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klosko, george

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Email Address: **gk@virginia.edu**

george klosko

Department: Politics
Gibson, South Lawn

University of Virginia
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PROVISIONALITY IN PLATO'S IDEAL STATE†

George Klosko

I

In recent years much of the controversy surrounding Plato's political theory has died down. The wilder charges made by Plato's detractors of the 1930s and 1940s have been rebutted, though the works of Popper *et al.* have left a lasting impression—and rightfully so. Though it is now generally recognized that Plato is not a Fascist, a racialist, or a vicious opponent of all that is good and noble, it is also recognized that he is not a lover of freedom ('negative freedom'), democracy or the open society of Popper's ideal.

It seems to me that much of this controversy has been beneficial to the study of Plato. Scholars on both sides of the dispute were led to re-examine his political dialogues. Searching questions, having been raised, had to be answered, and such critical reassessment is invaluable for clearing away the dross that tends to accumulate around long dead thinkers. The question of Plato's relationship to authoritarian political theory—using 'authoritarian' in a fairly loose sense—was probed in depth, and while the overall nature of this relationship was firmly established, it is upon one particular aspect of it that I will focus in this paper. By looking closely at the precise relationship between rationality and political authority in the ideal state, I think it can be seen that the state is not as authoritarian as many scholars would argue, while I believe that such an examination will also cast new light on important themes in Plato's political theory.

Several influential scholars have described the central features of authoritarian political theory in similar terms. One particular feature often discussed is its distinctive attitude, combining moral certitude and extreme narrowness of vision. For example, perhaps the central theme of Isaiah Berlin's political

† In this paper Plato is quoted from the edition of Burnet, *Platonis Opera* (5 vols., Oxford, 1900-7). Unless otherwise indicated, I use G.M.A. Grube's translation of the *Republic* (Indianapolis, 1974), and Loeb Classics Library translations for other dialogues, with occasional slight modifications.

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writings is the great danger posed by thinkers who believe they possess the one solution to all human conflicts. Berlin draws the crucial political implications of this state of mind, that it often justifies the imposition of truth by force:

Any method of bringing this final state nearer would then seem fully justified, no matter how much freedom were sacrificed to forward its advance. It is, I have no doubt, some such dogmatic certainty that has been responsible for the deep, serene, unshakeable conviction in the minds of some of the most merciless tyrants and persecutors in history that what they did was fully justified by its purposes.¹

Other thinkers of course agree. In *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*, J.L. Talmon describes the dangers of 'a pencil sketch of reality', a broad outline of the ideal social arrangement, absent from which is much of what is recognizable as human society: 'The flesh of the intangible, shapeless, living forces, traditions, imponderables, habits, human inertia and lazy conservatism are not there.'² The danger cited by Talmon too is that the would-be reformer, enthralled with his outline, will be willing to impose it by force, while ignoring all that it leaves out. Along similar lines, in many of his works Popper states his fear of the belief that 'truth is manifest'.³ For, abandoning what Popper calls 'critical rationalism', knowledge of human fallibility and the desire to improve, the believer in manifest truth can be led by his certainty to adopt similar political means.⁴

In all three of these thinkers, then, we see an alliance between dogmatic certainty and coercion. All three fear that those who know will not hesitate to use any means to bring their truths to birth in society. This attitude of indifference to everything besides the single truth was characterized earlier this century by Weber as the 'ethic of ultimate ends':

The ethical commandment . . . is not at all concerned about that, and this unconcern is its essence.⁵

¹ I. Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford, 1969), p. 168.

² J.L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (1951; reprinted New York, 1970), p. 135.

³ K. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* (New York, 1963), p. 5.

⁴ See, e.g. *ibid.*, pp. 359–61.

⁵ M. Weber, 'Politics as a Vocation', in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans., H. Gerth and C.W. Mills (Oxford, 1946), p. 119.

As numerous scholars have argued, a similar combination of attitudes can be seen in Plato's *Republic*. Berlin cites Plato as a prime example of a believer in the single harmonious solution to human conflict,⁶ while Popper of course has chosen Plato as one of his prime targets.⁷ It seems clear, as much of the literature critical of Plato has established, that there are important respects in which Plato's political theory is authoritarian. Not least of these is his attempt to anchor the *Republic's* political system in certain knowledge. Government in the ideal state is, of course, in the hands of philosopher-kings, one necessary prerequisite of whose selection is the ability to glimpse the Form of the Good. Of course much of Book VII of the *Republic* is given over to discussing the educational process designed to realize this potential.

Not only are the state's rulers to know the highest truths, but they are to govern in accordance with them. Plato describes his ideal rulers as painters, who use the Forms as their divine models in shaping the state:

. . . as they work, they would keep looking back and forth to Justice, Beauty, Moderation, and all such things as by nature exist, and they would compose human life with reference to these, mixing and mingling the human likeness from various pursuits, basing their judgment on what Homer too called the divine and godlike existing in man.⁸

To carry the parallel one step farther, the philosopher-kings are supremely indifferent to all other concerns. They would begin their work by wiping clean the canvas of the state.⁹ At the end of Book VII¹⁰ Plato describes how this would be done. All in the state over the age of ten would be rusticated, while the next generation was brought up properly, under careful supervision.

The institutional structure of the state is designed to facilitate rule in accordance with the philosophers' divine wisdom. The centrepiece of the

⁶ I. Berlin, *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas* (Harmondsworth, 1979), pp. 68, 80, etc.

⁷ Similar arguments are made by other scholars as well. See, e.g. essays by R. Bambrough, H.B. Acton and others in *Plato, Popper and Politics: Some Contributions to a Modern Controversy*, ed. R. Bambrough (Cambridge, 1967); also J. Neu, 'Plato's Analogy of the State and Individual: The *Republic* and the Organic Theory of the State', *Philosophy*, 46 (1971), esp. pp. 247–9. Even R.B. Levinson (*In Defense of Plato* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953)), concedes this to a certain extent (esp. pp. 478–9).

⁸ *Republic*, 501b.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 501a.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 541a.

state is an all-encompassing educational mechanism, designed to shape and control the minds of the subjects from earliest childhood. All artistic media are carefully censored, while the rulers are given license to utilize deception as well to further their educational purposes.¹¹ The rulers are unchecked by any institutional constraints. The consent of the ruled is of no concern,¹² while the class of warrior auxiliaries, which monopolizes the means of physical force in the state, is totally under their control. Moreover, so intense is Plato's desire that the rulers carry out their divine programme to the fullest that he removes from their lives such possible temptations and distractions as family and personal property. In all of these ways, then, the ideal state is crafted in order to maximize the rulers' ability to impose upon society their ideal blueprint. Perhaps the clearest sign of how little regard Plato has for anything that does not fit the prescribed pattern is his insistence that anyone who is too ill to occupy his role in society might just as well die. For 'if he does not perform the task which is his, life is of no benefit to him.'¹³

It is an indication of the extent to which Plato has shaped his state after this pattern that certain scholars are unwilling to take it seriously and argue that the *Republic* is a kind of ingenious satire, designed to show the limits of the politically possible. According to this view, Plato relentlessly takes things to their logical conclusions in order to reveal the absurdity that results.¹⁴ But the majority of scholars do not go to this extreme, and I do not find this view convincing.

In this paper I attempt to qualify the commonly held views concerning the ideal state's authoritarianism. I argue that there is a feature of the state, which has received little notice and which, if duly recognized, must cause these views to be moderated. The argument here is carried on in three additional sections. In Section II, I examine a key concept of the Socratic thought of Plato's early dialogues, which I call 'provisionality'.¹⁵ Section III is given over to tracing this concept in the *Republic*, and then in Section IV certain problems are dealt with and objections met, in defence of the view that provisionality is a significant feature of the political theory presented in the *Republic*.

II

In the simplest of terms, 'provisionality' is an attitude of extreme open-mindedness. It is the willingness constantly to re-examine one's convictions, especially one's moral convictions, to make sure that they are the best available. The Socrates of Plato's early dialogues became a firm adherent of provisionality as a result of his distinctive mission, described in the *Apology*.¹⁶ Socrates of course believes that 'the unexamined life is not worth living',¹⁷ that it is an essential part of being human to think about moral questions and to arrive at one's own convictions.¹⁸ As a result of his mission Socrates discovered the full extent of people's ignorance and came to believe that human wisdom in general is of little or no value.¹⁹ Because this is so, no human opinion, no human belief, is to be taken at face value. All must be subject to constant scrutiny at the bar of reason.²⁰

The first requisite of this Socratic ideal is self-knowledge. From the very outset Socrates has in mind the one respect in which he was found to be wiser than other Athenians, his awareness of his own ignorance.²¹ Socrates demands the complete overthrow of intellectual authority. He accepts beliefs only if he is able to defend them, and demands the rigorous examination of all moral convictions. Convictions can be maintained only as long as they are supported by the best available arguments, while convictions based solely on authority are not worthy of consideration as such.²²

The principle that beliefs are not to be accepted unless they can be proved acceptable applies to beliefs that have been proved acceptable in the past.

¹⁶ *Apology*, esp. 21a–23c.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 38a.

¹⁸ The view of the Socratic problem taken here is well defended in W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* (6 vols., Cambridge, 1962–81), Vol. III. Basically, the assumption I make is that the Socrates of the early dialogues is largely historical, but of the middle and late dialogues is not—which is the most commonly held view. For the chronology of the dialogues, see Guthrie, Vol. IV, pp. 41–56, and the discussions of the individual dialogues in IV and V.

¹⁹ *Apology*, esp. 23a–b.

²⁰ For an enlightening discussion of the nature of this scrutiny, see Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, Chs. II–VII.

²¹ *Apology*, 29b; also 21b–22d.

²² See *Charmides*, 161c; *Hippias Minor*, 365c–d; *Meno*, 71d; *Phaedrus*, 270c; also *Protagoras*, 347e–48a, 329a–b; *Phaedrus*, 275d; *Theaetetus*, 179e–180a.

¹¹ See esp. *ibid.*, 459c–60b; 414c–15c.

¹² cf. *Statesman*, 293a–e, 296a–297b.

¹³ *Republic*, 406d–407a. J. Annas is good on this: *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 90–4.

¹⁴ See L. Strauss, *The City and Man* (Chicago, 1964), pp. 124–7, 138; A. Bloom, *The Republic of Plato* (New York, 1968), pp. 407–12.

¹⁵ I borrow the term from R. Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic* (Oxford, 2nd edn., 1953), pp. 107–9, to whose discussion I am indebted.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Socratic thought is his insistence that the struggle against ignorance lasts an entire lifetime. Not only is every question an open question, but it remains an open question for life. As Gomperz says: 'No proposition . . . is so self-evident, so universally true, that we may not be called upon, good ground being shown, to reconsider it on first principles and test its validity anew.'²³ This aspect of provisionality is revealed in many of the dialogues, as time and again Socrates is depicted as willing to go over ground already covered to make sure his arguments are sound. We see this, for example, in the *Euthyphro*: 'Then', Socrates says, 'shall we examine this again, Euthyphro, to see if it is correct, or shall we let it go and accept our own statement, and those of others, agreeing that it is so, if anyone merely says that it is?'²⁴ Of course it is decided to go over the matter once again.

It is clear from the early dialogues that Socrates holds a number of beliefs that are grounded in something like religious conviction. Examples are his faith that virtue and happiness coincide, that no harm can come to a good man, and that committing injustice is greatly harmful to oneself.²⁵ But it is clear that even these convictions are subject to critical reassessment at any time, should grounds for reconsideration be produced. This is seen especially in the *Crito*, which presents the clearest example of Socratic provisionality in the entire corpus.

The dramatic action of the *Crito* centres upon the re-examination of the conclusions of past arguments.²⁶ The situation presented in the work is familiar. Crito has come to Socrates' cell and pleaded with him to escape while there is still time. Socrates responds, characteristically, that he will act according to the moral principles he believes most likely to be true, which are the ones he has always followed:

. . . I am not only now but always a man who follows nothing but the reasoning which on consideration seems to be best.²⁷ And I cannot, now

²³ T. Gomperz, *The Greek Thinkers*, trans. L. Magnus and C.G. Berry (4 vols., London, 1901-12), II, pp. 58-9.

²⁴ *Euthyphro*, 9e. See also, e.g. *Cratylus*, 428d; *Gorgias*, 508c-9a; see P. Friedlander, *Plato*, trans. H. Meyerhoff (3 vols., Princeton, 1958-69), II, p. 270.

²⁵ For these views, see, e.g. *Apology*, 41c-d, 30c-d; *Crito*, 47e, 49a-d; *Republic*, I, 335b-e; *Gorgias*, 472d ff.

²⁶ As Robinson points out, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, p. 107.

²⁷ In 46b4 Burnet changes the generally accepted reading, *ou monon nun* to *ou nun proton*; see his note, *Plato's Euthyphro, Apology of Socrates, and Crito* (Oxford, 1924), ad loc. Cf., e.g. J. Adam, *Platonis Crito* (Cambridge, 2nd edn., 1891) text and ad loc.

that this has happened to us, discard the arguments I used to advance, but they seem to me much the same as ever, and I revere and honor the same ones as before. And unless we can bring forward better ones in our present situation, be assured that I shall not give way to you . . .²⁸

But even though his old arguments are revered, and still believed to be true, they are subject to re-examination:

And I wish to investigate, Crito, in common with you, and see whether our former argument seems different to me under our present conditions, or the same, and whether we shall give it up or be guided by it.²⁹

The result of the ensuing inquiry is that it would be unjust for Socrates to flee, and so he elects to stay and bear the consequences. But the matter is not yet settled: 'be assured that, so far as I now believe, if you argue against these words you will speak in vain. Nevertheless, if you think you can accomplish anything, speak.'³⁰ But Crito has no fresh arguments, and Socrates' previous beliefs stand.

Although Socrates holds his convictions without great faith in their certainty, he does not hold them lightly.³¹ As remarkable as the open-mindedness Socrates brings to bear in testing his convictions is the single-mindedness with which he acts according to those *logoi* that best survive examination. Even if certainty is not to be had in this life, we must act, which means acting upon those arguments that seem most likely to be true.³² A glimpse at the *Apology* shows Socrates' procedure. As he sees his situation at his trial, Socrates must choose one of two alternatives: either he must desist from his mission, which he believes would be in defiance of the god and therefore unjust, or he must die. Though the general run of men fear death and wish to avoid it, Socrates believes that such fear is rooted in ignorance.³³ Since he knows that the other alternative is bad, his decision is not difficult: '. . . I do know that it is evil and disgraceful to do wrong and to disobey my superior, whether he be god or man. So I shall never fear or avoid those things concerning which I do not know whether they are good or bad rather than

²⁸ *Crito*, 46b-c.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 46c-d.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 54d.

³¹ See esp. Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, p. 108.

³² This is well expressed in the *Phaedo* (85c-d, 115b), though this is a middle work.

³³ *Apology*, 29a.

those which I know are bad.³⁴ As we have seen, in the *Crito* Socrates proves to Crito that it would be unjust to flee, and so the road taken in the *Apology* is followed to its dénouement.

Thus Socrates holds his beliefs, even his deepest beliefs, only provisionally. But so long as a given conviction proves worthy, his commitment to it is absolute. We see in the *Apology*, and the *Crito* that Socrates willingly dies rather than violate his convictions, and would willingly die 'many times over'.³⁵ Socrates presents the striking position of absolute adherence to convictions he is willing to reconsider at any time.

III

Having sketched some basic features of Socratic ethics, we can easily see that the view of Plato's middle dialogues, especially the *Republic*, differs sharply. It is seen above and generally agreed by scholars that Plato grounds his ideal state in certain moral knowledge. It would therefore seem that he has abandoned Socrates' critical rationalism, his provisionality, in favour of the position that the most important moral truths can be known. Not surprisingly, several commentators focus on this and related differences. Popper, for one, holding that belief in knowable, ultimate truths is irrational, declares that Plato betrayed Socrates and became an enemy of human reason.³⁶ The 'closed society' of Popper's opprobrium differs from the 'open society' in, among other respects, its being grounded in forces other than reason; it reveals a 'magical attitude' towards social customs.³⁷

This kind of view of the *Republic* is so widespread that it is appealed to even by Plato's defenders. For instance, in a revealing article R.S. Bluck defends Plato from the charge of basing the ideal state on cynical considerations of self-interest or class interest, by arguing that it is actually a theocracy.³⁸ Bluck locates the central feature of a theocracy in the fact that 'the ultimate author

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 29b.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 30b-c.

³⁶ Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. I, *The Spell of Plato* (Princeton, 5th edn., 1966), I, pp. 195-201. (Popper takes the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues as the historical Socrates; see his surprisingly moderate and reasonable discussion of the Socratic problem, Ch. 10, note 57.) See also, e.g. R. Crossman, *Plato Today* (New York, 1939), pp. 89-90, 292-6.

³⁷ Popper, *Open Society*, I, p. 172.

³⁸ R.S. Bluck, 'Is Plato's *Republic* a Theocracy?', *Philosophical Quarterly*, 5 (1955).

of all law, whether written or unwritten', must be divine.³⁹ Thus he believes that Plato wishes for the state to be founded on divine truths, in keeping with which the Guardians are to legislate. In Bluck's words: 'the ideal state should acknowledge a divine force external to itself not only as the sanction of its laws, but also as the ever-present guide to interpretation of them, and its Guardians, having constant reference to it, should put these into effect . . .'.⁴⁰

My main purpose in this paper is to contest this view. Although many scholars believe that Plato bases the ideal state on some non-rational knowledge, I believe that this contention can be qualified severely, if we scrutinize it more closely. For even if Plato's rulers have knowledge of ultimate moral truths that cannot be subjected to rational criticism (on which, more below), the degree to which this influences the state's political structures must still be ascertained. I believe, in fact, that a crucial element of provisionality is built into the ideal state.

At first sight it would seem that the kind of certainty Plato's philosopher-kings gain from communion with the Forms is inimical to provisionality. Communion with the Forms produces a kind of knowledge far removed from the kind Socrates had in mind, and it seems difficult to imagine how the philosopher who has glimpsed the Forms, thereby learning the truths of 'all time and all existence',⁴¹ could possibly treat this knowledge as provisional. Moreover, I think it is safe to assume that it is with this kind of knowledge that Plato sketches the major features of his ideal state, i.e. that the *Socrates*⁴² of the *Republic* possesses certain knowledge concerning the most important of all matters, human and divine. However, despite all this, some element of provisionality can be seen in the ideal state.

Though the *Socrates* of the *Republic* possesses a degree of certainty far removed from that of the Socrates of the earlier dialogues, something of the spirit of that Socrates is evident in the *Republic*. Like the other dialogues, the *Republic* of course depicts a discussion, and the ideal state is sketched in this discussion, through the running device that *Socrates* and his interlocutors are

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁴¹ *Republic*, 486a.

⁴² Throughout the remainder of this paper, I use the convention *Socrates* to refer to the Platonic Socrates of the middle and late dialogues, when he is placed in explicit opposition to the Socrates of the early dialogues (and/or the historical Socrates).

the 'legislators' and founders of the just state.⁴³ The point we must note is that the discussion in which the ideal state is instituted is conducted in keeping with Socratic provisionality. Even if this is only a pretence, it is one that is consistently maintained.

The matters under discussion in the *Republic* are the most important matters a man can possibly discuss, and throughout the dialogue all concerned are bent on sparing no effort to arrive at the truth. *Socrates'* attitude is well summed up in the following words:

. . . one can feel both safe and bold if one speaks among intelligent friends about the most important and cherished subjects with knowledge of the truth, but to speak at a time when one is still in doubt and searching, which is what I am doing, is both frightening and unsafe. I am not afraid of being laughed at—that indeed would be childish—but I fear that I may not only miss my footing in my search for the truth, but also drag down my friends in my fall where a false step should least occur. So I bow to Adrasteia for what I am going to say, as I expect it is a lesser crime to kill someone involuntarily than to deceive people about beautiful, good, and just institutions.⁴⁴

And so, even though the *Socrates* of the *Republic* possesses certain knowledge about the greatest of truths, it seems that he does not know everything (on this, more below). There are limits to what he knows and so he consistently gives voice to the fear that he might make mistakes. Since he is anxious to avoid errors, it follows that much of what he says retains something of the status of hypothesis. Certain of his arguments must prove themselves before the bar of reason, not only by dealing with objections raised by those present at the discussion, but by meeting future objections as well. Concerning his views on the status of women, *Socrates* says:

Must we not first agree whether our proposals are possible or not? And we must grant an opportunity for discussion to anyone who, in jest or seriously, wishes to argue the point . . . Would this not be the best beginning and likely to lead to the best conclusion?

Certainly.

Do you then want us to dispute among ourselves on behalf of those others, lest the other side of the argument fall by default?⁴⁵

⁴³ See esp. *Republic*, 379a; also 497d, 417b, 409e, 434e, 456b–c, 458c, 425b, 425d, 463c, 471c, 519c, 520c–d, 534c, 534d.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 450d–451a.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 452e–453a.

Because the hypothetical objectors are not present, *Socrates* and *Glaucón* must raise their objections for them, and it is clearly implied that any further objections must be met as well.

The same attitude holds in regard to the principle that the same thing cannot act or be affected in opposite ways at the same time. *Socrates* deals with possible objections in a summary fashion: 'in order to avoid having to go through all these objections one by one and taking a long time proving them untrue, let us assume that it is so and carry on.'⁴⁶ But because this is only an assumption, certain consequences follow: 'We agree that if the matter should ever be shown to be otherwise, all the consequences we have drawn from it will also be invalidated.'⁴⁷

Thus it is clear that a certain measure of provisionality is maintained throughout the discussion in the *Republic*. Many points stated by *Socrates* and his interlocutors are explicitly said to have the status of hypotheses and must be re-examined on future occasions. Though we should not exaggerate this aspect of the *Republic*, we cannot deny that *Socrates* does express reservations about various matters, with the implications we have seen.

Granted this element of provisionality in the *Republic*, it (seems possible) that this tentativeness could spill over into the framework of the state itself.[?] Since *Socrates* and his interlocutors are the founders and legislators of the ideal state, it is possible that the institutions they establish would reflect something of their doubts. That this is in fact the case is given striking confirmation in the text of the *Republic*. In an important passage in Book X, it is stated that a major feature of their legislation remains open to further examination at any time, for in this Book poetry is given a defence. Though there is no other subject in the *Republic* that is treated with as much care, as much detailed attention, as the regulation of poetry, what Plato says on this matter most definitely is provisional. Poetry is offered a chance on some future occasion to reply to the charges levelled against it, i.e. the reasons Plato gives for treating it as he does. Though the passage is lengthy, its importance requires that we quote a substantial section of it:

. . . it should be said that we at least, if poetry that aims at pleasure and imitation has any argument to bring forward to prove that it must have a place in a well-governed city, should be glad to welcome it, for we are

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 437a.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*; see also 388e.

aware of the charm it exercises, but it is impious to betray what one believes to be the truth. . . .

Certainly.

We should also give its champions who are not poets the opportunity to speak on its behalf . . . to the effect that it not only gives pleasure but is useful to cities and to human life. We shall listen to them in a friendly spirit, for we shall certainly benefit if poetry is shown to be not only pleasant but useful.

How could we not benefit?

However, as long as such a defense is not made, my dear friend, we shall behave like people who have fallen in love but realize that their passion is not beneficial. . . . [B]ecause of the love of such poetry which has been implanted in us by the upbringing we received from our beautiful governments, we shall be well disposed to any proof that poetry is an excellent and very true thing. But as long as it is not able to put up such a defense, we shall listen to it but repeat to ourselves like an incantation the argument we now put forward and be careful not to fall again into that childish and popular love.⁴⁸

If poetry is able to present a suitable defence, the philosopher-king must treat it differently, though this would entail significant modifications in the system of early education, and perhaps in the state as a whole.⁴⁹

This is not the only instance. Plato does not hesitate to express his doubts about the system of early education as a whole. After completing discussion of this topic, at the close of Book III, *Socrates* stresses the importance of a good education in insuring that the Guardians will protect their charges and not abuse them. To Glaucon's remark that such a programme has been devised, *Socrates* responds:

Perhaps we should not assert this dogmatically (*diischurizesthai*), my dear Glaucon. What we can assert is what we were saying just now, that they must have the correct education, whatever that is (*pote estin*), in

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 607c–608a.

⁴⁹ This point is generally ignored by scholars; see, e.g. Guthrie, *History*, IV, pp. 553–4; P. Shorey, *The Republic of Plato* (2 vols., London, 1930–5), ad loc.; R.L. Nettleship, *Lectures on the Republic of Plato* (London, 2nd edn., 1901), pp. 353–4. N.R. Murphy, *The Interpretation of Plato's Republic* (Oxford, 1951), ignores it; cf. N.P. White, *A Companion to Plato's Republic* (Indianapolis, 1979), p. 259; and Bloom, *Republic*, p. 434.

order to attain the greatest degree of gentleness toward each other and toward those whom they are protecting.⁵⁰

Thus we see that central elements in the ideal state undoubtedly are maintained provisionally. What remains to be seen are the implications.

IV

The presence of provisionality in the ideal state gives us an important insight into Plato's political theory. It is clear that the central motif of the *Republic* is placing philosophers in control of society and allowing them to rule in accordance with their exclusive knowledge. We have seen how the institutions of the state are structured towards this end, but the question of exactly how the philosophers are to rule requires closer examination.

The point I wish to emphasize here is that their rule is more dynamic than it is often taken to be. In describing the closed society, Popper gives us a number of linked features, included among which is the one we have focused on, his insistence that such a state excludes rationality, that it is based on a 'magical' attitude. According to Popper, the main features of such a society are accepted unquestioningly by the populace; such a society is therefore rigid and extremely resistant to change, while changes that are made 'are not based upon a rational attempt to improve social conditions'.⁵¹ Along similar lines, we have seen that Bluck, one of Plato's defenders, is willing to concede much of the same ground, arguing that the state's laws are grounded in religious knowledge. However, I believe that any attempt to tar the *Republic* with the brush of this sort of closed society is misdirected. For though the ideal state is based upon a cohesive social plan or blueprint, and though the vast majority of the population must accept their situation uncritically, the state is designed to contain a rational, self-critical agency.

We have mentioned the running theme carried on by *Socrates* and his interlocutors that they are the founders and legislators of the ideal state. What is distinctive about the structure they create is that it must contain a mechanism capable of carrying on where they have left off. It is stated in Book VI that an essential component of the ideal state is that 'there must always be some people in the city who have the same understanding of the rational principle on which the constitution is based' that *Socrates* and his inter-

⁵⁰ *Republic*, 416b–c.

⁵¹ Popper, *Open Society*, I, p. 172.

locutors had in sketching its laws.⁵² The ideal state, then, is not only based on a plan, but it must have an element within it possessing a complete understanding of the plan. That element is, of course, the class of philosophers.

This stipulation suggests an important distinction. It seems to me that the overall nature of the ideal state is not based on having the philosophers put into practice a fully worked-out blueprint of their society, a blueprint consisting of divinely grounded laws that is formulated without any input from them. Rather, they are to implement a plan over which they have final say. As we saw in the previous section, should the philosophers be given reasons to alter the blueprint, even its basic features, they are to do so. To put the contrast as starkly as possible, Plato's philosopher-kings are committed to ruling the state according to reason, in two senses. They are to exercise reason, conceived of as (a) a discursive faculty responsible for critical inquiry, as well as reason conceived of as (b) an essentially intuitive faculty rooted in direct apprehension of its timeless objects.⁵³

Because the philosophers exercise reason in both of these senses, it seems to me that the ideal expressed in the *Republic* is putting political control in the hands of an active philosophizing intelligence, not subordinating all other considerations to the divinely grounded blueprint of the ideal state. The distinction can be seen more clearly if we look briefly at the *Statesman*. At one point in this work⁵⁴ the Eleatic Stranger, Plato's chief spokesman, argues that the true statesman or true ruler must be someone with a clear knowledge of the art of ruling. Plato appeals to the analogy of the true physician, whose claim to this title rests upon his secure grasp of the art of medicine.

Plato argues that the only true constitution is one presided over by a genuine statesman. It is in this connection that he makes the distinction that concerns us.⁵⁵ Plato contrasts the true constitution with others based on the rule of law. Laws are deficient because of their rigidity and generality. They are like instructions a doctor would give his patients if he were to be away from them for an extended time. Thus laws are drawn up with average conditions in mind; they cannot readily adapt themselves to special or

⁵² . . . hoti deēsoi ti aei eneinai en tē polei logon echon tēs politeias ton auton honper kai su ho nomothetēs echōn tous nomous etitheis. (*Republic*, 497c–d.)

⁵³ For reason in sense (b), see esp. P. Wilford, 'The Status of Reason in Plato's Psychology', *Phronesis*, 4 (1959); see below, pp. 187–9.

⁵⁴ *Statesman*, 292c ff.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 294a–296a.

extenuating circumstances. The rule of the true statesman is superior because it can adapt to change. The ruler would simply apply the scientific understanding he had brought to the original codification of the laws to the new circumstances. It is also clear that he would not be constrained by past enactments. Just as a doctor would not be bound by previous prescriptions but would apply his knowledge directly to his patients' changed conditions, the true ruler would not be bound by past laws. Plato does not explicitly discuss the extent of the true ruler's flexibility, but presumably he would be free to make whatever changes he believed to be best for his state. } weak

Thus in the *Statesman*, Plato contrasts the direct rule of scientific intelligence with the rule of law. Though this precise distinction cannot be applied to the *Republic*, something closely resembling it can.

The place of the wise statesman or wise physician of the *Statesman* is of course occupied by the philosopher-kings. Having undergone the rigorous educational programme described in *Republic* VII, they have true knowledge—the same knowledge Plato depicts the *Socrates* of the *Republic* as having. Accordingly, Plato is able to leave a good deal of the task of structuring society in their hands. Thus, concerning many aspects of the commercial life of the state, *Socrates* says that he and his fellow-interlocutors need not bother spelling out detailed rules and regulations. 'It is not worthwhile', Adeimantus says, 'to make orders about these for good men and true; they will easily discover most of those which need legislation.'⁵⁶ The same goes for other laws as well: 'If [the rulers] become cultured, moderate men, they will easily see these things for themselves, and other things too which we are now omitting . . .'.⁵⁷ And again: in a well-governed city ' . . . the true lawgiver must not bother with that kind of law and administration . . . because anyone at all could discover some of these laws for himself, while other laws follow automatically from the pursuits we laid down earlier.'⁵⁸

⁵⁶ *Republic*, 425d–e.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 423e.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 427a. The fact that, having created philosopher-rulers, we can trust them to draw up the detailed legislation we require, is one facet of the political theory of the *Republic* that indicates an attitude fundamentally different from that of the *Laws*. That Plato felt it necessary to go into such detail in the *Laws* seems to me a strong argument for the view of the work suggested by Aristotle in *Politics*, 1265a1–4, that the Nocturnal Council is not entirely in keeping with the rest of the work (supported by, e.g. E. Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and His Predecessors* (London, 1918; reprinted 1947), pp. 339, 385, 398 ff.); cf. G. Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City* (Princeton, 1960), pp. 500–3, 573–93.

Many specific aspects of the state are, accordingly, left incomplete, sketched in broad strokes with the remaining details explicitly reserved for the rulers. For instance, they must determine the extent to which the state can safely expand beyond its original borders,⁵⁹ and the number of marriages needed to keep the male population stable.⁶⁰ They must originate the programme of trials and tests through which the perfect Guardians are selected from their fellows,⁶¹ and any number of times in discussing his programme of early education, Plato states that he is presenting only broad outlines (*tupoi*), while the specific details are the responsibility of the Guardians.⁶²

It is in keeping with this principle that we are justified in reading into the ideal state even important features that Plato does not explicitly discuss, for example an organized system of education for the lowest class. This is necessary for at least two reasons: to inculcate some facsimile of virtue in the members of this class, for both their own benefit and that of the state; and to provide some means for detecting members of this class with unusual ability, so they can be raised to their proper stations.⁶³ Though Plato never mentions such a system of education, because it is required by various measures he does mention, the rulers of the state will recognize this and see that the appropriate steps are taken. Because the rulers will see the obvious need for such a programme, Plato need not bother discussing it himself.⁶⁴

It was seen in the last section that, at least to a certain extent, the rulers must remain open to criticism and be willing to modify various features of the ideal state, should convincing reasons be forthcoming. Granted this, and granted the degree to which Plato places the shaping of the state in their hands, it follows that the philosophers' role in the state is an active one. Like the true ruler in the *Statesman*, they can move beyond existing institutional structures, should conditions warrant this. We have seen that Plato's stric-

⁵⁹ *Republic*, 423b–c.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 460a.

⁶¹ See *ibid.*, 414a.

⁶² See *ibid.*, 412b, 379a, 398b, 400b–c.

⁶³ See *ibid.*, 415a–c.

⁶⁴ That Plato intends such a programme of education is argued by many scholars, e.g. F.M. Cornford, *The Republic of Plato* (Oxford, 1941), pp. 63–4, 145 note 1; the contrary view is argued by G. Hourani, 'The Education of the Third Class in the *Republic*', *Classical Quarterly*, 43 (1949); see also *Republic*, 590c–91b; and 619c–d; and G. Klosko, 'Demotike Arete in the *Republic*', *History of Political Thought*, 3 (1982).

tures concerning poetry are held provisionally, subject to re-examination at any time. Presumably the same holds true of other aspects of the state as well. The philosopher-kings give the state a self-critical intelligence; they have a permanent commitment to defending it—and their administration of it—against objections, or to making the appropriate changes. In sum, the political theory of the *Republic* is government according to the best reasoned arguments that can be produced. What remains to be seen is the extent to which it is possible for the philosophers to proceed in this fashion.

The obvious objection to this conception of the role of the philosophers is that it rests on an overly rationalistic conception of their divine knowledge; it treats this too much like ordinary factual or scientific knowledge. An in-depth discussion of this objection and various possible responses is not possible in the present context. Such a discussion necessarily involves complex aspects of Plato's epistemology and metaphysics, and reasons of space and scope preclude such a treatment here. However, the broad outlines of these matters can be discussed.

In light of the extraordinary nature of the philosophers' knowledge of the Good, it seems that the objection we face could be formulated like this: 'If the philosophers have certain knowledge of ultimate moral truths, how can this knowledge be subjected to critical examination and discussion?' Alternatively, adopting Bluck's point of view: 'If the philosophers' role is to enforce divinely sanctioned laws, how could they possibly criticize and change them?' Objections of this sort are of course closely bound up with an overall view of Plato as an irrationalist in the *Republic*, as far removed indeed from the probing, questioning spirit of Socrates.⁶⁵ But though this sort of objection is formidable, I believe it can be answered.

It is clear that the philosophers' knowledge of the Good is no ordinary knowledge. Exactly what the Form of the Good is is of course difficult to say. Socrates himself is reluctant to describe it in the *Republic*. On one occasion he says that he is unable to do so,⁶⁶ and on another that his interlocutors would be unable to follow his account if he did.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ See esp. Popper, *Open Society*, I, pp. 132–3; Crossman, *Plato Today*, pp. 292–6; B. Campbell, 'Intellect and Political Order in Plato's *Republic*', *History of Political Thought*, 1 (1980), pp. 375–8.

⁶⁶ *Republic*, 506d–e.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 533a.

Shorey especially is associated with a more pedestrian analysis of the Good. The main thrust of his argument is an attempt to eliminate the poetic, metaphysical and religious aspects of Plato's description, in order to uncover the 'perfectly simple and definite meaning' Plato had in mind.⁶⁸ Shorey argues that the Good for Plato has no determinate content, that it is a purely formal construct, a logical postulate designed to supply the ethical end around which Plato's moral system as a whole must be shaped.⁶⁹ Thus it is analogous to *eudaimonia* as described in Aristotle's *Ethics*, 'merely a verbal expression, a blank form, requiring to be filled up with concrete meaning'.⁷⁰

Were Shorey's account accurate, the problem of explaining how the philosopher could preserve provisionality would not be difficult. But it seems likely that the Form of the Good is more exalted. I believe that something of its religious nature must be recognized and taken into account.⁷¹ As described throughout the *Republic*—and the middle dialogues in general—reason is not primarily a discursive faculty used to draw connections and relations, but a species of desire, a love of wisdom and a longing for union with its objects.⁷² Throughout these works, the attainment of knowledge is generally described in visual terms. For instance at *Republic*, 540a, the philosophers' education is completed and they are described as seeing the Good, as follows:

We shall require them to turn upward the vision of their souls (*tēn tēs psychēs augēn*) and fix their gaze (*apoblepsai*) on that which sheds light on all . . .⁷³

I agree with the many scholars who link up apprehension of the Good in the *Republic* with the ascent of the ladder of Beauty in the *Symposium*,⁷⁴ and the

⁶⁸ Shorey, 'The Idea of the Good in Plato's *Republic*', *University of Chicago Publications in Classical Philology*, 1 (1895), p. 189.

⁶⁹ Shorey seems to see Plato's ethics as teleological, rather than deontological; he seems to believe that all ethical systems are necessarily teleological, and therefore require the postulation of a good to be maximized.

⁷⁰ Shorey, 'Idea of Good', p. 211.

⁷¹ See esp. Cornford, in *Cambridge Ancient History*, VI, p. 324. Cornford's views are given more developed exposition in his unpublished lectures, *Socrates and Plato*, esp. VI, pp. 45–6. (I am grateful to Professor Guthrie for granting me access to Cornford's papers.)

⁷² See esp. *Republic*, 611e; also 581d–e, 485d; W.K.C. Guthrie, 'Plato's Views on the Nature of the Soul', in *Plato II*, ed. G. Vlastos (Garden City, N. Y., 1971); Wilford, 'The Status of Reason'.

⁷³ Trans. Shorey.

⁷⁴ See *Symposium*, 201e–12a, esp. 210c–11b; on this see esp. F.M. Cornford, 'The Doctrine of Eros in Plato's *Symposium*', in *The Unwritten Philosophy and Other Essays* (Cambridge, 1950).

attainment of true knowledge in *Epistle VII*, which is described in similar terms: 'suddenly, like light flashing forth when a fire is kindled, it is born in the soul and straightaway nourishes itself.'⁷⁵ Thus this knowledge appears to have a strong intuitive, non-rational component and so would seem to pose problems for the kind of critical self-examination that is basic to provisionality.

There is, however, a response. Though Shorey seems to be incorrect in arguing that knowledge of the Form of the Good has no determinate object and content, the question of the extent of this determinate content strikes me as important. The philosopher's knowledge of the Good—and of the Forms in general—undoubtedly gives them knowledge of the supremely desirable moral condition to which men should be brought. Accordingly, as we have seen,⁷⁶ the philosophers look towards the Forms in shaping men's souls. It seems safe to say that knowledge of the Forms is knowledge of the ultimate principles of all of Reality as well.⁷⁷ But the role that knowledge of the Forms is to play in the political activity of the philosopher-kings is more difficult to determine.

Many aspects of the political theory of the *Republic* are left vague by Plato. It is notorious that he says little about even important features of the ideal state, while others are omitted from discussion altogether. Thus it is not unusual that Plato has little to say concerning how the philosophers are to go about translating their moral vision into the institutional structure of the state. In the passage quoted above on page 173, Plato describes the philosophers as looking to the Forms and patterning the state after them. Similarly, in Book VII (in the continuation of the passage just quoted), he writes: 'as [the philosophers] look upon the Good itself and taking it as their model, they must put in order the city and its citizens as well as themselves for the remainder of their life, each in turn.'⁷⁸

Discussing the artistic activity of the philosophers in his edition of the *Republic*, Shorey makes an interesting comparison (in reference to *Republic*, 501b):

⁷⁵ *Epistle 7*, 341c–d (trans. Morrow). See Cornford, 'The Doctrine of Eros', pp. 47–8; Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, pp. 172–7; Wilford, 'The Status of Reason'; Campbell, 'Intellect and the Political Order'.

⁷⁶ p. 173, above.

⁷⁷ On this see esp. Nettleship, *Lectures*, p. 225.

⁷⁸ *Republic*, 540a–b.

Plato applies the language of the theory of ideas to the 'social tissue' here exactly as he applies it to the making of a tool in the *Cratylus* 389c. In both cases there is a workman, the ideal pattern and the material in which it is more or less perfectly embodied.⁷⁹

This parallel, however, is not exact. In the *Cratylus* we have a carpenter who looks toward the Form of the Shuttle as he makes a shuttle out of wood. As Plato describes him, the nature of his task is easily grasped. He is to envision the Form of Shuttle and attempt to impose it on his materials, thereby creating a physical object that is an imitation of the Form. By implication the carpenter who makes a bed, as discussed in *Republic*, X,⁸⁰ functions in a similar manner.

The activity of the philosopher-king is more difficult to grasp. While there can be no doubt that the ideal state sketched in the *Republic* is not meant to be a Form—as some scholars have averred⁸¹—a more interesting question is if it is supposed to represent a Form, i.e. if the philosopher-kings are conceived by Plato as doing their work by embodying the Form of State (or, perhaps, of Ideal State) in the materials encountered in this world.

Such matters are, again, not explicitly discussed by Plato and our conclusions must therefore be tentative. To begin with, it is difficult to say if Plato believed that there actually was a Form of the Ideal State.⁸² Evidence that there would be such an entity is supplied in *Republic*, X: 'We are accustomed to assuming one Form in each case for the many particulars to which we give the same name.'⁸³ Since there is a Form corresponding to every general term, it would seem that there should be one of the State—and perhaps of the Ideal State—as well. But there is also evidence against this view.

Throughout the middle dialogues, the Forms Plato is clearly most interested in are those corresponding to moral and relational terms. Though there are a few exceptions, it seems possible to confine the range of the theory of

⁷⁹ Shorey, *Republic*, II, 70 n.

⁸⁰ *Republic*, 597a–e.

⁸¹ See, e.g. Popper, *Open Society*, I, pp. 79–81; that it is not a Form is clearly seen in *Republic*, 546a, in that it is liable to decay; on this, see White, *Companion*, p. 39.

⁸² This is a question White avoids (*Companion*, p. 39).

⁸³ *Republic*, 596a.

Forms to these, as various scholars have attempted to do.⁸⁴ In the *Parmenides*, when Socrates is questioned about the range of the theory, he is notably undecided.⁸⁵ He is quite sure that there are Forms of relational terms—e.g. Largeness, One and Many—and of moral properties—the Just, Beautiful, Good, etc. But concerning others he is more tentative, denying the existence of Forms of such things as hair, mud and dirt, while being uncertain in regard to those of fire, water and even man. Thus it seems reasonable to conclude that, at the time the *Republic* was written, Plato had not worked out all aspects of the theory of Forms and was consequently undecided about many of its features, including its range. If he had doubts about a Form of Man, it seems difficult to believe that he was more certain of a Form of Polis—let alone Kallipolis. It therefore seems clear that a Form of the Ideal State could not play an important role in the political theory of the *Republic*.⁸⁶

Let us return now to passages examined earlier. We have seen that Plato depicts the philosopher-king as an artist who shapes the state after the model of the Forms. It is striking to note, however, that the philosopher-artist looks to the *Forms of moral qualities*—Justice, Beauty, Moderation,⁸⁷ the Good itself⁸⁸—not to the *Form of Ideal State*. His task is to embody these moral qualities in men's souls, while the means to this end must be fabricated. How the philosophers are to shape the political institutions needed to yield the desired outcome is a problem to the solution of which they are not given metaphysical guidance.

It seems, then, that Bluck is incorrect in his assertion that the ideal state is a theocracy in which divine forces are responsible for *all* laws.⁸⁹ A more proper

⁸⁴ See, e.g. A. Nehemas, 'Plato on the Imperfection of the Sensible World', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 16 (1979). Exceptions, notably the bed in *Republic*, X and the shuttle in the *Cratylus*, are used for quite specific purposes of illustration.

⁸⁵ *Parmenides*, 135b–d. That the *Parmenides* is meant to criticize the theory of Forms as expounded in the middle dialogues is widely held; see, e.g. Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, pp. 223–5; W.D. Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas* (Oxford, 1951), p. 84. The contrary view is well argued by R. Allen, 'Participation and Predication in Plato's Middle Dialogues', reprinted in *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics*, ed. Allen (London, 1965).

⁸⁶ The ideal state is referred to as a *paradeigma* at *Republic*, 472d–e and 592b, but this is as a *model*, not as a Form, and says nothing of its metaphysical status; on this see White, *Companion*, pp. 39, 245, 151.

⁸⁷ *Republic*, 501b.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 540a.

⁸⁹ pp. 178–9, above.

view is that the philosopher-king is given an end at which to aim, while his political task lies in devising proper means. The question of fitting means to an end is, of course, 'rational' in the discursive sense of the word. Such a problem even lends itself to scientific consideration.⁹⁰ Insofar as the philosophers act in this capacity their role does not strike me as different in kind from that of Bentham's lawgiver, who must devise the optimal means to the greatest good for the greatest number. It is because ruling is this sort of task that Plato requires that the philosophers spend fifteen years gaining practical administrative experience—as much time as in all of their mathematical and dialectical studies combined—before they can be brought to rule.⁹¹

Thus it does not seem impossible for the philosopher-kings to maintain a critical, open-minded attitude toward the institutional mechanisms they must design to achieve their end. I do not wish to call into question the fact that the *Republic* is rooted in absolute moral knowledge. Plato puts his objective moral truths before all other considerations, and it does not seem that such absolute moral knowledge can really be subjected to critical scrutiny. However, Plato is undoubtedly less rigid about political institutions. In the *Statesman* and *Laws*, when he had become sceptical of the possibility of finding the superhuman beings required for philosophic rule, he altered basic features of his ideal state.⁹²

An additional piece of evidence should be noted, which supports the rulers' ability to maintain a critical attitude. In *Republic*, VII Plato declares that the philosophers must provide evidence of having achieved ultimate moral knowledge. Though knowledge of the Forms is obviously not intersubjectively available for examination,⁹³ Plato describes the kind of tests to which the philosophers must submit:

The man who cannot by reason distinguish the Form of the Good from all others, who does not, as in a battle survive all refutations, eager to argue according to reality and not according to opinion, and who does not come through all the tests without faltering in reasoned discourse—

⁹⁰ See esp. Weber, *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, trans. E. Shils and H. Finch (New York, 1949), esp. pp. 51–4.

⁹¹ Campbell, 'Intellect and the Political Order', p. 365, understates the importance of this point, which is quite damaging to his argument.

⁹² See esp. *Laws*, 874d–75d, 713c–14a; *Statesman*, 268d–75c.

⁹³ cf. Campbell, 'Intellect and the Political Order', p. 370.

such a man you will say does not know the Good itself, nor any kind of good.⁹⁴

Thus Plato believes that there are signs to distinguish actual perceivers of the Good from those who have not seen it.

From this passage it is clear that the philosophers are subjected to scrutiny on at least one occasion in their careers, and must be able to respond to questions about their knowledge. The passage seems to suggest that, even if they cannot be quizzed about their knowledge of the Good directly, they can be questioned about implications drawn from that knowledge. I believe that the fact that the philosophers are examined in this way supports the idea that they are able to maintain at least some measure of detachment from their moral knowledge. The fact that they are subjected to external scrutiny in this manner strengthens the possibility that they could be subjected to internal scrutiny as well.

In closing I would stress the extent to which critical rationalism is a significant element in the political theory of the *Republic*. It is, of course, a central motif of Plato's political theory that the philosopher-kings love the contemplation of the eternal Forms far more than anything encountered in this world. Having seen the truths of all time and all eternity, 'their souls are always pressing upward',⁹⁵ and they of course approach their political tasks as a duty, 'something that must be done'.⁹⁶ The philosophers love truth more than political power, and it is to their love of truth that I would connect the argument of this essay.

If the argument of this paper is convincing, it seems that the philosophers must rule by discursive reason as well as by intuitively perceived truth. They must maintain an open, critical attitude towards the political structures they control and must be prepared to modify them to meet objections. Though the philosophers are of course dedicated to the plan of the ideal state as sketched in the *Republic*, this is not a single-minded devotion. Their commitment to this blueprint is tempered by an additional commitment to discursive reason. The ideal state is in a way an open society.

George Klosko

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

⁹⁴ *Republic*, 534b–c.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 517c–d.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 520e; also 540b.

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*The Executive Editors,
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