

Shifting Allegiances in Plato's *Republic*
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Some readers regard book ten of Plato's *Republic* as a kind of epilogue, elevating the previous philosophy to mythic levels (Mattéi 71), or at the very least providing a secondary justification for the just life (Yunis 23). Others consider book ten to be tacked on and unnecessary (Annas 335), filled with philosophy that is unworthy and sloppy when compared with the rest of the work. This paper takes as its focus one particularly troublesome passage within book ten and situates it within an understanding of the *Republic* as a work of philosophical pedagogy. Such an understanding focuses on the effect of the philosophical dialogue within the *Republic* on its internal learners, Glaucon and Adeimatus, as well as on the reader herself; it rejects the notion that detailed Platonic philosophy can be abstracted entirely from its dialogical context. Ultimately this paper offers a view of Plato's *Republic* in which the reader is challenged to make sense of the strange and sometimes bizarre statements of book ten as offering new philosophical insights, and in which the philosophy of the *Republic* should be thought of as evolving as it educates.

Book ten of Plato's *Republic* concludes with the myth of Er, a tale of judgment after death followed by reincarnation. Interestingly, souls who have been rewarded for good deeds and who have just spent years in an orderly constitution make, on the whole, *worse* choices about their next lives than do those who had recently suffered on earth (*Rep.* 619d1). One of the messages of this myth is that only those who are agents of justice, that is to say only those who live a just life through choice and decision rather than through accident, attain the knowledge necessary to make a sagacious selection of a future life. As a whole this message is in keeping with the general tenor of Platonic philosophy, in which knowledge is required to live a truly virtuous life (e.g. *Phd.* 82b1). Yet this myth also has the extraordinary implication that those producers and guardians who live within Kallipolis are *worse off* in their next lives than their corollaries living elsewhere, for while the philosophically-disinclined elsewhere have some opportunity to learn the negative effects of injustice, those in Kallipolis are shielded from any such negative experience. Ultimately, this fact about Kallipolis seems to contradict Socrates' earlier claim to Glaucon that Kallipolis seeks justice for all, and does not simply seek the happiness of the philosopher-class (*Rep.* 420b-c).

Some commentators have avoided this contradiction by disassociating Kallipolis from the heavenly city (Reeve 319) or, more frequently, by simply dealing with book ten as distinct from the preceding nine books. However, the similar wordings of the descriptions of Kallipolis (*Rep.* 500c2, 592b-c) and of the former residence of the unfortunate soul (*Rep.* 619c5-d) strongly suggest a connection between the two. Beginning from the assumption that Kallipolis *is*, in fact, the referent here, one can then ask *why* Plato would add this odd fact about the not-so-ideal city. By following interpretations of the *Republic* as a pedagogical text (Clay, Yunis), I suggest that we should understand Socrates as slowly molding his audience's understanding of the nature of the philosophical life. The final book of Plato's *Republic* acts as a charge to the philosophical student not to be content simply with living in a just city, but to seek justice within themselves. Should they not, they will face the consequences in their next lives.

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