philosophic nature, and I explain all the accompanying themes necessary to understand fully his description.

Book V ends with Socrates saying that the third and most difficult wave for them to overcome in returning to their city would be explaining why philosophers would have to become kings, or that those who are currently kings would have to begin philosophizing. Book VI continues this explanation with Socrates describing the qualities of the philosophic nature: a good learner, a good rememberer, magnificent, charming, and a friend of truth, courage, moderation, and justice (487a). Socrates' interlocutors agree that these are fine qualities, but Adeimantus objects by saying that they do not sound like the qualities of a philosopher. Philosophers have the reputation of

being either useless or vicious, and neither one of those reputations seems compatible with Socrates' description of the philosophic nature (487c-d). What's more, Adeimantus complains that Socrates' manner of questioning gives the embarrassing appearance that his interlocutors agree with his conclusions when they do not, saying that they "believe that because of inexperience at questioning and answering, they are at each question misled a little by the argument; and when the littles are collected at the end of the arguments, the slip turns out to be great and contrary to the first assertions" (487b).

Socrates admits that philosophers have a reputation for uselessness, but that perception is misleading, for they are in reality the most useful people to a city. In other words, philosophers have the appearance of being useless, but the reality of being the most useful. Philosophers also have a reputation for viciousness, but that perception is misleading, for those vicious men Adeimantus has in mind are not really philosophers though they are perceived to be such. They have philosophic natures which have become corrupted, but that is as close as they come to being philosophers. In sum, certain demagogues have the appearance, but not the reality, of being philosophers.

Socrates uses the image of a shipowner, a crew of sailors, and a stargazer on a ship to explain the reason behind the philosopher's reputation of uselessness (488a-489a). The stargazer is seen as useless because of his unwillingness to use force or persuasion on either the shipowner or the crew of sailors. The sailors live on and below the deck of the ship, and the ship and all the goods on board – food, drink, drugs, cutting weapons – are all that concern the sailors (488b-c). The stargazer, on the other hand, observes and talks about stars, seasons, winds, and the like (488d). All these, while "proper to the art" of piloting, nevertheless are not to be found on or below deck. Thus, for the sailors'

intents and purposes they do not exist, and to be concerned with them is to make oneself useless. This image prepares Socrates' interlocutors for the second half of Book VI, in which Socrates explains that the world in which human beings live consists of two regions: the intelligible and the visible (509d). For most people, if something is not visible (or sensible in general), it does not exist, or in any case, it does not matter. Thus, the philosopher is deemed useless when he discusses intelligible matters which are by definition invisible.

In addition to being a picture of the philosopher in the city, Socrates' image is also a picture of human nature and its relation to the world in which it abides. The stargazer represents the calculating part (*logistikon*), the shipowner who "surpasses everyone on board in height and strength" represents the spirited part (*thumoeides*), and the crew of sailors represents the desiring part (*epithumetikon*) of the soul, while the ship herself represents the body. (Compare this picture of human nature to that of the chimaera in Book IX (588b-591a), which consists of a human being (*logistikon*), a larger-than-the-human lion (*thumoiedes*), and a beast with many tame and savage heads (*epithumetikon*), all contained in the form of a human being (the body).) Since the ship is run by the crew of sailors, the soul it represents is democratic.<sup>25</sup> The crew of sailors knows how to "enchain... the noble shipowner" through both force and persuasion, and each sailor knows how to use force and persuasion on one another, all for the purpose of piloting the ship, yet none of the crew knows the art of piloting. Thus, whether they do good for the ship and all aboard is a matter of chance, not art. The true pilot (calculating)

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<sup>25</sup> Socrates describes in great detail the nature of the democratic regime and soul in Books VIII and IX.

can do better than the pilot of chance (desiring) in avoiding shipwreck (death of the body), as well as in getting the ship to its destination. The true pilot guides the ship (body) by his knowledge of the stars, the heavens, the seasons, and everything else pertinent to the art of piloting, and the true pilot came to know these things by looking at them (intelligible matters), which was made possible by his turning himself toward them.

In the second half of Book VI, Socrates reveals that the goal of the philosopher is to seek, keep company with, and imitate “the divine and the orderly” (500c-d), which he then calls “the good.” When explaining to his interlocutors the nature of the good, Socrates shows how the good is something for which reputation alone is not enough, even for those who are typically satisfied with reputation alone in matters regarding justice (505d). The good is unique in that even in the opinion of the many, its appearance bereft of its reality is unsatisfactory. Socrates continues to discuss the good in terms of appearance and reality, likening the good, without which reality itself would not be possible, to the sun, without which appearance would not be possible (507b-508e). Socrates ends Book VI with a picture of a line which he divides into two segments. The sun he names as “king” of the segment that represents the visible, and the good he names as king of the segment that represents “the intelligible class and region,” which consists of things not as they appear, but as they are (509e-511e).

Book VII begins with a tale about prisoners in a cave, one of whom becomes freed. He “is released and suddenly compelled to stand up, to turn his neck around, to walk and look up toward the light... moreover, in doing all this is in pain” (515c). After he looks at the firelight which cast the shadows on the wall he had been forced to watch for his whole life, “someone dragged him away from there by force along the rough,

steep, upward way and didn't let him go before he had dragged him out into the light of the sun" (515e). As explained in the previous section, the cave image is a picture of the adult education of the guardians. One may compare this picture of the soul to the picture of the soul from the sailors-on-a-ship image discussed above: both show a person coming to know the truth about his situation by turning his soul towards that which it is most fit for him to contemplate, so that he may see what was hidden from his sight before, not due to blindness, but to improper orientation.

In Books VIII and IX, Socrates continues to talk about the conduct of the soul in terms of both appearance and reality and force and persuasion. The aristocratic soul, well ordered and ruled by the calculating part, degenerates into a timocratic rule, then into an oligarchic rule, then into a democratic rule, and finally into a tyranny. Each step of degeneration is marked with a greater concern for the visible over the intelligible, of appearance over reality, and as the degeneration unfolds, the soul's ability to maintain its internal order becomes lessened. Desires which were once tamed and regulated through a musical obedience to a persuasive rule have now become unruly, and must be held down through shame and other forceful means dependent upon reputation and appearance. The oligarchic man, for instance, maintains his "good reputation in other contractual relations" by "seem[ing] to be just" (554c). He succeeds in creating this appearance by "forcibly holding down bad desires [...] not by persuading them that they 'had better not' nor by taming them with argument, but by necessity and fear, doing so because he trembles for his whole substance" (554d).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> For an interesting treatment of the degeneration of the soul/regime in Books VIII-IX, see Joshua Mitchell's, *Plato's Fable: On the Mortal Condition in Shadowy Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 75-110.

After presenting the picture of the soul as a chimaera, thus finally making visible the nature of justice in the soul as friendship (*philia*) and injustice in the soul as fear and insatiableness (588b-591a), Socrates revisits the topic of imitation (defined and discussed at length in Book III at 392c-397d), this time characterizing it as a competitor with the truth which it imitates.<sup>27</sup> Imitation is the art of reproducing appearance. Imitation captures the look, not the form, of a thing (598a-d). The convincing look of a couch may sufficiently satisfy a person who wants houseguests to believe that he has a couch, but it will not satisfy a person who would like for her houseguests to be able to sit on a couch.

When Socrates finishes telling the story of the soul's degeneration in Book IX<sup>28</sup> and asks which soul is happiest, through three different arguments Socrates and company conclude that the aristocratic, or wisdom-loving soul, is happiest. Regarding the apparent happiness of the other souls, Socrates says they are like a "shadow-painting" (583b): they have the look, but not the reality, of happiness. Socrates' speech about the dangers of imitation in Book X is a warning to his interlocutors that their night's conversation has been an education in shadows. If they are to continue their studies, they must turn their heads and begin the intense adult regimen fraught with pains and labors. Book IX's treatment of the nature of pleasure and pain is a preface for this revelation, for in that treatment Socrates explains that most people do not know true pleasure, leaving it alone because it is mixed with pain (583b-587e). The conversation should have made clear to

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<sup>27</sup> Though it may seem odd or arbitrary that Socrates discusses imitation through the example of the three kinds of couches or tables, remember that Glaucon's complaint against Socrates' "city of sows" (as Glaucon phrased it) was that there were no couches or tables (372d). Socrates here gives Glaucon the requested couch in its fullness.

<sup>28</sup> For another take on the degeneration of the soul/regime, see Dennis Blackwood, "The Decline of Man and State in Books 8-9 of the *Republic*: Devolution and/or Instability Argument?" In *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* (2001) 75(1), 1-24.

them the necessity of being able to withstand the arguments, pains, labors, charms, fears, and pleasures that comprise the trials of persuasion, force, and wizardry, so that one may succeed in preserving the integrity and right orientation of what is most one's own, namely the good of one's soul. Socrates reiterates this point again quite explicitly in Book X when he asks how "a decent man" would bear losing a son. First, he shows once more the connection between force (which is associated with the spirited part of the soul) and appearances, noting that the grieving father would "fight the pain and hold out against it more when he is seen by his peers" rather than "when he is alone by himself in a deserted place" (604a). Second, Socrates states for his interlocutors how the calculating part of the soul, following argument, rules the soul in the midst of such hardships. The man who rules himself with his calculating part has a "prudent and quiet character, which is always nearly equal to itself," and which "is neither easily imitated nor, when imitated, easily understood" (604c-e).

Socrates' final tale of the dialogue, commonly referred to as the myth of Er, is a picture of the trials Socrates set forth in Book III for the souls of would-be guardians, when he defined force, persuasion, and wizardry. Heaven seduces the intellect unawares, which is the "robbery" associated with persuasion. The man who chooses the first life at the lap of Necessity had just come from a journey through heaven, a journey he had earned with a life lived virtuously out of habit and not philosophy. He chooses a great tyranny and "due to folly and gluttony, chose without having considered everything adequately; and it escaped his notice that eating his own children and other evils were fated to be a part of that life" (619b-c). Socrates explains that "not the least number of those who were caught in such circumstances came from heaven, because they were



unpracticed in labors” (619d). On the other hand, “most of those who came from the earth, because they themselves had labored and had seen the labors of others, weren’t in a rush to make their choices” (619d). The earth (or more accurately, the place of punishment under the earth) forms a person through pains and labors, which are associated with force and the spirited part of the soul. Finally, Tartarus is associated with the desiring part of the soul. “Fierce men, looking fiery through and through,” reminiscent of the fierce demagogues in Book VIII who seduce a democracy into tyranny (564d-e), grab some of the souls who attempt to leave the underworld and bind them “hands, feet, and head, throw[ing them] into Tartarus” (615e-616a).

In sum, heaven seduces the intellect unawares, the bowels of the earth provide pains and labors to cow the spirit, and Tartarus is the snare of the desiring part of the soul. The myth of Er is thus a retelling of the three kinds of trials which Socrates proposed for the would-be guardians of the city in speech. This is why Socrates insists that they will all fare well if they have been persuaded by him (621b-d).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Preservation of One's Own

In this chapter, I apply Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and wizardry in analyses of the noble lies from Book III, the allegory of the cave from Book VII, the degeneration of regimes in Book VIII, and the account of imitation in Book X. Through these analyses, I demonstrate that a central theme of the *Republic* is Socrates' arguing for the importance of the preservation of what is most one's own, that being the good of one's soul. Since Socrates uses and speaks about force and persuasion as part of his night-long attempt to persuade his interlocutors of the preferability and profitability of justice, one may expect that the images, analogies, and stories he uses in this attempt can be best understood in light of his treatment of force, persuasion, and wizardry. Further, since much of Socrates' persuasive work for the night involves correcting his interlocutors' mistaken opinions about human nature, one may also expect his treatment of human nature to be a predominant – and perhaps the central – theme of his speech. Continuing the work of the previous chapter, in this chapter I show that both these expectations are warranted. I confirm the validity of the first expectation once again by using Socrates' definitions of force, persuasion, and wizardry as an interpretive key for the rest of his speech, and I confirm the validity of the second expectation by showing that the symmetrical structure of the *Republic* indicates the literal and thematic centrality of Socrates' speech about human nature in its most proper ordering and orientation, the philosophic nature. In this chapter, I also discuss the prominence of *philia* in the

*Republic*, as well as its relation to preservation. I discuss this topic because when Socrates defines force, persuasion, and wizardry, he does so in the context of explaining how a true guardian of conviction must be able to withstand force, persuasion, and wizardry, preserving in love that which she holds to be most her own, namely, the good of her soul. Thus, by focusing on Socrates' use of and speech about force and persuasion, one may readily see that the *Republic* is not primarily about *erōs* and the striving after what one lacks, but rather, about *philia* and the preservation of what is most one's own.

*i. Four Metals: Persuasion, Force, Wizardry, and Appearance and Reality*

Near the end of Book III, Socrates says that in the city in speech which he and his interlocutors are building, those who are to care for the city by doing their various jobs would be motivated best by love (*philia*). To engender a love of one's fellow citizens in all the citizens, Socrates proposes that the citizens be told certain stories the kind of which resemble certain Phoenician tales he has heard, and which in Plato scholarship today are referred to most commonly as the "noble lies" (415a-c). There are four metals Socrates mentions in the tale he tells, yet they are to be distributed among the souls of three general groups. Few scholars have commented on the reason why Socrates has included four metals in his tale, and even fewer scholars have commented on the reason why Socrates tells a tale in which the numbers of metals and the numbers of groups of citizens are mismatched.

The gold of the tale is connected to persuasion, the silver to force, and the bronze and iron to wizardry. I argue this claim as follows: (1) According to Socrates' tale, the guardians who rule are born with gold mixed into their souls, the auxiliaries with silver,

and the farmers and other craftsmen with bronze or iron. (2) In Book IV, when Socrates explains the analogy between the parts of the city and the parts of the soul (436a-444a), he argues that the guardians correspond to the calculating part of the soul, the auxiliaries to the spirited part, and the farmers and other craftsmen to the desiring part of the soul. (3) Through this analogy, the gold of the guardians' soul is associated with the calculating part of the soul, the silver of the auxiliaries' soul with the spirited part, and the bronze and iron of the farmers and other wage earners with the desiring part. (4) Persuasion affects the calculating part of the soul, force affects the spirited part, and wizardry affects the desiring part. Thus, (5) the gold of the tale is connected to persuasion, the silver to force, and the bronze and iron to wizardry. I take statements (1), (2), and (3) to be uncontroversial since they are based on the quotation provided immediately above and on the well-known city-soul analogy referenced at 436a-444a. I substantiated statement (4) above in Chapter Three.<sup>1</sup>

The souls of the rulers and their helpers have gold and silver mixed in them. The farmers and other craftsmen who must obey the rulers and who constitute the rest of the city have bronze and iron in their souls. These two groups are portrayed in opposition with one another throughout the *Republic* – Gold and Silver v. Bronze and Iron. One reason for the opposition is that the bronze and iron part of the soul is more closely identified with the body than the gold and silver parts, which are more concerned with the good of the soul. A person who becomes more concerned with the good of the body to the good of the soul lives poorly, and such an inversion of concern occurs when the desiring part of the soul refuses to obey, and rules instead (442a-b). The desiring part of

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter Three, section ii, "Definitions of Force and Persuasion in Plato's *Republic*."

the soul, when it rules, “charms” the calculating part and “terrifies” the spirited part with wizardry, whose dual aspects simulate the persuasion proper to calculation and the force proper to spiritedness. Socrates’ very intentional choice of metals aids in the illustration of all these points, for just as wizardry looks like a mixture of persuasion and force, so too do bronze and iron look like gold and silver, only without their luster. No Plato scholar has explained the meaning of the noble lie’s four metals in this manner.

The first half of the noble lie is about everyone being born of mother Earth so that they are all family. The second half is about metals being in people’s souls so that what they do in the city is actually a flowering of their nature. In *Beautiful City: The Dialectical Character of Plato’s Republic*, the most insightful comment David Roochnik has to offer on the metals in the soul is that our souls are fluid, not metallic.<sup>2</sup> He has no account to give for why there are four metals and only three kinds of soul into which these metals are infused. In fact, rather than explaining the apparent anomaly he ignores it. Roochnik writes in a footnote that he collapses bronze and iron into one metal so the three kinds of metal (now simply gold, silver, and bronze) conveniently to fit into the three kinds of classes in the city: guardians, auxiliaries, and the farmers and craftsmen.<sup>3</sup> This explicitly stated suppression of textual detail is especially problematic for Roochnik, who insists on taking seriously the dialogic form of the *Republic*.<sup>4</sup> If there is a reason for

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<sup>2</sup> See David Roochnik, *Beautiful City: The Dialectical Character of Plato’s Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 45. Socrates notes that the soul’s metals can be made fluid. However, Roochnik’s claim that our souls are fluid by default makes it impossible for him to account for Socrates’ description of fluidity in the soul as a kind of infirmity: “But when he keeps at it without letting up and charms his spirit, he, as the next step, already begins to melt and liquefy his spirit, until he dissolves it completely and cuts out, as it were, the sinews from his soul and makes it ‘a feeble warrior’” (411b).

<sup>3</sup> Roochnik, *Beautiful City*, 11, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> Roochnik accuses other Plato scholars of both misrepresenting and misunderstanding the content of the *Republic* due to their insensitivity to its form, treating the dialogue as a “grab bag of propositions”

four metals, then Roochnik's collapse does injustice to the text and prevents one from being able to provide a full and proper interpretation of the noble lie and its place in the *Republic*.

The facts that (1) there are three classes in the city in speech – the three having been clearly established (414b-c) immediately prior to the noble lie (415a-c) – and that (2) Socrates goes on in Book IV to talk about a tripartite soul (436a-444a), have together dominated scholars' interpretation of the noble lie to the extent that they have all but ignored the significance of there being four metals (as opposed to three) in the lie. Some have made gestures toward the noble lie being a reference to the golden triangle of

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without regard for the propositions' proper contexts. While Roochnik's point is well taken, he only reaches his conclusions about the form of the *Republic* by ignoring or (in this particular case) suppressing its content. Others may treat the *Republic* as a grab bag of propositions, but Roochnik's alternative is to treat the *Republic* as if it doesn't contain those propositions at all. For instance, the central claim on which Roochnik's entire dialectical interpretation of the *Republic* rests can only be maintained by paying attention to Socrates' use of the phrase "at the same time" in Book IV and ignoring Socrates' continual and consistent use of the phrase throughout the rest of the dialogue (Book V – 462c, 468d, 479e; Book VI – 488e; Book VII – 515c, 523c-d, 524d-525a; Book VIII – 555c; Book IX – 589d; Book X – 602e, 603d, 604b, 611d).

Roochnik argues that the tripartite soul established in Book IV is the "arithmetical soul," a logical structure derived from Socrates' argument that the soul must have parts since it cannot will and not will the same thing at the same time with respect to the same part of itself (10-50). Roochnik says this "at the same time argument" is based on what he calls PNO – the Principle of Non-Opposition (13) – and he argues that the tripartite soul which results from an application of PNO is only a dialectical moment which Socrates negates in successive books. Roochnik's argument rests on the claim that nothing happens in the soul "at the same time," thus Socrates must not be taken at his word when he describes the soul's operations in this way. Roochnik says Socrates abandons this arithmetical "at the same time" model of the soul as the conversation continues. However, after Book IV and until the end of the dialogue Socrates continually and consistently uses the phrase "at the same time" to refer to simultaneous events concerning the soul (462c, 468d, 479e, 488e, 515c, 523c-d, 524d-525a, 555c, 589d, 602e, 603d, 604b, 611d). For instance, Socrates uses the phrase "at the same time" in Book X as follows: "When a contradictory tendency arises in a human being about the same thing at the same time, we say that there are necessarily two things in him" (604b).

Roochnik also argues that the chimaera picture of the soul Socrates describes at the end of Book IX replaces the "arithmetical" tripartite soul consisting of calculation, spiritedness, and desire, which Socrates provided in Book IV. He claims that each successive picture of the soul in the *Republic* is actually a new model with new content that negates some part of the content of the previous model, and that the series of proposals and negations instantiate a model of the dialectical process. As interesting as this interpretation may be, Socrates' speech invalidates it, for he explicitly explains each model or picture of the soul in the same way. For instance, Socrates provides the same explanation of justice and injustice in his summation of both the chimaera picture of the soul in Book IX (588e-592b) and of the tripartite soul in Book IV (443c-445b).

ancient Greek mathematics (a right triangle with sides of 3 and 4 units, and a hypotenuse of 5 units). Perhaps the three classes, combined with the four metals, result in a total of five regimes. These mathematical ruminations are interesting, but often tenuous, or at least highly speculative. In any case, none of them provides an explanation as to (1) why *in particular* there are four metals and three classes (as opposed to, say, three metals and four classes), (2) why gold, silver, bronze, and iron are the particular metals mentioned, and (3) why each metal is given its particular assignment to each class.

Moving from numerical explanations to literary ones, several scholars have proposed that Socrates' noble lie borrows from Hesiod's five races of men listed in his *Works and Days*. This approach is also suggestive, especially since Socrates explicitly references Hesiod's five races in Book VIII when he begins the story of their regime's degeneration. However, in Socrates' reference, whether he means for the races of men they have been discussing to be the same or different from Hesiod's races, is ambiguous: "And rulers chosen from them won't be guardians very apt at testing Hesiod's races and [*te kai*] yours—gold and silver and bronze and iron" (546d-547a).

In his *Works and Days* Hesiod describes five generations or races of men: the first being gold, the second being silver, the third being bronze, the fourth being some race that was better than the bronze – this race is of demi-gods with no metal associated with them – then the fifth race, the race that he's in now, the race of iron.<sup>5</sup> As these people go down successively, if they have a metal associated with them, they get worse. Silver was worse than gold, bronze was worse than silver. Strangely, the fourth generation with no

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<sup>5</sup> Hesiod, *Works and Days*, in *Theogony & Works and Days*, trans. by M. L. West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 35-61, 40-2.

associated metal was better than the preceding one. But then it gets worse again and the iron is the worst of all, and that is the life human beings live now.

Hesiod's and Socrates' stories are superficially similar in that they both track an overall degeneration across five generations of men, but there are significant differences between the two stories. The fourth of Hesiod's races is better than the third, but Socrates' story is one of consistent degeneration. Also, excepting perhaps the first race of gold men, Hesiod's description of the races of men are radically different from Socrates' description of the four degenerate regimes. For instance, Hesiod's third race of men were "a terrible and fierce race, occupied with the woeful works of Ares and with acts of violence... their stern hearts being of adamant; unshapen hulks, with great strength and indescribable arms growing from their shoulders above their stalwart bodies."<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, Socrates' third type of soul, the oligarchic man, is "a sort of squalid man... getting a profit out of everything, filling up his storeroom—exactly the kind of men the multitude praises" (554a). The oligarch "forcibly hold[s] down bad desires... not by persuading them that they 'had better not' nor by taming them with argument, but by necessity and fear, doing so because he trembles for his whole substance" (554d). When the poor of the city come alongside the ruling oligarchs of their city during war, they see the oligarchs "panting and full of perplexity," and the poor say of these oligarchs, "'Those men are ours. For they are nothing'" (556d). One would be hard-pressed to find a greater disparity than the one between Hesiod's description of the fierce bronze race of men and Socrates' description of the trembling oligarch.

There are more problems for attempting to interpret Socrates' use of the four

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 41.



metals in terms of Hesiod's race of men. Socrates' description of the interaction of the four metals cannot be explained at all. Immediately after alluding to the "gold and silver and iron and bronze" of "Hesiod's races and yours," he adds, "And the chaotic mixing of iron with silver and of bronze with gold engenders unlikeness and inharmonious irregularity, which, once they arise, always breed war and hatred in the place where they happen to arise" (547a). After this mixing, there is an alignment and separation, with iron and bronze "pull[ing] the regime toward money-making and the possession of land, houses, gold, and silver" on the one hand, and gold and silver leading "the souls toward virtue and the ancient establishment" on the other (547b). A consultation of Hesiod's *Works and Days* avails little in explaining the particularity of the pairs Socrates identifies in either the "chaotic mixing" or the faction.<sup>7</sup>

Socrates says iron mixes with silver, and bronze mixes with gold. He doesn't mix them together as allies in faction (gold with silver, and bronze with iron). Rather, Socrates says there will be a "chaotic mixing of iron with silver and of bronze with gold" because iron looks like tarnished silver, or silver without its luster, and bronze looks like tarnished gold, or gold without its luster. In other words, bronze and gold will become mixed because of their similar appearances. The same goes for iron and silver. The guardians will fail to preserve the number which comprehends the period of "bearing and barrenness of soul and bodies" for human births (546a-b) because they will mistake

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<sup>7</sup> Peter Kingsley is among the scholars who have noted that this "chaotic mixing" may be a reference to the preSocratic philosopher Empedocles' fragments regarding the cycle of love and strife among the four elements, or "roots," of the cosmos. Thanks to Anne Bowery for bringing my attention to this matter. While there may be interesting connections between the content of Empedocles' fragments and the four metals of the noble lie, a consultation of Empedocles' fragments, much like a consultation of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, avails little in explaining the *particularity* of the pairs Socrates identifies in either the "chaotic mixing" or the faction. In any case, no exegesis of Empedocles' fragments provides the explanation that I offer here.

appearance (bronze and iron) for reality (gold and silver). Bronze, though it is third removed from gold (with silver being the intermediate metal between them) nonetheless looks like gold. Similarly, iron, though it is third removed from silver (with bronze being the intermediate metal between them) looks like silver.

The relationships between bronze and gold on the one hand and iron and silver on the other are foreshadowed by the image of the cave-dwellers in Book VII, and they themselves foreshadow Socrates' discussion of imitation in Book X. In the cave image from Book VII, Socrates told of prisoners who mistook the imitation of a thing (a shadow of a puppet) for the thing itself (the animal or object on which the puppet was modeled, which in turn cast the shadow seen by the prisoners). In Book X, Socrates discusses three kinds of couch or table to explain the nature of imitation, which convinces those who are taken in by the painting of a couch (an imitation of an imitation) that they have the real thing (the idea of the couch), from which the painting is third removed. Here in Book VIII, Socrates' description of the mixing of the four metals indicates how the guardians failed to preserve the "nuptial number": by judging the metals based on their appearances rather than their realities.<sup>8</sup>

Socrates describes the faction that follows the mixing as follows: the bronze and iron pull the regime towards a love of bodily possessions ("money-making and the possession of land, houses, gold and silver"), while the gold and silver "le[a]d the souls toward virtue and the ancient establishment" (547b). The bronze and iron parts of the city – those associated most closely with the desiring part of the soul – turn the soul

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<sup>8</sup> For a thorough and fascinating analysis of the "nuptial number," see Robert Brumbaugh's *Plato's Mathematical Imagination: The Mathematical Passages in the Dialogues and Their Interpretation* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1954), 107-150. No contemporary scholars offer as thorough an analysis of this passage as does Brumbaugh.

towards the good of the body and away from the good of the soul. The wizardry associated with the desiring part of the soul simulates the arguments of persuasion and the pains of force with the pleasures and fears of the body. Thus, one sees why wizardry looks like a mixture of force and persuasion: it is the faction of bronze and iron, fighting for the priority of the body's good, versus the faction of gold and silver, fighting for the priority of the soul's good.

Socrates' success in persuading his interlocutors of the preferability and profitability of justice over injustice depends on his persuading them first that the soul has a good particular to it over and against the good of the body, and second that the soul's good is more important than that of the body. Unfortunately, even if he succeeds in persuading his interlocutors of both these claims, nonetheless if their souls are ruled by their desiring parts, they will mistake the good of the body as the good of the soul, since to such men the wizardry of the desiring part sufficiently resembles the persuasion and force of the calculating and spirited parts of the soul.

Claudia Baracchi is fairly good at referring to all four metals in her book, *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato's Republic*, but Seth Benardete perhaps gives the best and most consistent treatment of the metals. Throughout his commentary *Socrates' Second Sailing: On Plato's Republic*, Benardete mentions the four metals often, and he is consistent in his ordering of them ("gold and silver and bronze and iron"). He also tracks well the factions of gold and silver versus bronze and iron. Following Socrates' speech, Benardete remarks on the interesting fact that those with gold and silver in their souls don't need physical gold and silver as spoils of war. The gold and silver in the city will be handled by the people with bronze and iron in their souls, and, the people with gold

and silver in their souls fight with bronze and iron weapons. Adding to Socrates' speech and Benardete's remarks, I think it noteworthy that due to this inversion of metals, each faction ends up with all four metals. The guardians and their helpers – those that properly prize the good of the soul over that of the body – have their gold and silver in their soul, where it is most worthwhile to keep the most lustrous (light-reflecting) and precious materials, and they have bronze and iron where those hard metals<sup>9</sup> are most beneficial and profitable, as shields and weapons. To speak in terms of body and soul, the guardians and their helpers know the good of both body and soul, and their prioritizing of the good of the soul over the body enables them to make the provisions proper to the preservation of both kinds of good. On the other hand, the farmers and craftsmen who prize the good of the body over that of the soul end up providing poorly for both kinds of good, thus preserving neither.

*ii. Chiastic Structure of the Republic: A New, More Accurate Construal of the Chiasmus*

Generally speaking, Socrates makes frequent use of images to explain himself more in the second half of the *Republic* than in the first. However, the topics of Socrates' speech in the second half of the *Republic* are about intelligible things more than visible things. In the first half of the dialogue, Socrates focuses on building a city, stipulating policies governing bodies and possessions, yet primarily for the sake of forming citizens with well-ordered souls, and with little in the way of imagistic explanation. But of course, since Socrates is talking about the bodily, which is already visible in nature, he

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<sup>9</sup> Socrates claims that both music and gymnastic are good for the soul, for they make the soul softer and harder, respectively (410c-411b). Socrates clearly has the metals of the soul in mind when describing the softening and hardening effects of music and gymnastic, as he mentions the softening of iron in his description (411a).

need not add more images to explain himself further. In the second half of the dialogue, Socrates focuses on explaining the philosophic nature, its goal, and the ways in which it succeeds or fails in seeking that goal, with failure arising often due to a person's inability to prioritize concern for the intelligible over concern for the visible. Since the intelligible is by its very nature invisible, Socrates must use images symbolically, metaphorically, and analogically if he wishes to explain himself further to those who cannot grasp his meaning otherwise.

The city in speech built in first half of the *Republic* is not only about the influence of the body on the intelligible, but it is also one long, extended image of the soul. In addition, the second half of the *Republic* presents a series of bodily images of the soul (sailors on a ship, the analogy of the sun, the divided line, the cave allegory, the chimaera, the myth of Er, etc.). Thus, both halves of the *Republic* present visible expressions of the invisible soul – the city in speech in the first half, and the series of images in the second half. Further, the themes at the joint between the first and second halves of the *Republic* focus on the philosophic nature (the highest flourishing of human nature as such) and how this nature succeeds or fails in engaging the world in which it lives (through knowledge, ignorance, and opinion). All these textual features support my characterization of the *Republic* as being concerned primarily with explaining human nature by presenting visible expressions of the invisible soul. Thus, while the literal and thematic center of the *Republic* may be metaphysical in nature, it is not about forms or ideas or the good itself, but rather, about how the human being engages the good.

The diagram on the following page summarizes the above explanation of the chiasmic structure of Plato's *Republic*.

- Book I – Socrates’ comment about inheritance leading to spendthriftiness  
 – Cephalus’ warning about punishment in the afterlife
- Book II – Glaucon’s two men with rings of invisibility, one just and the other unjust
- Book III – Purging stories about the gods of tales in which they act licentiously, viciously, out of lust and other tyrannical desires  
 – The “Phoenician tale” of being born of the earth mother, and of four metals infused in the soul
- Book IV – Adeimantus’ objection about the happiness of the guardians  
 – Discussion of the virtues  
 – Definition of Justice  
 – Picture of the just soul (as properly ordered)
- Book V – First wave of difficulty: women with the same natures do the same jobs  
 – Second wave of difficulty: communal procreation and child-rearing  
 – Discussion of the conduct and rules of war and retribution, and the firsthand education of children at war on horseback  
 – Third wave of difficulty: philosophers must be kings, or kings must begin to philosophize, else there will be no end to the evils for cities  
 – Discussion of the nature of knowledge, ignorance, and opinion
- Book VI – Explanation of the philosophic nature  
 – Sailors on a ship: Defense of the stargazer (philosopher) as the true pilot (ruler)  
 – Discussion of the just man in the unjust city and the internal and external influences that corrupt the philosophic nature  
 – The analogies of the good to the sun (generation and growth)  
 – The divided line
- Book VII – Image of the cave-dwellers  
 – Purpose and nature of education (properly orienting the soul)  
 – Discussion of the adult education of the guardians  
 – Glaucon’s objection about the happiness of the guardians
- Book VIII – The “nuptial number” is not properly derived due to a chaotic mixing of metals, thus the citizens beget children in disorder  
 – People in the city (beginning with the rulers) begin to act more and more out of greed and other tyrannical desires
- Book IX – Socrates’ chimaera shows the invisible souls of both the unjust and the just man
- Book X – Socrates’ tale about punishment in the afterlife  
 – Socrates’ comment that being unpracticed in labors leads to poor decisions (e.g., choosing a life in which one ends up eating one’s own children)

In his book *Homer and the Heroic Tradition*, Cedric Whitman argues that a common device of the oral tradition of ancient Greece was the use of symmetrical structure in telling a tale, and further that this device was inherited by literate ancient Greece and her authors. He demonstrates his claim through extensive references to and analyses of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Following Whitman's lead, many scholars have proposed that the structure of the dialogue of the *Republic* as a whole is symmetrical in shape, instantiating an overarching ascent and descent (or vice versa).<sup>10</sup> Eva Brann refers to this structural phenomenon as a "ring composition,"<sup>11</sup> Robert Brumbaugh as a "pediment,"<sup>12</sup> Anne Bowery as a "mountain,"<sup>13</sup> and Kenneth Dorter as "chiastic."<sup>14</sup>

While there is some variance among those who have construed the "shape" of the *Republic* as symmetrical, nevertheless there are several constants, one of them being the claim that Book VI and/or Book VII belong(s) at the center of that symmetry. Another common claim is that the sun and line images from Book VI should be grouped together with the cave image from Book VII. One weakness of all these interpretations is that while they claim to identify a symmetrical structure to the dialogue, this so-called

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<sup>10</sup> My construal of the dialogue's symmetry is compatible with both mountainous ascent-descent readings, as well as chthonic descent-ascent readings of the *Republic*.

<sup>11</sup> See Eva Brann's *The Music of Plato's Republic* (Paul Dry Books, 2004), 108-117.

<sup>12</sup> See Robert Brumbaugh's *Platonic Studies of Greek Philosophy: Form, Arts, Gadgets, and Hemlock* (New York: State University of New York, 1989), 17-27.

<sup>13</sup> Seminars with Anne Bowery. Bowery's choice of word for the structure (i.e., "mountain") is supported by Socrates' speech in the *Republic*. Several times during the dialogue, Socrates describes the "journey" being undertaken by the citizens in their city in speech with references to mountain-climbing and mountainous terrain (e.g., "the peaks of philosophy," "poets can't take the thin air on the higher slopes," etc.).

<sup>14</sup> See Kenneth Dorter's "The Divided Line and the Structure of Plato's *Republic*" in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* (Jan 2004) 21(1), 1-20. See also Dorter's *The Transformation of Plato's Republic* (New York: Lexington Books, 2006), 3-8.

symmetry is rather lopsided. One would expect a better observance of symmetrical form of a dialogue according to whose content mathematical studies are of such immense importance that their misapprehension leads necessarily to the decay of the well-ordered city, and of a dialogue whose overarching form clearly shows signs of design.

*Contra* all the interpretations that propose a lopsided or so-called symmetrical structure to the *Republic*, I propose that the *Republic* has a true symmetrical structure, with five books on each side of the center point, and with each major theme or image in one half of the dialogue being mirrored by a corresponding theme or image in the other half. This new construal of the chiasmus (i.e., the “chi” shape, or symmetrical structure) of the *Republic* has many advantages over the previous construals of loose or so-called symmetry. Showing that the form of the *Republic* is a more perfect instantiation of a chiasmus than previously believed not only demonstrates more clearly the continuity between the mathematical form and content of the dialogue, but also demonstrates more clearly Plato’s mastery and intentional use of the same structure that Homer uses in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. This latter point makes even more plausible the claim by scholars such as Jacob Howland that Plato’s *Republic* is a philosophical retelling and appropriation of Homer’s epic poem(s).<sup>15</sup>

Since I locate the center of the chiasmus directly between Book V and Book VI (instead of somewhere in or between Books VI and VII), the literally central theme of the dialogue is not the nature of the good, but rather the nature of knowledge, ignorance, opinion, and the philosopher. The fact that the center point of the dialogue focuses not on

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<sup>15</sup> See Jacob Howland’s *The Republic: The Odyssey of Philosophy* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2004).



the good, but both on a particular kind of human nature (the philosophic nature) and on how that human nature relates to the world in which it lives (through knowledge, ignorance, and opinion), supports my thesis that Socrates' project in the *Republic* is to correct his interlocutors' misunderstandings of human nature so that they may be persuaded by his claims about justice.

My proposed chiasmus also leads to different groupings of themes and images on either side of the chiasm, as well as different mirrored pairs of themes and images on both sides. This rearrangement sheds new light on the content of the *Republic* by providing a more unified and cohesive explanation of the dialogue taken as a whole. The chiasmic structure of the *Republic* itself suggests the unity of two parts, since a literary chiasm is a unity of two mirrored halves. The form of the dialogue thus echoes its content, which treats of the unity of the body and soul in human nature. I illustrate this chiasmic structure in the following list of comparisons.

*Books I and X.* The visceral description of the souls tortured under the earth at the end of Book X (614e-616a) recalls Cephalus' description at the beginning of Book I of the soul of a wicked man "twist[ing] and turn[ing]" in fear of the punishment that may await him after death in Hades (330d-e).<sup>16</sup> The religious festival which marks the opening scene of the entire dialogue (327a) mirrors the "public festival" in the afterlife that Er witnesses, where those who have come from heaven and under the earth tell of what they saw in those places (614c). Socrates' comment that inherited money makes spendthrifts in Book I prefigures his tale of souls in Book X, wherein souls which

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<sup>16</sup> This comparison has been noted by many scholars, among them Brumbaugh. See Brumbaugh's *Platonic Studies of Greek Philosophy*, 20.

enjoyed the rewards of heaven due to having lived lives of virtue out of habit often made the poorest decisions in choosing their new lives because of their lack of practice “in labors” (619c-d). One such poor decision involves a man choosing a life of great tyranny in which he will end up eating his children (619b-c).

*Books II and IX.* Glaucon’s two men with two rings of invisibility – the unjust man with the just appearance, and the just man with the unjust appearance – comprise his challenge to Socrates at the beginning of Book II (359b-362d). Socrates finally answers that challenge at the end of Book IX with the picture of a chimaera he asks his interlocutors to mold. Whereas in Glaucon’s story injustice was made to seem more profitable because the body was made invisible, in Socrates’ answer to that story he makes the soul visible by describing a series of interconnected images (a many-headed beast, a lion, and two humans) giving a visual representation of the nature of the three parts of the soul and how they relate to one another (588b-591b), all of which he described initially without visual aid in Book IV.

*Books III and VIII.* Near the end of Book III, Socrates tells a “Phoenician tale,” or noble lie, in which souls have metals mixed into them, as if souls are the kinds of things that can contain metal. These metals in the soul are metaphorical expressions of the various natures a person may be born with, any one of which would enable her to fulfill a particular need of the city by practicing a particular art. In essence, these metals in the soul help bring about proper and harmonious functioning in the city, and ultimately justice. In Book VIII, loves which are described as wasp-like “drones” enter a young man’s soul where they begin to “sting” him, as if the soul is the kind of thing that could

house wasps or be stung. Oligarchs, for instance, are described as wounding the soul with injections of silver (555e). Eventually the stinging drives the young man to the greatest injustice personally and for the city: he becomes a tyrant and enslaves his city.

The noble lie also describes everyone in the city as brother and sister since they are all told that they are born of the same earth mother. The tale is meant to motivate the citizens to do well the jobs for which they have suitable natures and in which they have been trained, for the purpose of meeting the mutual needs of their fellow citizens.

Socrates notes that care is best in love, meaning that one acts for the good of whatever or whomever one considers one's own. Thus, if everyone believes everyone else is family (each one's own), then each will be motivated by love of one's own family (*philia*) to do one's job. In contrast to this concluding tale from Book III, at the beginning of Book VIII Socrates says the degeneration of their city in speech will begin when the "nuptial number" is not derived properly, leading to the citizens begetting children in disorder. This disordered begetting is described in terms of a "chaotic mixing" of the metals in the soul that were established, separated, and ordered in the second half of the noble lie told at the close of Book III.

The bulk of Book III describes a purging of the stories about the gods in which they act licentiously, viciously, out of lust and other tyrannical desires. Similarly, the luxuries of the citizens who will be guardians are slowly eliminated, from certain kinds of music to certain kinds of food, and many things in between. The bulk of Book VIII, on the other hand, describes people in the city (beginning with the rulers) acting successively more and more out of greed, lust, and other tyrannical desires.

*Books IV and VII.* Book IV opens with Adeimantus objecting that the guardians of their city in speech will not be happy because they will not be allowed to own private property and the (bodily) things conventionally held to bring about happiness (419a-420a). Socrates responds by saying that in pursuit of the project at hand, they are concerned primarily about the happiness of the city (the organism being built as a visible model of the soul) (420a-421c).<sup>17</sup> In Book VII Glaucon objects to the injustice done to the guardians in pulling them away from their companionship with the good to watch after the city (519d). Once again Socrates responds by saying that they are concerned primarily about the happiness of the city (519e-520e), and so rather than being an injustice, requiring the guardians to rule and “harmoniz[e] the citizens by persuasion and compulsion” is “laying just injunction on just men” (519e-520e).

Socrates summarizes the education of the guardians up until young adulthood in Book IV (423e-425c), which aims at perfecting their harmonious friendship with their fellow citizens (423c-424a), and in Book VII he outlines the guardian’s adult education (522c-540a) which aims at perfecting their friendship with and imitation of the good (540a).

In Book IV, Socrates leads Glaucon through a discussion of opposites, greater-than’s and lesser-than’s to conclude that the soul has parts (436c-441c). In Book VII, Socrates leads Glaucon through a discussion of opposites, bigger-than’s and smaller-than’s to show how mathematical studies are properly used in turning the soul toward

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<sup>17</sup> Adeimantus’ objection about happiness occurs one third in to the *Republic*. His brother Glaucon’s objection about happiness in Book VII occurs one third from the end of the *Republic*. Thus the brothers’ two objections about the happiness of the guardians trisects the *Republic* into three parts of roughly equal length.

being, “the region inhabited by the happiest part of what is, which is what the soul must by all means see” (523b-526e).

Perhaps the most important comparison between Books IV and VII is that of the picture of the just soul (the last image in Book IV) (443c-444a) compared to the image of the cave dwellers (the first image in Book VII) (514a-517a). After having found the definition of justice in their city in speech (“minding one’s own business and not being a busybody”) earlier in Book IV (433a-b), Socrates discovers how to apply the definition to the soul:

But in truth justice was, as it seems, something of this sort; however, not with respect to a man’s minding his external business, but with respect to what is within, with respect to what truly concerns him and his own. He doesn’t let each part in him mind other people’s business or the three classes in the soul meddle with each other, but really sets his own house in good order and rules himself; he arranges himself, becomes his own friend, and harmonizes the three parts, exactly like three notes in a harmonic scale, lowest, highest and middle. And if there are some other parts in between, he binds them together and becomes entirely one from many, moderate and harmonized. (443c-d)

This picture of a harmonized soul is completed in Book VII when Socrates explains that the thing toward which one ought to be turned – that which is most one’s own – is “the brightest part of that which *is*,” namely “the good” (518c-d). As explained above, the education of the guardians up to young adulthood helps to establish the order of the soul described in Book IV, and the further adult education described in Book VII helps to turn the soul toward that which it is most fit for the soul to contemplate (526e), which is the good.

As the last image of Book IV and the first image of Book VII, the properly-ordered soul and the properly-oriented soul act as an introduction and conclusion to the

middle two books of the dialogue, the last two books to review in this demonstration of the chiasmic structure of Plato's *Republic*.

*Books V and VI.* Three waves of difficulty in Book V are countered with three images given as analogies in Book VI. The first two waves in Book V are bodily in nature (451b-466d), though Socrates insists that the greatest benefit of these bodily policies is for the soul (464a-466d). The last two images in Book VI describe the nature of reality as being composed of a visible region and an intelligible region (509d-511e), and as having been generated by an ultimate, divine, and orderly principle Socrates calls "the good" (507d-509c). The final wave in Book V is the proposal that philosophers (those concerned primarily with the intelligible) must become kings (those concerned primarily with the visible), or vice versa (473c-476b), and the first image in Book VI is that of sailors, a stargazer, and a shipowner at sea on a ship, symbolic of philosopher's being in reality the most useful person to the city, while his appearance is one of uselessness (588a-589a).

The divided line (the last major image in Book VI) (509d-511e)<sup>18</sup> is a recapitulation of the female drama (the first wave of difficulty from Book V) (451c-457c). In describing the difference between men and women, Socrates points out that as a general rule women are weaker than men, nonetheless women can have the same natures for the same jobs (455d-e). Thus women can receive the same training and do the same jobs, but they do them to a lesser degree insofar as their strength is lesser and the

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<sup>18</sup> Sara Brill describes an interesting application of the divided line in her article, "Diagnosis and the Divided Line: Pharmacological Concerns in Plato's *Republic*," in *Epoche* (2005) 9(2), 297-315. For another application of the divided line, see Eli Diamond, "The Relation between the Divided Line and the Constitutions in Plato's *Republic*," in *Polis* (2006) 23(1), 46-73.

jobs depend upon strength. The divided line is a picture of two unequal segments of a line which are analogous in their features, yet the first segment is lesser in clarity and participation in truth than the second.<sup>19</sup> And each line segment itself has two segments, the former of which is less stable than the latter. Socrates' description of the relation and proportion of the line segments of the divided line to one another recapitulates his description of the relation of women and men as equal/similar but unequal/lesser-and-greater.

The sun metaphor (the second major image in Book VI) is a recapitulation of the family drama (the second wave of difficulty from Book V). They are both about generation. The family drama explains how children will be conceived and reared for the well-ordering and healthy growth of the city. The sun metaphor explains that all of reality is an offspring of the good. The good is the father of the intelligible realm and of the sun. The sun in turn is the father of the visible realm, responsible for all the "generation, growth, and nourishment" seen there (508b-c), meaning that the good is the grandfather of the "visible region" (508b-c). This recapitulation of the family drama on a cosmic scale shows how the city's unity through family love is a participation in the family love that unifies all of reality.

The just man in the unjust city and the internal and external influences that lead to his being corrupted (the second subject after the ship in Book VI) correspond to the discussion of the conduct and rules of war and the firsthand education of children at war

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<sup>19</sup> For three more applications of the divided line see Robert Colter, "Unifying the Soul: Comments on Sim's 'The Divided Line United Psyche in Plato's *Republic*,'" in *Southwest Philosophy Review* (2004) 20(2), 179-181; Moon-Heum Yang, "The Relationship between Hypotheses and Images in the Mathematical Subsection of the Divided Line of Plato's *Republic*," in *Canadian Philosophical Review* (2005) 44(2), 285-312; and Kenneth Dorter, "The Divided Line and the Structure of Plato's *Republic*," 1-20.

on horseback (the second-to last subject before the third wave of difficulty in Book V). In Book V Socrates describes the guardians at war (which was the entire point of forming them to begin with) and in Book VI Socrates describes what goes wrong with the just man, especially in the unjust city (which is arguably the most important lesson to learn for those wondering why injustice seems to be profitable and why one should choose to be just).

The sailors on a ship (first major image in Book VI) is a recapitulation of the philosopher-kings wave (the third and final wave of difficulty from Book V). Just as the stargazer who knows the true art of piloting is best fit to pilot the ship, though he is considered useless by those on board who fight over being pilot, so too is the philosopher, who is turned toward the good, best fit to rule the city as her king.

These last two images are the final bookends, or rings, surrounding the center point of the entire dialogue. At the very center of Plato's *Republic* is an explanation of the natures of knowledge, ignorance, and opinion at the end of Book V, and an explanation of the philosophic nature at the beginning of Book VI. In Book V, knowledge is defined in terms of its object, that which *is*. Ignorance is defined in terms of its object, that which is *not*. Opinion is defined as something darker than knowledge yet brighter than ignorance, as something that is somehow in between knowledge and ignorance, "opin[ing] neither that which *is*, nor that which is *not*" (478c). The philosopher who should be king seeks knowledge, not opinion.<sup>20</sup> Socrates explains that philosophers are not "lovers of opinion" or of "fair sounds and colors and such things,"

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<sup>20</sup> Gail Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* V-VII," in *Plato: Critical Assessments: Vol II: Plato's Middle Period: Metaphysics and Epistemology*, ed. by Nicholas D. Smith (New York: Routledge, 1988), 235-265.



but instead are “lovers of wisdom” and of the fair itself, “delight[ing] in each thing that is itself” (480a). In Book VI, continuing his description of the philosopher, Socrates explains that the philosophic nature is a good “rememberer, a good learner, magnificent, charming, and a friend and kinsman of truth, justice, courage, and moderation” (487a). The first four qualities are capacities the philosopher has for pursuing her goal, which is to seek out, “keep company” with, and “imitate... the divine and the orderly” also known as the good (500c-d), and the last quality defines the philosopher in terms of four friendships (*philos*).

More comparisons can be made, but the above lists constitutes a fairly representative picture of the symmetrical structure of the dialogue as a whole, with many of the most important themes, stories, and images both accounted for and given new light. The symmetrical structure of the *Republic* indicates that Socrates’ description of the philosophic nature is the literal and thematic center of Socrates’ speech for the night. The philosophic nature first appears in seed form as the nature of the “true guardians of conviction” in Book III. There, Socrates describes the philosophic nature of the “true guardian” in a negative fashion, as a nature that is resistant to the effects of persuasion, force, and wizardry. When it receives its full treatment in Book VI, Socrates defines the philosophic nature in terms of its friendship (*philos*) with truth, courage, justice, and moderation.

*iii. Philia, Not Erōs: The Love of Fathers and Sons, The Preservation of “One’s Own”*

In Book III, when Socrates defines force, persuasion, and wizardry, he does so in the context of explaining how a true guardian of conviction must be able to withstand persuasion, force, and wizardry, preserving in love (*philia*) that which she holds to be

most her own, namely, the good of her soul. Thus, by focusing on Socrates' use of and speech about force and persuasion, one may readily see that the *Republic* is not primarily about *erōs* and the striving after what one lacks, but rather, about *philia* and the preservation of what is most one's own.

Plato's *Republic* is a story of (1) fathers and sons, (2) the love proper to parents and children, (3) the full nature of inheritance fathers pass on to their sons (including the goods of both the body and soul), and (4) the proper appropriation and preservation of inheritance from fathers by their sons.<sup>21</sup> From the slave boy's arrest of Socrates in the opening pages of Book I, all the way to the tale of a man eating his own children in the closing pages of Book X, Plato's *Republic* is rife with references to children, child-rearing, inheritance, and the interaction of fathers and sons. The following list of such references is partial but representative:

Book I: Polemarchus' slave boy grabbing Socrates, Cephalus' report of age-mates' complaints about abuse at the hands of younger relatives, Socrates' discussion of the effects of inheritance and money-making on the soul, Cephalus' explanation of his inheritance, Polemarchus' contradiction of both his father and Socrates

Book II: Glaucon's tale of a shepherd described as an ancestor of a man named Gyges, Adeimantus noting the children that one would have as a result of taking anyone one wants in marriage if one had a ring of invisibility, Adeimantus' claim that they would agree with Socrates' judgment on the nature of justice if only they had been taught as much from childhood on

Book III: Socrates' description of the childhood education of the guardians in their city in speech, the banning of stories about the gods' intergenerational (i.e., father-son) warfare, Socrates' stipulation that a man may kiss, be with, and touch

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<sup>21</sup> Mothers and daughters are mentioned in the *Republic*, but to a far lesser degree. I use the phrase "fathers and sons" as opposed to "parents and children" because "sons" can refer to adults where "children" cannot, and because most of the examples of the parent-child relationship in both the narrative and dramatic parts of the dialogue are father-son relationships. All that said, nothing prevents the lessons taught through the father-son relationships in the *Republic* to apply to father-daughter, mother-daughter, and mother-son relationships.

a boy only in the manner that fathers treat their sons (403b-c)

Book IV: Summary of the laws about education in the city in speech, the providence of a god is needed to preserve the educational laws of the city (the citizens' common inheritance from their city's founding fathers) (425e)

Book V: The procreative and child-rearing policies of the city in speech, the effects of the "family drama" in facilitating child-rearing and reducing the mistreatment of the elderly, the training of children at war on horseback

Book VI: The need for a divinely inspired passion for philosophy to come to sons of kings or to kings themselves, unworthy suitors of philosophy "come to her – like orphaned children without relatives – and disgrace her" (495c), the good as the father of the sun and the intelligible region (508b), the sun as the father of the visible region, the temptations that threaten to disorder and/or disorient the philosophical nature of a youth

Book VII: Childhood education described as shadow play in the image of the cave, the adult education of guardians by the guardians of their parental generation, fifteen years of political experience learning how to rule by watching, imitating, and preserving the rule of the predecessor guardians, the rule by necessity over the city and the training of its guardians-to-be by the 50+ year old guardians

Book VIII: The generational story of degeneration from aristocracy to oligarchy, told in terms of the effects of fathers on their sons and vice versa

Book IX: The continuation of the generational story of degeneration from oligarchy to tyranny, the violence and parricide fathers suffer at the hands of tyrannical sons

Book X: The tale of the rebirth of an ancient (1,000 year old) generation as the new generation, a man who chooses his next life poorly sees that the life will involve eating his own children, the preservation of a tale that can save those who are persuaded by it

The night's discussion in the *Republic* is primarily about preserving the goods one has inherited and how *philia* aids one in preserving that inheritance. It is only secondarily about acquiring goods and *erōs*' motivating role in that acquisition. Thus, scholars who focus on *erōs* over and against (and even to the exclusion of) *philia* in their

interpretations and criticisms of the *Republic* fail to identify or properly construe its central themes.<sup>22</sup>

Some scholars have laid groundwork for coming to the conclusion that in Plato's *Republic* Socrates fails to give a satisfactory account of justice since his account requires the denial of human nature as embodied and thus finite.<sup>23</sup> Specifically, the charge is that in the luxurious city in speech, Socrates recommends an impossible regulation of *erōs*, but *erōs* is a necessary feature of any finite being, and thus Socrates recommends a city in which it is impossible to be just and be embodied (i.e., finite) at the same time.<sup>24</sup> However, because many of these scholars have focused on the presence of *erōs* in the *Republic* to the exclusion of a consideration of the presence of *philia* in the text, they have overlooked Socrates' activity of city building as an attempt to alter his interlocutors' understanding of human nature. Socrates does not recommend an extirpation of either *philia* or *erōs*, but rather a proper ordering of them.

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<sup>22</sup> As mentioned in previous chapters, for examples of this kind of interpretation see Roochnik's *Beautiful City*, especially Chapter 2, entitled "Eros" (51-77); Claudia Baracchi's *Of Myth, Life, and War in Plato's Republic* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002); Hyland's *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); and Allan Bloom's *An Interpretive Essay in The Republic of Plato*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. by Plato, Trans. by Allan Bloom (Basic Books, 1991). See also Stanley Rosen's essay "The Role of Eros in Plato's *Republic*" reprinted in *The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry: Studies in Ancient Thought* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 102-118.

<sup>23</sup> See Drew Hyland's *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), especially chapter 3 (59-86), for a discussion of finitude and *erōs* that lays the groundwork for coming to such conclusions as those stated above. His treatment of *erōs* in the *Republic* is, in a certain sense, a logical outgrowth of his overarching thesis about Platonic dialogues. However, I think one can affirm his thesis about the dialogues in general and deny his particular claims about the place of *erōs* in the *Republic*. Although I share Hyland's interpretive assumptions and agree that his thesis is true, I disagree with him in how to interpret certain passages of the *Republic*, not because Hyland misapplies his interpretive assumptions, but in part because our shared assumptions and Hyland's thesis together are insufficient to preclude possible disagreement in interpretation.

<sup>24</sup> Leo Strauss and Allan Bloom both claim that the city in speech Socrates and company build is impossible because it abstracts from or denies the reality of the bodily nature of human beings. See Strauss' *The City and Man* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), and Allan Bloom's *Interpretive Essay in The Republic of Plato*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. by Plato, Trans. by Allan Bloom (Basic Books, 1991).

For a scholar to note that *erōs* is much more regulated in the *Republic* than it is in Plato's *Symposium*, or to conclude that the city in speech fails because *erōs* cannot be regulated successfully by the city's laws, is to mistake an effect for a cause. One misses the point by saying the city fails because Socrates has made *erōs* secondary in importance. Rather, *erōs* becomes secondary as a natural result of *philia*'s being primary. *Erōs* has less of a place in the city because Socrates redefines who the people in the city are: *these particular bodies* are not the proper object of *erōs* because they are brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers – people whom one loves with the love of *philia*. In the ninth edition of Liddell, Scott, Jones and McKenzie's *Greek-English Lexicon*, two of the first three definitions of *philia* are “the love of gods for men,” and the “love for a child reared.”<sup>25</sup> Failing to be sufficiently persuaded by Socrates that widespread *philia* may be established in their city in speech, and claiming that a properly established widespread *philia* cannot cause the effects that Socrates describes, are two different issues. The latter claim reflects a misunderstanding of the nature and effects of *philia*. Socrates has not mischaracterized the power of *philia*, but if he cannot correct his interlocutors' (or his readers') understanding of *philia*, then his attempts to persuade them of any claims dependent on this understanding will fail.<sup>26</sup> To restate and summarize the issue: the regulation of *erōs* is not the root project, but rather an effect of the root project, which is a

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<sup>25</sup> Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, revised and augmented by Sir Henry Stuart Jones with the assistance of Roderick McKenzie (New York: Clarendon, Oxford University Press, 1996), 1933.

<sup>26</sup> Apropos of this remark, Leon Craig begins his book *The War Lover* with the following quotation from Alexandre Kojève's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*:  
 “I believe that Plato actually succeeds in convincing those who read and understand his dialogue. But here is the difficulty: the number of people who read Plato is limited; and the number who understand him is still more limited.”  
 In Leon Craig, *The War Lover: A Study of Plato's Republic* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1994), xi.

promulgation of *philia* among all citizens for the preservation of the goods of both body and soul that they have inherited from their parents.

The *Republic* begins with strong references to the relationship between fathers and sons (and father figures and their wards), and it is Adeimantus' reintroduction and phrasing of the question of how fathers relate to sons that Socrates attempts to answer for the bulk of the dialogue's remainder. It is Adeimantus who is concerned about children, about their rearing, and about the effect children have on their parents and vice versa. Socrates' speeches regarding the rearing and education of the children, the laws regarding poetry, and the effects these policies have on the way people think about justice, all are responses to Adeimantus' concerns. So much of Socrates' speech in the *Republic* has to do mainly with how people are trained to apprehend justice, and so little of it is actually about what justice is in itself. The possession of justice is often presupposed. Justice is only sought after as if not already possessed when Socrates' interlocutors insist that he make their city in speech real (450c, 458a, 470d, 472a), despite Socrates' objection to these requests that they miss the point of their discussion (472c-e).

Glaucon's *erōs* may initiate the night's discussion anew after Socrates' shaming of Thrasymachus, but Socrates chooses most often and most prominently to address Adeimantus' concerns about *philia*. Glaucon proposes that with a ring of invisibility a man could (1) "commit adultery with the king's wife" and so take over the rule of the kingdom (360a-b), (2) "have intercourse with whomever he wanted" (360b), and finally because of his rule he could (3) "take in marriage from whatever station he wants" (362b). Adeimantus in his turn "brings up" the children that would inevitably result as a consequence of this invisible and unjust man's prodigious "husbandly" activity (366a-b).

Adeimantus tells Socrates that their inability to prize justice for its own sake above injustice has been a failure of education (366e-367a). In essence, Adeimantus tells Socrates that if they had been raised properly, they would be persuaded by Socrates' claim that justice in itself is always preferable to and more profitable than injustice. In response, Socrates spends the rest of the night in conversation fulfilling the antecedent of Adeimantus' conditional statement by building a city in speech in which the children will be taught by people who speak about justice "in this way from the beginning." Thus while *erōs* may initiate the discussion (much as a husband's love for his wife leads to the conception of a child), as the discussion unfolds it finds its full fruition and expression in a treatment of how the interlocutors are to preserve that to which they have metaphorically given birth in speech. *Philia* (in this case, a father's love for his son) is the key to succeeding in that preservation.

Because of the *procreative* consequences of *erōs* pursued to its completion, there is no trick to transforming *erōs* into *philia*, any more than there is a trick in a husband transforming into a father. A husband becomes a father by practicing the virtues of being a husband, namely performing his "husbandly duties." In a sense this is Socrates' lesson regarding the ultimate fruit of *erōs* in the *Symposium*. In the *Symposium*, *erōs* is that movement by which one ascends toward and accesses the eternal, where finally one gives birth in beauty. In the context of an all-male drinking party, where many of those present are practicing man-boy lover-beloved relations, Socrates' dissonant contribution to the contest of speeches is a tale of procreation, describing that to which *erōs* leads and in what it results (*Symposium*, 206c-e).

T. K. Seung argues that the *Republic* is a dialogue which replaces the *erōs* of the *Symposium* with *philia*.<sup>27, 28</sup> Seung begins by explaining that the Pythagorean notion of friendship (*philos*) was that of a philosophical, as opposed to a tribal, kinship.<sup>29</sup> Further, concerning the connection between love (*philia*) and wisdom (*sophia*), Seung explains the full Pythagorean meaning of the word “philosophy” is best understood as a combination of its literal meaning, “the lover or friend (*philos*) of wisdom (*sophia*),” and the supplementary meaning, “the friend or friendship in wisdom.”<sup>30</sup> Seung claims that “the theme of brotherly love is highlighted by the partnership of two brothers, Glaucon and Adeimantus.”<sup>31</sup> Brotherly love (*philia*) is an important theme to highlight, according to Seung, for in the *Republic* one learns that “The ideal state is a community of brotherly love or Pythagorean fellowship.”<sup>32</sup> Finally, as a consequence of using “the bond of fraternal love [as] the spiritual foundation of a new political order,”<sup>33</sup> the kinship of the city in wisdom “extends from the world of humans to that of the gods” because “the world of wisdom” stands above all human affiliations.<sup>34</sup> Seung also argues that the city in speech is “a city of love (*philia*)” because *philia* “ties together not only the three

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<sup>27</sup> T. K. Seung, *Plato Rediscovered: Human Value and Social Order* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996), 40-44, 99-116.

<sup>28</sup> Drew Hyland makes a similar claim in his article, “Eros, Epithumia, and Philia in Plato,” in *Phronesis* 13:32-46.

<sup>29</sup> Seung, *Plato Rediscovered*, 40-1.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 41-2.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.



classes of the state into a harmonious whole, but also the three parts of the soul in each individual (589ab),” and that “This bond secures the happiness of both the soul and the state.”<sup>35</sup>

For Seung, *erōs* comes into play in the *Republic* in Books VIII and IX, where Socrates establishes a “distinction... between the rule by reason and the rule by passion” through his description of “the inner state of the unjust souls.”<sup>36</sup> The problem between these two kinds of rule is that “they are liable to be mistaken for each other, because both of them are called the rule of reason.”<sup>37</sup> Bringing to mind my earlier discussion of the differences and similarities between persuasion and force on the one hand, and wizardry on the other, one can explain why such a mistake is likely. The true rule by reason is affected by persuasion, which is marked by argument, but the wizardry which affects the rule by passion through its “charm[ing] by pleasures” has the appearance of persuasion.

Incidentally, (1) my account of the respective mapping of persuasion, force, and wizardry onto the calculating, spirited, and desiring parts of the soul, combined with (2) my explanation of wizardry’s being an imitation of persuasion such that it has persuasion’s appearance without its reality, together also explain Socrates’ speech on the difference between rhetoric and dialectic in the *Gorgias*, another Platonic dialogue which Seung references in tandem with the *Phaedrus* in his overall treatment of the *Republic*. According to Seung, in the *Phaedrus*

A lover must be able to speak persuasively to establish and cultivate a relation with the beloved. Therefore, the art of speaking well, rhetoric, is the natural topic

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 112.

to follow the topic of love. This answer is seriously flawed. It stands on the assumption that rhetoric is the best way of talking between the lover and the beloved. As a student of rhetoric, Phaedrus may subscribe to such a view, but Socrates has no reason to do so. For Socrates, the relation of the lover and the beloved is the relation of *philosophia*, and rhetoric is the worst way of cultivating wisdom.<sup>38</sup>

Seung notes, “Beginning in the *Gorgias*, Socrates has repeatedly branded rhetoric as a technique of deceiving and misleading the gullible audience, while praising dialectic as the only reliable way of investigating the truths.”<sup>39</sup> In the *Gorgias*, Socrates refers to rhetoric as a “knack,” not deserving the name “art” or “craft” (*techne*), likening what the rhetorician does over and against the dialectician to what a pastry maker does over and against a physician. Like the pastry maker, the rhetorician may be able to convince people to buy his wares and shun those of his competition (the dialectician), but that does not mean he gives his customers any good, though they take what he gives them as good because of its being pleasurable (*Gorgias*, 500b). The rhetorician deals in wizardry, which is convincing because of its verisimilitude to persuasion. If a person is ruled by her desiring part, she will not be able to distinguish the mere appearance of persuasion from its reality. Seung concludes, “If Socrates has not abandoned his lowly view of rhetoric, he should simply say that the lover should use the art of dialectic rather than the dubious rhetoric, if he wants to lead his beloved to truth and wisdom.”<sup>40</sup>

Returning to the *Republic*, *philia* appears during the establishment of the proper ordering and the proper orientation of the city and the soul, and *erōs* appears during the moments of degeneration of the city and the soul. *Erōs* is described mainly in terms of its

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

deleterious effects in Books VIII and IX, as discussed earlier. Granted, on a few occasions, Socrates does describe *erōs* in positive terms, referring, for instance, to the philosopher as an erotic man,<sup>41</sup> and to the need for *erōs* in making kings into philosophers. However, an analysis of these occasions reveals that Socrates' praises of *erōs* as divine, or even necessary, are qualified, and further that Socrates makes these claims out of conversational necessity. Socrates discusses *erōs* in a positive fashion only on those occasions when his interlocutors insist that he makes their city in speech real (450c, 458a, 470d, 472a). Socrates acquiesces to the requests, but only after prefacing his response with a warning that they are not remembering well or maintaining (i.e., they are not preserving) the topic of the conversation at hand (472c-d). Following this warning, Socrates stipulates that his response to their request to make the city come into being will be a qualified one, saying, "don't compel me necessarily to present it as coming into being in every way in deed as we described it in speech" (473a). Glaucon agrees to this caveat. Socrates then responds to their request to make the city come into being, saying that their city in speech will never come into being unless "the philosophers rule as kings or those now called kings and chiefs genuinely and adequately philosophize" (473c-d). On hearing this, Glaucon threatens "that very many men, and not ordinary ones, will on the spot throw off their clothes, and stripped for action, taking hold of whatever weapon falls under the hand of each, run full speed at you to do wonderful deeds" (473e-474a). Socrates meets the charge by explaining himself through the analogy of an "erotic man" taking care not to "forget that all boys in the bloom of

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<sup>41</sup> See Chapter Three, section iii above, "The Problem of Force and Persuasion in the *Republic*: Acquisition and Preservation."

youth in one way or another put their sting in an erotic lover of boys and arouse him; all seem worthy of attention and delight” (474d). He goes on to explain through this analogy that the philosopher is not the lover of sights, sounds, appearance, and opinion, but the lover of things as they *are*. Throughout his explanation, Socrates word for “lover,” is *philia*: lovers of learning (*philomathes*), lovers of sights (*philotheamones*), lovers of sounds (*philekooi*), and lovers of wisdom (*philosophois*) (475b-476e). In summary, Socrates uses the example of an “erotic man” who remembers well to beware the “sting” of *erōs* that makes all young boys “*seem* worthy of attention and delight” as an analogy to explain that the love of wisdom (*philosophia*) is concerned with things as they *are*, and not as they *seem* to be (474d-480a).

After Socrates describes the nature of the philosopher in Book VI, he summarizes their discussion about the “third wave” of difficulty from the end of Book V, recalling that their city in speech will not come to be unless

...some necessity chances to constrain those few philosophers who aren't vicious, those now called useless, to take charge of a city, whether they want to or not, and the city to obey; or a true erotic passion for true philosophy flows from some divine inspiration into the sons of those who hold power or the office of king, or into the fathers themselves. (499a-c)

Philosophers have no need of *erōs*; it is the person who is not a philosopher who needs the “divine inspiration” of *erōs* to become a philosopher. The object of *erōs* is not truth itself or a knowledge of things as they are, but true philosophy. Thus *erōs* is satisfied if and when a person establishes a friendship with (or in) wisdom. The philosophic nature is defined in terms of its friendship with truth, justice, courage, and moderation (487a). With these friendships, the philosopher has what is necessary to be properly-ordered interiorly and properly-oriented exteriorly. There is nothing that the philosopher lacks, or

must acquire, other than perhaps the continuation of her well-ordered state in perpetuity. But this continuation is much more easily or intuitively explained in terms of preservation than acquisition. The philosopher preserves what is most her own, namely, the good of her soul, through her friendship (*philos*) in wisdom with truth and the other virtues, guarding her convictions successfully in the face of persuasion, force, or wizardry used against her.

*iv. Philia and Erōs: Unity, Inheritance, and What is Most One's Own*

Caring for or “minding one’s own business” is an ambiguous way to define justice,<sup>42</sup> since its meaning varies depending on what is meant by “one’s own.”<sup>43</sup> No doubt Socrates intentionally defines justice in this ambiguous way, for he redefines what one means by “one’s own” throughout the dialogue. In Book II, at the birth of their city of necessity (the city based on mutual need), Socrates asks Adeimantus whether each person will make everything he needs for himself, and in this way “mind his own business,” or whether each will take care of the mutual needs of the others. Adeimantus suggests the former arrangement, but Socrates argues that the latter will be better (370a). People have different skills and capacities by nature, and exclusive training in a skill allows for products or services of superior quality and quantity, so it will be better if the city is built on the principle of “one man, one art.” Following this principle, by the time Socrates and company discover the definition of justice in Book IV, “minding one’s own

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<sup>42</sup>For some historical context see Eric A. Havelock, *The Greek Concept of Justice: From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978).

<sup>43</sup>For an interesting article on this subject see Patrick Coby, “Mind Your Own Business: The Trouble with Justice in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Interpretation* (2003) 31(1), 37-58. See also Jiyuan Yu, “Justice in the *Republic*: An Evolving Paradox,” in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* (2000) 17(2), 121-141.

business” means doing what one is best fit to do by both nature and training, for the mutual benefit of one’s fellow citizens and the happiness of the city as a whole.<sup>44</sup> “One’s own” also has a double meaning at this point, for in Book III Socrates proposes that a pair of noble lies will persuade the citizens not only that their art is their own by nature (according to the metals in their souls), but also that all the other citizens are their own by birth, for they are all children of the same earth mother, and as a large family of brothers and sisters they care for each and every citizen as their own. As such, they all do their jobs well for the sake of their fellow citizens’ mutual needs, for as Socrates puts it, “A man would care most for that which he happened to love [*philia*]” (412d). Eventually, in Book V Socrates says this love unites the city so intimately that everyone in the city means the same thing by the phrase “my own” (462c-e).

Should the just man ever live in an unjust city, however, “minding one’s own business” no longer refers to minding one’s art for the mutual needs of one’s fellow citizens, who are more like wild beasts than men, since he sees that “no one who minds the business of the cities does virtually anything sound, and that there is no ally with whom one could go to the aid of justice and be preserved,” and that he “would perish before he has been of any use to city or friends and be of no profit to himself or others ” (496c-d). In this context, “minding one’s own business” refers to whatever helps the just man best preserve himself “as a man in a storm, when dust and rain are blown about by the wind, stands aside under a wall... content if somehow he himself can live his life here

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<sup>44</sup> See Daniel Devereux, “The Relationship between Justice and Happiness in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* (2004) 20, 265-305 for another treatment of this topic.

pure of injustice and unholy deeds, and take his leave from it graciously and cheerfully with fair hope” (496d-e).

In Book IX, Socrates finally gives the definition of justice as “minding one’s own business” its full content by explaining that “the philosophic” that “is not factious” is what is most one’s own (586d-587a). The lack of faction is the friendship that one has with oneself when one is philosophic,<sup>45</sup> which Socrates states explicitly in explaining the meaning of the chimaera picture of the soul (589a-d).

Prior to providing the chimaera picture of the soul, Socrates explains that most fail in discerning the pleasures of the soul – the “truest pleasures” – from the pleasures of the body because they misunderstand the nature of pleasure and pain (583c-584a). Most people think pleasure and pain are opposites, and that they are relative to one another such that “pleasure is rest from pain and pain rest from pleasure” (584b). Thus sick people may believe that “nothing is more pleasant than being healthy, but before they

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<sup>45</sup> In *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues*, Hyland insists that maintaining political unity is the most important theme in the *Republic*. He claims that the second wave of difficulty is meant to highlight this theme, arguing that Socrates is willing even to pay the high cost of abolishing the family for the sake of political unity. However, Hyland misses two critical points here: (1) The city was built for the explicitly stated purpose of being a highly visible model of the soul. Thus, the maintenance of political unity is not primary in importance, but rather it derives its importance from its being comparable to the soul. One could argue that the political unity of the city is primary in importance, but only in an imitative sense, insofar as the city is a visible imitation of the invisible soul. (2) Socrates does not abolish the family in the city in speech. Instead he explicitly uses family feeling to redefine membership in the family of the city. In his speech at 412b, he gives the reasoning behind the use of a noble lie in causing all in the city to view one another as family: “A man would care most for that which he happens to love [*philia*].” *Philia*, not *erōs*, is the love one feels for children, siblings, and parents. Thus it is not the eruption of *erōs* into the city that leads to the procreative policies of book V, but rather a concern for *philia*. *Erōs* is not introduced in the city with the use of the noble lies told in Book III, but rather it is *philia*. It is not mismanaged *erōs* but rather the lack of *philia* that is the primary cause of the degeneration of the city in speech. Misguided *erōs* is but one of the many maladies that run rampant in the absence of properly ordered *philia*.

If Socrates thought family feeling was something that could be controlled, he should have done what he could have done to extirpate it. Instead, realizing it is an unalienable part of the order of a human soul, he seeks to use it. Socrates uses *philia* as the foundation of the city as a whole. Family feeling is so crucial because it is one of the most powerful ways in which one “knows” what is “one’s own.”

were sick it had escaped them that it is most pleasant,” and “those who are undergoing some intense suffering saying that nothing is more pleasant than the cessation of suffering” (583c-d). Socrates says of pain, pleasure, and the repose that is neither pain nor pleasure but lies between them, “when it is next to the painful, repose looks pleasant and next to the pleasant, painful; and in these appearances there is nothing sound, so far as truth of pleasure goes, only a certain wizardry” (584a).

Socrates asks Glaucon to think about pleasure, pain, and the repose from both in terms of a metaphor: imagine three regions, an upward region, a middle region, and a downward region. The middle region represents the state of repose. The downward region represents the state of deficiency, where one falls when one experiences a lack of something. For example, a person’s body has used up its nutrients and now requires more of them. When one falls into this state of deficiency, one experiences the pain of hunger. Perhaps a person gets a particular sexual urge, like an itch that must be scratched. Falling into this state of irritation is the experience of sexual desire. The same is true for any desire that is caused by the body falling into a state of deficiency. When one moves from the state of repose (the middle region) down to the state of deficiency (the downward region), one experiences pain. (584d-585a)

Addressing some deficiency (for instance, eating to address the feeling of hunger), may feel pleasurable, but Socrates points out that it is a mistake to call this true pleasure, since one is moving only from the downward (pain) to the middle region (repose). Socrates explains to Glaucon, “of the so-called pleasures stretched through the body to the soul, just about most, and the greatest ones, belong to this form; they are kinds of relief from pains” (584c). Those who mistake the movement from the



downward to the middle region to be pleasure are “inexperienced” in the pleasures of the soul because they have mistaken the pleasures of the body as “true” pleasures, or in any case, as the truest of pleasures. Socrates explains that eating, drinking, and similar activities associated with filling the “emptiness of the body’s condition” are not true pleasures, but pleasures so-called (585a-b). They do not give a “true fullness” since their objects do not “participate in pure being” to the extent that the goods of the soul do. Addressing “ignorance and imprudence,” which are the “emptiness of the soul’s condition” fills one with things that *are* more, and so learning, education, and the activities which address the emptiness of the soul’s condition are more accurately called true pleasures (585b-c).<sup>46</sup>

True pleasure is the movement from the middle region to the upper region – when one moves from a state of repose, to a state where one is more “full” than one was before because one has turned toward the source of truth and being (namely, the good).<sup>47</sup> The experience of true pleasure is more lasting than the experience of moving from the downward region to the middle region. Oddly enough, as it turns out the experience of true pleasure – of moving from the middle to the upper region – is actually a painful experience. The intense pain of the prisoner’s turning toward the light and journeying

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<sup>46</sup> See Monte Johnson, “Ousia: A Fundamental Term in Platonic Ontology,” in *Southwest Philosophy Review* (2000) 17(1), 95-101; Wong Kui, “The Concept of Being and the Ontological Status of Plato’s “The One”, “The Good” and the Ideas,” in *Philosophical Inquiry* (2004) 26(4), 67-88; and Patrick Quinn, “Plato and Freire on Knowledge, Education and Justice,” in *Skepsis* (2001) 12, 27-36.

<sup>47</sup> See Charles Kahn, “Plato on What Is Good,” in *Veritas* 2004) 49(4), 627-640; Terry Penner, “The Forms, the Form of the Good, and the Desire for Good, in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *Modern Schoolman* (2003) 80(3), 191-233; Dominic Scott, “Metaphysics and the Defence of Justice in the *Republic*,” in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* (2000) 16, 1-20; Rachel Singpurwalla, “Are There Two Theories of Goodness in the *Republic*? A Response to Santas,” in *Apeiron* (2006) 39(4), 319-330; and Nicholas White, “Plato’s Concept of Goodness,” in *A Companion to Plato*, ed. by Hugh Benson, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 356-372.

out of the cave from Book VII is thus described in Book IX as the truest pleasure (585a-587a).<sup>48</sup> In Book IX, Socrates also describes the lives of those who mistake the pleasures of the body as those which are most their own, and thus the summit and sole source of happiness (586a-b). The life full of bodily pleasures – the life which Thrasymachus described in Book I and which Glaucon and Adeimantus resurrected in Book II – is the life of cattle. Thrasymachus' perfect tyrant who succeeds in enslaving everyone and who is called by everyone happy and blessed (344b-c) thus proves to be as happy as, though no happier than, the stud bull of a cow pasture. Socrates says of those who live in this fashion that their pleasures are “mere phantoms and shadow paintings of true pleasure,” and those who fight over these shadow paintings are as foolish as the men at Troy who fought over “the phantom of Helen [...] out of ignorance of the truth” (586b-c). With this description, Socrates portrays the tyrant as the prisoner in the cave who manages to establish himself as the king over his fellow prisoners, laying claim to the shadows on the wall as most his own.

Throughout Book IX, in explaining the nature of the tyrant to his interlocutors, Socrates provides one image after another as a visible imitation of the tyrant's invisible soul. The final and perhaps most graphic image Socrates provides in Book IX is that of the chimaera. He asks Glaucon to imagine three things: (1) a many-headed beast with both tame and savage heads, (2) a lion, and (3) a human being. He instructs Glaucon to make the lion larger than the human being. Next he asks Glaucon to take these three things and put them together so that they somehow grow together, like one organism.

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<sup>48</sup> See Rafael Ferber, “The Absolute Good and the Human Goods,” in *Philosophical Inquiry* (2003) 25(3-4), 117-126.

Finally, he asks Glaucon to take this three-part creature and put it inside the form of a human being. (588b-e)

The many-headed beast represents the desiring part of the soul. The lion represents the spirited part of the soul. The human being represents the calculating part of the soul. The outside form of the human being that encases all three of these things is the body, or the appearance, of the person. In a tyrannical or gain-loving soul which is ruled by the many-headed beast, every part is at war with every other part. The beast and the lion snap at each other, and both of them terrorize the human being, who is starved. The beast (the desiring part) constantly tears at the human being (the intellect, or calculating part), forcing it to do everything possible to figure out how to give it satisfaction. The soul of the tyrannic person is a place of constant inner-battle and fear (588e-589a). On the other hand, in an aristocratic or wisdom-loving soul which is ruled by the human being, the savage heads of the beast are cut off or tamed, so that only tame heads remain. The human being tames and feeds both the beast and the lion, keeping them properly regulated. Every part is at peace with every other part, because the human being rules over the other parts properly.<sup>49</sup> In short, the aristocrat is internally ordered and unified, “rearing” his soul’s parts and “making them friends with each other and himself” so that there is an integrity (or wholeness) to his soul (589a-b).<sup>50</sup> The tyrannic or unjust person, on the other hand, is internally fragmented, at war with himself so that

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<sup>49</sup> For another treatment on the topic see R. K. Bentley, “Ruling Oneself: Platonic Hedonism and the Quality of Citizenship,” in *Polis* (2003) 20(1-2), 85-107.

<sup>50</sup> See Julius Moravcsik, “Inner Harmony and the Human Ideal in *Republic* IV and IX,” in *Journal of Ethics* (2001) 5(1), 39-56.

he ends by “devour[ing]” himself (588e-589a). There is no integrity or wholeness to his soul.

With these pictures Socrates finally addresses the challenge Glaucon made at the beginning of Book II. Glaucon said that everyone acknowledges that justice is good for its consequences. However, most people do not believe that justice is good for its own sake. People obey laws and act justly because they want to avoid punishment and gain praise. However, if people could do whatever they wanted to and get away with it, they would. Most people think of justice as a burden, done for the good consequences associated with it, but the thing itself is unpleasant. To prove his point, Glaucon asked Socrates to consider two men: one man is unjust, but he has the appearance and reputation of being just because of his cleverness and his use of a ring of invisibility. On the other hand, the second man is just, but he has the appearance and reputation of being wicked and evil. The first man whom everyone believes is a just man (even though in reality he is unjust) will get praise, trust, goods of all kinds, he will be king, all because people think he is just, and when he dies, he will also receive the blessings of the gods, whom he also fooled with his appearance. The second man whom everyone believes is an unjust man (even though in reality he is just) will have everything taken from him, he will be tortured, and finally he will be crucified. After painting the picture of these two men, Glaucon asked Socrates to show that one would still want to be the just man who is misunderstood, tortured, and murdered. If he can do that, he will have shown that justice is good not only for its consequences, but for its own sake as well, contrary to what most people believe (358a-362c).

Socrates professes an inability to answer the challenge as Glaucon and Adeimantus state it initially, so he proposes that they build a city in speech to look for justice (367e-369b). Since a city is bigger and more visible than a soul, they could look for justice in the city and perhaps find it more readily. When they find it, they could go back to the soul and see what justice looks like there through the mediation of an analogy to the image of the city in speech they built.<sup>51</sup> Here at the end of Book IX, with the pictures of the just and unjust souls that Socrates provides, he finally answers Glaucon's challenge directly. Observing the image of the soul of the unjust man (the tyrannic soul), one sees that his inner life is one of constant fear and strife. It would not matter how many people called this man holy, blessed, just, or good, it would not matter how much wealth and influence he had, it would not even matter if he could fool the gods and so gain their blessings – no matter how many of these things are heaped upon this man, one can see from the picture of his soul that amidst all these possessions and blessings, his life is one of extreme misery. Observing the image of the soul of the just man (the aristocratic soul), on the other hand, one sees that his inner life is one of peace, satisfaction, and wholeness. It would not matter how many people reviled him and spit upon him, how much he was tortured, or what people did to his body, including crucifixion (362a) – no matter how many of these are heaped upon this man, one can see from the picture of his soul that amidst all these hardships and sufferings, his life is one of extreme happiness. In this way, Socrates shows what Glaucon asked him to show at the beginning of their discussion: namely, that the life of justice is always happier and

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<sup>51</sup> For a treatment of this analogy see Bernard Williams, "The Analogy of City and Soul in Plato's *Republic*," in *Plato's Republic: Critical Essays*, ed. by Richard Kraut (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), 49-59.

more profitable than the life of injustice, even if one could get away with doing injustice and were made to suffer for being just.<sup>52</sup>

Socrates is not yet finished. Having made visible the inner life of one who mistakenly prioritizes the good of the body over the good of the soul, he now continues to describe what happens to those whom this person loves as his own. When one mistakes as most one's own things other than the philosophic, such as gold, or other goods more pertinent to the pleasures of the body, one ends poorly, enslaving not only oneself, but often those whom one loves as one's own as well:

...if he took gold for enslaving his son or daughter, and to savage and bad men, it shouldn't have profited him no matter how much he took for it; now if he enslaves the most divine part of himself [the calculating part] to the most godless and polluted part [the desiring part] and has no pity, won't he then be wretched and accept golden gifts for a destruction more terrible by far than Eriphyle's accepting the necklace for her husband's soul? (589d-590a)

The good of the body, while part of one's own good, is not what is most one's own.

Thus, prioritizing the good of the body over the good of the soul is unjust, for one is not fully minding one's own business in doing so. Socrates makes clear that this injustice means not only destruction for the man who perpetrates it, but also for those whom he loves as his own.

Finally, in Book X, after Socrates has presented his case to persuade his interlocutors "that it is in every way better to be just than unjust" (357b), he warns them of the dangers of mistaking the imitative and pleasing snares of wizardry for true persuasion. Beginning with the city in speech and ending with the chimaera, Socrates has provided his interlocutors with visible imitations of the invisible soul, all in hopes of

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<sup>52</sup> On a related topic see John Mouracade, "Plato's Three Arguments for Justice," in *Methexis* (2005) 18, 43-52.

answering their challenge to be persuaded. With two final demonstrations – the discussion of the three kinds of couches, and the tale about the afterlife – Socrates makes clear that their night’s image-filled conversation has been a study in shadow-painting, and if they are to benefit from their conversation, they must recognize the images as appearances of truth only so that they may turn, however painful it may be, toward truth in its fullness. In short, with his final two demonstrations Socrates provides the argument that shows how their imitative play at argument has prepared them for the adult education in true persuasion.

When building their city in speech at the beginning of Book II, Glaucon asked Socrates to include couches in the city, claiming that “men who aren’t going to be wretched recline on couches” (372d). At the time Socrates acquiesced to the request by providing imitations of couches in speech – hardly enough to provide true comfort even for the pleasure of the body – but perhaps enough for the citizens in their city in speech. Now, at the end of their conversation, after having met Glaucon’s challenge, Socrates also meets Glaucon’s request for a couch in abundance, by pointing out that a painting of a couch (or an analogous description of a couch in speech) is an imitation of a couch that has the couch’s appearance but not its reality, and further a particular physical couch itself is an imitation of the couch “in nature,” as put there by “the god,” eternal and fully participatory in being, definitive absolutely for whatever it is that makes a couch, a couch. (595a-598d)

Socrates describes three kinds of couch: couchness, one particular couch, and a painting of that particular couch. “Couchness” is the kind of couch that contains the fullness of the truth about what any and every kind of couch is, was, and ever will be:

this idea, or form, or essence of couchness is the model on which all particular couches are based. When furniture makers or craftsmen build particular couches, they look to this form or essence of couchness to guide them in their planning. In short, they imitate the essence of couchness when they make their particular couches. Painters, in their turn, look at particular couches, and make paintings of couches by imitating what they see when they look at some particular couch. Thus, the god makes the couch in nature (“couchness”), the furniture maker makes a particular couch by imitating couchness, and the painter makes a painting of a couch by imitating a particular couch. By the time one has the painting of the couch, very little of what makes a true couch is left. For instance, part of what makes a couch is that one can sit on it comfortably. One cannot sit comfortably on a painting of a couch, no matter how good a painting it is. One cannot learn from the painting how the couch smells, or how heavy it is, or what it sounds like when one drags the couch across a dirt floor. (595a-603d)

This discussion of the three kinds of couches to explain the nature of imitation is reminiscent of the cave image from Book VII. Remember that the prisoners in the cave saw shadows their entire lives. The shadows were an “imitation” of sorts of the puppets and statues being held in front of the fire. And those puppets and statues were imitations of actual animals and people. One animal can be represented by many different kinds of statues or puppets. And each one of these statues can cast a huge variety of shadows. Thus, the one animal is the cause of many, many shadows, all of which are in some sense called by the same name, “animal.” So, too, with “couchness.” “Couchness” can be instantiated in a variety of ways – a red couch, a five-foot long couch, a wooden couch, and so on. Each of these individual couches can also be represented in a variety of ways



by painters who make paintings of these couches. Thus, the singular form of “couchness” gives rise to the many, many couches that exist, not to mention the many paintings of couches. Of course, the paintings of the couches do not capture everything there is about the couches which they imitate, and each individual couch does not capture everything there is about “couchness,” any more than a collection of shadows can capture everything there is about a statue, nor any more than a collection of statues can capture everything there is about the animal of which they are imitations.

Socrates points out that poets are like painters who make imitations of imitations. Their products are three removes from the truth of the thing that they are portraying, like the shadows on the cave wall. The problem is that the “shadows” that poets create can be so pleasing that people do not care about anything else, or they come to think that they should model their lives on these shadows, or they think there is no truth other than what they can see in these shadows. Socrates sees how much the poet’s work in wizardry can distract, or even warp a person’s ability to engage reality and know truth. Their work relies on the confusions caused by certain oddities of the visible region, so that their “shadow painting, and puppeteering, and many other tricks of the kind fall nothing short of wizardry” (602c-d). For this reason, Socrates says the practitioners of the imitative arts will be banished from the city unless they can give an account of their art to explain how it is the “shadows” they produce are actually beneficial to the citizens, for while “the part which trusts measure and calculation would be the best part of the soul,” “imitation keeps company with the part in us that is far from prudence, and is not comrade and friend [*philos*] for any healthy or true purpose” (602e-603a).

The imitative arts are powerful precisely because of their ability to engage the desiring part of a person's soul and masquerade as true persuasion or force. Plato's *Republic* itself is a case in point. As they built the city in speech, Socrates and company had to supply policies as needed to persuade the citizens in their city in speech of certain matters. Socrates' attempts at persuading his interlocutors was intertwined with their joint attempts at persuading the citizens. Socrates' interlocutors spoke on behalf of the citizens, who were imitations of people. For readers of the *Republic*, the interlocutors themselves are imitations of people (imitations of the historical Socrates and Glaucon, for instance). Thus, when one reads about the citizens in the city in speech, one is reading about imitations of imitations of people. Further, while Plato is the author of the book (the real animal), he appears nowhere within it. Plato writes the story so that Socrates is the narrator (the puppet). And as Socrates narrates the story, Socrates becomes a character in his own story (the shadow). It follows that when one reads Socrates' dialogue, one is actually reading an imitation of an imitation – an author writing about a narrator who is narrating what happened as if he were a character in the story. In other words, Plato intentionally writes the *Republic* so that it appears to be an imitation of an imitation, which is what Socrates says poetry is here at the beginning of Book X.<sup>53</sup> Thus,

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<sup>53</sup> For more works which do an excellent job in discussing Plato's choice of the dialogue form, as well as the "metaphilosophy" Plato practices with this choice, see Thomas A. Szlezák, *Reading Plato*, trans. by Graham Zanker (New York: Routledge, 1999); John Sallis, *Being and Logos: The Way of Platonic Dialogue* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1975); Charles Kahn, "Did Plato write Socrates' Dialogues?" in *Classical Quarterly* 31 (1981), 305-320; Angela Hobbs, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue: The Philosophical Use of a Literary Form* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Jacob Howland, "Storytelling and Philosophy in Plato's *Republic*," in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* (2005) 9(2) 297-315; Wendy Hamblet, "Just Story-Telling," in *Prima Philosophia* (2005) 18(3), 303-321; Francisco J. Gonzalez, "A Short History of Platonic Interpretation and the 'Third Way'," in *The Third Way: New Directions in Platonic Studies*, ed. by Francisco J. Gonzalez. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995), 1-22; also Gonzalez's "Self-Knowledge, Practical Knowledge, and Insight: Plato's Dialectic and the Dialogue Form," in *The Third Way: New Directions in Platonic Studies*, ed. by Francisco J. Gonzalez. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995), 155-187;

Plato's attempts at persuading the reader are intertwined with the Socrates' double attempts at persuading both his interlocutors and the imaginary citizens for which they speak.<sup>54</sup> These layers of imitation are thus not only a warning to Socrates' interlocutors not to be deceived by the imitative appearance of persuasion caused by Socrates' imagistic wizardry, but to Plato's readers as well.

Socrates' discussion of imitation is seemingly out of place in the overall flow of the night's conversation. This strangeness is one reason why Kenneth Dorter claims that those who fail to see the underlying structure of the dialogue may take it to be a collection of "juxtapositions of disparate material written at different times and not completely integrated."<sup>55</sup> On the contrary, the somewhat startling placement of this discussion of imitation, and in fact Plato's decision to call attention to the nature of imitation with this particular speech, is explained by the dialogue's content regarding the deceptive nature of imitation and its ability to simulate persuasion, which is marked by argument ordered toward truth.<sup>56</sup> The *Republic* is a shadow that Plato has been casting on the wall for his reader to have an image of the truth of justice.<sup>57</sup> If a reader can come

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Bernard Freyberg, *The Play of the Platonic Dialogues* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1997); and Charles L. Griswold, Jr., "Style and Philosophy: The Case of Plato's Dialogues" in *The Monist* 63 (1980), 530-546.

<sup>54</sup> For another reading of Plato as interactive author see Gerald A. Press, "Plato's Dialogues as Enactments," in *The Third Way: New Directions in Platonic Studies*, ed. by Francisco J. Gonzalez (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995), 133-152.

<sup>55</sup> See Dorter's *The Transformation of Plato's Republic*, 3.

<sup>56</sup> See Jyl Gentzler, "How to Know the Good: The Moral Epistemology of Plato's *Republic*," in *Philosophical Review* (2005) 114(4), 469-496. See also Gentzler's "The Attractions and Delights of Goodness," in *Philosophical Quarterly* (2004) 54(216), 353-367.

<sup>57</sup> Some noteworthy treatments of Plato's "silent voice" are Diskin Clay's *Platonic Questions: Dialogues with the Silent Philosopher* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000); Lloyd P. Gerson's "Plato *Absconditus*," in *Who Speaks for Plato: Studies in Platonic Anonymity*, ed. by Gerald A. Press (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 201-210; and Debra

to understand that the dialogue is only a shadow, and thus it is being cast by something which is closer to the fullness of truth, then the reader can come to see that the *Republic* has been the childhood shadowplay in preparation for the painful adult studies in true dialectic and persuasion.<sup>58</sup> Socrates' reference to the ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry is yet another indication that he is warning his interlocutors not to mistake the appearance of truth for its reality.

After warning about the dangers of poetic tales given without argumentative support or explanation, Socrates ends the night's conversation with just such a tale, about a man named Er who was brought back to life after being killed in war so that he could bring back an account of what he saw. There are many noteworthy details in Socrates' tale, and quite a few fascinating connections to be made between this tale and many of the images, analogies, and stories Socrates provided in previous parts of the dialogue. Two details are of particular note for this concluding section: (1) This is a tale of rebirth and reincarnation. Those just and unjust people who have come and gone from the face

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Nails' "Mouthpiece Schmouthpiece," in *Who Speaks for Plato: Studies in Platonic Anonymity*, ed. by Gerald A. Press (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 15-26.

<sup>58</sup> Stanley Rosen argues that the *Republic* is an introductory text to philosophy, but not on the basis of the kind of interpretation I provide here. Rather, Rosen argues that the combination of clearly fallacious arguments with philosophical themes of such great number and gravitas in the *Republic* indicate the dialogue's function as an introductory text to the study of philosophy. See Rosen's *Plato's Republic: A Study* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

Rosen also argues that Plato's *Republic* shows the tyrannical nature of philosophy, that the last temptation of the philosopher is the temptation to rule, and that the attempt to enact perfect justice politically can succeed only by perpetrating grave injustice, with the highest injustice being that of making philosophers into rulers. While Rosen's conclusions about the *Republic* do appear in the dialogue, I would argue that his emphasis on these themes distorts their content. For instance, it is true that Socrates himself worries over whether and how it might be possible that "a city can take philosophy in hand without being destroyed" (497d), but he poses this question so that he may begin answering it shortly thereafter (497e-504d). I also disagree with Rosen's conclusion that the numerous fallacious arguments in the *Republic* indicate its function as an introductory text to philosophy, largely because the nature, timing, and wording of many of these so-called fallacious arguments can be better explained through attention to the dramatic detail of the conversation as it unfolds in the dialogue.

of the earth return to earth one thousand years after their deaths to be reborn again. In this way, one is shown the effects of a person's life on the lives of those who come after her (including possibly her descendents), since she herself becomes one of those people (614b-621b). (2) The man who goes first in choosing his next life, chooses the life of a great tyrant. He had just come from one thousand years of pleasures in heaven, having been rewarded for a life of virtue. Unfortunately, it was a life of virtue from habit, not from philosophy. Thus when he chose his next life, the tyranny, he chose it on the basis of its apparent pleasures. After awhile he examined the life more closely and realized it would be filled with all sorts of miseries and terrors, including eating his own children. Socrates says many of the people who made poor decisions like this man had spent the last thousand years in heaven. Many who had just come from the pains and labors under the earth chose more wisely. (619b-e)

The inheritance that a son receives from his father may be the salvation or the destruction of either or both of them, depending on whether both father and son have succeeded in preserving, giving, and receiving that which is most his own. A father who "due to folly and gluttony" chooses a life of tyranny may end up "eating his own children" (619b-c), and a son may end up murdering his father for a tyrannical love that has stung his soul (569b). A father passes on to his son goods of both the soul and the body, and a just father, realizing the value and priority of both, guided by the love of a child reared does what he can by way of persuasion and force to pass along the inheritance he has preserved for his son. Thus, a father like Cephalus may realize that while his wealth is of some help to his happiness, the primary cause of his happiness is a well-ordered character, and that to aid in passing along to his son what he has tried to

pass along through both persuasion and force, it would be a godsend if a man like Socrates could speak to his sons and “be with these young men, com[ing] here regularly to us as to friends and your very own kin” (328d).

The *Republic*'s lessons on justice are not about striving erotically after what one lacks, but rather, about how to preserve the proper ordering and orientation of one's soul.<sup>59</sup> The proper ordering of the soul is defined in terms of friendship (*philos*) with oneself, and the proper orientation of one's soul is defined in terms of one's friendship (*philos*) with and imitation of “the divine and the orderly” known also as “the good.” In sum, the *Republic* isn't so much about the lack or suppression of *erōs* as much as it is about the presence or flourishing of *philia* for the sake of preserving that which is most one's own, namely, the good of one's soul. Hoping that his interlocutors do not mistake the appearance of a good for its reality, Socrates proposes visible imitations of the invisible soul, so that they may see their own human nature, body and soul, in a manner they can understand. If they are persuaded by him, they shall fare well, both them and those whom they take to be their own.

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<sup>59</sup> In *Beautiful City*, Roochnik says that the *Republic* begins with a question of *erōs* and is pushed by the question of *erōs* (48-69, 76-7). He maintains this thesis in part by suppressing the presence of *philia* throughout the dialogue, claiming that *erōs* may be liberally substituted for *philia*. To gloss the difference between these words seems irresponsible or at the very least denying the application of his own careful reading assumptions and practices. Asking why Socrates constantly uses the word *philia* as opposed to the word *erōs* would be a perfectly good question to ask, but one made unintelligible or irrelevant by Roochnik's suppression of any content of the word *philia* that cannot be mapped onto *erōs*.

While there may be something to learn by focusing on the lack of *erōs* in the *Republic*, there remains much to learn by focusing on the presence of *philia*. In his interpretation of the *Republic*, Roochnik stresses the striving, the lack, the coupling, the private, and the sexual; over the familial, the procreative, the generational. Granted, the two sets of topics are related, and Roochnik does point out their relation to some extent. Nevertheless, his stress continually on the former topics as opposed to the latter: on the sex as opposed to the procreation, on the private as opposed to the familial, and so on. This lack of an account for the latter topics in their own terms is a significant deficiency in his interpretation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Conclusion

By focusing on the use and discussion of force and persuasion throughout Plato's *Republic*, I have argued that Socrates attempts "truly to persuade" his interlocutors "that it is in every way better to be just rather than unjust" (357b), primarily by correcting their misconceptions of human nature. Cephalus needed no correction regarding his understanding of human nature. Instead, he provided the corrections to the opinions of the many, establishing the model in speech upon which Socrates built his speech in the *Republic*. Polemarchus, through his defining justice in terms of its use in contracts, money, and war, made clear his view that justice, at bottom, concerns the effects of force on the matters of visible region (such as bodies and physical possessions). Thrasymachus made clear the same view of justice, only more baldly and vituperatively, and Glaucon and Adeimantus, in their turns, resurrected Thrasymachus' argument after Socrates had succeeded in winning the argument, though not yet in truly persuading those present that "it is in every way better to be just rather than unjust" (357b).

I have shown that one should expect force and persuasion to be prominent themes in Plato's *Republic*, given the prominence of the polarity of force and persuasion in ancient Greek poetry, plays, and literature in general. I have shown how Socrates uses and discusses force and persuasion to engage and persuade the citizens of their city in speech, his interlocutors, and the readers of the *Republic*. Using Socrates' definitions of persuasion, force, and wizardry, I have provided interpretations of many of the major

themes, images, and stories of the *Republic*, and further I have shown how these themes, images, and stories are unified through their common interpretive key. Among those themes, images, and stories which I have interpreted through an application of Socrates' definitions of persuasion, force, and wizardry, are: the difference between appearance and reality; the four metals of the noble lie; the musical and gymnastic childhood education of the guardians; the definition of justice in the city in speech; the tripartite soul; the three waves of difficulty in Book V; the philosophic nature; the image of sailors on a ship; the analogy of the good to the sun; the divided line; the cave image; the adult education of the guardians; the degeneration of the regimes; the lesson regarding the relations among pleasure, repose, and pain; the chimaera picture of the soul; the three kinds of couches used to explain the nature of imitation; and the myth of Er.

I have shown that Socrates attempts to persuade his interlocutors that human nature consists of both body and soul, and that the good of the soul is the good of that which is most one's own and so is more important than the good of the body. I have shown that to persuade his interlocutors Socrates makes visible the invisible soul through the extensive use of images, metaphors, and analogies. With my discussion of the chiasmic structure of the dialogue, I have shown that Socrates' claims about human nature, and in particular its expression in the philosophic nature, are both literally and thematically central to his speech. Finally, I have shown that the philosophic nature is the happiest expression of human nature because of its proper ordering and orientation, both of which are preserved by its love (*philia*) for that which is most its own, namely, the good of the soul, and its friendship (*philos*) with truth, courage, justice, moderation, and "the divine and the orderly," also known as the good.



The central claim of this dissertation is that Socrates' definitions of persuasion, force, and wizardry may be used as a hermeneutical key for understanding the rest of the *Republic*. My use of this general interpretive key made possible not only the interpretation of much of the *Republic*, but it also led to three more contributions in particular, which are: (1) my analysis of Cephalus as Socrates' precursor and model, (2) my new construal of the symmetrical structure of the dialogue, and (3) my interpretation of the four metals of the noble lie as a quadruple lesson in the themes of (i) appearance and reality, (ii) imitation, (iii) the preservative importance of *philia*, and (iv) the consequences of failing to withstand persuasion, force, and wizardry.

The meditation on the themes of persuasion, force, and wizardry in the *Republic* has proven to be quite fruitful, and the interpretive harvest to be reaped from the use of force and persuasion as a hermeneutical key promises to yield even more fruit with more extensive applications to Plato's *Republic*. This interpretive key can be used not only to a level of greater depth and detail in treating the images, metaphors, analogies, themes, and stories that I have treated in an illustrative fashion in this dissertation, but also in treating those remaining topics and passages from the *Republic* which I did not address. The breadth and the depth of the interpretive power of an application of persuasion, force, and wizardry to the text of the *Republic* is very far from being exhausted, calling out for future work in spanning the breadths and plumbing the depths of the *Republic* that this interpretive key may yet unlock. Finally, an additional topic for future exploration would be to see what a similar meditation on the use and discussion of force and persuasion may reveal in other Platonic dialogues, particularly Plato's *Symposium*.

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