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The Military Character of Plato's *Republic*

by
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A Thesis
Submitted in Fulfilment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Ancient History

The University of Auckland
2010

This thesis examines the military character of Plato's *Republic*, and is driven by two key concerns: First, to demonstrate and explain warfare's importance as both an influence on, and factor within, the argument of the *Republic*; second, to explore the way in which Plato, as a fourth century BC Greek intellectual, engages with his social, cultural, military, and intellectual context with regards to warfare. I begin with an overview of the *Republic's* argument, emphasising the prevalence of military content in the text. I then proceed to the question of Plato's participation in and experience of warfare, offering a tentative account of his life to the time of the Corinthian War. Finally, I situate the *Republic* within its military context at the date of its composition, whilst emphasising key points of historical interest. In Chapter One I discuss the influence of warfare on the social structure of Plato's just city. I look at the evolution of Kallipolis from Socrates' first and second cities, and I emphasise warfare's role as a driving force enabling the city to achieve the condition of true justice. I then discuss the three-class ordering at Kallipolis, emphasising the lifelong military participation of the guardian class generally, and the guardian-rulers particularly. In Chapter Two I look at the importance of warfare to Kallipolis' educational system and distinguish the two forms of education conducted at Kallipolis: The first, cultural and physical training targeted at the entire guardian class; the second, mathematical and dialectical instruction targeted at the guardian-rulers. I also look at the question of the philosopher-kings' motivation to rule, which, I suggest, is connected to the quality of self-sacrifice developed over the course of their military participation. In Chapter Three I take an explicitly historical approach to the *Republic's* military content as an aid to understanding better Plato's philosophical purposes. In this chapter I consider the following points: Plato's largely traditional approach to military training; the operational concerns of Kallipolis' army; the inclusion of females as warriors; and, finally, the limitations Socrates imposes on warfare in Book V.

To Paul Beachman

On the Occasion of His Retirement

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have always thought it rather clichéd for a set of acknowledgements to begin, ‘Without the following people, this piece of work would not have been possible...’ However, having reached the end of my own ‘piece of work’, I think I now understand that, clichéd or otherwise, this kind of statement is in fact very appropriate. Without each of the following people, this thesis would either not have been written, or it would have been written in a much poorer form. So, in no particular order, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to:

Lieutenant Colonel Simons, for the conversation we had at the Malone Bar, Waiouru, in February 2008. Also, for convincing Wellington to fund three full years of tuition, for which I am extremely grateful.

Dr Dougal Blyth, my supervisor, a constant source of support, and after five years I hope I can now say a friend. I know that my approach to this thesis has caused some headaches, so thank you for your patience.

Dr Jeremy Armstrong, Nicola, and Peter, who have read this thesis in its draft form and have offered useful suggestions.

Grandmum and Grandy, Nana and Aunt Lynne, Mum and Dad, and my wife Liz, who have encouraged me at each step.

The Classics Tea Room Gang, who have kept me sane.

Members of the New Zealand Army, whom I have had had the privilege to get to know and work with over the last three years; particularly those superior officers who have indulged the questions of a young subordinate, allowing me to shape my own thinking on the role of the military in history and in the world. I want to offer special thanks to Major Mortimer, for the lengthy discussion we had that day on the track to the Wairoa Dam.

Finally, Paul Beachman, who opened my eyes to the possibilities of the Classical World as a third former at Northcote College in early 2000. The path that I have taken from that point to now is a testament to this inspiring and exceptional teacher. I congratulate you on a full and successful career, and wish you all happiness for your upcoming retirement.

Richard Carpenter
The University of Auckland
April 2010

ABBREVIATIONS

In this thesis, the following abbreviations have been used:

<i>Ath. Pol.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Athenian Constitution</i> : trans. H. Rackham (1952). Cambridge.
Diod. Sic.	Diodorus Siculus, <i>Bibliotheca Historica</i> : trans. H. Oldfather (1989). Cambridge.
Diog. Laert.	Diogenes Laertius, <i>Lives of Eminent Philosophers</i> : trans. R. D. Hicks (1925). Cambridge.
<i>EN</i>	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> : trans. C. Rowe (2002). Oxford.
<i>Grg.</i>	Plato, <i>Gorgias</i> : trans. R. Waterfield (1994). Oxford.
<i>Hell.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Hellenica</i> : trans. W. Heinemann (1985). Cambridge.
Hdt.	Herodotus, <i>Histories</i> : trans. A. D. Godley (1920). Cambridge.
<i>Il.</i>	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> : trans. R. Lattimore (1961). Chicago.
<i>Lac.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Constitution of the Lacedaemonians</i> : trans. E. C. Marchant (1969). Oxford.
<i>Lach.</i>	Plato, <i>Laches</i> : trans. W. R. M. Lamb (1955). Cambridge.
<i>Leg.</i>	Plato, <i>Laws</i> : trans. T. L. Pangle (1980). Chicago.
<i>Mem.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Memorabilia</i> : trans. W. Heinemann (1987). Cambridge.
Paus.	Pausanias, <i>Description of Greece</i> : trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod (1918). Cambridge.
<i>Pol.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> : trans. C. D. C. Reeve (1998). Indianapolis.
Polyb.	Polybius, <i>Histories</i> : trans. E. S. Shuckburgh (1962). London.
<i>Resp.</i>	Plato, <i>Republic</i> : trans. C. D. C. Reeve (2004). Indianapolis.
<i>Symp.</i>	Plato, <i>Symposium</i> : trans. C. Gill (1999). London.
Thuc.	Thucydides, <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> : trans. J. M. Dent (1920). London.

All other texts and translators are as noted.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. The *Republic* at War: A Two-Pronged Approach

The military content of Plato's *Republic* is an area that has been largely neglected by mainstream scholars. Few have attempted to discuss the importance of warfare to Plato's argument; in fact, the effect is generally to stress the opposite. None, as far as I can tell, has made any serious effort to link Plato's comments on warfare to his historical context in order to gain a fuller understanding of the topic. This thesis has arisen from my firm beliefs that there is much more to the military character of this text than its treatment in current scholarship would indicate, and that this is an area in need of significant address.

To this end, I have adopted a two-pronged approach: First, to demonstrate and explain warfare's importance as both an influence on, and a factor within, the argument of the *Republic*; second, to explore the way in which Plato, as a fourth century BC Greek intellectual, engages with the social, cultural, military, and intellectual context of his time with regards to warfare.

I will begin with a substantial general introduction in order to lay a solid foundation for subsequent chapters. First, I will provide an overview of the *Republic's* argument, whilst emphasising both the prevalence and the importance of military content in the text. This section will also serve to situate subsequent discussion of specific passages within their wider context. Second, I will look at the question of Plato's participation in and experience of warfare, offering a tentative account of his life to the time of the Corinthian War. The purpose of this section will be to provide a point of reference for future discussion of common points of historical evidence, and to suggest that warfare represents a significant influence not only on the text, but in Plato's life more generally. Third, I will situate the

Republic within its military context at the date of its composition and emphasise key historical features whose presence is strongly felt in the text.

In Chapter One, I proceed to a discussion of my first major point: the influence of warfare on the social structure of Plato's just city. I will look at the evolution of Kallipolis from the first city, described as suitable only for pigs, and then to the second city, described as fevered and luxurious. At the same time I will emphasise warfare's role as a driving force throughout this progression. Although the first city descends from a state of peace into war, it is only through the demands of war that the city is enabled to ascend to the condition of true justice. As such, I will argue that warfare holds a positive role in the *Republic*. I will then move to a discussion of the three-class ordering at Kallipolis: the guardian-rulers, the auxiliary-guardians, and the productive classes. I will consider the military role of the guardian class as a whole, and their status as protectors and defenders of the rest of the citizens. I will then look at the fundamental distinction in the guardian class between ruler and auxiliary, and then further distinctions made over the course of the guardian-rulers' lives, as evidence for a well-delineated hierarchy in the city's army.

In Chapter Two, taking a similar approach to that of Chapter One, I will look at the importance of warfare to Kallipolis' educational system. Education is one of the most important subjects discussed in the *Republic*, and Plato's underlying concern that it be suitable for the city's guardians as warriors is marked: the guardians' education is introduced in response to, and crafted essentially with regards to, the demands of war. In this chapter, I will distinguish the two forms of education conducted at Kallipolis: The first, consisting primarily of cultural and physical training and targeted at the auxiliaries and future guardian-rulers; the second, consisting of mathematical and dialectical instruction, and targeted at the guardian-rulers and future philosopher-kings. I will situate each form of education within Plato's historical context, and seek to understand how he

thought they would be practically applicable to Kallipolis' soldiers and officers. An important question raised in this chapter will be just why the guardian spirit, *the* prerequisite quality for further education, is so martial. Here I believe that one can see Plato clearly engaging with his contemporary historical context, where military and political participation were considered requirements for, and to some extent the definition of, full citizenship. I will address the objection of interpreters who see the discussion of the philosopher-kings' higher education merely as an excuse to prescribe an ideal education for philosophers *as such*, not as a serious suggestion for practical application to politics and the military. I will also look at the question of the philosopher-kings' motivation to rule and I will suggest that the quality of self-sacrifice, honed throughout a lifetime of military participation, helps explain why the philosopher-kings ultimately forsake a life of private philosophy.

In Chapters One and Two, I will make occasional use of Plato's historical context in order to gain a better understanding of his thinking as expressed in the *Republic*. In Chapter Three, however, I will take a more explicitly historical approach, evaluating elements of Plato's argument firmly through the lens of the military, literary, and social context of his time. I will begin by looking at Plato's approach to military training, giving particular consideration to the Greek ideal that military success stemmed as much from moral qualities as actual combat training. I will then consider the operational concerns of Kallipolis' army, giving particular consideration to the subjects of navy and allies. Third, I will discuss the inclusion of female warriors in Kallipolis' army, a discussion that will promote the reading of the *Republic* as a Platonic thought experiment exploring what would be necessary for justice to be perfectly realised in the city, even beyond the bounds of practicality. Finally, I will consider the limitations Socrates imposes on warfare at Kallipolis in the *Republic* Book V, which, I will suggest, evidences a historically and

literarily informed tension in Plato's approach to conflict. As I will argue, this tension provides a paradigm through which the *Republic's* overall approach to the military and warfare may best be understood

At the conclusion of this thesis, I hope to have firmly established the significantly military character of Plato's *Republic* and to have addressed the following questions: How much of an influence does warfare represent on Plato's own life and thought? Why does warfare play such a significant role within the argument of the *Republic*? What can be added to our understanding of the *Republic* by importing evidence from Plato's military context and comparing it to evidence from the dialogue?

2. A Military Overview of the *Republic's* Argument

The argument of the *Republic* is both far-ranging and diverse. In Book I, prior to the intervention of Thrasymachus, its aim is to arrive at a definition of justice. In Books II to IV, this aim is subordinated to a consideration of whether or not the just life is the happiest. Over the course of the work, Plato and his interlocutors cover a host of subjects including poetry, philosophy, mathematics and political theory. As I will discuss in this section, war plays a significant role in Plato's argument throughout.

The dialogue begins in Book I with Socrates, and his companion Glaucon, chancing upon a group of fellow Athenian aristocrats, including Glaucon's brother Adeimantus, and also the metic Polemarchus, son of Cephalus, on the way home from the Piraeus. Polemarchus persuades Socrates to join him at his house where discussion soon turns to the subject of justice and whether or not it is beneficial to its possessor. War receives its first mention when Polemarchus identifies it as the activity in which the just person is most capable of benefiting friends and harming enemies (*Resp.* 332e). Socrates highlights major

flaws in this definition, specifically the difficulty of judging whether or not people are actually good or bad, as well as an objection to the idea of justice being used to harm anyone. Nevertheless, the conceptual link between warfare and the exhibition of moral virtue is picked up and developed by Socrates later in the work.

By the start of Book II, Socrates believes that he has adequately addressed the question of justice's value. Glaucon and Adeimantus, hereafter his main interlocutors, object. Socrates, Glaucon states, has only given the *appearance* of persuading the group, he has not *really* persuaded them (*Resp.* 375a). Socrates therefore proposes a way forward: by considering justice in the city, which is large, the group will be able to discern justice in the individual, which is smaller, and therefore more difficult to examine (*Resp.* 368e-369a). This proposal enables Socrates to embark on the construction of the just city, and, consequently, for Plato to provide an extended piece of political and moral philosophising.

Socrates begins by constructing a city using two main principles: First, that people are not individually self-sufficient; second, that people are naturally suited to different jobs. The citizens, therefore, will work best by meeting certain needs of others and having others, in turn, meet certain needs of theirs (*Resp.* 369b-371e). Although Socrates states that this city will include a range of occupations including craftsmen, retailers and tradesmen, there is an underlying theme of simplicity: the citizens dress simply, eat simply, and are housed simply (*Resp.* 372a-b). In doing so, and by regulating reproduction, Socrates argues that this city will be able to avoid both poverty and war (*Resp.* 372c).

Before Socrates can proceed any further and examine the city with a view to justice, Glaucon objects, describing the city as fit only for pigs and lacking in conventional luxuries (*Resp.* 372c-e). In the passage that follows, Socrates describes how the process of accommodating such desires leads to the enlargement of the city. It will not be long before

the citizens will need to seize neighbouring land to meet the pressures of feeding the increased population and this is the origin of war (*Resp.* 372e-373e).

Although Socrates describes the city at this point as luxurious and fevered, stating that the former is the true, healthy city, he refuses to say whether he believes the effects of war to be either good or bad, and states only that warfare itself originates in, ‘the same factors that cause the greatest evil for cities and men’, namely desire (*Resp.* 373e). Later, he will optimistically suggest that the expression of this desire can be dramatically curtailed. The strict course prescribed for the education of the city’s guardians will ‘unwittingly re-purify’ the city, which was initially described as luxurious (*Resp.* 399e cf. 372c-373c). For now though, Socrates allows Glaucon’s objection to stand, and proceeds in earnest with the discussion of the luxurious city. As the debate continues to unfold, it becomes apparent that the social and political development of the city is made essentially in response to, and with regards to, this seemingly inescapable condition of war.

Socrates’ response to the advent of warfare is to have the city institute guardians. This concept is introduced innocuously, but the centrality of the guardian ideal to Socrates’ thinking quickly becomes apparent. The presence of war means that the city needs to be enlarged to incorporate an army. Following the principle of occupational specialisation, which has already been established, soldiering cannot be a part-time concern (*Resp.* 373e-374d). Where this occupation is identified for the first time as belonging to the guardians, Socrates argues that it is in fact the most important occupation in the city, requiring the most freedom, the most craft, and the most practice; it also requires a person of a suitable nature (*Resp.* 374e).

Socrates initially focuses on the prerequisite spirit, strength, and courage of the guardians, drawing comparison between the ‘noble hound’ and the ‘well-bred youth’ (*Resp.* 374e-375b). But this in turn raises a problem: ‘With natures like this how will [the

guardians] avoid behaving like savages to one another and the citizens?’ (*Resp.* 375b). Socrates feigns being at a loss, but then introduces the final demand that the guardians must also possess philosophical natures, a love of learning that will ensure that they can balance the need for gentleness with the need for violence. As Socrates concludes, ‘philosophy, then, and spirit, speed and strength as well, must all be combined in the nature of anyone who is going to be a really fine and good guardian of our city’ (*Resp.* 376c). This is the nature that the guardians must have at the outset; their education builds on this prerequisite foundation.

In one way or another, the remainder of Books II to VII are consumed with the lives of Kallipolis’ army of guardians, and they culminate in Socrates’ call for the institution of philosopher-kings. Having outlined the prerequisite guardian nature, Socrates proceeds to examine how the guardians’ spirited and courageous elements should be properly developed. As will become clear, Socrates imagines a distinction not only in the individual guardians’ natures, but also within the guardian class collectively in their capacity for philosophical reason. The discussion begins with the guardians’ cultural education. From birth, music, poetry and stories will be censored so that future guardians will only imitate courageous and temperate examples (*Resp.* 376d-403c). During this extended passage, Socrates reiterates the point that this education is specifically designed for the raising of soldiers; it is clear that a driving demand is that of military application (*Resp.* 398b). Next, Socrates deals with physical training, proposing a regime similar in nature to the simple cultural education already described, and again he emphasises that its primary requirement is to be useful for warriors (*Resp.* 404b). Socrates states that this physical training needs to be refined in a way that makes the guardians like, ‘sleepless hounds’, with a robust health that is able to withstand the variations and demands of war; the guardians are to eat and train simply and rigorously for ‘complexity engenders intemperance’ (*Resp.* 403c-405a).

The need for harmony between these two educational systems is emphasised, in order that the guardians become neither ‘feeble warriors’ by neglecting the physical, nor savage, like ‘wild beasts’, by neglecting the cultural (*Resp.* 410c-412a).

Book III concludes by dividing the guardian class into the complete-guardians who rule, and the auxiliary-guardians who support. I believe that this is the first real indication of the army’s implicit command-structure, as I will discuss below (*Resp.* 412b-417b; Ch.1.4). Socrates then advocates the so-called Myth of the Metals as a means to convince the citizens that this now tripartite social structure is in fact divinely ordained (*Resp.* 414b-415c).

Focus on the lives of the guardians continues into Book IV where Socrates discusses their happiness, how they will be able to fend off larger, richer armies, the importance of education, and, finally, the role of religion at Kallipolis (*Resp.* 419a-427). Proclaiming the city founded, Socrates moves to examine civic justice as a parallel for psychic justice. The army remains an integral part of the argument, as it is the auxiliary-soldiers who contribute the courageous component of the city’s composite virtue, and who provide the appropriate analog for the courageous part of a person’s soul (*Resp.* 429b; 440d-e). The prevalence of military references throughout the discussion seems clearly motivated by a link in Plato’s thought between justice, morality, and participation in the army.

At the start of Book V, Socrates is ready to proceed to a discussion of constitutions and characters, but he is restrained by Adeimantus and Polemarchus who implore him to develop further his comments on the guardians’ lives, particularly the notion of holding everything, including women and children, in common (*Resp.* 449b-c). This digression from the dialogue’s central argument lasts until Book VII, and covers several topics of importance to this thesis which include: the role of the female guardians in the city and the

army; the raising of children with a view to military participation; and an extended and insightful passage on the conduct of warfare itself (*Resp.* 451c-471e).

At the end of Book V, Socrates makes his infamous call for philosophers to become rulers, or rulers to become philosophers, and Books VI to VII are occupied with the guardians' higher education. Even here, warfare remains an ongoing concern to Socrates' argument. He relates this education to practical, military applications, and he states explicitly that philosophy, 'must not be useless to warlike men' (*Resp.* 521d-526d). Furthermore, in the selection of those suitable for a higher education, Socrates draws his candidates exclusively from the ranks of the auxiliary-soldiers (*Resp.* 535a-541b). This narration continues into Book VIII, where Socrates concludes that for the city to be, 'eminently well governed', the kings must be those who have proven best in both philosophy and war, and that as, 'athletes of war and guardians', they deserve to be supported by the rest of the city (*Resp.* 534a-b).

This marks a return to the original argument for justice that covers Book VIII and most of Book IX, with Socrates providing a series of vignette comparisons between increasingly bad forms of constitution, and their corresponding human characters. Each vignette mentions war, at least in passing, and provides detail that will inform subsequent chapters. The final vignette is of the completely unjust tyrant, which serves to show just how much happier the just life is (*Resp.* 571a-576d). Book IX ends with two further arguments in favour of justice; the first appealing to Socrates' theory of the soul, and the second to his theory of pleasure (*Resp.* 580d-583b; 583b-588a).

The dialogue itself concludes in Book X with a final attack on poetry that builds on the points raised in Book III, and with further appeals to the value of justice in this life and the next. Homer is banished from the city, partly on the basis that although he speaks of war and generalship, no war was ever fought well due to his leadership or advice; he is an

imitator at a third remove from the truth with no role in the guardians' education (*Resp.* 599b-e). The centrality of warfare to the *Republic* is maintained to the end, and it seems no coincidence that the *Republic's* concluding myth is focused on the Pamphylian soldier Er, and his experience of the afterlife following a brave death on the battlefield (*Resp.* 614b-621b).

3. Plato's Military Participation and Experience

The evidence for Plato's participation in and experience of war falls into two categories: That which is specifically attested to in the literary record and that which can be reasonably deduced from a combination of Plato's known biographical details and evidence from the wider historical record. In this section, I will offer a tentative account of Plato's life to the time of the Corinthian War incorporating both categories of information. The purpose of this section is to provide a point of reference for subsequent chapters where discussion will often allude to common points of historical context. I also intend to supplement my argument above that warfare is an important consideration for the text by arguing that warfare is an important consideration for Plato's life more generally, a point that has been largely neglected by modern scholarship.¹

Plato was born at some point during the Archidamian War (431-421 BC), although exactly when, both sources and scholars disagree.² At an age when Plato would have been

¹ Even the works on Plato and/or the *Republic* that do include some sort of biography omit, almost without exception, any mention of Plato's military participation. For just a few examples see Annas (1981), pp.5-7; Pappas (1995), pp.3-9; Sayers (1999), pp.1-4; Klosko (2006), p.134; Purshouse (2006), pp.1-3; Barrow (2007), pp.3-7.

² The traditional date accepted by the majority of scholars, and described variously as 'beyond doubt' and 'certain' is 428/7 BC; see Bosanquet (1895), p.1; Burnet (1950), p.206; Gomperz (1964), p.250; Davies (1971), p.33; Guthrie (1975), p.427; Thesleff (1982), p.21; Waterfield (1994), p.xii; Sayers (1999), p.1; Ferrari (2000), p.xxxviii; Lee (2003), p.xiii; Schofield (2006), p.14. The main evidence cited in support of this claim is that Diogenes Laertius has Plato's pupil Hermodorus state that when Plato left for Megara after Socrates' death in 399 BC, he was twenty-eight years old (Diog. Laert. 2.106; 3.6). An alternative date suggested by the mid-third century BC writer Neanthes of Cyzicus, and also recorded by Diogenes, is 429/8

old enough to take notice of contemporary events, Athens attacked the island of Melos and, according to Thucydides, put to death all the adult males of military age, enslaving the women and children (Thuc. 5.84.1-116.1).³ The morality of this action was debated prominently and publically at Athens, and did not sit comfortably with thinkers such as Thucydides, for whom Athens' subsequent change in fortune was seen as connected.⁴ Indeed, the question of how to treat fellow Greek enemies properly is one that comes to the

BC; however, this suggestion has been convincingly rejected as an attempt to both synchronise Plato's birth with the year of Pericles' death and to give Plato the Apolline life-span of eighty-one years; Diog. Laert. 3.2; Davies (1971), p.333. Although the former is clearly the more plausible of the two, the fact that both these dates depend on the evidence of Diogenes is itself problematic. Burnet perhaps goes too far when he argues that Diogenes' *Lives* should be regarded as almost 'entirely mythical', containing only, 'one or two stray facts derived from older sources', but his conclusion that it is safer to approach Diogenes from a starting point of scepticism seems valid; Burnet (1950), p.205. A more recent, and I believe a more convincing suggestion, is that Plato was actually born later, in 424/3 BC; Nails (2002), pp.243-247. The primary evidence for this assertion is found in Plato's *Letter VII*, a text generally considered to be more reliable than Diogenes', which some assert to be Plato's own work (see for example Burnet (1950), p.205; Thesleff (1982), p.21; Kahn (1996), p.59; Sayers (1999); p.1; Monoson (2000), p.119; Nails (2002), p.246), although there is still some debate. Schofield, while agreeing that the text is stylistically identical to Plato's later work, nevertheless argues that cross-references with passages from the *Republic* have a suspiciously forced and self-conscious feel to them, striking what he describes as a distinctly 'false note', and evidencing an overly deliberate attempt to mimic Plato's writing; Schofield (2006), pp.15-6. Ultimately, Guthrie's summary of this issue seems to address what I consider to be the most pertinent point: whether or not the work is Plato's own, its historical value remains as even critics agree that the letter must have been composed by one of Plato's immediate disciples; Guthrie (1975), p.8 cf. Annas (1981), p.5; Thesleff (1982), p.27. In the key passage from *Letter VII*, drawn upon by supporters of the later birth-date hypothesis, Plato, or someone writing as Plato, states: 'In the days of my youth, my experience was the same as that of many others. I thought that as soon as I should become my own master I would immediately enter into public life. But it so happened, I found, that the following changes occurred in the political situation. In the government then existing, reviled as it was by many, a revolution took place [...] Thirty were established as irresponsible rulers of all' (Plato *Letters* 7.324b-d, trans. Bury). Plato's twentieth birthday, the age at which an Athenian citizen became 'his own master', occurred in the same year as the rise of the Thirty, namely 404 BC. Plato's birth can thus be dated to 424/3 BC; Nails (2002), p.246.

³ Nevertheless, and as Xenophon makes clear, this cannot have been carried out as comprehensively as Thucydides reports as there are accounts of the resettlement of Melian survivors (*Hell.* 2.2.9 cf. Plutarch *Lysander* 14.3).

⁴ Note the deliberate location of the Melian Debate directly before the Sicilian Expedition in Thucydides' narrative. It is also worth comparing Thucydides' account of the Melian Debate with that of the Mytilenian Debate. In response to Cleon's demand to put the entire Mytilenian adult male population to death for revolting from Athens (even though, as Thucydides points out, they were technically not a subject state), Thucydides has Diodotus state that, 'insolence and pride of wealth nourish ambition' and drive men to conflict (Thuc. 3.45.4). Although Diodotus is explicitly referring to the actions of the Mytilenians, there seems to be some implicit commentary on the likes of Cleon, whose ambitiousness and rejection of traditional values represented an increasing trend amongst prominent Athenian politicians (Thuc. 5.89.1). There is perhaps here some criticism of the imperialistic actions of Athens herself. Evidence for a perceived regression of traditional agonism in the face of an encroaching spirit of *pleonexia* is found in the changing justifications offered in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* for Athens' actions. In Book I, the Athenian delegation to Sparta tells of a three-fold motivation for acquiring and holding its empire: 'security, honour and self-interest' (Thuc. 1.75.3). Sixteen years later during the Melian Dialogue, honour has dropped out of the equation; self interest is to the fore (Thuc. 5.90.1); Hall (2007), p.105.

fore for Greek thinkers at this time, and the issue is given significant attention in the *Republic* (*Resp.* 468a-471e).⁵

Athens' involvement at Melos indicates something of a shift during the Classical Period in the nature of Greek warfare. Following the Persian Wars, and particularly into the late fifth century BC, conflict became, as Raaflaub puts it, 'a permanent feature, ubiquitous, brutal and increasingly total'.⁶ This change seems to have effected a kind of scarring on the corporate consciousness, evidenced in the writings of contemporary Athenian intellectuals at least, who began increasingly to explain the origins of warfare in terms of *pleonexia*, an immoderate desire to acquire possessions and wealth (see *Resp.* 372d; 373d-e; *Pol.* 1267a4; *Hell.* 5.16-18).⁷ This challenge to conceptions of traditional morality, and to the importance of *sophrosyne*, self-control, was clearly of concern to Plato, and a subject to which he directs substantial thought. It is addressed explicitly in his *Gorgias*, where the character Callicles states that it is 'right' for the superior to dominate and possess more than the weaker (*Grg.* 483d), and also in the *Republic*, where the character Thrasymachus claims that justice is nothing more than the interests of the stronger (*Resp.* 338e-343d). Although the reasoning behind these two positions differs, both evidence a concern amongst contemporary Athenian moralists that traditional thinking about ethics and values, both on the private and civic levels, was breaking down.

⁵ One may speculate as to a connection between Plato and Melos in that Alcibiades, while not one of the generals directly involved in the city's destruction, was a prominent and key supporter of the decree to kill and enslave the Melian population (Plutarch *Alcibiades* 16.4). Alcibiades was a source of independent interest to Plato because of his relationship with Socrates, and one can see Plato in the *Symposium*, for example, attempting to exonerate Socrates of any blame for Alcibiades' notoriously immoral behaviour (*Symp.* 212c-223d).

⁶ Raaflaub (2007), p.25 cf. Klosko (2006), p.2.

⁷ On this topic see Cross and Woosley (1971), pp.87-8; Klosko (2006), pp.2-9. *Pleonexia* is translated variously as 'greediness, grasping, assumption, arrogance'; see Liddell and Scott (1889), p.645. The concept is first discussed in the *Republic* in the discussion with Thrasymachus, and it is defined as trying to get more than is fair, the opposite of conventionally moral behaviour (*Resp.* 343a). According to Plato, *pleonexia* arises when the appetitive part of the mind dominates, and must be addressed by allowing reason to rule; see *Resp.* 442a; 562b; 586b; Waterfield (1993), p.lx. In Book I, *pleonexia* is presented as the underlying cause of *adikia*, wrongdoing; Bosanquet (1895), p.23; Keyt (2006), pp.353. It is interesting to note that one of the two definitions of justice, *diakaiosune*, offered by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* is that justice is the opposite of *pleonexia* (*EN* 1129a4-1130a13).

The year after the Melos episode, Athens sent its military forces on a disastrous expedition to Sicily. In the subsequent years, with revenue from the silver mines cut following the slave-miner revolt, and the Spartan fortification at Decelea resulting in food-shortages, the Athenians were placed under intense economic and political pressures culminating in the oligarchic coup of 411 BC. The shock destruction of the Athenian forces in Sicily in 413 BC and the communal grief and widespread hardships at Athens were likely felt by Plato, now in his late pre-teenage years.⁸ The influence of war, and perhaps more pertinently, the importance of military success to the welfare, and indeed survival, of a city-state, formed a major part of the historical context of Plato's youth.

At some point in the latter stages of the Peloponnesian War, Plato reached military-age, and it has been suggested that he would have undertaken some form of military training, mustering, maintaining gear, and perhaps fighting in isolated skirmishes within the limits of Attica, as was common for Athenian males at this time.⁹ Even before this age, male Athenian youth were required to perform garrison and sentry duties, and it is more than likely that Plato would have had some direct contact with warfare in this capacity prior to 404 BC.¹⁰ It has also been suggested that Plato may have fought at Arginusae in 406 BC.¹¹ Athens' navy was so desperate for manpower at this point in the war that even slaves and metics were promised Athenian citizenship to fight, a totally unprecedented move.¹² In this context of mass, bordering on total, mobilisation of the Athenian adult male population, it would be unsurprising if Plato either fought at Arginusae, or was engaged in service elsewhere in the Aegean.¹³

⁸ Pomeroy, Burstein, Donlan and Tolbert-Roberts (1999), p.306; Shorey (1933), p.4.

⁹ Shorey (1933), p.5.

¹⁰ Gomperz (1964), p.253. On this practice see van Wees (2004), p.94.

¹¹ Shorey (1933), p.5.

¹² Athenian abhorrence at this action seems to have directly contributed to the prosecution of the generals following the battle; see Hunt (2001), pp.361-380.

¹³ Nails supports Shorey's line of reasoning, asserting that if Plato was older than twenty at this stage, which, following the traditional dating, he would have been, then it is almost certain that he would have fought at Arginusae, or at least have been on active service elsewhere; Nails (2002), p.245. However, Nails

The Athenian fleet was totally destroyed at Aegospotami in 405 BC, and Athens finally surrendered in 404 BC. The Thirty Tyrants took control of Athenian politics with Spartan support, the awful consequences of which are recorded by Aristotle, who writes:

At first, then, they were moderate towards the citizens and pretended to be administering the ancestral form of constitution. But when they got a firmer hold on the state, they kept their hands off none of the citizens, but put to death those of outstanding wealth or birth or reputation, intending to put that source of danger out of the way, and also desiring to plunder their estates; and by the end of a brief interval of time they had made away with not fewer than fifteen hundred. (*Ath. Pol.* 35.2-4).

In this historical context, the importance of military prowess for the wellbeing of the city-state must have been evident to all Athenian citizens, including the politically aware Plato.¹⁴

With regards to Plato's post-404 BC individual experience of warfare, it seems quite certain that he did serve as a combatant in one or more of Athens' early-fourth century BC conflicts. Primary evidence is found in two sources: Diogenes, who states that Plato fought at Tanagra, Corinth, and Delium; and Aelian, who omits Delium.¹⁵ Diogenes' mention of the battle of Delium, fought in 424 BC, seems to be the result of combining references to the lives of Socrates and Plato, and can be reasonably discounted.¹⁶ The references to Tanagra and Corinth probably date to 395 BC and 394 BC (or perhaps 391 BC)

proceeds to argue for a later dating of Plato's birth that would make him eighteen in 406 BC, and the question of his participation at Arginusae is not returned to, although the implicit conclusion seems to be that he was not. However, I would suggest that if the Athenians were prepared at this point to offer citizenship to slaves, then they would not have hesitated to send able bodied eighteen year-old citizens to the conflict either, and if Diogenes is to be believed, then there is every indication that Plato was a very physically able youth; Diog. Laert. 3.5.

¹⁴ See Plato *Letters* 7.324b-d.

¹⁵ Diog. Laert. 3.8; Aelian *Various Histories* 7.14.

¹⁶ Thesleff (1982), p.27.

respectively, and the argument that Plato fought at Corinth, at least, has found general scholarly consensus.¹⁷

The origins of the Corinthian War lay in the tensions between Sparta and the states that had supported her during the Peloponnesian War, especially Corinth and Thebes. These tensions escalated after 404 BC in the wake of Spartan belligerence and resentment on the part of its allies at what was seen as Sparta's failure to share properly the spoils of victory.¹⁸ When the Spartan King Agesilaus led an expedition to Ionia in 398 BC, the satrap Pharnabazus responded by encouraging a coalition of anti-Spartan states including Thebes, Corinth, Argos, and Athens, precipitating the war, which was fought in two main stages: 395-394 BC and 391-388 BC (*Hell.* 3.5.1-2). A key battle in the first stage was the Battle of Nemea fought at Corinth in 394 BC, the largest hoplite battle of its time. The Athenians alone numbered six thousand and, according to Diodorus, almost four thousand Greeks were killed (*Hell.* 4.2.16-23; *Diod. Sic.* 14.23.2).

In the following years, conflict in the Greek world was continuous and far-ranging. Chabrias and Iphicrates came to the fore as prominent Athenian generals and made extensive use of non-hoplite, mercenary soldiers.¹⁹ Thrasybulus was similarly active in the Aegean on the naval front, attempting to rebuild Athens' former empire in the face of both Spartan and Persian opposition. Sparta put pressure on Athens directly, coordinating attacks from Aegina on Attic territory, which included a morale destroying raid by the Spartan commander Teleutias in 388 BC on the Piraeus itself (*Hell.* 5.1.20). In 387 BC, the Spartan commander Antalcidas, supported by the Persian king Artaxerxes, offered peace terms to the Athenians. Through naval and political manoeuvrings, Antalcidas was able to consolidate his naval power in the Aegean, threaten Athens' corn supply, and bring about the so-called King's Peace, sworn at Sparta in 386 BC. A key point to note is that, as with

¹⁷ Shorey (1933), p.6; Thesleff (1982), p.27; Guthrie (1975), p.14; Nails (2002), p.245.

¹⁸ Seager (1994a), pp.97-100.

¹⁹ Pritchett (1974), pp.77-116.

the Peloponnesian War previously, it was the loss of naval power resulting in a threat to supply lines that effectively ended the war. With such firm historical precedents, a prominent literary affirmation by Thucydides (Thuc.1.16.1), and in consideration of his comments in the *Laws*, Plato must have appreciated the need for naval power, which is remarkable considering his total neglect of the subject in the *Republic* (Ch.3.3).

In addition to Plato's direct, personal experience of war, which has been suggested above, there is the indirect impact of warfare on Plato's life through the experiences of family and friends. To mention a few key examples, Plato's brothers, Glaucon and Adeimantus, are praised in the *Republic* for their conduct at the Battle of Megara in 424 BC (*Resp.* 368a). Plato's mentor Socrates fought at Potidaea in 432 BC where, Plato records, he rescued a wounded Alcibiades, as well as at Delium in 424 BC, where he showed such composure in the retreat as to save all his companions (*Symp.* 219e-221c). After the Peloponnesian War, the cousin of Plato's mother, Critias, and his uncle, Charmides, were killed at the Battle of Munychia in the defeat of the Thirty Tyrants (*Hell.* 2.4.1).²⁰ Theaetetus, a known associate of Plato, and a fellow student of Socrates, was mortally wounded at Corinth in 391 BC, perhaps, as has been suggested, fighting alongside Plato himself.²¹

Warfare is prominent in the *Republic*, a fact that should be viewed in light of Plato's personal and communal experiences. When he wrote the *Republic*, Plato was neither a stranger to warfare, nor the effects on its participants. However, it is not possible to infer from these conclusions any particular interest in the subject by Plato, only a degree of experience and awareness. Indeed, my argument is not that Plato's thought generally, and in the *Republic* specifically, is dominated by military concerns, which is patently untrue. Philosophy clearly held this position, and there is a host of other subjects whose

²⁰ Buck (1998), p.79. For the relationship between Socrates, Critias and Charmides see Plato *Charmides*; Xenophon *Symposium* 1.3; *Hell.* 3.6.1; 3.7.1.

²¹ Nails (2002), pp.274-278.

importance to the text is considerable including poetry, rhetoric, government, mathematics and education. The point I wish to emphasise is simply that when Plato discusses warfare and the army, whatever his purposes may be, he is not starting from a position of ignorance. As a result, I suggest that one may reasonably take the large number of passages in the *Republic* that *do* discuss warfare and attempt to see how Plato is engaging on the subject with both his military context and personal experiences.

4. Dating the *Republic*: Composition and Military Context

It is important now to add some comment on the dating of the *Republic*. Although Schofield rightly asserts that this question cannot be answered with any real accuracy, the topic is important as it provides a *terminus ante quem* for the influence of historical events on Plato's thought.²² Because of the difficulties surrounding this issue, and in appreciation of the fact that a suitably full discussion would far exceed both the scope and focus of this present work, my approach here will be conservative.

To begin, it is reasonably certain that the *Republic* dates to Plato's middle period, and to some point between his first Sicilian visit in 389-387 BC, and his second visit in 366 BC, when the text, in some form, was already known to his associates.²³ Amongst scholars, there seems to be a consensus that the *Republic* was composed somewhere between 380 BC and 370 BC. To list some key examples: Kraut suggests the 380s or 370s BC; Kahn, 380-370 BC; Reeve, *circa* 380 BC; Schofield, the mid- to late-370s BC; Jaeger, 375-370 BC; and Guthrie, 374 BC.²⁴ Even Thesleff, whose work indulges in significant speculation, nevertheless agrees that the *Republic* was written in something approaching

²² Schofield (2000), p.199.

²³ Schofield (2000), p.199. For the co-location of this dialogue with other middle period works using stylistic similarities see Young (1998), pp.29-49.

²⁴ Kraut (1997), p.vii; Kahn (1996), p.59; Reeve (2004), p.ix; Schofield (2000), p.199; Jaeger (1944), p.329; Guthrie (1975), p.437.

its present form in the mid-370s BC.²⁵ As far as determining the latest possible date of composition goes, I follow Jaeger's argument that the *Republic* is unlikely to have been written after the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BC.²⁶ Although Plato's comments on Sparta display an appreciation for the weakness of its educational system (see especially *Resp.* 548b), he is far less critical of Sparta than post-Leuctra commentators such as Aristotle (see *Pol.* 1269a29-1271b14).

In light of these comments, I suggest that it is important to cover briefly the military context immediately surrounding the composition of the *Republic*. Although no evidence suggests Plato's direct involvement in conflict after the Corinthian War, because of Plato's involvement in Sicily, his awareness of contemporary events attested to in the *Republic* (see *Resp.* 496a-e), and in consideration of the many students at the Academy who went on to live public lives, it is improbable that Plato composed the *Republic* totally oblivious to the more significant events of his historical context traced below.²⁷

From 386 BC, Sparta set about punishing allies who had been disloyal during the recent conflict. The Spartan occupation of Thebes in 382 BC is perhaps the most infamous action, but notable too is Sparta's involvement in Olynthus in 379 BC, which both Xenophon and Diodorus judge the height of Spartan power (*Hell.* 5.3.27; *Diod. Sic.* 15.23.2). Sparta's actions during this period were in direct violation of the terms of the King's Peace, and they have been described as evidencing a 'single-minded pursuit of

²⁵ Thesleff (1982), p.138. Thesleff suggests Plato's remark in *Republic* Book VII, that the philosopher-kings need to have reached the age of fifty to rule the city, has a distinctly self-conscious feel to it, arguing that this passage must have been written not long after 377 BC when Plato himself reached the age of fifty. Following the revised birth date hypothesis, this line of reasoning would give an amended composition date of sometime soon after 373 BC. Thesleff also suggests that Plato's commentary on Greek versus Greek conflict in *Republic* Book V actually refers to the internal Greek warfare of 374 BC. Both of these suggestions, however, are entirely speculative. Even by Thesleff's own admission, the 374 BC connection is dubious, and there was obviously no shortage of Greek versus Greek warfare that Plato could have had in mind when writing this section of the *Republic*.

²⁶ Jaeger (1944), p.329.

²⁷ Socrates' anguish at the present state of public affairs is widely read as Plato's own commentary on his contemporary society: one can see the author wrestling with a far from perfect reality, not simply abstract ideals; see Thesleff (1982), pp.138; 185 cf. Nails (2002), p.248.

power and military resources'.²⁸ The rejection of conventional norms for a 'law of the jungle' style, 'might is right' approach to foreign affairs certainly resonates with Platonic characters, such as Callicles and Thrasymachus, as discussed above (Intro. §.3). Again, it is tempting to suggest a link between the historical context of Plato's literary composition and the content of these works, although such attitudes are evidenced in responses to earlier historical events, such as Thucydides' account of the Athenians at Melos (Thuc. 5.84.1-116.1). In any case, it seems important to re-emphasise that in this historical context, military might was key to the safety and wellbeing of the state, a point that is brought to the fore in the *Republic*. This context may also go some way to explaining the prominence of Sparta and Spartan ideology in the argument of the text.

Later, in 379 BC, Athenian forces assisted in the Theban reoccupation of the Cadmea and the overthrow of the Spartan garrison located there. The Spartans retaliated with an expedition of their own, and established Sphodrias as the Spartan governor in Boeotia. Sphodrias' failed attempt to seize the Piraeus provoked Athens, which since the King's Peace had followed a somewhat conservative foreign policy.²⁹ In 378 BC, the Second Athenian Confederacy was established with the aid of Chios, Byzantium, Rhodes, Mytilene, possibly Methymna, and later in the year Thebes as well.³⁰ According to Diodorus, by 373 BC the total number of members had risen to seventy (Diod. Sic. 15.30.2).³¹ This league, led by the general Chabrias, defeated Sparta at Naxos in 377 BC and, in the wake of successive Athenian victories, a peace treaty was signed between Athens, Thebes and Sparta.³² Conflict continued, however, until the defeat of Sparta at Leuctra in 371 BC. Although exactly when the *Republic* was written is unclear, the best

²⁸ Seager (1994b), p.161.

²⁹ Pomeroy, Burstein, Donlan and Tolbert-Roberts (1999), p.338.

³⁰ Seager (1994b), pp.166-7.

³¹ Seager (1994b), p.170.

³² Pomeroy, Burstein, Donlan and Tolbert-Roberts (1999), p.339.

estimates put the date somewhere within this period of competing hegemonic alliances, the resurgence of Athenian imperial power, and the ongoing professionalisation of armies.

CHAPTER ONE: THE IMPORTANCE OF WARFARE TO KALLIPOLIS' SOCIAL STRUCTURE

1. Introduction

Having summarised the importance of warfare to the argument of the *Republic* (Intro. §.2), I turn now to a fuller discussion of warfare's influence on the social structure of Kallipolis. This chapter is divided into three sections. First, I will discuss the importance of warfare to the evolution of the just city. I will argue that although warfare is presented as a manifestation of uncontrolled desire, it nevertheless indicates a yearning for sophistication and civilisation, the gratification of spiritual as opposed to simply bodily wants. It is this yearning that enables the creation of the guardian class and the philosopher-kings, and which allows justice to be realised on the civic level. Socrates' so-called 'true' and 'fevered' cities will be considered, and I will argue that both these cities are ultimately surpassed and preserved in the third city of Kallipolis; here warfare serves as a driving force in what is presented as a natural progression from corruption to perfection.

Second, I will discuss the positioning of the army within the social structure of Kallipolis, paying particular attention to the city's tripartite class division. Socrates' principle of occupational specialisation will be discussed, as too his justification for Kallipolis' evaluative social hierarchy. This section will introduce one of the key considerations of this thesis: The nature of the relationships between Kallipolis' army, its populace, and its rulers, and the importance of these relationships to the realisation of justice in the city. Unlike at Sparta, the relationship between Kallipolis' classes is characterised by harmony and cooperation, necessary conditions for the presence of

justice, a demand that explains why Socrates is so ready to employ deception to further this end. This section will also allow for a more informed discussion of the military hierarchy of Kallipolis' guardian class.

Third, I will consider the relationship between the guardian-rulers and the auxiliary-guardians specifically, and with reference to three key passages, I will suggest that the guardian-rulers are themselves hierarchically integrated into the army. As a consideration of the guardians' lives will show, the distinction between ruler and auxiliary is revealed over an extended period of time. In distinct periods of testing, introduced on the basis of age and aptitude, it is revealed that the guardians do not make up two completely distinguishable classes: as some progress, and as others are held back, there will be a significant overlap and mixing of characters and abilities. In this section I will pay substantial attention to Socrates' discussion of the education and selection process of the philosopher-kings in Book VII, and I will highlight the fact that at any one point in time there will be guardian-rulers, engaged in politics and the army, who possess rational abilities ordered in distinct, incremental levels. The participation of the guardian-rulers in the military throughout their lives is important for several reasons. It provides a clearer picture of the relationship between ruler and auxiliary, and it explains where the interaction between the classes occurs considering that the auxiliaries do not take an active part in the city's politics. What I suggest is the most important reason though, and this perhaps goes some way towards explaining the centrality of warfare to the guardian-rulers' lives, is that participation in the military promotes a paradigm of self-sacrifice which plays a pivotal role in the philosopher-kings' decision to return to rule for the city's sake, a point I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Two.

2. Warfare and the Origins of the Just City

The importance of warfare to the argument of the *Republic* becomes apparent in Book II where Socrates embarks on his examination of justice in the city. As I have noted, Socrates refuses to state whether the effects of war are either good or bad when he admits only that war itself originates in, ‘the same factors that cause the greatest evil for cities and men’, namely desire (*Resp.* 373e; Intro. §.2). This ambiguous statement seems to allow for the possibility of a city responding to warfare in a proper, healthy manner. Although warfare is presented as the manifestation of uncontrolled desire and the result of corruption in Socrates’ first city, previously described as both ‘healthy’ and ‘true’ (*Resp.* 372c-e), it is nevertheless the condition which allows for the creation of the guardian class and the philosopher-kings; essential components of the just city.

But these assertions are problematic. We may question, with justification, what to make of Socrates’ description of his second city as ‘fevered’ and ‘luxurious’. What assurance do we have that justice is able to be found in such a city? Is Socrates’ entire argument perhaps flawed from the outset? In this section, I will argue that Socrates’ first city is neither true nor healthy in any unqualified sense, and I will suggest that Plato himself did not believe otherwise. The aborted construction of the first city, depicted by Glaucon as fit only for pigs, does not constitute a failure as far as Socrates’ examination of justice is concerned. It serves as a preliminary stage in a larger programme where Plato can be seen progressively peeling back the layers to reveal his core argument. As such, I will suggest that Socrates’ second, ‘fevered’ city is also a layer Plato intends to peel away. The ideal city is, in fact, a third city, which results from purging the luxuriousness of the second city. In this process, warfare acts as a driving force pressing towards the attainment of the just city by providing the conditions necessary for its realisation.

To begin, it is important to address Socrates' description of his first city as 'true' and 'healthy' (*Resp.* 372c-e). If Plato really believes that warfare only arises due to the perversion of an ideal natural order, then this would seriously influence the way we read the role of warfare in the *Republic*. The army would be nothing more than a necessary evil, and one might expect Socrates to angle his argument towards eventually abandoning, or at the very least minimising, its usage. As it is, I believe there are inherent problems with Socrates' first city because of which Plato would have his readers ultimately reject the first city as any kind of ideal.

Socrates describes his first city as 'true' and 'natural', and in one sense it is. The city is organised along the principle of occupational specialisation. People are naturally born with different aptitudes, and in this first city they attend the occupation to which they are naturally suited. The first city is also natural in the basic sense of the word. As stated, the citizens live simply in terms of habitation, nutrition, and cultural endeavours; because of this they are able to avoid both poverty and war (*Resp.* 372c; Intro. §.2). However, an immediate problem causes Glaucon's strong objection: There is no consideration of more sophisticated, civilized culture. When Glaucon calls this city fit only for pigs, it is important to realise that he is appealing to a Greek symbol of ignorance, not of greed as a modern audience might assume (see *Resp.* 535d).¹ What Glaucon is actually saying is that the citizens of this first city are ignorant of the correct way to live as civilised human beings. Although satisfying some natural needs, this city may be described more correctly as 'sub-natural', rather than natural, as it satisfies only the lowest demands of human nature.² So much for Glaucon; yet there is reason to suggest that Socrates, and ultimately Plato, agree.

¹ Burnyeat (1999), p.231.

² A suggestion made by Rosen (2005), p.81.

Noticeably absent from this first city are the checks and balances that would prevent the citizens sliding into the kind of avaricious behaviour Socrates presents as both the cause of warfare and ‘the greatest evil for both cities and men’ (*Resp.* 373e). There are no guardians, no philosophers, no rulers, no army, and no government. I believe this point speaks to the inherent infeasibility of the first city; a point the *Republic’s* audience is intended to appreciate. The first city seems to rely on the guiding agency of nature herself to balance the city’s private and public interests and, as experience and reason demonstrate, this is a totally inadequate measure.³ It is typical for humans, having satisfied basic needs, to turn towards the satisfaction of larger and more complex ones. As Socrates presents it in the *Republic*, this is an entirely natural process. What is ‘unnatural’, in the basic sense of the word, is to restrain these impulses on the basis of anything approaching altruistic considerations.⁴ Philosophy at the level of the individual, and philosophical governance at the level of the state, provide the braking mechanisms to restrain these natural and potentially destructive processes; but they seem to have no place in Socrates’ first city. As Brown says, the porcine city is a no-where utopia: it is ruled by appetite, not reason, and it will inevitably follow the course of corruption Socrates traces.⁵

It is also important to note a problem with Socrates’ assertion that such a state would actually be able to avoid both war and poverty (*Resp.* 372c). Even if this first city managed by some miracle to stay true to its simplistic foundations, there is no explanation for how the citizens would protect themselves from external enemies and avoid exile, confiscation of territory, enslavement, or death. In his discussion of the luxurious city, Socrates makes

³ Bloom (1991), p.356.

⁴ See Morrison (2007), p.251. This point is illustrated by Calicles in Plato’s *Gorgias*. Calicles argues that laws are laid down by the weak masses in an attempt to restrain the stronger members of the community, who are naturally able to obtain the greater share. They do this so that, by restraining themselves as well as the stronger citizens, they will ultimately receive more for themselves than that to which they are naturally entitled (*Grg.* 483b-484a). This paradigm clearly falls short of the altruistic ideal of self-sacrifice that is so important to Plato’s thought in the *Republic*, as I will discuss below (Ch.2.5).

⁵ Brown (2003b), §.4.1.

it clear that both offensive and defensive wars will be fought as a result of immoderate desire for possessions (*Resp.* 373d). The first city does not exist in a vacuum but in a context of expanding, avaricious neighbours: not only wise governance, but also military force will be needed to ensure the city's survival (see Ch.3.3).

This point is reinforced by a consideration of Plato's historical context, in which the physical effects of warfare on a community could be severe. Athens, for example, in the second year of the Peloponnesian War, only two years before Plato was born, was struck by a plague that ran rampant due to the cramped war-time living conditions in the city. One estimate puts the total population loss at one-third of the original: the effects of this tragedy must still have been felt during Plato's formative years.⁶ War brought not only plague, but also hunger and famine, with the ravishing of crops and the cutting of food supplies a standard and devastating tactic of invading armies.⁷ The potential impact of war on a community is demonstrated clearly in the example of Thespieae. This city was razed by Xerxes after its defeat at Thermopylae (*Hdt.* 8.50.2); its walls were destroyed by Thebes following a massacre at Delium (*Thuc.* 4.93.4-4.96.3; 4.133.1); and, after suffering heavy losses at Leuctra (*Paus.* 9.13.8; 9.14.1), Thespieae was ultimately destroyed by Thebes and its inhabitants driven out of Boeotia (*Hell.* 6.3.1; *Diod. Sic.* 15.46).⁸ Several generations of military defeats weakened the Thespian army and left homes, families and farms vulnerable and exposed. As this example shows, the fate of entire communities could depend on the ability of their armies to protect them.

⁶ Buck (1998), p.8 n.4.

⁷ See, for example, Xenophon's description of the fate of Phlius at the hands of the Argives in *Hell.* 7.2.1-5. Recent scholars, such as Hanson, have challenged the view that Greek armies actually practised this ravishing of crops on a level that would have had any serious impact, often citing the example of Athens' ability to withstand the Spartan invasions as evidence; see Hanson (1998). However, this position is convincingly refuted by Thorne in his article 'Warfare and Agriculture', and he demonstrates that Athens' ability to withstand food shortages was due to her uniquely powerful naval position. As such, Athens was an exception rather than a rule; see Thorne (2007), pp.196-223 cf. Klosko (2006), p.7. In fact, the Peloponnesian War was ended by the Spartan siege of Athens in 405 BC following Lysander's naval victory in the Hellespont that cut off the Athenian corn supply, leading to starvation in the city and surrender in 404 BC; see Wilson (2006), p.549.

⁸ For further details of Thespieae see Smith (1857), p.1164; Hanson (1999), p.215.

Some scholars, however, disagree with the suggestion that philosophy and governance are absent in the first city. Rowe argues that although there is no explicit mention of philosophy in this first city, Socrates' apparent approval of its 'true' and 'healthy' nature, does imply that there will be.⁹ I find this proposal unconvincing for a number of reasons (not least of which is the uncertainty over the sincerity of Socrates' so-called approval, as I will discuss below). First, the citizens of the 'true' city are only motivated by self-interest of the lowest kind. Similar to the way in which Callicles caricatures his contemporaries in the *Gorgias*, the citizens of the porcine city seem to be limited to an appreciation that individual restraint in the context of a community is good only because it ensures a greater degree of personal gain (*Grg.* 483b-484a). Their desire is not for shared community in the expectation of the fulfilment of any higher social desires; it is for shared community to serve basic economic ends.¹⁰ As Socrates states, whenever a member of this community shares with another, whether they give or receive, they do so, 'because each believes that this is better for himself' (*Resp.* 369c). It certainly falls short of the Greek intellectual ideal, common to thinkers including Plato and Aristotle, that living a fully human life demands both communal existence and shared, rational discourse.¹¹

Further argument against the presence of philosophy in the first city is found in the fact that its crowning achievement is to establish a marketplace, retailers, and non-citizen wage-earners. Disconcertingly, it is at this point that Socrates calls the city complete and then moves towards an examination of the presence of justice (*Resp.* 371b-e). Like many contemporary aristocrats, Plato held business and trade in very low esteem, a point that is evident in his disregard of the productive classes after the establishment of the guardians. I find it improbable that Socrates would have considered it an implicit and obvious

⁹ Rowe (2007), p.44.

¹⁰ On this topic see Annas (1981), p.78; Benardete (1989), p.49; Bloom (1991), p.344; Purshouse (2006), p.37.

¹¹ Gill (1996), p.12. Consider, for example, Aristotle's famous assertion that man, by nature, is a 'political animal' (*Pol.* 1253a1).

conclusion that philosophy should be practiced in a community characterised by appetitive, economic motivations, particularly in light of the fact that he is later at pains to distinguish the appetitive element of the soul from the rational, philosophical one (*Resp.* 441c-442b). Furthermore, if the citizens of this first city did practice philosophy, Socrates' explanation for how the community would deteriorate to a state of feverishness and luxuriousness would be in need of considerably more explanation. I find it notable that nowhere does Socrates label the first city just, but instead he moves on readily to the consideration of his second city. As Rosen observes, the presence of philosophy in a city Socrates allows to be described as suitable only for ignorant pigs seems highly unlikely.¹²

So, having dismissed the first city as an ideal, one might rightly ask what Socrates' purpose was in proposing it at all. Annas' response is to state that this section adds nothing to the text except to introduce the principle of occupational specialisation.¹³ The importance of this principle to the *Republic's* argument is unquestionable, and will be discussed in more detail below (Ch.1.3). However, I would argue that there is more of relevance here than Annas suggests. The realisation that Socrates' first city will never work in reality, and the further realisation that this is because it lacks reason and wise governance, build forcefully into the rest of the debate.

A final suggestion for why Socrates discusses this first city as he does lies in the nature of his two interlocutors, Glaucon and Adeimantus. As scholars have pointed out, the austere conditions of the first city both mimic and appeal to Adeimantus' nature as characterised in the dialogue. Likewise, the relish with which Socrates elaborates and describes the peaceful, Golden Age-style lives led by citizens of the first city deliberately

¹² Rosen (2005), p.79 cf. Bloom (1991), p.346; Rowe (2007), p.4. I also find Pappas' argument that Socrates is forced to move from consideration of the ideal first city to the complex second city because the first is too simple and too perfect to study highly improbable, and not in need of further comment; see Pappas (1995), p.63.

¹³ Annas (1981), p.79.

provokes the spirited Glaucon to enter and engage fully in the discussion.¹⁴ Consistent with his practice throughout the Platonic dialogues, Socrates demonstrates the desire and ability to engage his audience in philosophical discourse. I suggest that this should cause us to question what Rowe describes as Socrates' 'sincere praise' of the first city.¹⁵

Socrates' second city, the one that develops from Glaucon's demands for a more civilized culture, is justly described as 'luxurious' and 'fevered' (*Resp.* 372e). It exhibits an unbridled appetite, the consequences of which are extrapolated by Socrates far beyond Glaucon's initial suggestions. The citizens will not only desire furniture, relishes and desserts, but eventually perfumes, prostitutes, pastries, gold, ivory, beauticians, barbers, and many other luxuries besides (*Resp.* 373a-c). The force of Socrates' listing picks up momentum as he goes on, giving the impression of a city spiralling out of control as it attempts to satisfy a rapidly expanding and insatiable appetite. It is at this point that the city decides to go to war 'to seize some of [its] neighbours' land' and, at the same time, is forced to defend itself against neighbours who have likewise 'abandoned themselves to the endless acquisition of money and overstepped the limit of their necessary desires' (*Resp.* 373d).¹⁶

This second city, however, is not the city to which Socrates will later turn to look for the presence of justice. The establishment of the guardian class in response to the requirements of war, a process whereby reason is introduced and developed, eventually results in the purging of the second, luxurious city and the creation of a third, just city, Kallipolis (*Resp.* 399e). However, it must be stressed that this is a process of purging, not

¹⁴ For this reading see Benardete (1989), p.51; Schofield (2000), p.211; Rosen (2005), p.80.

¹⁵ Rowe (2007), p.44.

¹⁶ See also Plato's middle-period work the *Phaedo*, where he writes: 'The body fills us with passions and desires and fears, and all sorts of fancies and foolishness, so that, as they say, it really and truly makes it impossible for us to think at all. The body and its desires are the only cause of wars and factions and battles; for all wars arise for the sake of gaining money, and we are compelled to gain money for the sake of the body' (Plato *Phaedo* 66b-e, trans. Fowler). On the subject of the link between war and bodily desires in Plato's thought see Schofield (2006), p.204.

simply replacing. As Reeve observes, Socrates' fevered city is both overcome and preserved in the just city; the same way in which the porcine city is overcome and preserved in the fevered city.¹⁷ The corruption of the former cities leads to the perfection of the latter.¹⁸ In the text, we can see Plato gradually unveiling his argument in a way that mirrors what he saw as a natural progression.

Morrison argues, correctly I believe, that Socrates' description of the first city at the point of Glaucon's interjection is incomplete.¹⁹ However, for reasons stated above, I disagree with Morrison's suggestion that the rest of the discussion is omitted. I argue that it makes more sense to see Socrates' discussion of the appetitive city, suitable only for pigs, as finding completion in the cities discussed subsequently. In the first city, Socrates presents an image of basic, appetitive desires in a true and natural community. But the desires that eventually corrupt the city belong to both the body and the soul; as Bloom observes, they evidence the beginnings of a desire to satisfy longings that yearn for something higher than the body does.²⁰ As discussed, Glaucon's dissatisfaction is with the ignorance of the citizens in the first city, who fail to appreciate that there is more to life than meeting the basic needs of provision and shelter. But the ideal of simple bodily appetites is preserved to a large extent in the guardians' materially basic lives (see *Resp.* 403c-405a; 416d-420a). Likewise in the fevered city, unbridled spiritedness is overcome by philosophical governance, but the spirited ideal finds its preservation when properly channelled into the institution of an auxiliary-army. The just city does not spring fully formed: it is the result of a process of natural development and progression working towards, not beginning with, the ideal.

¹⁷ Reeve (1988), pp.172-3. See also Brown (2003b), §.4.1.

¹⁸ Bloom (1991), p.346.

¹⁹ Morrison (2007), p.252.

²⁰ Bloom (1991), pp.345-7.

In the progression from corruption to perfection that gives birth to the just state, warfare holds a pivotal position. The advent of warfare is the final consequence of the untamed appetite and spirit of the fevered city. It is also the immediate justification for establishing the guardian class, which allows for the possibility of wise and rational rule. Warfare, therefore, is a very complex issue in Plato's thought; it seems to straddle an uneasy position between what is beneficial and what is not (cf. Ch.3.5). Jaeger reads this tension as evidence of Plato attempting to make the best of an imperfect historical situation. Faced with the inevitability of warfare, which, Jaeger argues, Socrates presents as an unwelcome disturbance to the original social order, Plato is forced to make do with focusing positive attention on the now indispensable warrior class.²¹ I find this conclusion rather pessimistic, and would suggest that there is evidence for warfare holding a more positive role in the *Republic's* argument.

As I have discussed above, the corruption of the porcine city is presented as a necessary development for the realisation of the just city, one that introduces first the presence of spirit, and then later reason. The key problem with the first city is that while it does meet the needs of the body, it does not allow for needs of the soul. The key improvement on the fevered city is that although it costs the body in war, it takes the first steps towards meeting higher desires of the soul; as Bloom argues, warfare is presented as a requirement for the realisation of true humanity.²² In any case, it must be stressed that Plato does not have Kallipolis develop independently from other city-states: neighbouring, fevered states are also imagined waging war in order to seize Kallipolis' property (*Resp.* 373d). The reality of external enemies does not change even in the just city (cf. Ch.3.3).

²¹ Jaeger (1944), p.208.

²² Bloom (1991), p.348 cf. Rosen (2005), p.80.

Ultimately, warfare serves the citizens as an important guarantor of their bodily and spiritual needs.²³

A final suggestion as to why warfare holds a positive role in the argument of the *Republic* concerns the concept of self-sacrifice. A key problem I raised above with Socrates' first city is that its conception of 'interest' is both self-focused and limited. The citizens are motivated by the desire to receive the biggest possible share for themselves; hence the focus on possessions, economics and trade. With the advent of warfare, the citizens are asked for the first time to sacrifice in a manner whereby their concept of 'interest' is seriously challenged: should they die on the battlefield, it is unclear what they would gain personally. Plato's concern with communal interest comes to the fore in the *Republic*. The so-called Noble Lie, for example, and the entire force of the guardian education is engineered to make the guardians care 'more for the city and more for each other' than for themselves as individuals (*Resp.* 415d). The importance of altruistic sacrifice reoccurs prominently in Book VII, where Plato argues that the philosophers will have to be compelled to rule. They will do so, however, out of concern for the community (*Resp.* 519e-520a; Ch.2.5).

3. Positioning the Army: The Social Structure of Kallipolis

It is on the topic of Kallipolis' social structure that the importance of warfare to Plato's argument is most evident: the guardian class, whose lives dominate the text, are instituted in direct response to the condition of war. In this section, I will begin by outlining what the *Republic* says about the organisation of social classes at Kallipolis. I will then discuss in further detail the divisions of both non-guardian from guardian, and complete-guardian

²³ A suggestion made by Rosen (2005), p.83.

from auxiliary-guardian. Finally, I will consider the interaction between these classes with reference to contemporary historical models, especially that of Sparta. This section will introduce one of the key considerations of this thesis: the nature of the relationships between Kallipolis' army, its populace, and its rulers, and the importance of these relationships to the realisation of justice in the city. In particular, I will examine how Plato transitions from his prescriptive principle of occupational specialisation, evident in the first city as division by function, to an evaluative, tripartite, social hierarchy. This will allow for a more informed discussion of the military hierarchy of Kallipolis' guardian class (Ch.1.4).

Two key principles initially underlie Socrates' thinking on the social structure of the ideal city: First, each person should perform only the task suitable to their nature; second, each citizen should have only the one job suitable to their natural aptitude in order to ensure that the job is done well, the idea of occupational specialisation (*Resp.* 374a-b). As discussed above, Socrates' first city is both overcome by, and preserved in, his second and third cities (Ch.1.2). The constituent members of Kallipolis' non-guardian class turn out to be those discussed in the examination of the first city and include the range of craftsmen, farmers, and merchants, essentially all occupations other than soldier or ruler (*Resp.* 369b-372c).²⁴

As with the manual crafts of the first city, fighting is introduced as a job for the luxurious city, and Socrates does not refer to its practitioners as soldiers, as previously those who farm have been called farmers, but as the class of guardians (*Resp.* 374b-d). The distinction is important because it anticipates an argument Socrates will develop further, the idea that a guardian's occupation differs from that of, say, a carpenter, in a completely different way from how a carpenter's, for example, differs to a shoemaker's. He also

²⁴ With the establishment of the guardian class following the introduction of war, discussion turns away from the working classes, who are only mentioned again by way of comparison with the guardians; their lives were clearly not of particular interest to Plato, or at least to his particular purposes in the *Republic*. On this topic see Annas (1981), p.176.

argues that the tasks of the guardian *qua* ruler and the guardian *qua* soldier, although united to some degree by the common theme of guardianship, do differ in a manner that approximates the difference between craftsman and guardian (*Resp.* 434b). Socrates concludes that meddling and exchange amongst these three classes is the worst evil that could befall a city (*Resp.* 434c). This point is reiterated towards the end of the work in the discussion of how a city like Kallipolis would degenerate to a timocracy, with Socrates stating that the intermixing of these classes always breeds war and hostility (*Resp.* 547a).

The social structure of Kallipolis finds its most explicit discussion in Book III, in the so-called Myth of the Metals, ‘a single, noble lie’ to persuade the citizens of the validity of Kallipolis’ three-tier ordering (*Resp.* 414c-415c). Each social class, and therefore each kind of occupation, is assigned a corresponding metal which, Socrates states, is fixed to a person’s nature before birth: Iron and bronze to the farmers and craftsmen; silver to the auxiliaries; gold to the rulers. Although metals generally run in families, an aristocratic ideal, Socrates is adamant they are not automatically inherited.²⁵ On occasion, a silver child will be born to a golden parent for example, or a silver child to an iron parent (*Resp.* 415a-b). Although Socrates presents this as a highly unlikely possibility, he states that should it occur, it is imperative for the city’s guardians to quickly reallocate the child to its appropriate class. Clearly, then, there is active scope for vertical movement within the city’s social structure. Kallipolis turns out to be a true aristocracy with power invested in the best, not those with a minimum standard of wealth, property, or birth, as with the oligarchic constitution criticised in Book VIII (*Resp.* 551c-d).²⁶

It is clear that the guardians hold a position of elevated status above the productive classes and that within the guardian class itself, the complete-guardian is elevated above the auxiliary. What is not so clear is how Socrates arrives at this three-tier hierarchy from

²⁵ For further discussion of this ideal in Greek thought see Jaeger (1944), p.247. See also Xenophon’s account of Spartan beliefs about birthing strong and vigorous children (*Lac.* 1.5-8).

²⁶ On this topic see Barrow (2007), pp.41-2.

his principle of occupational specialisation: the former does not presuppose the latter.²⁷ This is problematic, as it calls into question the legitimacy of the primacy Socrates attaches to the army and the rulers at Kallipolis. We might reasonably question how sincere Plato's comments on the military, and guardianship in general, actually are. We may perhaps even begin to wonder whether Jaeger's suggestion that Plato is visibly trying to put the best possible spin on a bad situation, attempting to provide legitimacy to a less than ideal situation, may in fact be justified.²⁸ Such fears are, I believe, unwarranted: Plato's arguments do seem to be rooted in a set of beliefs that supersede his principle of specialisation.

A good indication that Socrates did not really hold to the principle of specialisation is that he has his guardians performing a wide range of rather distinct jobs: they will engage in political and civil office, hold military command, police the citizens, fight in defence of the city, and wage war abroad (Intro. §.2). Furthermore, these broad categories may themselves be broken into a range of sub-occupations: the military combat role is divided into sub-categories including hoplite and cavalry, for example (Ch.3.2). Admittedly, the guardians' tasks can be grouped under the general category of 'guardianship', but such generality is not consistent with Socrates' principle of specialisation as it is explained in Book II.²⁹ In the construction of the first city, Socrates separates the tasks and natures of a carpenter, cloak-maker, and shoe-maker; and he concludes that it is better for the community when each does only that one task to which they are naturally suited (*Resp.* 370a). The differences between the tasks of cloak-making and shoe-making are less

²⁷ This is a point that does not seem to have been given the attention it deserves. Sayers, for example, observes that Plato begins by using the principle of specialisation to justify basic division of labour, and then later applies it to social and political structures in general, but gives no explanation as to how this shift occurs; Sayers (1999), p.24.

²⁸ Jaeger (1944), p.208.

²⁹ Compare with Plato's comments in the *Euthydemus*, for example, where the occupation of general is distinguished from that of politician; the general hunts and captures, and then hands over to the statesman who knows how best to use the spoils of victory (Plato *Euthydemus* 290b-d).

marked than those between hoplite and cavalry soldier, not to mention those of politician and general. When Socrates reaches his discussion of the guardians' lives, the principle of specialisation, at least in its original form, has been abandoned.

A similar point may be raised with reference to the guardians' education process, in which progression along the guardian hierarchy is made on the basis of performance over a period of rigorous testing. Those guardians who prove themselves most resolute and most adept at studies, war, and politics are the ones who are invested by the city with increasing power and responsibility (*Resp.* 536e-537d). At this stage in the dialogue, the principle of natural specialisation has changed into a kind of natural ability to master quickly and easily a variety of crafts.³⁰ These observations are so evident that it seems only fair to see this shift in Socrates' argument as a deliberate move, and to search for a more credible explanation for why this occurs than because of mere slippage in Plato's thought.

One suggestion, proposed by Reeve, is that although Plato clearly does not hold to the principle of specialisation as explained in the construction of the first city, he does believe that people have a naturally set upper limit to their cognitive development.³¹ Accordingly, the citizens of Kallipolis must practice the craft that best approaches this limit, and which falls under one of the three general categories of production, guarding, and ruling. This explanation makes sense of Socrates' assertion that if a carpenter and a shoemaker were to swap occupations, no great harm would come to the city, but that if an unworthy craftsman was to enter the class of soldiers, or an unworthy soldier the class of rulers, the city would be destroyed (*Resp.* 434a-b). It also allows for a range of intellectual capacities and occupations within any one general category: For example a tradesman and shoe-maker; a hoplite and cavalry-member; a senior general and a young lieutenant. This distinction will

³⁰ For full discussion of this topic see Reeve (1988), pp.172-6.

³¹ Reeve (1988), pp.174-6.

become particularly relevant to the discussion below of Kallipolis' military hierarchy (Ch.1.4).

A weakness in Reeve's suggestion is that the guardian class is initially distinguished from the productive classes by their *spirited nature*, and only later by their philosophical disposition (*Resp.* 375d-e). Furthermore, when Socrates introduces the idea of a philosophical requirement for the prerequisite guardian nature, it is compared merely to the way in which a dog judges between friends and enemies on the basis that it knows the former and not the latter; tongue in cheek, Socrates asks how one could view the dog as anything else besides a 'lover of learning' (*Resp.* 376b). Admittedly, the auxiliary-guardians do receive a degree of philosophical training, but only the complete-guardians receive formal philosophical training; in accord with Plato's tripartite parallel between city and soul, the auxiliaries are primarily distinguished from the complete-guardian by their spiritedness. Not to malign the effect of eighteen years of, albeit informal, philosophical training, Reeve does seem to overemphasise the importance of the intellectual component of this social division. A truer analysis perhaps places more weight in Plato's hierarchical ordering of appetite, spirit, and reason.

This explanation begs the following question, however: Why does Socrates argue for the principle of specialisation in the first place, when he intends only to replace it later in the dialogue? Again, I follow Reeve's suggestion that Socrates' approach is heavily influenced by consideration for his two main interlocutors, Glaucon and Adeimantus. The principle is introduced unobtrusively and seemingly unquestionably, which is consistent with Plato's method of gradually unveiling and developing his core argument. The principle appeals to the men's characters, enabling Socrates to engage them in dialogue and lead them towards deeper philosophical considerations.³²

³² Reeve (1988), pp.174-8 cf. White (1979), p.85.

I further suggest that in the first city, which lacked both guardians and rulers, if Socrates were to have introduced the concept of differing levels of cognitive development, he would have somewhat tainted the argument he will develop later.³³ In Kallipolis, the distinction between natures suited to specific productive crafts is collapsed, and its practitioners are grouped into the general class of producers whom Socrates wishes clearly to separate from the guardians. Although I suggest there *is* a distinction between the intellectual requirements of certain crafts in the first city, such as business and shoemaking, the key point Socrates wants to stress is that *all* these crafts are aimed at bodily satisfaction and the pursuit of money: their practitioners' souls are ruled by the appetitive element. Despite the fact that there are major differences in the tasks of those in the productive classes, as Bloom observes, they find an overwhelming unity in their spiritual natures and therefore they belong to an entirely different category from the guardians whose souls are ruled by courage and reason.³⁴

Having discussed the principles of Kallipolis' basic social structure, it remains to be considered how the three classes will interact. Reserving discussion of the relationship between the auxiliary-soldiers and the guardian-rulers largely to the next section of this present chapter, I will now outline what the *Republic* says about the relationship between the productive classes and the guardian class as a whole. I will discuss how the guardians *qua* soldiers are integrated into, and supported by, the city, and I will defend the charge that Kallipolis is simply a military dictatorship oppressing the freedom of the many for the benefit of the few.

After explaining how the Myth of the Metals could be convincingly employed, Socrates gives a picture of the guardians, as an army, leading the wider population to occupy the city-site. The guardians then situate themselves in a military encampment

³³ Note that the *Republic's* first and second cities are also constructed by Socrates with consideration for the characters of Glaucon and Adeimantus, as I have discussed above (Ch.1.2).

³⁴ Bloom (1991), p.349.

where they might best protect the citizens from internal and external enemies, their policing and military roles respectively (*Resp.* 415d-e). The guardians are located in the city separate from the working classes who go about their lives as normal, owning houses, worshipping the gods, and entertaining guests (*Resp.* 419a). There is every indication that the productive classes would have led fairly typical and traditional Greek lives, with the omission, of course, of any military or political participation. Socrates states that the guardians will receive all necessary provisions from the working classes, with the amount being fixed so that there will be neither surplus nor deficit at the end of each year, only enough for basic upkeep in their communal military environment (*Resp.* 416d-420a). This causes Adeimantus to observe that although the city seems to belong to the guardians, in that they both rule and protect it, they do not really seem to derive from it any private benefit, such as wealth or property: they are in fact akin to a mercenary garrison established in the city and paid for by the working class citizens for their services, a point with which Socrates agrees (*Resp.* 419a-420a).

This social arrangement has attracted negative criticism from some scholars. Annas, for example, takes significant exception to the degree of compulsion placed on Kallipolis' productive classes to support the guardians, a feature she describes as 'shocking' and 'sinister'; she labels the relationship 'manipulative', and claims that the guardians use 'force and fraud', their policing powers and the Noble Lie, to cement harmony in the city.³⁵ Annas is also at pains to portray the relationship between producers and guardians as one of master and slave. She does concede that Plato allows for the producers to have some degree of control over their lives: '[Like] an Athenian slave living apart from his master, who might well be comfortably off and run his own business without interference,

³⁵ Annas (1981), pp.79; 107; 117.

indistinguishable on the surface from a free man'.³⁶ However, she concludes that the producers lack all real autonomy and, as an 'oppressed class' leading lives structured by others, they have 'no basis for self-respect'.³⁷

Although there is certainly some truth to her comments, I believe the overall tenor of Annas' argument is somewhat misdirected. Admittedly, the use of deception at Kallipolis is depicted as necessary for the realisation of the just city. Not only will the producers be lied to in an effort to convince them that the guardians rule by divine approval, but lies will also be utilised amongst the guardians themselves, most notably in the city's eugenics programme (*Resp.* 459c). But Socrates presents these as 'noble' lies, ones that contribute to the overall happiness and wellbeing of the city, and it must be noted that he is concerned to remove all other forms of falsehood, especially in the guardians' cultural education (Ch.2.3).³⁸ Similarly, although the guardians will serve as police to the city's productive classes, Socrates emphasises their role as protectors of the citizens, not abusers (*Resp.* 414b).³⁹ It must also be noted that it is the guardians who are willing to sacrifice their lives in war, protecting the productive classes from external enemies, and relieving the workers of all military responsibilities. The implementation of force and deception by the guardians on the producers can be seen through both positive and negative filters. The position one takes on their usage ultimately comes down to one's own stance on individual liberty and autonomy versus corporate harmony and happiness; in the *Republic*, Plato clearly favours the latter.⁴⁰

It is possible to gain further insight into the location of the army within Kallipolis' wider social structure by reference to contemporary historical models, none of which seem

³⁶ Annas (1981), p.173.

³⁷ Annas (1981), pp.172-4.

³⁸ On the use of deception at Kallipolis see Schofield (2007), pp.142-3.

³⁹ It seems this policing will, in fact, be targeted at the productive classes. As Socrates states, in this case with regards to drunkenness, it would be ridiculous for guardians to need guardians themselves (*Resp.* 403e).

⁴⁰ For perhaps the most balanced discussion of this topic see Brown (2003b), §§.3.1; 4.4.

to match Plato's just city precisely. Kallipolis is not like Athens where hoplite soldiers were drawn from the entire citizenry with both the working classes and the aristocratic elite partaking in the city's military affairs (cf. *Resp.* 556d). Nor is Kallipolis' army like the elite classical forces instituted in cities such as Syracuse and Thebes (see Ch.3.2). Although supported by their cities to fight their cities' wars, the duties of these historical forces were far more limited in scope than those of Kallipolis'. In addition to war, the *Republic's* guardians take charge of creating and enforcing laws, as well as ruling in the political sphere (*Resp.* 412c; 415d-e). Nor is Kallipolis exactly like Sparta. Although Sparta's military-rulers were supported by a wider civilian population, and did take charge of both war and politics, this was only achieved through violent subjugation and oppression of the class of Helot producers. A key condition for the presence of justice in Kallipolis is that harmony must exist amongst *all* elements of the city (*Resp.* 415d-e).

Nevertheless, Sparta provides the closest match to the arrangement of Kallipolis, and I suggest that where the two models differ we can learn much about the role of the army in Plato's just city. To begin, I offer some comment on the significance and influence of Sparta on Plato's thought. As I have discussed above, the *Republic* was almost certainly written before the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BC, when Sparta was still viewed by many Athenian intellectuals as an ideal societal model (Intro. §.4).⁴¹ Indeed, as many scholars have pointed out, commonalities between Kallipolis and Sparta are conspicuous: Both cities are engineered to ensure success at war; both promote physical prowess as an ideal; both dissolve traditional nuclear families, subjecting the youth to a consuming education process; both instate communal living and feeding arrangements; both demand considerable respect for the city's rulers and military; both restrict the ruling class from participation in productive crafts; both place major focus on child bearing, and even

⁴¹ See Jaeger (1944), p.32; Ferrari (2000), pp.xvi-xviii; Barrow (2007), p.8.

sharing sexual partners to this end; both take an intensive approach to institutionalised habituation to ensure honour and loyalty to the state.⁴² It seems fairly certain that Plato had the Spartan model in mind in his construction of the just state.

Nevertheless, for all the similarities there are some marked differences between Sparta and Kallipolis. The most obvious example is the importance Plato accords to the guardians' cultural education, and the need for the rulers to be philosophically trained intellectuals.⁴³ One may also read direct criticism of Sparta for its inconsistent approach to money where Plato writes in Book VIII of those in oligarchies who, 'passionately adore gold and silver in secret', hoarding it in their houses and spending it lavishly on their women and other things (*Resp.* 548a). Kallipolis' guardians are forbidden to have private property, and their reliance on the willing provision of the working classes for support is an important structural and functional difference between the two cities. Most pertinent to this current discussion, however, is the way that the two cities treat their productive classes, a point of such significant divergence that it is almost certainly self-consciously so.

In Book VIII, while describing how a city like Kallipolis would deteriorate into a timocracy, Socrates provides a description of the timocratic regime in terms that seem to deliberately evoke the Spartan-Helot system. Socrates states that as a result of faction, the iron and bronze classes pull the just city towards appetitive desires, while the silver and gold classes, 'rich in soul', attempt to maintain the original, virtuous order. After much struggle, Socrates states that these two latter classes:

⁴² I do not mean, by listing these examples, to indicate that the *Republic* is created with reference only to the Spartan system. As dialogues such as the *Protagoras* suggest, Plato also gave considerable thought to the Athenian system of education (Plato *Protagoras* 325c-326e). On this topic see Grube (1980), p.231.

⁴³ Jaeger (1944), p.326; Barrow (2007), p.11.

Compromise on a middle way: they distribute the land and houses amongst themselves as private property; enslave and hold as serfs and servants those whom they previously guarded as free friends and providers of upkeep; and take responsibility themselves for making war and for guarding against the ones they had enslaved (*Resp.* 547b-c).

Although inaccurate as an explanation for how the historical Spartan regime came to be, in its description of the relationship between the Spartan rulers and Helot producers, the comparison holds true. The Helots were used as serfs, lacked citizen rights, and were forced to provide upkeep for their Spartan rulers.⁴⁴ Socrates' prediction for the consequences of such oppressive behaviour also speaks to the Spartan example. Although the Spartans did wage many external wars, they were continually on internal guard against the Helots; a total reversal of the situation in Kallipolis.⁴⁵ It seems quite possible that the violent and turbulent history of Spartan-Helot relations influenced Plato to recognise the need for the wider citizenry to be loyal to the military and the rulers, and vice-versa.⁴⁶

Socrates' criticism of the Spartan system gives an implicit commentary on the social structure of Kallipolis, which is not characterised by such dictatorial and oppressive relationships between the classes. While it is unclear whether this passage implies that the members of the working classes at Kallipolis are citizens in the conventional sense (they certainly do not share in the military or political aspects of the city), it is clear that they are at least considered 'free friends' of the guardians, and are valued as an essential element of the city. The social interactions at Kallipolis are ones of harmony and agreement, and it is this harmony, Socrates states, which is essential for the presence of temperance and

⁴⁴ Barrow (2007), p.9.

⁴⁵ See Hornblower (1994), p.74; Pomeroy, Burstein, Donlan and Tolbert-Roberts (1999), p.204. For an example of the Spartan army's freedom of action being thwarted by revolting Helots see Thuc. 1.101.1-2.

⁴⁶ A point made by Pappas (1995), p.65.

therefore justice in the city (*Resp.* 431e-432a).⁴⁷ Socrates does acknowledge, however, that this harmony is tenuous and that there is an inherent potential for the guardians to abuse this social arrangement, to use their strength and position to become, ‘savage masters rather than gentle allies’ (*Resp.* 375b). Nevertheless, he has immense faith that the correct education will obviate this problem, and he holds to the ideal that the guardian class should both rule and protect the city from internal and external enemies with the willing cooperation of the productive classes (*Resp.* 416a-b).

4. Kallipolis’ Guardian Class as a Military Hierarchy

At Kallipolis, the producers support, the auxiliary-guardians guard, and the complete-guardians rule. Having discussed the principles that premise these divisions, and the interactions between the guardian class as a whole and the productive classes, I turn now to the relationship between auxiliary and ruler. In this section I will consider three key passages: The first from Book III on the division of social classes; the second from Book IV on the analogy between city and soul; the third from Book VII on the selection and education process of the philosopher-kings. My main contention is that this relationship goes beyond a situation where there is simply political rule over a military ruled, and that the guardian-rulers are themselves integrated into the army as a military hierarchy.

This is a topic that has received very little scholarly attention, with most opting to emphasise the political as opposed to the military nature of the auxiliary-ruler relationship.⁴⁸ Few scholars acknowledge the almost overwhelming certainty that the

⁴⁷ In the *Republic* there is a pervasive sense of open dialogue and agreement between the working classes and their guardians as to the division of their civic roles; see *Resp.* 442a.

⁴⁸ Pappas states, for example, that as Socrates ignores the productive classes after introducing the army, so too from *Resp.* 414b he ignores the army following the introduction of the rulers whom he describes as the city’s ‘administrators’; see Pappas (1995), p.71. See also Grube’s discussion of the guardian selection

guardian-rulers would also command in the army, and of those who do, still fewer discuss the details or implications of the arrangement.⁴⁹ Some, in fact, have denied outright that the guardian-rulers will serve in the army. Annas, for example, makes a very weak argument to this end by appealing to the principle of occupational specialisation.⁵⁰ She not only overlooks the range of passages discussed below that argue forcibly to the contrary, but she also seems to place more emphasis on this principle than Plato himself (Ch.1.3). In this section I hope to address this imbalance, and to contribute to a fuller understanding of this aspect of Plato's thought.

As I have mentioned previously, in the division of the city into three distinct social classes in Book III, the guardian class is divided into two: the guardians who rule, and the auxiliary-guardians who support (*Resp.* 412b-417b, Ch.1.3). Socrates presents the reasons for this division as dual: First, older guardians must rule over younger; second, the rulers must be those who have been observed across their lives to have acted most consistently in the best interests of the city and whose convictions are the most resilient to external pressures (*Resp.* 412b-414b). As discussed above, at this stage of the argument, Socrates has moved away from his original principle of occupational specialisation and introduces a sliding scale of qualification for the occupation of ruler. The guardian-rulers are not automatically distinguishable from the auxiliaries, as he originally implies shoe-makers, for example, are from cloak-makers. The distinction is revealed over an extended period of time; as Socrates states, the guardians will be observed and tested as children, young men, and adults, to see if they are in fact suitable rulers for the community (*Resp.* 413e-414a). In these distinct periods of testing, introduced on the basis of age and aptitude, there is a developing sense of hierarchy in the city: the guardians, it is revealed, are not in fact

process in Book VII, which emphasises the political involvement of the guardian-rulers, but almost totally elides their military participation; Grube (1980), pp.240-1.

⁴⁹ Ferrari, for instance, talks of 'soldiers and generals' with regards to the passage in Book VI, but does not state the relationship explicitly or give it any further comment; see Ferrari (2007), p.187.

⁵⁰ Annas (1981), p.114.

comprised of two completely distinguishable classes. As some progress, and as others are held back, there will be a significant overlap and mixing of characters and abilities.

This suggestion, that there will be an expanded hierarchy amongst the guardians, does not necessarily imply the presence of guardian-rulers in positions of military leadership. Later in the text, however, there is significant evidence that the complete-guardians will stay connected to the auxiliary soldiers in a military capacity, and that the hierarchy discussed above is intended to be applied in a military context. Some significance may also be attached to Socrates' assertion in the passage from Book III that the complete-guardians are to lead the armed men forth in the initial occupation of the city, an assertion which carries distinctly military undertones (*Resp.* 415d-e cf. 543b).

Socrates' discussion in Book IV of the analogy between city and soul provides stronger evidence that the guardian-rulers' political hierarchy, evident in Book III, is also intended to be applied in the military realm. In this section, Socrates establishes a parallel between the complete-guardians and reason, and between the auxiliary-guardians and spirit (*Resp.* 441c-442b). Socrates argues that in cities, as well as souls, the rational part, which is wise, needs to bring the spirited part alongside as its ally (*Resp.* 441e). In the soul, these two elements will keep a person's appetitive element in check; in the city, they will keep the desires of the productive classes in check (*Resp.* 442a-b). Socrates argues that this combination of reason and spirit will also do the best job of protecting against external enemies. The rational rulers plan, the spirited auxiliaries fight, 'following the rulers and using [their] courage to carry out the things on which the [rational element] has decided' (*Resp.* 442b).⁵¹ I suggest that this is a clear depiction of the guardian-rulers as officers, and the auxiliary-guardians as soldiers, combining strengths and abilities, reason and spirit, in a military context.

⁵¹ This arrangement is reiterated later in the text, where Socrates states that the rulers need to be prepared to give orders, and for the auxiliaries to follow them (*Resp.* 458b-c).

It may be possible, and it would avoid the conclusion that Kallipolis' complete-guardians must participate directly in warfare, that Socrates is merely implying a kind of political control by the city's rulers over the army, that the planning and ordering by Kallipolis' complete-guardians control only the most general aspects of the auxiliaries' military operations. Perhaps Socrates is thinking of a situation, not unlike that found in contemporary New Zealand, where the government dictates in broad terms where it wants the army to go, and what it wants the army to do, but where the implementation of these desires is left to the army's discretion. However, in light of both Plato's historical experience of warfare and the overall argument of the *Republic*, this suggestion seems highly unlikely.

Socrates argues that the basis for the division between ruler and auxiliary is that the former is ruled by reason and the latter by spirit. This is not to say that the auxiliaries do not possess any degree of reason, as they do receive eighteen years of primary philosophical training (Ch.2.4). However, as Plato makes clear in Books V to VII, the auxiliaries lack the consistent and well-founded rational basis for decision-making possessed by the philosophically educated rulers. Any significant decisions must be made by the rulers and, as a brief consideration of Plato's military context will show, contemporary Greek warfare afforded considerable scope for this kind of reasoning.⁵²

In Classical Greece, campaigns were often fought far from home, over extended periods, and with limited means of communication: the Athenian exploits in Sicily during the Peloponnesian War, and at Corinth during the Corinthian War, are good examples. The idea that politicians could issue an army, prior to a campaign, with a set of orders comprehensive enough take account of every significant eventuality is absurd. A case in point is that of the Athenian general Phormio who, in the two naval battles at Naupactus

⁵² For discussion of the influence of this context on Plato see Intro. §§.3-4.

(429/8 BC), made successful use of surprise, unconventional tactics, and decisive direct orders to defeat the Peloponnesian fleet (Thuc. 2.80.1-2.92.7). As a whole, Thucydides' *History* is testament to a growing concern with the ability of a commander to quickly and accurately respond to uncertain circumstances, predicting the future and taking appropriate action; the so-called *logos-ergon* effect.⁵³ Thucydides' highest praise is for the general and politician Themistocles whom he describes as, 'the best judge in those sudden crises which admit of little or of no deliberation and the best prophet of the future, even to its most distant possibilities' (Thuc. 1.138.3). Closer to Plato's own experience is the example of Iphicrates, whose real-time decision-making abilities prevented a revolt at Corinth and defeated a Spartan mora at Lechaion (*Hell.* 4.5.11-18), an action publically lauded on the orators' roll of triumphs at Athens.⁵⁴ The need for commanders to be physically present at battles, and to be able to think quickly and rationally in response to changing tactical situations, was keenly appreciated within Plato's intellectual and military context (see Ch.3.2). For Kallipolis' auxiliary soldiers to fight as 'hard, lean hounds', able to defeat much larger enemies of 'fat, tender sheep', I suggest that Kallipolis' guardian-rulers would have to be present as officers, planning, ordering, and personally leading the army into battle (*Resp.* 422c-d).

The third and perhaps the most important passage on the subject of military hierarchy at Kallipolis is found in Book VII, where Socrates covers the education and selection process of the philosopher-king.⁵⁵ Throughout the discussion, Socrates continually reiterates the need for this education to be applicable to military situations, which I believe is itself a fair indication that these guardian-rulers and potential philosopher-kings will in fact be generals (Ch.2.4). For now though, I turn specifically to the philosopher-kings'

⁵³ See Parry (1981) for specific discussion of this topic.

⁵⁴ Seager (1994a), p.111.

⁵⁵ This passage has often been assumed to relate closely to the curriculum of Plato's Academy; however, there are many difficulties with this interpretation, and it seems that the arrangement is, in fact, uniquely suited to the conditions of Kallipolis. For discussion of this point, see Mueller (1992), pp.170-1.

selection process and its potential application to a military hierarchy incorporating progression through distinct ranks (*Resp.* 535a-541b). As I will discuss, the importance of military participation for progression in the city's political hierarchy is clearly stated, and is seen to complement the academic and philosophical aspects of the guardian-rulers' education. Socrates divides this process of progression into distinct phases of learning and testing. Not only will there be guardians simultaneously moving through different stages of this education process, but there will also be guardians whose careers are capped at various points on the career ladder. At any one point in time, there will be guardian-rulers, engaged in politics and the army, who possess rational abilities ordered in distinct, incremental levels.⁵⁶ This, I argue, is the basis of Kallipolis' military hierarchy.

Socrates states that up to the age of eighteen, all young guardians will participate in a preparatory education tailored for war. In addition to academic subjects, the young guardians will be taken to battles as observers to prepare them for military service; to be, 'given a taste of blood like young dogs' (*Resp.* 536d-537a). This will be followed by two years of compulsory physical training, undertaken by the entire guardian class (*Resp.* 537b). When read in the context of the preceding discussion of children at war, subsequent comments on enrolling in military units, and the generally military focus of Kallipolis' physical training as described in Book III, I suggest that Socrates is clearly referring here to something akin to basic military training.⁵⁷ It is also important to note that at this stage, there is no distinction between auxiliary and ruler. The fact that all guardians undergo the same basic military and academic teaching until the age of twenty fits with the dual

⁵⁶ The only scholar I have found who provides more than a cursory discussion of the issue of military hierarchy at Kallipolis is Reeve, who argues that guardians who are not selected for further training at age twenty will be private-soldiers, and that those who make it through the first level of systematic education and then the second level of dialectic training, but fail to reach the fourth level of city management, will make up two classes of officers; see Reeve (1988), pp.195-7. Where I differ from Reeve is in his conclusion that the guardians who reach the highest level will not be engaged in military concerns.

⁵⁷ In support of this reading see Nettleship (1906), p.290; Murphy (1951), p.79. It certainly matches the age at which Athenian males, no doubt Plato included, undertook their basic military training; see Nails (2002), p.155; Intro. §.3.

principles described above for the selection of guardian-rulers: that old must rule young, and that the rulers must be observed over a period of trials and tests to be suitable for the job (*Resp.* 412b-414b cf. 537a).

Socrates argues that those guardians who demonstrate the greatest ability over the course of their twenty-year education are to be enrolled in a unit separate from the others. I suggest that this is the moment when the crucial divide between guardian-ruler and guardian-soldier occurs (*Resp.* 537a). At this stage, the guardian-rulers are not yet philosopher-kings, a progression that occurs for those who make it some thirty years later; but they are no longer merely auxiliaries (*Resp.* 540a).⁵⁸ Socrates states that those selected will be singled out for, ‘greater honours than the others’, which is consistent with his previous description of the guardian-rulers (*Resp.* 414a; 503a). Following the initial division at age twenty comes formal training in mathematics, dialectic, and philosophy (*Resp.* 537b-5403; Ch.2.4). These are all targeted at the rigorous development of reason, and it is capacity for reason that ultimately divides the guardian class in two.

These young guardian-rulers will then take part in a decade-long systematic education in the subjects begun as youths (arithmetic and geometry amongst others), as at the same time they undertake military service (*Resp.* 536d; 537a-c). At the age of thirty, those who again prove satisfactorily ‘resolute in studies, war and the other things conventionally expected of them’ will be selected to undertake a five-year education in dialectic (*Resp.* 537d-539e). Socrates does not say whether or not these guardians will continue to be simultaneously engaged in military affairs, although I suggest that they will not. This phase of learning is described as ‘continuous and strenuous’, allowing its participants to do nothing else, just like the two-year period of basic training previously (*Resp.* 539e cf.

⁵⁸ See Reeve (1988), pp.196-7. Murphy seems to ignore this division, and suggests, somewhat confusingly, that the guardians will serve as private-soldiers from the age of twenty to thirty, and then officers from the age of thirty-five to fifty; no explanation is given for how the auxiliaries fit into this picture; Murphy (1951), pp.78-9.

537b). Again, at the end of this learning and testing phase, those who prove themselves best return to a civic life for a period of fifteen years to ‘take command in matters of war and other offices’ (*Resp.* 539e-550a).

The final progression occurs at the age of fifty when those guardians who are ‘entirely best in every practical task and science’ reach the pinnacle of philosophical education and grasp the Form of the Good, turning to its implementation in the city (*Resp.* 540a). Socrates states that these guardians will spend most of their time philosophising, but that each in turn must, ‘labour in politics and rule for the city’s sake’ (*Resp.* 540b). They will also educate younger guardians to take their place when they retire (*Resp.* 540c). Whether the guardian-rulers at this final stage will continue to serve in the military is unclear, although I suggest likely, as Plato states that the age for political retirement is the same as that for military retirement (*Resp.* 498b).

This suggestion may jar with any romantic notions of Kallipolis’ philosopher-kings as learned and distinguished gentlemen leading somewhat idyllic and theoretical lives. I think that it is important to realise however, that at this final stage of progression the guardians will have undertaken the following: Fifty years of rigorous physical training whose primary purpose is to produce strong warriors (*Resp.* 403c); fifty years of cultural habituation aimed at developing temperance and courage, again with an underlying view to war; fifty years of first informal and then formal training in intellectual activities whose application to warfare is continually stressed (Ch.2.3-4); fifty years of living in barracks and eating in communal messes (*Resp.* 416d-4217b); fifty years of first observing, and then fighting wars to protect the city’s interests (*Resp.* 537b-540a). The philosopher-kings, having completed their extensive education process, will not be the ‘kind old grandfather’ figures that I believe is often imagined. They will be hard and austere men for whom warfare has been a permanent and pervasive fixture in their lives (cf. *Resp.* 543a). This

suggestion finds support in Book VI, where Socrates addresses the complete course of the philosopher-kings' lives. Socrates argues that it is only when, 'their strength begins to fail and they have retired from politics and military service' that the philosopher-kings retire and practice philosophy as a full-time pursuit (*Resp.* 498b-c). With this fact in mind, it seems more likely than not that the still able-bodied, post-fifty year-old, complete-guardians will continue to engage in military affairs, as they have done for their whole lives.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, in this chapter I have examined the importance of warfare to the social structure of Kallipolis in three key sections. First, I have looked at warfare and the origins of the just city. I have argued that the so-called 'true' city, fit only for pigs, does not represent any kind of unqualified ideal in Plato's thought; nor, for that matter, does Glaucon's 'fevered' city. The truly just city is seen to be third in a natural progression, gradually revealed in an unveiling of Plato's thought. In this progression, warfare serves a positive role introducing the necessary conditions for the establishment of the guardian class as well as promoting the ideal of true self-sacrifice.

Second, I have looked at the influence of warfare on the development of Kallipolis' tripartite social structure. In particular, I have examined Socrates' principle of occupational specialisation used in the construction of his first city, and the way in which this principle is ultimately replaced by a system that allows for an evaluative hierarchy with greater delineation within the class of guardian-rulers. I have also emphasised the harmony of the relationship between guardians and producers with reference to Sparta, stressing the positive, protective role of the guardians as both the city's army and police. The need for

harmony is a fundamental requirement for the presence of civic justice at Kallipolis, which explains, in turn, why Socrates is so ready to employ deception to further this end. It is also important to note that the guardians are able to maintain this harmony because of their military occupation, which enables them to keep the appetitive element of the city under control. The presence of the army, then, is a key condition for the presence of justice.

Third, I have looked at the guardian class as a military hierarchy. Using the premise that there will be varying degrees of ability and experience amongst the rulers who lie between the stages of auxiliary-guardian and philosopher-king, I have examined three key passages with a view to placing the guardian-rulers in the army's command-structure. I have argued that these passages, particularly the one found in Book VII, do suggest that the guardian-rulers will act as officers with varying ranks and responsibilities. This participation of the guardian-rulers in the military throughout their lives is important for several reasons: it explains where the interaction between the two classes occurs, for example, considering that the auxiliaries do not play a role in the city's political concerns. What I suggest is the most important reason, however, and one that would go a considerable way towards explaining the centrality of warfare to the guardian-rulers' lives, is that participation in the military promotes a strong paradigm of self-sacrifice. As I will argue further in Chapter Two, I believe this factor plays a substantial role in the philosopher-kings' decision to rule for the city's sake rather than to pursue a life of private philosophical reflection.

CHAPTER TWO: THE IMPORTANCE OF WARFARE TO THE GUARDIANS' EDUCATION

1. Introduction

The pervasive and driving influence of warfare on the *Republic* extends beyond the development of Kallipolis' social structure and to the education of the city's guardians, a subject introduced in response to, and crafted largely with regards to, the demands of war. In this chapter I will address the question of warfare's influence on the education of Kallipolis' guardian class in four stages. First, I will discuss Plato's belief in the existence of a prerequisite guardian spirit that is clearly shaped with a view to future military and political service. Consideration will be given to the relationship between military and political participation in Plato's historical context in order to understand better why Plato is so adamant that the city's warriors and politicians will be drawn from the same class of people. Plato's thinking at this point can be seen as largely in keeping with tradition.

Second, I will consider the cultural and physical education given to Kallipolis' auxiliary-guardians, an education that is shared by guardian-rulers up to the age of twenty. The guardians' cultural training is of immense concern to Plato, and he accords it a prominent position in the text. I will situate this subject within its historical context, and link its status in Greek society to Plato's thinking on the appropriate cultural training for the just city. I will then discuss Plato's censorship of poetical content, genre, and music; also his major concern with mimetic poetry and its ability to corrupt a person's soul. Plato gives the guardians' physical training less attention, and his concern with spiritual over and above bodily concerns is clearly evidenced. Nevertheless, the physical training is an important aspect of the guardians' wider education, and relates explicitly to their role as

soldiers. Even more importantly though, the combination of this cultural and physical education serves the wider, philosophical purpose of habituating the sub-rational spirited aspect of the guardians' souls. I will suggest that the prominence of the military at this point in the *Republic* can be explained by a strong connection in Plato's thought between military participation and the correct expression of the soul's spirited element; this point will reoccur prominently in my discussion below of the philosopher-kings' motivation to rule in the city.

Third, I will move to a discussion of the guardian-rulers' philosophical education. Some comment will be made on the process of selection for the philosopher-kings, as well as the guardians' primary education, which includes early instruction in philosophical subjects and is taught to the guardian class as a whole. I will then make an examination of the guardian-rulers' instruction in mathematics and dialectic, which ultimately leads to knowledge of the Forms. Plato discusses the specific military applications of mathematics, although this concern becomes less apparent in the progression to dialectic; I argue that at this stage, it not so much specific skills that will be useful to the guardian-rulers as officers, and even politicians for that matter, but rather the development of highly analytical and logical thinking processes. I suggest this goes some way towards explaining why Plato presents five years of dialectical education as suitable preparation for guardians who are about to embark on fifteen years of military and political service. This point is important as it argues against the interpretation of certain scholars who see the philosopher-kings' education merely as an excuse to prescribe an ideal education for philosophers *as such*, that is, the guardians' higher education is not designed with a serious view to practical application. However, as I will argue, Plato's concern in the *Republic* is to explore what would be required for true justice to be achieved on the civic level, not so much for the individual pursuit of philosophy. For the sake of the integrity of thematic and

narrative structure, I will suggest that the practical-application approach I take in this thesis is, in fact, the most natural and the most consistent reading. This section also addresses the intellectual component of the twofold explanation that I suggest ultimately motivates the guardian-rulers to rule for the city's sake.

Fourth, I will consider the application of compulsion used to make the philosopher-kings rule in the city and I will suggest two explanations for why they agree to do so: The first relies on the force of reason, the guardians' higher education; the second relies on the force of sub-rational moral habituation, their cultural and physical training. With regards to the former, I will suggest that the 'compulsion' applied to the guardians actually takes the form of *persuasion* within the context of mentor-mentee relationships. This leads to a fuller understanding of the philosopher-kings' knowledge of the Forms, which motivates them to act justly. Within the special circumstances of Kallipolis, the philosopher-kings come to distinguish between simple preference, and preference all things considered. They recognise that justice only exists when the city as a whole performs 'outstandingly well', not just one section, and they heed the call of justice that demands they repay the generous education provided by the city by ruling as an act of gratitude and indebtedness. With regards to the latter, I will suggest that the moral quality of self-sacrifice, introduced in consequence of the demands of warfare, and promoted across the course of the guardians' entire lives, also plays a key role in the philosopher-kings' decision to eschew a life of private philosophy and to rule for the city's sake. Drawing on Plato's psychological theory as discussed in Book IV, and in particular his account of Leontius and the corpses, I will argue that neither explanation, taken in isolation, provides a totally sufficient answer for why the philosopher-kings decide to rule: it is rather a combination of the two. In this section warfare comes to the fore, as it is warfare that provides the vehicle for the proper expression of spiritedness; it is this spiritedness which comes alongside as an ally to reason

motivating the guardians to sacrifice; and it is sacrifice which is needed for the philosopher-kings to subject their personal interests to communal interests, acting in a way they recognise on an intellectual level to be just, and resisting what may seem to be the more pleasant life of theoretical contemplation.

2. Warfare and the Prerequisite Guardian Spirit

Education is perhaps the most important component of the guardians' lives and it is introduced explicitly in response to the demands of war. As has been discussed, Socrates argues that for anyone to become a truly good guardian, to receive the necessary education, they must possess at birth a nature that combines philosophy, spirit, speed, and strength; the *sine quibus non* for inclusion in the guardian class (*Resp.* 375c; Intro. §.2). Spirit and speed are needed so that the guardians will be good fighters (*Resp.* 375a). Philosophy enables the guardians to balance violence and gentleness, thus preventing the abuse of Kallipolis' working class citizens (*Resp.* 375b-376c). Although this education will evolve beyond a singular, military focus, as Benardete observes, it is warfare that initially distinguishes the type of nature required for future guardians of the just city.¹ Before I move to a more detailed discussion of Kallipolis' guardian education, further comment must be made on this important distinction.

A key point here is Socrates' belief that Kallipolis' political rulers must be military men. This certainly jars with contemporary examples of successful politicians hailing from a variety of professions and a variety of temperaments that are less likely to be military than not. To understand Plato's thinking on this issue, due consideration must be given to

¹ Benardete (1989), p.55.

his historical context, in which the modern distinctions between military and political participation were far less pronounced.

The ideal of a Greek city-state drawing its army from citizens with politically vested interests was one maintained throughout the Archaic and Classical Periods. From early on in Greek history, this principle manifested itself in the wealthy propertied elite assuming primary responsibility for military activity, a manifestation van Wees argues developed into a justification for Greece's elitist social structure.² The notion that soldiering somehow belongs to the city's elite as a special and unique duty comes clearly to the fore in Aristotle's *Politics* and, as Aristotle makes clear, his thinking drew on firm historical and intellectual precedents (*Pol.* 1329a40-b39).³

In Greek society, there existed a fundamental distinction between the leisured classes, who took control of military affairs and lived off the labour of others, and the working classes, who did not.⁴ This opposition is expressed vividly in an archaic scholium attributed to Hybrias the Cretan, who states:

I have great wealth: a spear and a sword and a fine leather shield to protect my skin. For with this I plough, with this I reap, with this I trample the sweet wine from the vines, with this I am called master of serfs. Those who do not dare to have a spear and a sword and a fine leather shield to protect their skin all cower at my knee and prostrate themselves, calling me master and great king
(Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* 15.50.24; trans. Gulick).

In some city-states such as Sparta, this division was absolute: the Spartan citizens focused entirely on governance, fighting and leisure activities, while the subject Helots managed

² Hunt (2007), p.138; van Wees (2007), pp.273-280.

³ As early as Homer, there is literary affirmation of the principle that armies should consist of clans and tribes so that those with common interests support each other in fighting to protect those interests (*Il.* 2.361-366).

⁴ Van Wees (2007), p.273.

all production.⁵ Even at Athens, whilst never so definite, the division was nevertheless maintained through property qualifications that restricted political and military duties and obligations to the leisured classes in the period before the growth of the navy. From the early sixth century BC, the property qualification for military and political participation was set at two hundred *medimnoi* of barley, the amount required to support roughly fifteen people and well above what was needed for basic economic independence.⁶ This state of affairs altered somewhat in the 450s BC, when the introduction of pay for military and political office loosened the grip of the leisured classes over these institutions.⁷ However, support for the old ideal remained. Thucydides records, for example, that the oligarchic coup of 411 BC, which reintroduced the financial restrictions on military and political involvement, was the best government Athens had ever had (Thuc. 8.65.3; 8.97.1). Although Plato's period saw the rise of non-citizen mercenary forces, such as Iphicrates' Corinthian peltasts, the traditional hoplite and cavalry roles, the basis of Kallipolis' army, remained largely restricted to citizen-soldiers (Ch.3.2).

In each of the examples described above, we find evidence for a Greek ideal whereby those who rule the city must be those who fight in the army; those who guard the city's political interests must be those who guard the city's military interests. More than an ideal, however, this arrangement can be seen as a reflection of natural reality. As Bloom notes, there is a certain degree of inevitability to the conclusion that strong and spirited warriors will rule the city; almost by definition the most violently powerful element will take control.⁸ In contemporary New Zealand society, where warfare is not the pervasive reality

⁵ See Pomeroy, Burstein, Donlan and Tolbert-Roberts (1999), pp.148-9. Although never stated in as many words, this also seems to be what Aristotle envisages in his *Politics*, a total segregation of the two classes in what Nagle calls a form of 'cultural and residential apartheid'; see *Pol.* 1327a31-9; Nagle (2006), pp.122-4.

⁶ Van Wees (2007), p.276.

⁷ Van Wees (2007), pp.276-7.

⁸ Bloom (1991), pp.349-50.

that it was in Classical Greece, such an arrangement is not so apparent.⁹ However, the most cursory examination of world history soundly demonstrates that in less settled and less peaceful times and places, those with the military force invariably dominate the political realm; Plato's Greece was such a time and place.¹⁰ In the *Republic*, education is introduced as a means to bring the most naturally powerful citizens under control, channel their desires into appropriate avenues, and ultimately to provide higher justification for their prominent civic position. However, as with the progressive development of the just city discussed above, I believe Plato presents this process as both natural and necessary. It is not merely a pragmatic rationalisation of an imperfect situation.

Plato's stance on the role of warfare in the just city straddles an uneasy divide between that which is beneficial and that which is not (Ch.1.2). This has been taken by certain scholars as evidence that Plato, in the *Republic*, is applying a positive spin to a far from ideal situation, seeking to validate the position of political power inevitably held by the warrior class.¹¹ My main objection to this argument is that it seems to imply a degree of underhandedness in Plato's argumentation that I find unconvincing in light of Plato's historical context. Even though the late Classical Period saw increasing division at Athens between the offices of politician and general, the fundamental ideal that the city's army should embody a representative cross-section of the city's politically enfranchised was nevertheless maintained.¹² This ideal is far removed from that of modern Western armies, for example, which, following the total war scenarios of the early twentieth century, have increasingly been drawn from society's less privileged classes, operating more or less

⁹ Although it must be noted that the New Zealand Defence Force is held firmly under the control of the New Zealand government; this affirms the principle that those with the political power must have the support of the military.

¹⁰ This line of reasoning certainly seems to premise Thrasymachus' argument in Book I that justice is nothing more than the interests of the stronger (*Resp.* 338c).

¹¹ See Jaeger (1944), p.208.

¹² Feldherr and Spawforth (2003), p.1448; Hunt (2007), p.128; Plutarch *Pelopidas* 2.1.

independently of mainstream society.¹³ Plato's context was one of intimate connection between the citizen population as a whole, and the city's military affairs. Consider, for example, the mass mobilisation of Greek citizens across the Persian, Peloponnesian and Corinthian Wars which drew participants from all walks of life, including philosophers such as Socrates and Plato (Intro. §.3). The notion that Plato is somehow scrambling against his better judgement to justify the political power of Kallipolis' warriors seems to lack historical basis.

This assertion is supported by what seems to be a strong connection in Plato's thinking between the roles of the guardian *qua* soldier and the guardian *qua* ruler. As discussed, Plato conceives of a distinguishable guardian spirit that decisively separates the guardians from the productive classes on the basis of a fundamental desire to protect the city from both internal and external enemies (*Resp.* 375b-376c; 415d-e; Ch.1.3). At the basic level, this role is confined to military participation; at the most advanced and developed level it is the role of the philosopher-king. Although the strength of resolve and the motivations for this behaviour evolve over the course of the guardians' careers, the basic spirit, or nature, remains unchanged: the desire to serve and protect that which is recognised as one's own.¹⁴

3. Educating Soldiers: Cultural and Physical Training

The guardians' systematic education builds on their inborn nature, and is approached in the *Republic* in three main stages. In this section I will discuss the first two, the guardians' cultural and physical training, reserving discussion of the third, the guardians'

¹³ For discussion of this point see Kennedy (2005).

¹⁴ For an interesting comparison of Kallipolis' educational system with that of the British Imperial educational system, which also aimed to produce a class of guardians to serve in positions of both military and civilian authority, see Mitchell and Lucas (2003), pp.144-5.

philosophical training, for below. I will begin by considering the importance of cultural education to Greek society in general, and at Kallipolis in particular. I will then stress Plato's concern that this education be practically applicable to the city's warriors in their military capacity, and I will address the scholarly debate over Plato's criticism of contemporary poetry. I will then move onto an examination of physical training at Kallipolis, which is immediately conspicuous for the relative brevity of its treatment. Nevertheless, I will argue that physical training is an important aspect of the guardians' education, conditioning the mind as well as the body, again with a dominant military focus. The combination of this cultural and physical education serves the wider, philosophical purpose of habituating the spirited aspect of the guardians' souls. As I will suggest, the prominence of the military at this point of the *Republic* can be explained by a strong connection in Plato's thought between military participation and the correct expression of spiritedness. This point will become important for my discussion below of the philosopher-kings' motivation, as I suggest that it is the strength of this habituation that allows the philosopher-kings to choose to rule for the city and to renounce the seemingly more pleasurable life of private philosophy.

In Ancient Greece, the arts (music, dance, and songs) were of immense significance. Poetry was the most important and pervasive form of education, and its presence is amply attested in examples from feasts to festivals, rituals to symposia. When Plato addresses the role of poetry in his just state, it is important to understand that he is not thinking of poetry confined to the strictly formal education of youth in an institutional setting, but rather the pervasive and popular culture of society as a whole. For the majority of Greek citizens, poetry represented a standard of knowledge and morality to be admired and emulated, and

in a society that lacked any unifying and authoritative sacred text or clergy, the poets, pre-eminently Homer, filled this gap.¹⁵

In the *Republic*, Plato is acutely aware of the power of poetry to shape thoughts and beliefs, habituating behaviour prior to the presence of reason. This power is dramatised in Book I, in the dialogue between Socrates and Cephalus. Socrates questions Cephalus as to what has been the greatest good he has enjoyed as a result of his great wealth (*Resp.* 330d-331a). In reply, Cephalus' tells of stories of Hades, received in his youth, which have come back to haunt him in his old age. Although he has suppressed these stories for most of his adulthood, when confronted by the prospect of his own mortality he claims to have been filled with foreboding and fear, and is forced to examine his life for the presence of injustice in anticipation of punishment in the afterlife. The effect of Cephalus' early poetical education on his thinking and character are profound. Powerful beliefs are instilled in childhood through the medium of allegorical stories long before the child can distinguish between allegory and truth. The consequence is that later in life, even when the allegorical nature of the stories is understood, the thought patterns that have been established cause belief to persist even against the force of reason (*Resp.* 330d-e). As will be discussed, this is why it is so important that the philosopher-kings be correctly habituated to act justly and selflessly (Ch.2.5). Socrates is at pains to emphasise the importance of censoring the fictional stories that will be told to the guardian-youths even before they are old enough for physical training and factual instruction; he claims that at this stage, their minds are 'especially malleable', and extremely receptive to the impression of ideas (*Resp.* 376e-377b). The onus is placed on the state to ensure that the guardians are raised with beliefs and behaviour suitable for protectors of the state.

¹⁵ Jaeger (1944), p.214; Annas (1981), p.94; Rutherford (1995), p.288; Burnyeat (1999), p.256. The hugely popular status of poetry in Classical Greece can be seen in reports of tragedy and comedy performed in Athens before crowds of fourteen thousand people at the Great Dionysia, and crowds of up to twenty thousand at Homeric recitals; see Burnyeat (1999), p.256.

The guardians' cultural education is addressed in Book III in three key stages: First, the content of the stories, what it is appropriate for the poets to say about gods, heroes, and men (*Resp.* 376e-392c); second, the form or style in which the stories are presented, how it is appropriate to relate them, whether through narration, imitation, or a mixture of both (*Resp.* 392c-398b); third, the harmony and rhythm with which the stories are told (*Resp.* 398c-401d). Throughout his discussion, the importance of this education being applicable and pertinent to the guardians in their role as soldiers is evident.

The first point to note is Socrates' concern that the stories told at Kallipolis be of such a kind as to establish paradigms suitable for warriors, the content aspect of the guardians' cultural education. Any stories about the gods warring, fighting or scheming against each other are to be banned; the danger is that the young guardians, unable to distinguish between what is allegorical and what is not, may be moulded at an early age to think that fighting amongst citizens is acceptable (*Resp.* 378b-e; 416a-b cf. 429d-430b). This clearly targets one of two explicit purposes of the guardians' education: ensuring that the city's warriors do not abuse the city's other citizens (*Resp.* 375b-376c). Socrates then moves to address the second stated purpose of the guardians' education: the need to produce spirited and courageous warriors (*Resp.* 374a-375a). He argues that young guardians must not be told stories that cause them to be afraid of death and to prefer defeat and slavery to fighting courageously on the battlefield: accordingly, all stories of punishments in the afterlife will also be banned (*Resp.* 386a-387c). These stories, which cause the listener to fear Hades are, Socrates states, 'neither true nor beneficial to future warriors' (*Resp.* 386b-c).

The dialogue then proceeds to a discussion of appropriate examples for the guardian-warriors to imitate; here there is concern about both the content of the stories and the form in which they will be delivered. Poetical lamentations of famous heroes, such as Achilles' lament over Patrocles in Homer's *Iliad*, will be removed, as soldiers should be ashamed

to show such weakness and cowardice (*Resp.* 387e-388a cf. *Il.* 24.3-12). Nor will Kallipolis' guardians be given over to excessive laughter: Socrates argues that with any violent display of emotion, violent action generally follows (*Resp.* 389a-d). Kallipolis' guardians, at this point explicitly called soldiers, will only be allowed to hear stories that imitate good men, and that fit the pattern for creating courageous and virtuous warriors (*Resp.* 398a-b).

When Socrates moves on to address the explicitly musical aspects of this cultural education, the modes and rhythms with which the stories will be told, his martial theme continues. He begins by banning 'soft' and 'womanly' scales such as the mixo-Lydian and syntono-Lydian, which he says are entirely inappropriate for warriors (*Resp.* 398d-e). The only scales left in Kallipolis will be the Dorian and the Phrygian: one that imitates the vocal sounds and tones of the courageous person engaged in battle, facing injury and death in a disciplined and resolute manner; the other which imitates the same man engaged in peaceful pursuits, not arrogantly but with temperance, moderation, and satisfaction (*Resp.* 399a-c). The same principles apply to the question of rhythms: only those that imitate an ordered and courageous life will be permitted (*Resp.* 399e-400a). It is these limitations on the culture of Kallipolis, limitations driven by the need to create good soldiers, which, Socrates remarks, unwittingly re-purify the city previously described as luxurious (*Resp.* 399e).

Plato's concern with the content and musical aspects of the guardians' cultural education is understandable; even today we distinguish stories with content inappropriate for certain ages, and recognise that different styles of music can have different effects on one's emotions and feelings. The criticism levelled against imitative poetry, however, demands further explanation; why is Plato so concerned to reach an agreement about whether or not to allow Kallipolis' poets to 'narrate as imitators, or as imitators of some

things but not others – and what sorts of things these are?’ (*Resp.* 394d)¹⁶ To answer this question, we must appreciate Plato’s strong belief that the human soul is naturally assimilative. After offering an explanation appealing to the principle of occupational specialisation, Socrates argues forcibly that whenever a person imitates, whether good examples or bad, their soul is given a taste or desire for the real thing (*Resp.* 395c). A direct correlation is drawn between imitation, *mimesis*, and the establishment of the nature and habits of a person’s body and soul (*Resp.* 395d). Consequently, Kallipolis’ guardians will only imitate examples of courage, temperance, piety and freedom (*Resp.* 395c). They will be forbidden to imitate slaves, women, cowards, bad men, craftsmen and animals (*Resp.* 395d-396b).¹⁷ In order to give a convincing performance, it is common to hear actors speak of the need to ‘get inside the mind of a character’; for Plato, it is totally unthinkable that Kallipolis’ guardians should experience the sensation, and potentially even the thrill, of stepping into the thought processes of a bad character.¹⁸ During the course of reciting a story, when a guardian is to speak of the words or deeds of good men, he will not hesitate to use imitation: if, however he needs to speak of any bad example, he is to use pure narration (*Resp.* 396c-d). The guardians are not ignorant of badness *per se*: they possess a cognitive understanding of the concept, and are able to discuss it in a detached manner. For the correct pre-rational moral habituation of their souls, though, and

¹⁶ Plato’s criticism of poetry is one with firm intellectual precedents including Xenophanes, Heraclitus, and even Euripides; see Jaeger (1944), p.213.

¹⁷ Note here the inconsistency of Plato’s approach to females in the *Republic*. Plato reveals an underlying pro-male bias in passages where he states, for example, that in every single respect, the male is superior to the female (*Resp.* 451c-457b cf. 387e; 395d-e; 398e; 421b-c; 455c; 469d). He is far more forthcoming in the *Timaeus*, where he argues that wicked men will be reborn as women! (Plato *Timaeus* 42b-c cf. 76d-e cf. *Apology* 35b; *Phaedo* 117d) However, in Book VII, Plato is careful to note that many of the guardians will in fact *be* females (*Resp.* 540c). Although Plato’s particularly harsh criticisms seem directed more at *contemporary* examples of women and not at the *Republic*’s virtuous female guardians, as Rosen points out, the dialogue itself is still a ‘masculine daydream’, and Plato is clearly working from the reference point of his male-orientated social paradigm; Rosen (2005), p.186; Vlastos (1997), p.121.

¹⁸ On this topic see Nettleship (1906), p.78; Annas (1981), pp.96-7; Mitchell and Lucas (2003), pp.155-6.

therefore for the performance of their guardian duties, they must remain ignorant of evil in the experiential sense for the duration of their lives.¹⁹

Having discussed the guardians' cultural education, I turn now to a consideration of their physical training, one of the core activities of the guardian class, both auxiliaries and rulers. In this section I will explain the function of physical training within the pedagogical system of Kallipolis and the relationship between physical and musical training. Above all, one can see here the importance Plato places on correctly conducted pre-moral habituation, and the strong connection between this concern and the guardians' participation in the military.

The guardians' cultural training is begun in childhood and continued for the duration of their lives; its importance, then, is central (*Resp.* 403c). However, Socrates states that there

¹⁹ The question of mimetic poetry is returned to in Book X, where Socrates claims, remarkably, that *all* mimetic poetry will be refused admittance at Kallipolis, an apparent contradiction of what he said previously in Book III (*Resp.* 595a cf. 396b-398b). Although this debate lies somewhat outside the focus of this thesis, some comment is useful to explain why the points made in Book III on the positive role of poetry are not undercut by what is said in Book X. I suggest that when Socrates returns to the discussion of poetry in Book X, his purposes have clearly changed from those in Book III. In the intervening chapters, Socrates has discussed the Theory of the Forms, developed his account of the soul, and spoken at length on the nature of philosophy. His concern is now for the lives of philosophers who possess true knowledge, not with the education of auxiliary-guardians, who only possess true belief; as Jaeger argues, in the presence of philosophical knowledge, poetical education is rendered obsolete; Jaeger (1944), p.358. Socrates begins his critique of poetry in Book X with a reaffirmation of poetry's power to corrupt the minds of its audience, and then proffers two new arguments for why poetry should be banished from the city: First, the poets lack true knowledge (*Resp.* 595a-602c); second, poetry appeals to the bad, non-rational part of a human's soul (*Resp.* 602c-605c). After these two arguments, one final 'chief charge', is made against imitative poetry: its ability to corrupt *good* people; Socrates argues that even the best people, when they hear poetical lamentations, give themselves over, and in some sense enjoy the suffering of the character, praising the poet who tells of this suffering so beautifully. This makes for a dramatic contrast to real life where *endurance* of suffering is seen as the quality to pride oneself upon and praise (*Resp.* 605d-e). In the *Republic*, one can see three distinguishable views of poetry: First, from Book III, that poetry is a powerful tool that can be harnessed and used for the purposes of correct habituation, which is the key point for this thesis; second, from the first two arguments in Book X, that poetry is a demonstrably pale reflection of the truth, and can be dismissed out of hand; third, from the final argument of Book X, that poetry is a corruptive and corrosive influence on the human soul and must be banished from the city; see Annas (1981), p.342. At least for the purposes of the auxiliary-guardians' education in Book III, Plato seems to believe firmly that poetry serves a valuable purpose in the just state. With regards to the third position, from Book X, it seems to me that Plato no longer has in mind the conditions of Kallipolis; perhaps he has reverted to his own historical context of fourth century BC Athens. In support of this suggestion is the fact that the emotions portrayed in Book X as being aroused by poetry, which result in the corruption of the audience's souls, seem to be sufficiently checked by the restrictions established in Kallipolis; not least, of course, the wise and vigilant guardianship of the philosopher-kings. With regards to the second position, that poetry is merely a pale reflection of the truth, I suggest that Plato's efforts to distinguish philosophy from poetry come clearly to the fore; see Gadamer (1980), p.70; Nightingale (1995), pp.13-59; Nussbaum (2001), pp.122-135; 200-233. Ultimately, the positive role accorded to poetry in Book III, its ability to correctly habituate the guardians' pre-rational souls, is maintained.

is no need to enumerate its specifics in any great length for which I suggest three reasons (*Resp.* 403d).²⁰ First, physical training is clearly not as complex as poetry: where poetry is concerned with metres, harmonies, content and form, physical training is primarily concerned with strength and stamina developed through basic, repetitive activities such as weight-lifting and running. Even though some degree of combat training is clearly intended to take place under the heading of physical training, this demands nothing like the complexity present in poetry (*Resp.* 412b cf. Ch.3.2). Second, physical training does not pose the same threat as poetry. Although Socrates states that excessive dedication to physical training can make a person savage and irrational, this is presented as both less likely and less dangerous than the potentially subversive and subliminal effects of bad poetry (*Resp.* 407b-c; 411c-e cf. 547e).²¹ Third, and perhaps most importantly, is Socrates' argument that good physical training of the body flows from good cultural training of the soul, but not vice-versa: a properly habituated mind will take proper care of the body without the need for detailed instructions (*Resp.* 403d-e).

The ostensible aim of the guardians' physical training is to produce good soldiers and the principles for its conduct will be similar to those of the guardians' cultural education; they must be simple, good, and 'especially adapted to the conditions of war' (*Resp.* 404b). The guardians will avoid drunkenness and eat and exercise in a way that will develop health suited to the frequent changes of diet and climate typical of military campaigns (*Resp.* 403e-404b). Following Homer, Socrates especially recommends the consumption of roasted meat (*Resp.* 405b-c cf. 595b). The guardians must also avoid various luxuries such

²⁰ Specific discussion of the particular, 'dances, hunts, chases with hounds, athletic contests, and horse races' that would make up the guardians' physical education is deliberately avoided. For further discussion of this point see Ch.3.2.

²¹ Plato criticises Sparta in particular on this score, a criticism re-emphasised by Aristotle (*Leg.* 628d-f cf. *Pol.* 1269a29-19). However, as Xenophon makes clear, for soldiers in the majority of Greek city-states during this period, the likelihood of neglecting physical training was far more of a threat (*Hell.* 6.1.5); see van Wees (2002), p.71.

as rich sauces, prostitutes, and pastries as ‘complexity engenders intemperance’ (*Resp.* 405a).

A substantial amount of Socrates’ discussion of physical training is concerned with the subject of medicine: surgeries and law courts are the two main proofs, as far as Socrates is concerned, of the presence of intemperance in the body and the soul respectively (*Resp.* 404e-410b). Again referring to Homer, Socrates cites the example of Asclepius at the Battle of Troy to argue that medicine in Kallipolis should be for those who are generally healthy but who are suffering from some specific affliction; those whose bodies are riddled by diseases are not to receive medical attention as they are of no benefit to either themselves or their city (*Resp.* 407c-d). The medical treatment will be that of a military field hospital targeting otherwise healthy and robust warriors (*Resp.* 407e-408b).

At this point Socrates revises his earlier claim that physical training is primarily for the body and argues that it is, in fact, done less for strength than for the purposes of arousing the spirited element of the guardians' souls (*Resp.* 410a-c). Excessive concern for the body beyond simple training, then, is identified as a significant obstacle as there is potential for a guardian to become savage and ignorant, immune to the influence of reason, and excessively warlike (*Resp.* 410d-411e cf. 547e). On the other hand, Socrates also points out that neglect of this physical training for cultural pursuits will create a soft spirit, and make the guardian a feeble warrior (*Resp.* 411b). There needs to be a harmony between the two educational concerns: the physical training tenses and the cultural training relaxes the spirited element of the soul to achieve the correct pitch (*Resp.* 410b-d).

Nevertheless, I believe Bloom takes this psychic-harmonising role of the physical training too far when he states that Plato treats the guardians as men without bodies who do not need weapons to win victories: Socrates does not actually deny, as Bloom states,

that physical training has anything at all to do with the body.²² To take this reading is to ignore other passages that emphasise, for example, the physical hardness of Kallipolis' warriors in relation to other soldiers of 'tender' armies, and Plato does mention the need for training in traditional combat skills (*Resp.* 412b; 422c-d). Nevertheless, the general point that Plato is more concerned with psychic development than physical development does seem to hold true. This education is applicable in the practical military context of the city's army; but the more important consideration appears to be that of the application of warfare to the correct development of the guardians' pre-rational souls, which provides the vehicle for the proper expression of spiritedness. As I will discuss below, it is this spiritedness which comes alongside as an ally to reason and which motivates the guardians to selfless behaviour. It is the quality of self-sacrifice which is needed for the philosopher-kings to reject the life of private philosophy and to rule for the city's sake (Ch.2.5).

4. Educating Officers: Selection, Primary Education, Mathematics and Dialectic

Following extensive discussion of the philosopher-kings and the Form of the Good, Socrates turns, in Book VII, to the question of 'how such people will come to exist'; this is the third educational topic discussed in the *Republic*, broadly defined as the guardians' philosophical education (*Resp.* 502c-541b). Before I begin this section, I offer a note on terminology. Although it is common to identify dialectic with philosophy, in this thesis I have also included mathematics under the heading of 'philosophical education'. Although each stage of Kallipolis' educational programme serves to prepare the guardian for the subsequent stage, Plato does present mathematics and then dialectic as clearly distinct from the preceding education. Whereas previously the guardians' physical and cultural

²² Bloom (1991), pp.361-5.

education was concerned with ‘that which is coming to be’ (the growth of the body and the proper harmonisation of the soul), both mathematical and dialectical education are concerned with ‘what is’ (*Resp.* 521c-533b). Referring to the Analogy of the Cave, Socrates describes this education as the process of turning the soul from darkness towards the light, reaching an understanding of the Form of the Good and attaining true, philosophical knowledge (*Resp.* 521c cf. 514a-520a). Because mathematics is such an important and related part of dialectical study, I think it makes sense to refer to the combination of the two subjects as the guardians’ ‘philosophical training’.

In this section I will address the topic of Kallipolis’ philosophical education in three stages. First, I will provide an overview of the selection and education processes used to identify and train potential philosopher-kings, which will include reference to previous discussion of Kallipolis’ military hierarchy. I will emphasise the function of this process of turning the soul of the guardians towards an understanding of the transcendent and unchanging Forms, whilst at the same time the guardians participate in civic and military affairs. Some discussion will also be made at this point of the guardians’ primary philosophical training. Second, I will discuss the first formal stage of the guardians’ philosophical training; the study of mathematics. I will look at the importance of mathematics to Plato’s thought, and will highlight the contemporary belief that mathematics held the power to unlock a deeper understanding of nature and reality. I will then cover the content of this training and the process by which it turns the soul from an understanding of the sensible to the intelligible. This point, however, must be tempered by Socrates’ ongoing concern to relate mathematical knowledge to practical applications, especially those of a general at war. Third, I will discuss the second formal stage of the guardians’ philosophical training; the study of dialectic that ultimately leads to knowledge of the Forms. I will provide some discussion of what dialectic and the Forms actually are;

however, I will quickly turn to the more pertinent subject of its application to military rule. This final, philosophical stage of training provides the secure foundation on which the philosopher-kings are able to legislate and rule the just city; it also develops a kind of sharp analytical thinking clearly of use in the military realm. The guardians' philosophical education is not presented as a wholly abstract and intellectual pursuit; it is, in fact, driven by two overwhelmingly practical concerns: the city's need for both wise politicians and good military officers (*Resp.* 519b-c; 521b-d).

To begin, I will provide a summary of the philosopher-kings' career-path, emphasising the educational components at each stage of progression (cf. Ch.1.4). In Book VI, Socrates argues that as youths, the guardians should be educated in philosophy suitable for the young; during puberty, the focus should be on developing the body; as they grow older and increase in maturity, so too will the exercise of philosophy become more rigorous; finally, as old men retired from politics and military service, they will do nothing else except philosophise (*Resp.* 498b-c). This progression is further developed in Book VII, where Socrates explicitly enumerates the selection process for the philosopher-kings. The guardians begin their lives with a philosophical education designed for youths; this will include calculation, geometry, and preparation appropriate for dialectic, but not in any formal or forced manner; rather integrated into the children's play (*Resp.* 536d-e). Following a period of extensive physical training between the ages of eighteen and twenty, those observed to be most adept at higher studies will receive ten years of formal training in the mathematical subjects informally learned as youths (*Resp.* 537b-c; Ch.1.3). The force of this training is not only to gain specific mathematical knowledge, but also to understand the underlying and unifying principles of mathematics and of nature itself; this clearly serves as a precursor to understanding the theory of underlying and unifying Forms. Later, at age thirty, those again observed to be best at studies, as well as in political

and military affairs, will spend five years in intense and exclusive dialectical training (*Resp.* 539e). This period of training aims to break down the guardians' previous moral habituation, which depends on the use of allegorical stories, and points the guardians towards an understanding of the true moral ideal.²³ Socrates argues that the practice of dialectic before this age is harmful, as it will invariably be abused and treated as a game, undermining its ability to direct its user towards the Forms (*Resp.* 537e-539d). Finally, at the age of fifty, and following fifteen years of civic and military service, a select few will behold the Form of the Good and, making it their model, they will rule the city as philosopher-kings whilst educating others to take their place for when they retire; as I have argued, this role will continue to include military participation (*Resp.* 540a-c; Ch.1.4).²⁴

Kallipolis' complete philosophical education system targets two distinct products. The first is the acquisition of knowledge to be specifically applied in practical circumstances: the knowledge of arithmetic and calculation, for example, which facilitate the correct marshalling of troops (*Resp.* 522c-e). The second is the somewhat less specific, although no less practical product of a complete paradigm shift within the souls and minds of the guardians: the process of turning from darkness towards the light, approaching a philosophical knowledge of the intangible Forms (*Resp.* 521c cf. 514a-520a). Of the two, Plato is most concerned with the latter; each stage of the education can be seen to advance this rotation of the soul (*Resp.* 518b-c).²⁵

Before proceeding to a fuller discussion of the guardians' mathematical and dialectical training, further comment must be made on the subject of the guardians' primary education. As discussed, this education rests on the premise that the souls of children are

²³ See Murphy (1951), p.180.

²⁴ If any of these periods seem excessively long, for example the ten years spent studying mathematics or the five years spent studying dialectic, we should perhaps remember, for example, that Aristotle spent twenty years studying under Plato in the Academy; Keyt (2006), p.403.

²⁵ See Annas (1981), p.87. However, I believe Annas takes this point too far and under-emphasises the practically applicable aspects of this education, as I will discuss below.

especially malleable, and uniquely receptive to the indoctrination of ideas and beliefs; this period of education is seen to establish the physical, emotional, and intellectual patterns that will shape the course of the guardians' entire lives (*Resp.* 376e-377b; Ch.2.3).²⁶ The cultural and gymnastic content of this education has been adequately addressed above: the guardian children will be taught stories of such content and in such a manner that they will promote courage and justice in the soul and provide virtuous exemplars to imitate; they will do physical training to develop strength and robust fitness, as well as to maintain psychic harmony suitable to warriors and potential philosophers (Ch.2.3). Before the age of eighteen, the age at which basic military training commences, the young guardians will also receive some first-hand experience of warfare, being taken on horseback to observe specially selected battles; Socrates argues that this will give the young guardians a taste for war, as well as distinguish those whose spirits are not brave enough to deal with the fears that guardians must face (*Resp.* 537a). As Gill observes, taken as a whole, this initial education is designed to instil the societal values and expectations of the just state in the largely pre-reflective souls of the guardians; of these bravery, moral fortitude, and self-discipline, qualities demanded of future warriors, are clearly to the fore.²⁷

In addition to this measure is the somewhat underdeveloped notion that the guardian youth will receive a form of rudimentary philosophical education covering calculation, geometry, and preparation appropriate for dialectic (*Resp.* 536d-e). Although Socrates rejects the contemporary belief that philosophy can be studied and mastered by young men, informal philosophical training is presented as useful to establish patterns for future development (*Resp.* 497e-498b). Socrates argues that at this age, children are not responsive to any form of instruction other than compulsion, which for subjects like

²⁶ Jaeger (1944), p.212; Mitchell and Lucas (2003), p.145; Klosko (2006), p.125. Early education is clearly very important to Plato's argument in the *Republic* and, judging by its extended coverage in the *Laws*, it is a subject that became increasingly important as his thinking developed; see Grube (1980), p.235.

²⁷ Gill (1985), pp.11; 193.

philosophy, is slavish and not befitting free people (*Resp.* 536d-e). Unlike physical training, Socrates states that the benefits of enforced philosophical training are totally negated by the act of compulsion, which depends on the fear of punishment (*Resp.* 536e). The young guardians' philosophical training, then, will take the form of games that give the youths a taste for philosophy in the same way that by being taken to battle they will develop a taste for war. How this requirement would be implemented in practical terms is not discussed in the text, although I suggest it is not difficult to imagine. The vast array of modern resources designed to educate children through the medium of games and toys may provide a useful starting point for comparison. Plato's thinking on this subject, as with the auxiliaries' education in general, can be seen to address two competing educational concerns: the need to promote the capacity for critical thinking at the same time as habituating the young guardians in the city's prevailing social standards and requirements, especially those related to war (cf. *Resp.* 590e).²⁸

I turn now to the second part of this section, an examination of the mathematical education undertaken by Kallipolis' guardian-rulers between the ages of twenty and thirty, a subject addressed in Book VII immediately following Plato's Allegory of the Cave (*Resp.* 521c-531e; Ch.1.3-4). I will approach this subject in three stages: First, I will consider the importance of mathematics to Plato's thought with reference to his contemporary intellectual context; second, I will discuss how this education contributes to a rotation of the soul from the sensible world towards pure, analytical thought and an understanding of purely intelligible objects, a precursor to dialectic and knowledge of the Forms; third, I will relate the content of this education to its practical military applications. Plato's philosophical purposes are dominant in his examination of mathematics; however,

²⁸ See Gill (1985), p.2; Mitchell and Lucas (2003), p.145.

the realistic and interconnected need to develop the city's guardian-generals continues to hold a place of importance, even at this developed stage of the argument.

According to tradition, above the entrance to Plato's Academy was a sign that read, 'Let no one ignorant of geometry enter'.²⁹ This attests to a connection in Plato's thought between mathematics and wisdom not immediately apparent to his modern audience, and firmly rooted in his intellectual context. As scholars have recognised, Plato was heavily influenced by an emergent group of fifth century BC thinkers who looked to mathematics and the numerical relationships between objects as a means of understanding the natural world. Intellectuals from the likes of Zeno onwards argued through appeals to motion, plurality and division, for a single, hidden, and unifying force to explain the manifest variety in the world.³⁰ The influence of the Pythagorean school of thought is particularly evident: Socrates attributes them, for example, with discovering a significant link between astronomy and harmonic theory (*Resp.* 530d).³¹ This search for unity and oneness is clearly evident in Plato's Theory of the Forms, an explanation for both visible and intelligible existence dependent on the existence of a transcendent and unchanging first principle.

It is also important to note that in Plato's time, the principles of mathematics were by no means fully worked out; rather, they were in the process of ongoing discovery and development at a range of locations including the Academy.³² Philodemus' first century BC account records that under Plato's careful direction, his students significantly advanced the study of metrology and geometry.³³ Of the mathematicians included in Plato's circle, the most famous perhaps is Theaetetus, one of Plato's close friends, and the eponymous

²⁹ See White (2006).

³⁰ Jaeger (1944), pp.302-3; Annas (1981), p.274; Irwin (1992), p.50; Kraut (1997), pp.ix-10.

³¹ Nevertheless, Plato does criticise the Pythagoreans for not progressing from sense-perception to pure thought (*Resp.* 531a); see Jaeger (1944), p.303.

³² See Murphy (1951), p.189.

³³ Reproduced in Mueller (1992), pp.172-3.

character of Plato's dialogue.³⁴ According to Eudemus, Theaetetus invented the study of solid geometry that Socrates conspicuously includes in the guardians' educational programme, perhaps a form of posthumous acknowledgement to the mathematician and his work (*Resp.* 528a-b).³⁵ In this environment of constant and significant discovery, it is unsurprising that Plato saw mathematics as the natural ally to philosophy and an aid to discovering the true nature of existence.

In the *Republic*, the guardian-rulers' mathematical education consists of five key disciplines whose primary purpose is to turn the soul from the sensible world towards pure, analytical thought. This serves, in turn, as a precursor to the study of dialectic. Over the course of this decade-long training, the guardian will receive formal instruction in: Number and calculation (*Resp.* 521d-526c); plane geometry (*Resp.* 526c-528b); solid geometry (*Resp.* 528b-e); astronomy (*Resp.* 528e-530d); and harmonic theory (*Resp.* 530d-531c). As Miller argues, these subjects are deliberately arranged in a sequence designed to effect a psychic conversion towards an understanding of purely intelligible objects.³⁶ Beginning with number, instruction moves to geometry, and then finally astrology and harmonics. At each stage, there is movement away from the most sensible and comprehensible objects towards purely intelligible concepts and ideas. Proper investigation, Socrates claims, will allow the guardian to see what each of these subjects share in common, their affinities and kinship, and will point towards an understanding of the Beautiful and the Good (*Resp.* 531c-d). This is the revelation of truth that serves as the foundation to the study of dialectic.

The ability of mathematical studies to achieve this psychic conversion is explicitly discussed in Plato's Analogy of the Line which divides human existence into two main

³⁴ The same Theaetetus who, it has been noted, died as a result of injuries suffered during the Corinthian War (Intro. §.3).

³⁵ A suggestion made by Jaeger (1944), pp.305-6.

³⁶ Miller (2007), pp.318-323.

sections: the visible and the intelligible worlds (*Resp.* 509d-511e). The first sub-section of the visible world, signified by reflections and images, corresponds to the cognitive state of illusion; the second sub-section of the visible world, signified by tangible objects, corresponds to the cognitive state of belief; the first sub-section of the intelligible world, signified by mathematics, corresponds to thinking; the final stage, signified by the Forms, corresponds to understanding. Mathematics makes the leap to intelligible thought through two key steps: First, by using sensible objects as symbols to understand that which is not sensible; second, by reasoning from abstract hypotheses not merely sensible observations.³⁷ The overall effect of this mathematical education is to cause the guardian to let go of his or her dependence on the imperfect sensible world, and to begin to increasingly trust his or her own intellect. Whereas previously the guardians' primary and cultural education had chiefly depended on the mind's passive capacity to absorb the beliefs or ideas of others, in this second, philosophical stage of education there is an emphasis on promoting independent and analytical thought.³⁸

Although the guardians' mathematical education is primarily intended to re-adjust the focus of their souls, it nevertheless addresses some very clear military purposes. As Socrates states in his introduction to this education, because the guardians are both warriors and philosophers, 'It must not be useless to warlike men' (*Resp.* 521c-d; 525b). Kallipolis' mathematical education serves the guardians in their capacity as the army's officers in two main ways: The first, and most obvious, is the specific application of mathematical knowledge to practical military concerns. Socrates begins with arithmetic and calculation, subjects whose relevance to war is immediately apparent on the question

³⁷ Nettleship (1906), p.249. The key difference between thinking and understanding is that in the final stage there is a fundamental challenging of the hypotheses which underlie mathematical thought; see Klosko (2006), p.93.

³⁸ Nettleship (1906), p.251; Annas (1981), p.273; Gill (1985), p.16. In the final, dialectical stage of the guardians' education, this analytical reasoning will be used to critique, and ultimately understand, concepts such as goodness and justice.

of marshalling troops. Agamemnon's failure in this regard is given as the reason for his military incompetence, and Socrates states that warriors must be able to count and calculate (*Resp.* 522c-e; 525b-c). The next subjects discussed are plane and solid geometry, which are again linked to military applications. Socrates states that in war, whether in setting up camp, occupying a region, commanding troops, or any other military manoeuvre in battle or on the march, being skilled at geometry is essential (*Resp.* 526d). Finally, astronomy, which brings an awareness of seasons, months and years, is described as highly relevant to the general, although Socrates notes that this is not as important as astronomy's philosophical applications (*Resp.* 527d; 529c-531c).

The second way in which this mathematical education serves the guardians in their capacity as officers is through the development of analytical reasoning, which I have touched on above (Ch.1.4). As was well appreciated in Plato's historical context, warfare demands commanders with the ability to quickly and accurately respond to uncertain circumstances; to make predictions and to take appropriate action. As was also appreciated in Plato's time, a solid grasp of mathematics serves the instrumental purpose of honing analytical ability; as Isocrates states, mathematical study forces the mind to confront difficult problems, sharpens the intellect, and helps a person 'grasp and learn more quickly those subjects which are of more importance and of greater value.'³⁹ Although Socrates argues that this ability is primarily useful for higher philosophical training, as he notes, the guardian-rulers are both warriors and philosophers, and this analytical ability is clearly applicable to both spheres (*Resp.* 525b). Because this intellectual faculty finds its fullest realisation following dialectical instruction and an understanding of the Forms, I will provide fuller discussion of this topic below.

³⁹ Isocrates *Antidosis* 264-5. On this topic see White (2006), p.233.

Having addressed Kallipolis' mathematical education, I turn now to the third topic of this section, an examination of the guardian-rulers' education in higher philosophy. This education is undertaken in two stages: First, the exclusive dialectical training between ages thirty and thirty-five; second, the process of being led to behold the Form of the Good at age fifty (*Resp.* 539e-540b). To this point, the guardians' education has undergone a distinct shift towards an increasingly philosophical focus, and Socrates' concern for military application has become less and less overt. This is clearly seen in the progression from musical and physical training to the ten-year course in mathematics where Socrates actively encourages Glaucon to look beyond the superficial to mathematics' underlying, philosophical potential (*Resp.* 527d-528a). The observation also holds true for this final stage of the guardians' education after which, Socrates states, the guardians will spend most of their time engaged in philosophy and not public service (*Resp.* 540b). Be this as it may, following the five years of dialectical training, the guardians undertake fifteen years of sustained military and political service, a period of time longer than their mathematical and dialectical training combined. Even after beholding the Form of the Good, the philosopher-kings will still 'labour in politics and rule for the city's sake', a task that will most probably include military command (*Resp.* 539e-540b; Ch.1.4). The philosopher-kings' higher, philosophical education clearly prepares them for the performance of civic duties.

In the practical sense, this phase of education appears to be most useful for politics; knowledge of the Good allows the philosopher-kings to legislate well and to preserve justice in the city. However, in the development of analytical reason, I argue that there is also significant benefit for the guardian-rulers *qua* generals. The question of the guardians' philosophical training is immense, and it touches on some of the more heavily debated aspects of Platonic scholarship. Here I will provide some discussion of dialectic and the

Forms, in terms of both content and the processes by which they are apprehended; however, my main concern is to emphasise the way in which this education encourages sharp, analytical thinking applicable in the military realm. Fuller discussion of warfare's importance to the philosopher-kings will be made below (Ch.2.5); for now my concern is simply with the practical applications of philosophy for the highest ranking officers of Kallipolis' army.

The guardian-rulers' higher philosophical training begins with five years of dialectical training between ages thirty and thirty-five. During the ten years of mathematical education, the guardians will be observed, and only those whose natures show the greatest potential to achieve 'unified vision' will be selected for dialectical training (*Resp.* 537c-d cf. 531c-d). The force of this instruction, as with mathematics previously, is to encourage the guardians to step beyond the sensible world and into an appreciation of the intelligible; by the end of these five years, it will be apparent who is able to proceed towards a true understanding of the Forms (*Resp.* 537d).

What exactly is meant in the *Republic* by 'dialectic' is not entirely clear. The term relates to two Greek words, *dialektike* and *dialegesthai*: The former literally means 'the technical ability of being skilled in language or argument'; the latter conveys the sense of conversation, discussion and argumentation.⁴⁰ As Ferrari notes, Plato seems 'deliberately cagey' in his use of this term.⁴¹ At one point dialectic seems to be philosophical argumentation, disputation and refutation in the conventional sense (*Resp.* 539b-d). Elsewhere it is lauded as the ability to achieve a unified vision of science as a whole (*Resp.* 537c). Perhaps the most useful indication is found in Socrates' discussion of the Analogy of the Line, the force of which is reiterated in his specific discussion of dialectical education in Book VII. Socrates argues that dialectic is the discursive power to use

⁴⁰ For a full discussion of this topic see Roochnik (2003), pp.133-151. For a good overview of dialectic in the *Republic* see Nettleship (1906), pp.277-289.

⁴¹ Ferrari (2000), p.xxx cf. Mitchell and Lucas (2003), p.101.

hypotheses as stepping stones to achieve an understanding of what is ‘un-hypothetical and the first principle of everything’ (*Resp.* 511b-c). Dialectic is the process of eschewing sense-perception in favour of reason, and of achieving the philosophical definition of each thing ‘as itself’ (*Resp.* 532a-b). This goes beyond mathematical reasoning to question the very hypotheses on which mathematical study is constructed, but which it does not question (*Resp.* 510c).⁴²

Dialectic is also used to encourage the guardians to challenge, using reason, convictions held since childhood; to question their preconceived notions of concepts such as goodness and the truth. This is therefore a very dangerous period of instruction, one that demands proper safeguards (*Resp.* 537c-539d). An important measure will be to shield dialectical argumentation from the young and to postpone instruction in the subject until a relatively late stage of the guardians' lives. This is because, Socrates argues, youths generally misuse dialectic by treating it as a tool for competitive refutation which does not encourage the pursuit of truth but rather radical scepticism and lawlessness (*Resp.* 539b). The guardians are only allowed to critique the city's norms and conventions after they have been equipped with the proper age and instruction to understand why and how the city's norms and conventions have been put in place.⁴³ Although Socrates is clear that it is only at age fifty and following fifteen years public service that the guardians will behold the Form of the Good and rule as philosopher-kings, it seems quite certain that during this five year period of dialectical training there will also be some reconstruction of the moral ideal. In the Allegory of the Cave, before looking at the sun, the philosopher will look at night at the light of the stars and the moon (*Resp.* 516a-b). As Murphy suggests, this dialectical stage of education may perhaps end in the apprehension of principles such as

⁴² Socrates gives examples of hypotheses such as the existence of ‘the odd and the even, the various figures, the three kinds of angles, and other things akin to these’ (*Resp.* 510c). See Annas (1981), pp.277-93.

⁴³ Gill (1985), p.5. As Gill notes, in this passage there may in fact be some criticism by Plato of the historical Socrates' method of encouraging young Athenians to ask such questions, men like Alcibiades whose lawlessness later in life was infamous.

the Form of Justice and other moral virtues, even if the connection is not made to the unifying Form of the Good.⁴⁴ The process of dialectical analysis does not only result in disassembling, but also of building up a foundation that enables the guardians to lead practical lives.

Perhaps the clearest and, for the purpose of this thesis, the most informative explanation of the role Plato intends dialectic to hold in the guardians' philosophical education comes from an architectural analogy proposed by Mitchell and Lucas.⁴⁵ Imagine a group of people who come across the ruins of an unknown building and who wish to piece the building back together. All that remains are fragments of building materials, analogous to the various objects of the sensible world. The process of reconstruction consists of picking up individual fragments and hypothesising as to which larger object the fragments originally belonged.⁴⁶ This is a process of inquiry, discussion, and debate: each fragment must be examined for an understanding of what it is, in and of itself; what its function is; how it operates. At this point each hypothesis is tentative, but through the process of discussion and inquiry, the re-constructors are able to propose 'higher' hypotheses; they attempt to explain how several fragments belong to each other by appealing to underlying, unifying concepts such as columns, vaults, vestibules and altars. The process of examining and evaluating these higher hypotheses allows the re-constructors to see how each architectural element exists in relation to the others; at this stage there is a developing awareness of what the building itself may in fact ultimately look like. Finally, the mind's eye grasps the underlying design, the 'Form' of the building, which makes sense of the ruins in their entirety.⁴⁷ At this point, the re-constructors are able

⁴⁴ Murphy (1951), p.181.

⁴⁵ Mitchell and Lucas (2003), p.104.

⁴⁶ This process is akin to the Socratic elenchus of Plato's early dialogues, but, at Kallipolis, it is done under ideal circumstances; Gill (1996), p.282.

⁴⁷ See *Letter VII*, which describes this process of realising the true Form in somewhat mystical terms. The author writes: 'For it does not at all admit of verbal expression like other studies, but, as a result of continued

to proceed with the task of arranging the rest of the building using the Form as their guide and in the assurance that each fragment is being placed as it should be.

The key point I wish to emphasise with regards to dialectic's military application is the heavy focus on rational, systematic, and analytical thinking. Some scholars have pointed out that Plato's reason for thinking that five years of dialectical education is suitable preparation for guardians who are about to embark on fifteen years of military and political service is unclear, especially considering his concern to distinguish a higher, intelligible world from the lower, sensible one.⁴⁸ I suggest that the answer to this problem lies, at least partially, in the guardians' developed ability to process information in a logical and reliably sound manner. At its core, the guardians' philosophical training is instruction in logical thinking processes; this enables the guardians to critique social conventions and progress to a philosophical understanding of the Forms.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Socrates makes clear that this ability will also apply to the more practical areas of military and political rule. He states that this kind of thinking provides the basis, 'to rule in [the] city', and to 'control the most important things'; dialectic is the capstone of the complete-guardians' education, freeing the guardians from their former state of irrationality (*Resp.* 534d).⁵⁰

Before concluding my discussion of the guardians' higher education, I note the limited scholarly treatment of the subject as it relates to Plato's concern for its military, and even political, application. Of those who do address the topic, the reaction is almost

application to the subject itself and communion therewith, it is brought to birth in the soul on a sudden, as light that is kindled by a leaping spark, and thereafter it nourishes itself" (Plato (?) *Letter VII* 341c-d; trans. Bury). Whether or not this represents some kind of quasi-religious revelatory experience, however, is debated; see Klosko (2006), pp.95-6.

⁴⁸ Rosen (2005), p.282; Klosko (2006), p.179.

⁴⁹ Despite the fact that Plato's Theory of the Forms is a complex and highly debated subject, much of the detail of this subject is not hugely relevant to Plato's political philosophy and, more pertinently, to the military focus of this thesis. The most relevant facts seem to be that there is an underlying and unifying principle, the Form of the Good, which makes sense of existence; this principle can be apprehended through rigorous intellectual dialectic; and that knowledge of this principle enables its possessor to both live and legislate from a secure moral foundation. For a good introduction to this topic see Klosko (2006), pp.87-104. For more detailed discussion see Blackson (1995); Fine (2003); Ferejohn (2006).

⁵⁰ For the military careers of the complete-guardians, including the fifteen year period of military activity between ages thirty-five and fifty, see Ch. 1.4.

overwhelmingly critical; Jaeger is the only scholar I have found who presents Plato's concern to apply the guardians' mathematical training, for example, to warfare in anything approaching a positive light.⁵¹ At the polar opposite sits Annas, who claims that mathematics' military usage derives from an uneasy feeling that legitimisation must be sought through practical application.⁵² Annas describes Socrates' argument at this point as 'utterly grotesque' and, perhaps revealing more about her own thinking than Plato's, uses this passage as a platform to level criticism at NATO's research funding!⁵³

A somewhat more serious allegation is that the discussion of the philosopher-kings' education is merely included as an excuse to prescribe an ideal education for the philosopher *as such*. Planinc typifies this view, and argues that although Socrates says mathematics must be useful to warlike men, his purpose is, in fact, to demonstrate the truth of the opposite. Planinc claims that if the guardians were to study mathematics in the manner Socrates prescribes (driving at mathematics' philosophical application), they would both avoid war and not learn anything useful for war.⁵⁴ I feel Planinc's second charge has been adequately addressed above. With regards to his first point, I believe the argument suffers from an unbalanced reading of the *Republic*. As I will discuss in the succeeding section, unlike other Socratic dialogues such as the *Symposium*, where the major emphasis is philosophy as the individual pursuit of wisdom, in the *Republic*, Plato's concern is to explore what would be required for true justice to be achieved on the civic level. Accordingly, there is far less attention paid to the distinctly philosophical aspects of Plato's thought than one would expect. There is no real explanation of the Form of the Good, or even how it is apprehended by the potential philosopher-king: the three analogies which are used by Socrates in Books VI to VII to explain this process are just that;

⁵¹ Jaeger (1944), p.301.

⁵² Annas (1981), p.275.

⁵³ Annas (1981), p.275.

⁵⁴ Planinc (1991), pp.123-5.

analogies. I suggest that in consideration of the wider context of the work, Plato places more focus on the integrity of thematic and narrative structure than Planinc allows. For justice to be achieved on the civic level, the city needs to be run well; this requires good politicians. For justice to be preserved on the civic level, the city will need to fight wars; this requires an army led by proficient generals. The most natural and, I suggest, the most consistent reading of this topic is to see the practical aspects of this higher education, both military and political, as genuine concerns.

5. Philosopher-Kings: Compelled to Rule

While Socrates describes dialectic as the capstone of the philosopher-kings' education (*Resp.* 534e), it is quite clear that the philosopher-kings are themselves the capstone of the just city. With over fifty years of intensive habituation, education and experience, the philosopher-kings are at once the city's most highly prized product, and its greatest asset. Having completed my discussion of Kallipolis' educational system, I will now offer final comment on the philosopher *qua* ruler and on Socrates' insistence that compulsion will be needed to make the philosopher-kings rule.⁵⁵ In this section, I will offer two explanations for why the philosopher-kings agree to return to the cave: The first relies on the force of reason; the second relies on the force of sub-rational moral habituation. With regards to the former, I will stress the concept of justice, and the intellectual recognition by the philosopher-kings that it is good, all things considered, to act justly and in the common interest. I will deal at some length with the concept of compulsion, and I will reject the argument of Brown that this compulsion is applied in the form of laws, which denies the

⁵⁵ My use of the masculine pronoun to refer to the philosopher-kings throughout this section is not to imply that there will be no female philosopher-kings, an idea Socrates is careful to dispel (*Resp.* 540c). It is rather for the sake of convenience and in keeping with Socrates' own predominantly male orientated language (Ch.3.4).

intellectual motivational properties of the philosopher-kings' philosophical knowledge. With regards to the latter, I will suggest that the moral quality of self-sacrifice, introduced in consequence of the demands of warfare and promoted across the course of the guardians' entire lives, plays a key role in the philosopher-kings' decision to eschew a life of private philosophy and to rule for the city's sake. Looking to Plato's psychological theory as discussed in Book IV, and in particular his account of Leontius and the corpses (*Resp.* 439e-440a), I will argue that neither explanation, when taken in isolation, provides a totally sufficient answer for why the philosopher-kings decide to rule. I suggest that the true answer must combine these two concerns; war, therefore, holds one final and prominent role in the argument of the *Republic*.

Key to any discussion of Kallipolis' philosopher-kings is the question of their motivation to engage in public service, both politics and the military, and Socrates' assertion, stated no fewer than seven times, that those who have ascended to knowledge of the Forms will have to be compelled to rule, to benefit the city and not simply themselves (*Resp.* 500d; 520a; 520e; 521b; 539e; 540b). As this compulsion is applied after the guardians have attained knowledge of the Good, it seems one can plausibly argue, as Brown has done for example, that the reason the philosopher-kings return to the cave 'to labour in politics and rule for the city's sake', is not be due to any motivational property of this knowledge (*Resp.* 540b).⁵⁶ The most obvious interpretation seems to be that the complete-guardians must be compelled to rule against their better judgement, with the life of civic service falling short, as far as the guardians are concerned, of the ideal life of private philosophy. Glaucon's indignation is understandable; he claims that Socrates is treating the philosopher-kings unfairly, 'making them live a worse life when they could

⁵⁶ Brown (2003a), p.280.

live a better one' (*Resp.* 519d).⁵⁷ However, I believe Brown's position ignores an alternative possibility that would allow for an intellectually motivational understanding of the Forms, as I will discuss below.⁵⁸

To begin, it is important to address the term 'compulsion', which Brown takes, rather simplistically I suggest, as proof that the philosopher-kings are not motivated to rule by any intellectual reason. Although the application of compulsion to the philosopher-kings is referred to seven times in the text, this is clearly not compulsion in the sense of coercion, intimidation, or force backed up by the threat of punishment; the idea that Kallipolis' philosopher-kings could be subjected to punishment is ridiculous (cf. *Resp.* 403e; 536e).⁵⁹ As I will discuss below, nor could this compulsion plausibly refer to the influence of the city's laws. I believe this is an issue that can only be properly understood within the larger picture of the philosopher-kings' education system.

The question of compulsion is interesting because the philosopher-kings are not only compelled to return to the cave, they are also compelled to *leave* it. This creates a parallel within the analogy which Socrates carefully draws to his interlocutors' attention (*Resp.* 519c). The ostensible reason for the compulsion in each case clearly differs. First, the

⁵⁷ Glaucon's conception here of 'worse' and 'better' is clearly limited, and rests on the notion of being allowed to do whatever one likes in the pursuit of one's own happiness.

⁵⁸ Before making his suggestion that the philosopher-kings are compelled by the force of law, covered below, Brown offers a generally excellent survey of scholarly approaches to this subject. He divides the relevant scholarship into three camps and dismisses each summarily: First, the approach typified by Cooper that suggests philosophical knowledge of the Good motivates the philosopher-king to maximise goodness in the world, which is rejected on the basis of absent textual evidence; second, the approach typified by Irwin that argues that those who know the Form of the Beautiful will want to give birth to the beautiful in the world, an approach heavily influenced by the *Symposium*, which is rejected along similar lines to Irwin's argument; third, the approach typified by Kraut that those who know the Forms are necessarily motivated to imitate them in a practical sense, which is rejected on the basis of Brown's interpretation of compulsion; Brown (2003a), pp.277-80; Cooper (1999), pp.138-151; Kraut (1991), pp.51-8. Kraut's position is supported by other scholars such as Schofield and, based on my dismissal below of Brown's interpretation of compulsion, I suggest it is the correct one to follow; Schofield (2000), pp.226-7. To Brown's list I would add one final approach, Reeve's suggestion that the philosopher-kings' decision to rule is merely a calculated risk to maximise their own happiness by personally ensuring the conditions under which a private life of philosophy may be lived, even if intermittently; Reeve (1988), pp.201-3. However, as Kraut points out, this view also suffers from an absence of textual support and it ignores the more central demands of justice on the philosopher-kings, which is a key component of my argument; Kraut (1991), p.50.

⁵⁹ See Kraut (1991), pp.46-7.

guardians do not want to leave the cave because they have become accustomed to the darkness and are pained to look at the light (*Resp.* 515e). Second, the guardians do not want to return to the cave because they have become accustomed to the light of the perfect Forms, and are pained by the imperfection of the darkness (*Resp.* 519c-d). On a deeper level, however, the relationship between these two forms of compulsion is less clear. Here I find Dorter's suggestion that in both cases the need for compulsion is related to a similar condition of misguidedness highly convincing.⁶⁰ Although little is said of the compulsion to return to the cave, the *Republic* gives extended treatment to how the guardians are compelled to leave it. This is the force of the entire educational system from cultural habituation, to mathematical training, and then finally instruction in dialectic (Ch.2.3-4). The guardians are not educated against their will, which would be 'slavish' and not befitting free people (*Resp.* 536e). The compulsion to leave the cave takes the form of persuasion and leading, not force, which is presented as a significant evil (*Resp.* 548b). It stands to reason therefore, that the philosopher-kings are *led* to an understanding of why it is good for them to return to rule the city.

I argue that this idea of being led suggests the presence of mentor-mentee relationships within Kallipolis' guardian class. To be led, there must be a leader. As the person being led through the process of compulsion and persuasion is a fifty-year old guardian who has reached an understanding of the Forms, his leader must be a more senior philosopher-king; anyone else would be ill-suited in terms of age, experience, and knowledge. I refer here to Socrates' underappreciated suggestion that before retirement, the philosopher-king must educate others like himself to become guardians of the city (*Resp.* 540b). This suggestion is significant because it means that the moment at which the guardian realises the Form of the Good, although important, does not mark the end of his or her learning process. There

⁶⁰ Dorter (2006), pp.219-22.

seems to be an expectation that the implications of this Formal understanding will be worked out progressively, and be conducted under careful guidance and instruction. This suggestion is supported by the fact that it is not at the exact moment when the guardians look at the Forms that they are compelled to return to the cave, but only when they have looked at them ‘sufficiently’ (*Resp.* 519c). As Vernezze states, is unsurprising that when the philosopher-kings first behold the Form of the Good they do not wish to return to the cave but rather to contemplate it forever, enamoured by its beauty and perfection.⁶¹ However, if this can be read as an immature understanding of the Forms, then there is the possibility of coming to a more mature understanding of why a course of action that initially seems undesirable is in fact good, in the sense that it reflects the Form of the Good.

A potential problem with this suggestion is Brown’s argument that the philosopher-kings *continue* to prefer not to rule long after they have returned to the cave.⁶² If this is true then my suggestion for a maturing understanding of the Forms that compels the philosopher-kings to rule would be disproved. Brown’s key piece of evidence is found in Socrates’ discussion of the philosopher-kings’ selection process, where Socrates states:

[The philosopher-kings] will spend most of their time doing philosophy, but, when his turn comes, each must labour in politics and rule for the city’s sake, not as something fine, but rather as something that must be done (*Resp.* 540b).

My objection to Brown’s argument, is with his use of the term ‘prefer’. Socrates states quite clearly that the reason the philosopher-kings will eventually return to the cave and rule the city is not because they are compelled by force or coercion, but because they are convinced by an appeal to the demands of justice (*Resp.* 520a-b). They must believe that it

⁶¹ See Vernezze (1998), p.166.

⁶² Brown (2003a), p.281.

is desirable to act justly; therefore, they must consider acting justly to be good. I suggest that it is essential to make a distinction here between *simple* preference and preference *all things considered*. Rather than the clear cut picture painted by Brown, I prefer Kraut's more realistic observations that it is clearly possible to prefer to act one way for a particular reason, and at the same time to prefer to act in a totally opposing manner for a very different reason.⁶³ Although the philosopher-kings may *simply* prefer to pursue a detached life of theoretical contemplation, their preference *all things considered* is to rule when it is their turn to do so; this qualification takes into account the special character of Kallipolis, as I will discuss below. As Irwin notes, the fact that philosopher-kings do rule demonstrates that they must on some level 'prefer' to rule: the ultimate proof of their preference is in their actions.⁶⁴

Here, it seems necessary to make a point of clarification on the nature of the text. The *Republic* is, to quote Rosen, 'a daydream about the unity of theory and practice.'⁶⁵ The dialogue's overarching purpose is to uncover the necessary details and particulars for justice to be perfectly realised in the city, a purpose that often pushes the argument beyond the bounds of practicality (cf. Ch.3.4). In the *Republic*, Socrates argues for the subordination of the philosopher's private interests to the public interests of the just city, a point that makes something of a break with his standard practice. As Benardete argues, it seems possible to think of justice and wisdom in the *Republic* as distinct objects of desire.⁶⁶ Unlike in the *Symposium*, where emphasis is placed on pursuit of the potential philosopher's own best interests, in the *Republic*, for the sake of the 'daydream', Socrates is forced to elevate the demands of justice over those of wisdom.

⁶³ Kraut (1991), p.55.

⁶⁴ Irwin (1995), p.299. A similar argument is made by Schofield (2000), p.227.

⁶⁵ Rosen (2005), p.143.

⁶⁶ Benardete (1989), pp.82-91.

The compulsion of justice, which is the motivational property of philosopher-kings' philosophical knowledge, works on two major levels. First, the guardians recognise that justice only exists in the city when there is harmony amongst the classes and the city as a whole performs 'outstandingly well', not just one section (*Resp.* 519e-520a). Second, the guardians acknowledge that because they owe their philosophical awareness to a deliberate and generous education provided by the city, they must therefore serve the city in turn as an act of gratitude and indebtedness (*Resp.* 520a-d). The act of ruling for the city, then, stems from the principle of justice, and the philosopher-kings' recognition, cemented through the course of their primary moral education, and then their higher intellectual education culminating in mentor-mentee relationships, that acting justly is *good*. Socrates does allow that if a philosopher were to spontaneously arise in an unjust city then he would be under a different set of obligations than the guardians of Kallipolis, and he would not owe it to his city to participate in civic service but rather be free to pursue wisdom in the manner Socrates advocates to his interlocutors in the *Symposium* (*Resp.* 520a-c). Within the context of Kallipolis, however, this possibility is a moot point. The philosopher-kings do not occur spontaneously; they only exist because the just state exists, and they only continue to exist for as long as the just state is properly supported.

Brown's suggestion for why the philosopher-kings return to the city to rule is that the necessary compulsion is achieved through the force of laws set by the city's founders.⁶⁷ I find this position problematic for a number of reasons. First, I do not accept Brown's argument that the most natural reading of the passages citing the use of compulsion indicates the use of laws to compel the philosopher-kings. As Kraut points out, Socrates and his interlocutors do not present Kallipolis' future rulers with a dictate or a decree that states they must rule: they present a reasoned argument that ruling is the just course of

⁶⁷ Brown (2003a), p.282.

action, and it is the philosopher-kings' *agreement* with this argument that *persuades* them to rule (*Resp.* 519c-20d).⁶⁸ Second, I believe Brown's suggestion is inconsistent: he claims that the philosopher-kings rule because justice requires them to obey just laws, but the laws, although just, were set by the city's founders with a view to civic happiness, not civic justice.⁶⁹ As I have argued above, throughout the *Republic*, Socrates' construction of Kallipolis is driven by the demands of justice; happiness is a secondary concern. Third, although I appreciate Brown's general point that laws have a certain kind of persuasive allure, as is presented by Socrates in the *Crito* for example, I suggest greater consideration must be given to the atypical character of the philosopher-kings.⁷⁰ Kallipolis' rulers are the product of an educational system that far exceeds in both scope and rigour any real historical model. The comparison between the force of law on Plato's contemporaries and Kallipolis' philosopher-kings is not a comparison between like and like. As part of their extensive education, Kallipolis' philosopher-kings receive five years of intense and exclusive dialectical education whose purpose is to critique, challenge and deconstruct conventional beliefs and norms as preparation for an apprehension of objective truth via the Forms (*Resp.* 537c-539d; Ch.2.4). If the philosopher-kings did not truly believe their act of returning to the cave to be good, in the sense that it reflects the Form of the Good, then I suggest it highly unlikely that the influence of human laws would compel them, at least not to the extent Brown describes. On the whole, I suggest the idea of inter-personal

⁶⁸ Kraut (1991), p.47. This explanation accounts for four of the seven passages referring to compulsion (*Resp.* 519e; 520a; 520e; 521b), which bracket Socrates' argument appealing to justice (*Resp.* 520a-d). As Brown himself argues, the passage at *Resp.* 500d is silent about the form of compulsion implied, and should be read in the context of the four main passages discussed above; Brown (2003a), p.282 n.33. The reference at *Resp.* 539e actually refers to guardian-rulers in the thirty-five to fifty year old age group, not philosopher-kings. The reference at *Resp.* 540b, which does concern the philosopher-kings, does not refer to compulsion as such, only saying that the philosopher-kings 'will spend most of their time doing philosophy, but, when his turn comes, each must labour in politics and rule for the city's sake, not as something fine, but rather as something that must be done'; I have discussed the implications of this passage above.

⁶⁹ Brown (2003a), p.282.

⁷⁰ Plato *Crito* 48a-54d.

discussion and debate in mentor-mentee style relationships provides a more plausible way forward.

Although the presence of mentor-mentee relationships between Kallipolis' philosopher-kings leading to a true understanding of the demands of justice provides an intellectual account for why the philosopher-kings will rule in the city, as is made clear in Plato's account of the soul in Book IV, reason alone provides insufficient motivation to master appetite. This point is made forcibly in the story of Leontius, a reputed necrophile, who was travelling up from the Piraeus when he saw some corpses displayed along the outside of the North Wall (*Resp.* 439e).⁷¹ Socrates recalls that while the appetitive element of Leontius' soul strongly desired to look at the spectacle, his soul's rational element was disgusted, and attempted to hold his desire in check. After struggling for a time, and trying to cover his eyes with his hands, Leontius' appetite finally prevailed, and as he gazed upon the dead bodies, he rebuked himself severely (*Resp.* 440a). As Socrates proceeds to discuss, in the psychic struggle between reason and appetite, the soul's spirited element must be taken up by reason as an ally; it is the properly habituated spirit, analogous to a shepherd's well trained dog, that enables reason to prevail over appetite: 'Even if it suffers hunger, cold, and every imposition of that sort [...] it stands firm and wins out over them, not ceasing its noble efforts until it achieves its purposes' (*Resp.* 440a-e). It is the weakness of Leontius' spirit, the part of the soul that in the correctly habituated philosopher-king works in tandem with reason to produce right action, that explains why Leontius succumbed to his bad appetites.

The philosopher-kings might *know* that it is just and good to return to the cave and to rule for the city's sake, but faced with the more appetite-appealing option of a private life of undisturbed contemplation, an option as desirable to the philosopher-kings as that of

⁷¹ On this story, and for details of Leontius, see Lorenz (2006), p.148-153. An alternative explanation for this story is that Leontius had a penchant for boys as pale as corpses, and this reference here is an example of Platonic humour; Reeve (2004), p.128.

looking at corpses was to Leontius, then there is no guarantee they will act as reason dictates. However, in addition to rigorous intellectual training, the philosopher-kings also undertake a substantial education in sub-rational moral habituation targeted at developing courageousness in the soul's spirited element (Ch.2.3). At this point I suggest that Brown's argument is exactly right; in the *Republic*, Plato clearly adheres to the belief that those whose souls are well habituated must act justly, and that those whose souls have not been well habituated will never achieve a true understanding of justice (cf. *Resp.* 401d-402a).⁷² A major concern of the guardian class' pre-rational moral habituation is to make the guardians care 'more for the city and more for each other' than for themselves as individuals (*Resp.* 415d), and a key focus for this behaviour is their military participation. The philosopher-kings fight in the city's army from the age of eighteen when they are considered auxiliaries right through to their apprehension of the Forms at age fifty and beyond (Ch.1.4). As is indicated throughout the guardians' cultural and physical training, warfare provides the vehicle for the proper expression of spiritedness: it is this spiritedness which comes alongside as an ally to reason and motivates the guardians to sacrifice; it is sacrifice which is needed for the philosopher-kings to subject their personal interests to communal interests, resisting what may seem the more pleasant life of theoretical contemplation. Warfare holds an important position at Kallipolis by introducing and promoting a paradigm Plato saw as necessary for the presence of justice in the state.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, in this chapter I have discussed the importance of warfare to the education of Kallipolis' guardian class in four stages. First, I have looked at Plato's belief

⁷² Brown (2003a), pp.276; 283-290. For a fuller discussion of this topic see Kamtekar (1998), pp.334-8; Lear (2006), pp.29-33.

in a prerequisite guardian spirit that is clearly shaped with a view to future military and political service. This discussion was made with reference to Plato's historical context, where the modern distinctions between military and political service were almost entirely absent; participation in both areas was seen as an integral part of what it meant to be a Greek citizen. Plato's thinking at this point can be seen as largely in keeping with traditional, aristocratic thinking.

Second, I have considered Kallipolis' cultural and physical education, targeted at auxiliary-guardians and young guardian-rulers. I have stressed the importance of cultural training to Plato's thought and the argument of the *Republic*, as too his concern to create good warriors for the city's army. I have discussed Plato's reasoning behind his censorship of poetry, particularly the mimetic variety. I have also considered Kallipolis' physical training, an institution constructed with a clear view to creating strong warriors, and also for the promotion of psychic harmony. The influence of warfare throughout this section is marked; the education that serves as preparation for apprehension of mathematics, dialectic, and ultimately the Forms, is crafted with regards to, and in response to, the demands of conflict. This hints at a connection between warfare and philosophy in the just state that becomes important for a consideration of the philosopher-kings. As should also be immediately obvious from this discussion, Plato makes a point of elevating the education of the soul above that of the body; his major concern is with the pre-rational habituation of the guardians' souls, a process that will bring the spirit alongside as a future ally to reason, and will ultimately provide the resolve needed for the philosopher-kings to reject private philosophy and to rule for the city.

Third, I have looked at the philosophical education given to the guardian-rulers, the selection process for the philosopher-kings, and the initial philosophical training given to the guardian class as a whole. I have examined the specific military applications of the

guardians' instruction in mathematics, and I have argued that with progression towards dialectical training and an apprehension of the Forms, what really becomes of use to the guardian *qua* general is the development of analytical thinking processes. I have suggested this goes some way towards explaining why Plato presents five years of dialectical education as suitable preparation for guardians who are about to embark on fifteen years of military and political service as it is this kind of developed thinking that Plato states provides the basis to 'rule in [the] city', and to 'control the most important things' (*Resp.* 534d). This point is important as it argues against the position of scholars such as Planinc, who see the discussion of the philosopher-kings' education merely as an excuse to prescribe an ideal education for philosophers *as such*, not as a serious suggestion for practical application in the areas of military and politics. However, I have argued that because Plato's concern in the *Republic* is to explore what would be required for true justice to be achieved on the civic level and in consideration of thematic and narrative integrity, the approach that I have taken is in fact the most natural and the most consistent.

Fourth, I have discussed the application of compulsion used to make the philosopher-kings rule in the city and I have suggested two explanations for why the philosopher-kings agree to do so: The first relies on the force of reason; the second relies on the force of sub-rational moral habituation. With regards to the former, I have suggested that the 'compulsion' applied to the guardians actually takes the form of persuasion within the context of mentor-mentee relationships, not because of any persuasive power of the city's laws. Within the special circumstances of Kallipolis, the philosopher-kings come to distinguish between simple preference, and preference *all things considered*. They recognise that justice only exists when the city as a whole performs 'outstandingly well', not just one section, and they heed the call of justice that demands they repay the generous education provided by the city, ruling in turn as an act of gratitude and indebtedness. At

this point in the text, Plato can be seen elevating the demands of justice over of the pursuit of wisdom, a feature in keeping with the nature of the work as a whole. With regards to the second explanation, I have suggested that the moral quality of self-sacrifice, introduced in consequence of the demands of warfare, and promoted across the course of the guardians' entire lives, plays a key role in the philosopher-kings' decision to eschew a life of private philosophy and to rule for the city's sake. Drawing on Plato's psychological theory as discussed in Book IV, and in particular his account of Leontius and the corpses, I have argued that neither explanation, when taken in isolation, provides a totally sufficient answer for why the philosopher-kings decide to rule; the true answer must combine these two concerns. This points towards what is perhaps the most important role of warfare in the argument of the *Republic*, and may ultimately explain why warfare is so prominent in Plato's thought.

CHAPTER THREE: THE *REPUBLIC* IN CONTEXT

1. Introduction

Over the last two chapters I have discussed the importance of warfare to the argument of the *Republic* while making occasional use of Plato's historical context as an aid to interpretation. I will now take a more explicitly historical approach, and evaluate elements of Plato's argument firmly through the lens of his military, literary, and social context in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the text. Although the *Republic* is a piece of philosophical, not military, literature, I suggest there are significant points of overlap between the two areas, and that a responsible consideration of these contextualising factors will further an understanding of Plato's philosophical purposes.

I will approach this chapter from four angles. First, I will discuss Plato's approach to military training in the *Republic* and give particular consideration to the Greek ideal that military success stemmed as much from moral qualities as actual combat training. This focus on the development of the guardian-warriors' souls may seem odd considering the primarily combat-orientated nature of their occupation, and a modern audience may be surprised by the almost totally absent discussion of specific military training. However, Plato's thinking on this point is overtly traditional, and must be understood as such. Although the period during which Plato wrote the *Republic* saw movement towards more professional forms of military training, Plato is not simply oblivious to such developments; as his *Laches* demonstrates, he actively criticises them. This section will stress the importance Plato accords to spiritual as opposed to bodily development, and make sense of his belief that good physical training of the body flows from good cultural training of the soul, but not vice-versa (*Resp.* 403d-e).

Second, I will discuss the operational concerns of Kallipolis' army, giving particular consideration to the subjects of navy and allies. In general, Plato is unforthcoming on the question of Kallipolis' military units and combat-capabilities; he seems largely to assume the traditional aristocratic ideal of a hoplite-cavalry paradigm.¹ However, in light of his historical context and evidence from the *Laws*, his non-discussion of the navy is more difficult to dismiss. I suggest that Plato's silence on this point represents a historically informed rejection of both the value of navies and naval power, a conclusion that builds on our understanding of the character of Kallipolis. However, Plato does seem to leave open the possibility of Kallipolis requiring naval protection, which leads into my second operational consideration, the city's use of allies. Here Plato is far more explicit, and his discussion indicates that the city participates in the kind of conflict that matches his historical context. This has important implications for our understanding of Kallipolis' foreign policy, with the city being drawn into the wars of its allies, which helps to explain, I suggest, the high frequency of conflict implied throughout the text.

Third, I will discuss the inclusion of female warriors in Kallipolis' army. As a consideration of Plato's historical context demonstrates, Socrates' suggestions here reach into the realm of the absurd. Although there are historical examples of Greek females participating in war, these are few, and of a very limited, defensive nature. In general, Greek military ideology affirmed the total dominance of the military realm by males, which served in turn to reinforce the social subjugation of females. In the *Laws*, Plato's thinking on this subject is far more in line with his historical context, which indicates something of his purpose in the *Republic*. I will suggest that this topic clearly supports Rosen's argument that the *Republic* is best viewed as a Platonic thought-experiment whose

¹ Even though, as van Wees makes clear, this hoplite-cavalry paradigm was more likely theoretical than a reality; van Wees (2004), pp.47-76.

purpose is to explore what would be needed for justice to be perfectly realised in the city, even beyond what is practicable.

Fourth, I will look at the limitations Socrates imposes on warfare at Kallipolis in the *Republic* Book V, which, I will argue, is where the influence of the pervasive inter-Greek warfare of the Classical Period is most clearly visible in Plato's work. Although warfare holds a largely positive role in the *Republic's* argument by establishing conditions necessary for the creation of the just state and for the correct education of Kallipolis' guardians, Plato nevertheless demonstrates a high degree of sensitivity to the emotional, physical, and psychological costs of combat both to participants and societies. This creates a tension that I will argue is consistent with both contemporary and traditional Greek attitudes towards warfare, and is informed by Plato's own direct and indirect experiences of conflict. I suggest that this tension provides a paradigm through which the *Republic's* overall approach to the military and warfare may best be understood

2. Preparations for War

In Chapter Two I noted that Socrates appears to conclude his discussion of the guardians' physical training prematurely (Ch.2.3). Without providing any description of the specific combat training Kallipolis' army of guardians will conduct, Socrates claims to have explained the necessary patterns to discern what the particular, 'dances, hunts, chases with hounds, athletic contests, and horse races' will be, and how they should be worked out (*Resp.* 412b). While this might appear incongruous, bearing in mind that combat is a major concern of the guardian class, Socrates remains confident that the training programme he describes will make his soldiers 'hard, lean hounds' able to defeat larger enemies of 'fat, tender sheep' (*Resp.* 422c-d). In this section I will discuss Plato's

approach to military training in the *Republic* through the lens of his historical context in three stages: First, I will consider the contemporary belief, evidenced in prominent literary texts, that victory in battle stemmed as much from a combination of moral qualities and fitness, as actual combat training; second, I will look at the specific combat training utilised by the majority of city-states across the Classical Period, a largely *ad hoc* arrangement consisting of traditional leisure activities; third, I will discuss the movement towards the professionalisation of armies in the fourth century BC. By the conclusion of this section it should be clear that Plato's thinking on the military as expressed in the *Republic* is based on literary tradition to a larger degree than historical, military reality. This will serve as something of a precaution against pushing the historical military context of the early fourth century BC onto a reading of the *Republic* beyond what is reasonably supported by the text.

To begin, it is important to recognise the largely amateur approach to warfare taken by the majority of Greek city-states across the Classical Period. Although it is common to talk of 'the army of Athens', for example, the fact is there was no such thing as a standing army in the majority of Greek city-states.² Forces were generally raised from scratch as the situation dictated, and with each soldier having to supply his own provisions and equipment.³ An important factor in understanding this amateurish approach appears to be a contemporary belief that military success depended more on the possession of moral qualities combined with physical fitness rather than specific combat skills. This is testified to across Greek literature in a pervasive concern for the development of a martial character

² Van Wees (2002), p.61; (2004), p.102.

³ The confusion and disorder that often ensued is depicted in Aristophanes' *Peace*, written in 421 BC: '[The General] writes in some names and crosses others out, twice and thrice till all is chaos. On the board it says, 'We leave tomorrow', but a horde of privates haven't bought their ration-fare because they didn't know their names were there. Then at Pandion's plinth they see by chance they're in – and, looking acidly askance, run to and fro demented'; Aristophanes *Peace* 1178-4, trans. O'Neill. See also Xenophon's *Hellenica* where citizen armies are derided for being comprised of men both before and after their prime, as well as for lacking any proper training (*Hell.* 6.1.5 cf. *Lac.*13.5).

that somewhat minimises the need to develop technical abilities. In the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon writes to this effect, observing that the hoplite style of fighting is understood as naturally by humans as ‘the bull knows how to fight with his horns, the horse with his hoofs, the dog with his teeth, the boar with his tusks’; this style of fighting, he concludes, relies more on courage than skill.⁴ A similar sentiment is found in Pericles’ funeral oration, in which a contrast is drawn between the Spartan and Athenian attitudes to war: Pericles boasts that the Athenians rely on natural courage and loyalty developed through a liberal and unrestrained education; the Spartans, by contrast, require ‘laborious training’ from earliest childhood to achieve the same result (Thuc. 2.38.1-39.4).⁵ It is within this context that we should make sense of Socrates’ assertion that physical training should be conducted primarily for the spirited element of a guardian’s soul, not for its obvious, corporeal benefits (*Resp.* 410a-c).

Although many Greeks viewed moral virtue as key to military success, city-states during the Archaic and early to middle Classical Periods nevertheless did recognise the need to engage in varying degrees of specific physical training. The important point to note, however, is that it was only really in the fourth century BC that this training began to take on the form of what would now be considered military training in the strict sense for the average citizen soldier; prior to this period, training was generally private, informal and centred on physical fitness developed in the *gymnasia*.⁶

Belief in the importance of athletic training for martial success is attested to across a range of ancient sources, the *Republic* included. In the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon writes that even though Athens did not require its soldiers to practice exercises, doing so was essential

⁴ Xenophon *Cyropaedia* 2.3.9-11, trans. Heinemann.

⁵ This is an important point to emphasise, because, as Jaeger points out, it means that even the Spartans did not view combat skills as the only quality necessary for military success; Jaeger (1944), p.167 cf. van Wees (2007), p.279. See also *Pol.* 1269a29-1271b19, where Aristotle states that the whole Spartan system is designed to engender courage above all else.

⁶ Van Wees (2004), p.89.

for victory (*Mem.* 3.12.5).⁷ In the *Politics*, Aristotle makes clear that the military success of the Spartans was due primarily to their greater dedication to physical exercise (*Pol.* 1338b25-39). Likewise Diodorus, when describing the conflict of 335/4 BC, matches the superior numbers of the Macedonian army to the superior strength of the Theban army developed through constant training in the gymnasium (*Diod. Sic.* 15.33-4). As discussed, Plato talks of Kallipolis' soldiers in terms of warrior-athletes, and he emphasises the importance of gymnastic activity for military victory (*Ch.*2.3; *Resp.* 404a). It is perhaps telling that when Plato enumerates the dangers inherent in the army of a democracy that has the rich fighting alongside the poor, he does not think in terms of the rich failing with regards to their combat skills, but rather their physical fitness. He states:

It is often the case that a poor man, lean and suntanned, is stationed in battle next to a rich one, reared in the shade and carrying a lot of excess flesh, and sees him panting and completely at a loss [...] He believes that it is because of the cowardice of the poor that such people are rich and that one poor man says to another when they meet in private: 'These men are ours for the taking; they are good for nothing' (*Resp.* 556d).

Physical training with a view to warfare was also pursued in Greek society in forms other than athletics, such as hunting and dancing. Hunting was a common activity for many Greeks in the Classical Period, not only the large-game variety of the wealthy elite, but also for smaller game such as hares and wolves within the more common context of farming.⁸ In the *Cynegeticus*, Xenophon states that hunting, 'makes the body healthy, improves the sight and hearing, and keeps men from growing old'; in fact hunting, 'affords

⁷ In the *Spartan Constitution*, Xenophon records that athletic exercises were so important to the Spartans that they even did them whilst on campaign (*Lac.* 12.5).

⁸ Rawlings (2000), p.244.

the best training for war.’⁹ Likewise, in the *Spartan Constitution*, Xenophon writes that one of the most important reforms of Lycurgus was to force adult citizens to continue hunting, past the age where their fellow Greeks had stopped physical pursuits; this enabled them to continue to handle the fatigues of soldiering as well as younger men (*Lac.* 4.1). In the *Republic*, Plato treats it as a given that his citizens will take part in hunting, including it in a list of required physical activities, and in the *Laws*, he explains how hunting is useful for developing bravery (*Resp.* 412b; 535d; *Leg.* 823b-4b). Here again, Plato’s thinking on this subject is shaped with a view more towards moral habituation than physical skills.

Dance held a similarly important position in Ancient Greece as a bridging activity between leisure pursuits and military application. Philostratus writes that the Spartans used dance as a means to practice dodging and hurling missiles as well as leaping up from the ground, and evidence suggests that dances were often carried out in full hoplite panoply.¹⁰ Furthermore, as Rawlings identifies, there is a clear link between military drill and manoeuvres, and moving harmoniously and gracefully in dance.¹¹ In the *Republic*, Plato includes participation in dance as one of the key areas of the guardians’ physical training (*Resp.* 412b). In the *Laws*, he is more forthcoming, and he emphasises the importance of children practicing martial dances that imitate the actions of conflict from an early age (*Leg.* 796b-c). Taken as a collective whole, athletics, hunting and dancing clearly do promote skills useful in war such as mental and physical toughness, strength, agility and, to a degree, the development of weapon skills.¹² However, they ultimately fall short of combat-specific training in the truly professional sense. Nowhere in the *Republic*, or even in the *Laws* for that matter, does Plato speak of, or even imply, that the armies of his theoretical cities will rehearse group manoeuvres, battle formations, and tactics like the

⁹ Xenophon *Cynegeticus* 12.1, trans. Heinemann.

¹⁰ Philostratus *On Gymnastics* 19.

¹¹ Rawlings (2000), p.249.

¹² On this topic see van Wees (2007), p.279.

Spartan army of Xenophon's *Spartan Constitution* (*Lac.* 11.8-10). Plato seems to adhere firmly to the traditional and typical, individual gymnasium-focused military training engaged in by the majority of Greek city-states during the Classical Period.

Nevertheless, the fact that more professional approaches to military training are not discussed in the *Republic* does not mean that Plato was ignorant of their existence. Truly professional military training, including specific weaponry training on specialised military equipment, only really took hold at Athens in the late fourth century BC, probably in response to the city's defeat at the hands of Macedon at Chaeronea in 338 BC.¹³ The late fifth to early fourth centuries BC did see the advent of professional teachers of hoplite fighting at Athens though, the *hoplomachoi*, who are the subject of Plato's early dialogue, the *Laches*.¹⁴ However, the text sets up a strong distinction between truly virtuous courage and the kind of practiced skill taught by the *hoplomachoi* (*Lach.* 183c-184c), and it concludes with both of the Athenian generals, Nicias and Laches, recommending that the sons of their companions be entrusted to Socrates for proper instruction in courage (*Lach.* 200c-d). Although Plato allows for traditional methods of military training, his key focus is on the development of the soul above the body.

With the historical developments of the fifth century BC, the amateur approach of many Greek city-states to warfare began to diminish, with increasing movement towards the professionalisation of armies.¹⁵ Although Sparta stood alone as the only Greek state of the Classical Period to commit the entire citizenry to full time soldiering, small, elite, and well trained corps of citizen troops began to be progressively incorporated into other citizen armies.¹⁶ This is particularly true of the period after Plato wrote the *Republic*, but it seems likely that Plato would have been aware of earlier examples. The first was that of

¹³ Van Wees (2004), pp.94-5.

¹⁴ Hunt (2007), p.133.

¹⁵ A movement, scholars have argued, that found its ultimate realisation with Philip of Macedon; see van Wees (2004), p.145.

¹⁶ Pritchett (1974), p.221.

the Syracusan Six Hundred who, Diodorus records, defeated a mercenary revolt in 461 BC (Diod. Sic. 11.76.2). Diodorus also records the examples of the Boeotian Three Hundred, who fought at the Battle of Delion in 424 BC, and the Argive One Thousand established in 421 BC (Diod. Sic. 12.70.1; 12.75.7). Perhaps the most well known of these forces, the Theban Sacred Band, famous for their actions at the Battle of Chaeronea, was formed in 379 BC, around the date of the *Republic's* composition (Intro. §.4).¹⁷

During this period, at Plato's own Athens, use was increasingly being made of full time professional units alongside the amateur, citizen-based elements. Clear examples are the corps of professional archers established in the early fifth century BC, professional slingers attested to from 421 BC, and paid, full time rowers who were the key to Athens' naval supremacy in the Peloponnesian War.¹⁸ In fact, contrary to Pericles' boast, by the late Classical Period, the kind of intensive training that Plato describes in the *Republic* was clearly of a more general concern even at Athens. Although there is some disagreement in the scholarship, it seems that by the late fourth century BC Athens had formally established the *ephebeia*, which provided two years of military training for young Athenian citizens and seems to have been based on an earlier system Plato himself would possibly have trained under (Intro. §.3).¹⁹ It seems fairly reasonable to connect this institution with Plato's insistence in Book VII on a concerted two year period of military training for Kallipolis' guardians from ages eighteen to twenty (*Resp.* 537b).

To what extent Plato's thinking reflects this historical development of non-professional armies recognising the need to employ full time training is difficult, if not impossible, to

¹⁷ The Sacred Band is possibly alluded to in Plato's *Symposium* (*Symp.* 178e-179a), although this point is debated. For a full discussion of this question, which surpasses Dover's former, and influential work, see Leitao (2002), pp.143-169 cf. Dover (1965), pp.2-20. Plutarch's assertion that this passage in the *Symposium* inspired the creation of the Sacred Band can, at least, be reasonably discounted; Plutarch *Moralia* 639f.

¹⁸ Hdt. 9.22.1; Thuc. 2.13.8; Hunt (2007), pp.136-7. Pericles is quoted as saying that seamanship is an art that cannot be picked up in one's spare time, but rather, 'allows one no spare time for anything else', and Xenophon writes that the Athenian seamen acquired a level of skill and discipline that the hoplites and cavalry never managed (Thuc. 1.142.9; *Mem.* 3.5.18).

¹⁹ See Hesk (2000), p.29; Rawlings (2000), pp.237-41; Hunt (2007), p.134.

tell. In Book II, Socrates states that it is of the utmost importance that warfare be carried out well, and that this requires both extensive skill and practice; he specifically states that someone who is a full-time farmer, shoemaker or any other sort of craftsman cannot pick up a shield and spear and expect to be a good soldier on the battlefield (*Resp.* 374b-c). Although this sentiment could have arisen through consideration of contemporary movement towards professional armies, it must be acknowledged that Plato sat within, not independent of, this movement, which may have obscured such an observation. Furthermore, because this movement only really developed in earnest after the composition of the *Republic*, it is important to avoid falling into anachronistic reasoning. Perhaps it is safer to look towards Sparta, the idealised notion praised by many contemporary Athenian aristocrats if not the real historical city, which serves as a fairly adequate model for the *Republic's* dedicated and total approach to war, and whose heavy influence on the text is evident (Intro. §.4; Ch.1.3). My main point is that with regards to preparations for war through military training, Plato is largely thinking along traditional lines, albeit in a far more rigorous, formalised, and possibly Spartan, manner. He does not seem to be advocating the kind of cutting edge reforms of Iphicrates and other contemporary generals, and we should hesitate to read such developments into the text.

3. Operation: The Question of Navy and Implications of Allies

Although warfare and the army are pervasive concerns in the *Republic*, little attention is given to the question of how Kallipolis' army would actually operate. The only significant indications of military units and combat-capabilities are implicit references, and broad ones at that. Clearly, Plato is writing philosophy not military history, and this observation is both generally unremarkable and consistent with earlier discussion of the

city's military training (Ch.3.2). This said, I believe there are places where Plato's military context and the *Republic's* wider argument overlap on the subject of military operation, and where a consideration of the former will inform a fuller understanding of the latter. In this section I discuss two areas of overlap, those of navy and allies. I will begin with a brief summary of evidence in the *Republic* for the use of different combat units, and I will highlight Plato's conspicuous silence on the question of whether or not the city will possess a navy. Conclusions drawn at this point will reinforce points made earlier regarding the character of Kallipolis, and lead into a discussion of my second point, the city's use of military allies. Unlike the navy, Plato does provide explicit discussion of this matter, and I will argue that his comments can only be properly understood through consideration of his historical context. This discussion will contribute in turn to an understanding of Kallipolis' foreign policy, and will go some way towards explaining the prominence of warfare in the text.

As stated, Plato is generally unforthcoming on the subject of Kallipolis' military units and combat-capabilities. The use of hoplites is clearly implied, as Socrates mentions the punishments for soldiers who leave their posts or throw away their shields, and he refers to what must have been common hoplite experiences such as setting up camp, occupying regions, and manoeuvres in battle and on the march (*Resp.* 468a; 526d; 556c). There is also evidence for the use of cavalry units. Socrates states that young soldiers will observe war on horses so that they can flee to safety, and he draws a distinction between the fast and manageable horses the youths will use, and the spirited and aggressive ones presumably used in battle (*Resp.* 467e cf. 452c; 537a). Sailing and navigation are mentioned twice but not in the context of a navy (*Resp.* 346a-b; 488a-489a). Archery is mentioned once, but again, with no reference to combat (*Resp.* 439). Slings, marines and other combat units are not mentioned at all.

A key point to note from this summary is Plato's general failure to develop the details of his army much further beyond the level of hoplite and cavalry, a point distinctly at odds with his military context. In the fourth century BC, the composition of Greek armies was becoming increasingly diverse, as depicted by Xenophon in the *Oeconomicus*, where he writes:

What friend would not rejoice as he watches a strong body of troopers marching in order, would not admire cavalry riding in squadrons? And what enemy would not fear troopers, horsemen, light-armed, archers, and slingers disposed in serried ranks and following their officers in orderly fashion? (Xenophon *Oeconomicus* 8.4-8, trans. Heinemann).

This lack of detail no doubt testifies to the primarily philosophical focus of the *Republic*, as well as to Plato's staunchly traditional approach to military concerns. However, it is impossible to dismiss Plato's silence on the question of naval force so easily. Considering the prominence of the navy in Classical Athens (Intro. §§.3-4), as well as his highly critical comments regarding navies in the *Laws*, it is improbable that Plato did not give some thought to this issue when composing the *Republic*. In this case, I believe that Plato's silence indicates a rejection of naval force consistent with the role of historical navies in the Classical Period, and with the overarching purposes of his work.

In the Archaeology to his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides identifies the navy as 'an element of the greatest power to those who cultivate them, alike in revenue and in dominion' (Thuc.1.16.1). As Thucydides posits, the two main benefits of having a navy are benefits that, generally speaking, are of no real concern at Kallipolis (Thuc. 2.13.2). Revenue came from protecting and interfering with trade routes as well as exacting tributes from 'allies'; domain was procured by the projection of power far from home, and by the

ability to transport troops distances easily over one hundred miles a day.²⁰ Maintaining a navy was expensive and could only be done by wealthy, imperially focused cities.²¹ There is no indication in the *Republic* that Plato envisaged Kallipolis in such terms; in fact he criticises this kind of ambition severely as greed, identifying it as the primary cause of war (*Resp.* 373d-e). The lives of the *Republic's* guardians are introverted and focused on leading virtuous lives, not extroverted and focused on money and power.

Further evidence that Plato did not envisage the citizens of Kallipolis participating in naval affairs concerns his strong thinking on moral habituation. In the *Laws*, Plato states that the practice of supporting hoplites with ships has a negative influence on moral courage as it, 'habituates lions to flee from deer', and he specifically criticises the pilots, boatswains, and rowers as being 'not very serious' kinds of people (*Leg.* 707a). This prejudice against naval pursuits is also seen in his location of Magnesia eighty stades (over fifteen kilometres) away from the sea, a distance which Plato states is still too close (*Leg.* 704b-705a). Plato's comments are indicative of a general bias against the navy common to many Athenian aristocrats.²² Aristophanes, for example, caricatures sailors in the *Frogs*, farting in each other's faces, excreting on their mess-mates, and going ashore to rob and steal.²³ Similarly, Aristotle sets a fundamental opposition between the poor, unintelligent rowers, and the wise, aristocratic hoplites from whom they seek to seize power (*Pol.* 1321a13-21).

Plato rejects the navy in principle, but it is important to note that the absence of a navy at Kallipolis does not necessarily mean the absence of all sea-faring capability. Even though Plato has been roundly criticised as a key proponent of the 'closed society', there is

²⁰ Hunt (2007), p.125. Thucydides, for example, recounts the famous three hundred and forty kilometre non-stop voyage from the Piraeus to Mytilene in 427 BC that took approximately twenty-four hours (*Thuc.* 3.49.2-4).

²¹ Hunt (2007), p.125.

²² Van Wees (1995), p.156; (2004), p.200.

²³ Aristophanes *Frogs* 1075-7.

strong evidence that Kallipolis will maintain a degree of contact with the outside world, for the purpose of trade as well as diplomacy.²⁴ In Book II, Plato explicitly names merchants and tradesmen, those with the ability to trade by sea, as citizens of the first city (*Resp.* 371a-b). Although the class of guardians is separated from the productive classes, to which these merchants and tradesmen belong, and is subjected to an intense process of purging, it is clear that such a degree of purging is not extended to the city as a whole. Although the guardians will keep the productive classes in check, the productive classes will lead largely traditional lives, as I have argued above (Ch.1.3). The ongoing practice of external trade does not seem to be ruled out by any subsequent developments in the text. Likewise at Magnesia, although located far from the sea, the city will still possess excellent harbours, and although the city will be largely self-sufficient, the possibility of importing is left open (*Leg.* 704a-c).

Kallipolis' reliance on external, overseas trade means, however, that in certain cases of emergency, the city would need naval force. As the prominent example of Athens during the Peloponnesian War attests, the loss of supply lines could force a city at war into surrender (Intro. §.3). However, in light of Plato's strong opposition to the navy, as covered above, I suggest it more likely that Plato imagined naval protection coming via allies, in much the same way that Sparta relied primarily on the navies of its allies, Corinth and Aegina, during the Peloponnesian War (cf. *Resp.* 422a-423b).²⁵

This conclusion neatly introduces the second stage of this section, a consideration of Kallipolis' use of allies. The importance of allies to the operation of the city's army is underlined in Book IV, following Adeimantus' objection to the guardians' austere lives, and Socrates' reassertion that the city, as a whole, will not acquire significant wealth (*Resp.* 422a). Adeimantus objects further, questioning how Kallipolis would actually

²⁴ For Plato as an exponent of the closed society see Popper (1966). For evidence of diplomacy at Kallipolis see *Resp.* 422a-423b. For evidence of diplomacy at Magnesia see *Leg.* 941a-d; 949e-951a.

²⁵ Van Wees (2004), p.200.

defend itself when faced with a ‘great and wealthy’ enemy (*Resp.* 422a). Socrates then proffers three solutions: First, Kallipolis’ army, in consequence of its rigorous training, will easily be able to fight an enemy two to three times its own size (*Resp.* 422a-c); second, Kallipolis’ safety will depend heavily on the use of allies (*Resp.* 422d-e); third, Kallipolis will be able to play off different elements of large and rich cities against each other through bribes and promises (*Resp.* 423a). As Socrates presents it, the ability of Kallipolis to secure allies rests heavily on the atypical character of the city. Socrates argues that if Kallipolis were to send envoys to other cities, promising them all the spoils of the enemy, which the guardians themselves are forbidden to possess, there would be none who would not ally themselves with the city and join ‘hard, lean hounds’ in fighting ‘fat and tender sheep’ (*Resp.* 422d-e).

At this point, I think it is important to pause and reflect on the conflict in which Plato anticipates his city will be involved, a point that holds significant implications for our understanding of Kallipolis’ foreign policy. The wars will quite clearly not be conflicts initiated by the city in the pursuit of wealth or power; indeed, the impression given throughout the *Republic* is of a city characterised by moderation and deliberate introversion. So, if the city does not actively seek out conflict, why does Socrates imply that Kallipolis will be at war frequently, if not continuously (*Resp.* 467e)?

When Socrates asserts that Kallipolis’ army would be able to defeat an enemy force twice or even three times the size of its own, he must have been imagining small-scale conflict of the inter-state variety.²⁶ It is unlikely that he thought Kallipolis would have been able to withstand an army the size of Persia’s, as Athens did at Marathon.²⁷ On a

²⁶ A good example of this kind of conflict is that fought between Thespieae and Thebes, which resulted in Thespieae’s destruction sometime after 371 BC (*Hell.* 6.3.1; Diod. Sic.15.46; Ch.1.2).

²⁷ Even though Athens fought this battle largely without the support of allies, the numbers involved were still relatively large. The sources state that Athens fielded nine to ten thousand troops, with the aid of one thousand Plateans (Paus. 10.20; Plutarch *Moralia* 305b). The combined Persian forces are generally reckoned at eighteen to twenty-four thousand; see Sekunda, Sekunda and Hook (2002), pp.20-5. Although

more contemporary level, he cannot possibly have believed that his city would be able to stave off the combined forces of a fifth or fourth century BC hegemonic league, even with the use of emissaries as *agents provocateurs*.²⁸ Although there are notable instances of individuals behaving in this manner, for example Alcibiades playing Athens against Sparta and Persia during the Peloponnesian War, no city-states were able to use this policy consistently and reliably enough to avoid all conflict (*Resp.* 423a).²⁹ Kallipolis' army, while clearly formidable, would hardly have been irresistible to a contemporary superpower like Sparta or Athens, and it is extremely uncertain that the city could always thwart such an enemy through bribes and promises. In reality, the use of allies would be the city's safest option, with the state of neutrality in the Greek world often treated as hostility.³⁰

In order to maintain the alliances that would ensure its survival both from direct attacks and threatened trade routes, the city would regularly be at war fighting with and for its allies.³¹ Evidence for such a high frequency of military engagement is found in Socrates' discussion of children being introduced to battle in Book V. As the children of

there is no definite indication of the size of Kallipolis' army, one passage in Book IV may indicate a force in the vicinity of one thousand, one-tenth the size of the Athenian force at Marathon (*Resp.* 423a). Plato is more forthcoming on the population of his second city, Magnesia, which he states will have five thousand and forty households (*Leg.* 737e). Accordingly, the total citizen population of Magnesia has been estimated at around fifty thousand (not including resident aliens), which would make Magnesia one of the largest *poleis* in Classical Greece, after Athens and Sparta; see Golding and Golding (1975), p.353. However, as Mayhew points out, there is a significant difference between Plato's two cities in respect of Kallipolis' serious concern with the principle of 'oneness'; Mayhew (1997), p.79. Each citizen is to view every other citizen as a 'brother or sister, a father or mother, a son or a daughter, or some ancestor or descendant of these', and the citizens hold everything in common; the notion of private possession is abolished (*Resp.* 463a-464e). This will limit the size of Kallipolis, by comparison to Magnesia, and it seems the figure of around one thousand citizens is more or less correct; Mayhew (1997), p.79.

²⁸ The rise of the fifth-century BC hegemonic leagues involved in the Persian and the Peloponnesian Wars has already been discussed, and this trend continued in the fourth century BC, as can be seen in the Corinthian War (Intro. §.3). In fact, as Plato wrote the *Republic*, Athens was actively reasserting its central position in a coalition of anti-Spartan states and, soon after, regained its former allies to such an extent that historians regularly speak of a 'Second Athenian Empire'; see Kagan (1987), p.413.

²⁹ On Alcibiades and his many intrigues see, especially, Forde (1989).

³⁰ See Hall (2007), p.89. See also *Ath. Pol.* 8.5 where Solon is said to have made it illegal to take a neutral stance in a civil war, and Thuc. 6.80.1-2, where the Syracusan leader Hermocrates states that taking a neutral stance is effectively the same as supporting the victor.

³¹ I strongly disagree with Bloom's assertions that Kallipolis' army will do, 'little, if any, fighting outside the city', and that the city will have, 'little foreign policy'; Bloom (1991), p.362 cf. Jaeger (1944), p.208.

potters observe their fathers at work long before becoming potters themselves, Socrates argues that so too should the children of the guardians observe their fathers at war (*Resp.* 466e-467c). In order to ensure their safety, Socrates argues that the fathers will be able to distinguish between campaigns that are dangerous, and those which are less so, and to take the children to the latter, not the former (*Resp.* 466c-d cf. 537a). As Benardete argues, that the army will be at war consistently enough for this to be a key part of the guardians' education, and furthermore, that the wars they fight are able to be divided into both serious and non-serious conflicts, clearly indicates an army where active service is an expected norm.³² However, I believe that Benardete's suggestion that the city's guardians would ensure enough battles for this purpose by 'constantly inventing excuses for invading neighbours' lands' is highly unlikely given Plato's critical comments on the causes of war (Ch.1.2; *Resp.* 373d-e).³³ I argue that conflict arising from the demands of maintaining alliances is a far more plausible interpretation.

4. Amazons at Kallipolis: Plato's Female Warriors

In Chapter Two, whilst discussing Kallipolis' philosopher-kings, I raised the idea that the *Republic* may best be viewed as Platonic thought-experiment whose purpose is to explore what would be needed for justice to be perfectly realised in a city, even beyond what is practicable (Ch.2.5). This observation is perhaps nowhere truer than at the inclusion of female warriors in Kallipolis' army in Book V, where Socrates asserts they will share in every task performed by men, only less strenuously due to their physical weakness (*Resp.* 451d-e). In the modern context of increasing equality between the sexes,

³² Benardete (1989), p.121. See also the discussion of breeding in Book VI, where Socrates states that the city will need to take into consideration the number of those who have died in battle, which implies significant exposure to war (*Resp.* 460a).

³³ Benardete (1989), p.121.

and with the considerable inclusion of females in all facets of the military, Plato's comments may seem plausible. However, taken within his own military context, these comments are nothing short of absurd, as Plato would have been well aware. In this section, I will approach the topic of female warriors at Kallipolis in three stages. First, I will outline evidence from the text for the inclusion of females in Kallipolis' army. Second, I will situate the topic within contemporary Greek military ideology and practice. Third, I will examine the argument behind Plato's treatment of this subject in the *Republic*, an area that has been muddied by recent preoccupation with the notion of 'Platonic feminism', and I will offer a point of comparison with the *Laws*. By reading this aspect of the *Republic's* military content through the lens of Plato's historical context, I suggest one is able to arrive at a clearer understanding of the nature of the *Republic's* argument as a whole.

The inclusion of females in Kallipolis' army is hinted at in Book IV, and reaffirmed twice in Books VI and VIII (*Resp.* 423e; 540c; 543a); otherwise, the entire evidence for this topic is found in Book V, following the identification of justice in the city and the soul, and as Socrates is preparing to launch into a discussion of political constitutions. At this point, urged by his fellow interlocutors, Adeimantus interrupts and demands Socrates clarify what he meant, exactly, by the notion of the guardian men holding everything, including women, in common (*Resp.* 449a-c). Socrates' reluctance to discuss this topic is conspicuous. He states that he initially avoided the topic because of the trouble it would cause, claiming that it is not easy to explain, that it may raise doubts about what has already been said, and that one may rightly wonder if it is even possible (*Resp.* 450a-c). It is only after considerable cajoling, and with Socrates expressing fear, insecurity, and reluctance to pursue the discussion, that Glaucon finally prevails over Socrates to continue. However, as I will discuss below, Socrates' apparent reluctance to pursue the discussion

should not be read as any sort of unqualified reluctance; there are in fact more sophisticated reasons at play.

Socrates begins by questioning whether the female citizens should share everything with the males, or whether the principle of one task per person means that they will be confined to childbearing and household management (*Resp.* 451d). Glaucon responds that they should share everything, only that the females and males will be used in the same way as weaker and stronger animals respectively (*Resp.* 451d-e cf. 457a; 466c). Accordingly, females will require the same education as males, a prospect that Socrates argues is only strange due to convention, although he does acknowledge, whilst indulging in some *double entendre*, that many will mock the idea of women carrying ‘weapons’ and ‘mounting’ horses (*Resp.* 451e-452e). Socrates then discusses whether or not this arrangement is actually possible; whether or not females do have this natural ability, particularly with regards to war, and he argues that the sexual differences between men and women are no more significant than whether a man has hair or is bald (*Resp.* 452a-454c). In a city where children are held in common and are raised by the state, the fact that ‘the female bears the offspring’ will no more prevent women from working than the fact that ‘the male mounts the female’ (*Resp.* 454d-e). What roles people are naturally suited to is determined by a person’s aptitude for one kind of work versus another (*Resp.* 455b-c). Although males generally outperform females at every single task, there are still ‘many women who are better than many men at many things’, which demonstrates that the distribution of natural aptitudes is not gender specific (*Resp.* 455c-e). Therefore, there will be some females suited for physical training, war and philosophy, the tasks of the guardians (*Resp.* 455e-456a). Plato’s concern to legislate along the principle of justice, as opposed to the lines of convention, is particularly notable. The section concludes with Socrates arguing that this arrangement would be beneficial, and reaffirms that these female guardians must share in

warfare as with all other guardian tasks, only that their tasks will be lighter than males due to their relative physical weakness (*Resp.* 456c-457b).

Following discussion of the guardians' breeding considerations, Socrates finally turns to a consideration of how the male and guardian females will wage war. He states that it is clear that males and females will go to war together, as well as their children, who attend as part of their education, but also to urge their parents to fight harder as animals do in the presence of their young (*Resp.* 467a). Because of the principle of holding everything in common, this integrated army would be less likely to abandon each other in battle, recognising each other as family, and spurring each other on to fight the enemy even more fiercely (*Resp.* 471c-d). The only indication of how the females would actually fight is given by Glaucon, who observes they could be stationed in the same ranks or at the rear, to terrorise the enemy, or to act as a reserve (*Resp.* 471b-d). Further details of the use of females in the army are not forthcoming, and Socrates moves directly to the more central topic of the philosopher-kings.

As is amply attested in both primary and secondary sources, the Greeks, as a whole, viewed war as a male activity, and this fact seems to explain at least partially Socrates' fear that his suggestions will appear ridiculous to his audience (*Resp.* 452a).³⁴ However, there are historical examples of Greek females involved in conflicts, particularly in the case of sieges where they were expected to attack the enemy by throwing stones and roof tiles (Paus. 4.29.5; *Pol.* 1269b37-39). Perhaps the most well known example is that of

³⁴ See especially van Wees (2004), pp.39-40. This belief is clearly expressed by Hector in *Iliad* Book VI, where he tells his wife to return to the house and see to womanly affairs, the loom and distaff, while he sees to the fighting (*Il.* 6.490-493). Another example is found in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, where the character Aristarchus has received some advice to put his female relatives to work weaving clothing. When the women complain that Aristarchus himself is idle, Socrates suggests that Aristarchus respond with this story of the sheep: 'It is said [said Socrates] that when beasts could talk, a sheep said to her master: 'It is strange that you give us sheep nothing but what we get from the land, though we supply you with wool and lambs and cheese, and yet you share your own food with your dog, who supplies you with none of these things.' The dog heard this, and said: 'Of course he does. Do not I keep you from being stolen by thieves, and carried off by wolves? Why, but for my protection you couldn't even feed for fear of being killed.' And so, they say, the sheep admitted the dog's claim to preference. Then tell these women that you are their watch-dog and keeper, and it is due to you that they live and work in safety and comfort, with none to harm them.' (*Mem.* 2.7.13-14).

Telesilla, who helped defend Argos from Sparta in 510 BC. After the Spartans had defeated the Argive men in battle and were marching towards the unprotected city, Pausanias records that Telesilla armed the Argive women and slaves, positioned them strategically around the city, and managed to repulse the Spartan attack.³⁵ There is also the related example of Argive women helping the men to build the Long Walls in 417 BC, in the face of imminent Spartan invasion (Thuc. 5.82.6), and later epigraphic evidence from Messene dating to around 200-150 BC where women are included on the commemoration to those who died defending the city from Macedonian troops.³⁶

In these examples, however, one can see that historical incidents of women engaged in conflict are limited to cases of absolute necessity in the cases of defensive operations; they are not the result of any programme of affirmative inclusion.³⁷ The only case of females involved in offensive operations I have uncovered is that of the mythical, Amazon warriors, whose repeated suppression by Greek males served to both culturally reaffirm the male dominance in warfare and, as has been suggested, gave expression to a psychological fear that this position could ever be reversed (*Mem.* 2.7.13-14).³⁸ The distinction between participation in defensive as opposed to offensive combat is an important one that I will draw on below.

I turn now to an evaluation of Plato's argument for the inclusion of females within the army, and to a discussion of how this topic builds into a wider and fuller understanding of the *Republic*. To begin, it must be noted that within the context of the dialogue, Socrates argues for the inclusion of female guardians seriously. As scholars have pointed out, Socrates' discussion of this topic is one of the most sustained passages of argumentation in

³⁵ Paus. 2.20.8; Plutarch *Moralia* 345.

³⁶ Hornblower (2007), p.45.

³⁷ Even at Sparta, where females did receive formal education with an emphasis on physical fitness, this was primarily done so that they would bear healthy male soldiers; Cook (2006), pp.256-8. In fact, Aristotle records that during the Theban invasion in 369 BC, the Spartan women were even more useless than those of other cities (*Pol.* 1269b37-39).

³⁸ Shultz Engle (1942), pp.512-513.

the *Republic*, one that contrasts markedly with his discussion of guardian education in Books II to IV, where he does not seem overly concerned with demonstrating the truth of his comments.³⁹ Indeed, as Rosen points out, the lengths to which Socrates goes to couch this discussion in a rather playful tone, for example his invocation of theatre with reference to male and female dramas, and his tongue-in-cheek suggestion that his comments may find him prosecuted as if he was guilty of murder (*Resp.* 451c; 451a-b), ultimately serve to indicate the earnestness of what follows.⁴⁰ It must also be noted that while it is Socrates' interlocutors who demand Socrates explain 'How the sharing [of women and children] will be arranged' (*Resp.* 449c), it is Socrates himself who turns the discussion towards the questions of sexual equality and the feasibility and benefits of this communal system. In this discussion, Socrates displays an acute awareness of the distinction between what is by nature, and what is by nurture, the key *nomos-physis* distinction, and the underlying and driving principle of justice is to the fore.⁴¹

The question of Platonic 'feminism' is one I will largely avoid; suffice it to say that Plato's concern is not equality of the sexes, nor to address the rights of females, but rather to create a society where everyone contributes the most that they are able.⁴² One of the key criticisms levelled by feminist scholars against Plato is worth considering however, as it contributes to a fuller understanding of Plato's purposes at this point of the dialogue. The charge, typified by Annas, is that Plato's social programming is made without the consent

³⁹ Schofield (2000), p.220.

⁴⁰ Rosen (2005), pp.171-3.

⁴¹ Socrates emphasises, for example, that it was once considered shameful even for men to exercise naked (*Resp.* 452c). On this topic see Reeve (1988), p.220; Schofield (2000), p.221.

⁴² This issue is not made any easier by the fact that, as Pappas points out, just what exactly is meant by the term 'feminism' is not always clear; Pappas (1995), p.105. A key work on this issue is the 1994 collection, *Feminist Interpretations of Plato*, edited by Nancy Tuana, which includes a variety of scholarship on both sides of the debate. For one of the more blatantly pro-feminist readings of the *Republic* see Crossman (1963). For a decidedly anti-feminist reading of Plato see Annas (2000), also Smith (2000). Another approach is that of Vlastos, who attempts to isolate and identify both the feminist and non-feminist aspects of the work, an approach I do not think is wholly convincing; see Vlastos (1997). I personally tend to side with Schofield's assessment of the issue, that in the *Republic* one can see Plato wrestling with the distinction of nature versus nurture, 'a philosopher struggling to have a serious argument with himself: trying to reconcile two rather different sets of ideas about men, women, and human nature, both of which he found powerfully attractive'; Schofield (2006), p.231.

of the females: although Plato offers females freedom from service in the household, it is only done so that they can be re-subjected to service for the state.⁴³ This criticism is true as far as it goes, but it applies equally to Kallipolis' male guardians. Plato presents the good of the city as overlapping with the good of the individuals within the city.⁴⁴ Justice requires each individual to contribute as fully as they are able; the nature of Plato's thought-experiment means that considerations of individual liberty do not come into the equation.

In the *Laws* Book VII, Plato discusses the topic of female warriors in terms that seem more in line with his historical circumstance when he writes:

So long as they're still girls, they should practice all the dancing and fighting that goes with heavy armour; when they get to be women, they should have grasped manoeuvres, battle orders, and how to put down and take up weapons. They would do this much at least; to take the responsibility of guarding the children and the rest of the city if the whole mass of the army with all its power should ever have to leave the city and fight outside. Or then again, the opposite might happen [...] some enemies from abroad, whether Barbarians or Greeks, might fall on them with enormous strength and violence, compelling them to make a fight for the city itself. It would presumably show much evil in the political regime if the women had been so shamefully reared that they didn't do as the birds do, which are willing to run every risk, and even to die, fighting on behalf of their babies against even the strongest beasts (*Leg.* 814a-b).

Although perhaps still extreme for his time, this military education for the females of Magnesia expressly targets the two worst case scenarios a city could face: Protecting the city in event of a mass mobilisation of the male troops, and aiding in the defence of the

⁴³ Annas (1981), p.183.

⁴⁴ See Barker (1966), pp.86-93; Sayers (1999), p.86; Rosen (2005), p.179.

city in the case of an invasion. This argument is markedly different from the argument of the *Republic*, where females are included in military endeavours as a matter of principle; as Socrates states, they will ‘guard precisely what the males guard, hunt with them, and share everything with them’ (*Resp.* 451d). Their military involvement will quite clearly involve offensive roles as well as defensive ones, which steps right outside the bounds of historical reality and into the realm of myth, as I noted above. The important distinction to note between Plato’s comments in the *Laws*, and the *Republic*, is that in the latter, Socrates follows the discussion wherever justice demands, even if this pushes further than Plato thinks is reasonable or possible. Indeed, the point may be that the *Republic*’s thought-experiment is always destined to remain a ‘daydream’.

5. The Right Kind of Conflict: Limitations and Restrictions in Book V

In Chapters One and Two I argued that warfare holds a positive role in the argument of the *Republic* by establishing the conditions necessary for the creation of the just state and for the correct education of Kallipolis’ guardians. In this chapter’s final section, I will look at the limitations Socrates imposes on warfare in Book V in light of his historical context. Although warfare serves an important institutional role in the city, Plato nevertheless demonstrates a high degree of sensitivity to the emotional, physical, and psychological cost of combat both to participants and societies. This creates a tension that I will argue is consistent with contemporary and traditional attitudes towards warfare, and is informed by Plato’s own direct and indirect experiences of conflict. I suggest that this tension provides a paradigm through which the *Republic*’s overall approach to the military and warfare may best be understood

I begin with a consideration of Greek attitudes towards warfare, a consideration that defies, almost by definition, any simplistic or absolute answer; the variables of location, time, and person clearly result in a host of nuance and divergence. It is possible, however, to trace some major themes across the Archaic and Classical Periods, and to tie a more localised and specific paradigm to the context in which Plato wrote. A heavily influential approach to this topic has been to argue that the Greeks essentially tolerated warfare, accepting conflict as an unavoidable part of life.⁴⁵ This view is typified by Momigliano who writes that in Greek society, ‘War was a focus for emotions, ethical values, social rules [...] War was the centre of Greek life [...] The Greeks came to accept war as a natural fact like birth and death about which nothing could be done’.⁴⁶ One may recall here Heraclitus’ famous statement, ‘War is father of all and king of all. He renders some gods, others men; he makes some slaves, others free.’⁴⁷ More recently, Shipley has argued that Greeks did not have an autonomous concept of war; that in Greek literature peace is only lauded as a utopian ideal; and that nowhere is it suggested that war be abolished. Shipley concludes: ‘War is at least accepted, at most celebrated as the manliest of occupations.’⁴⁸

While there is certainly truth to these points, I suggest the position of these scholars goes too far by not paying sufficient attention to evidence that the Greeks, in general, acknowledged the undesirable aspects of war, and that they generally affirmed the desirability of peace. Good evidence for this argument is found in the *Iliad*, arguably the most warfare-centred of all Greek texts. Not only does the story end on a note of reconciliation between Priam and Achilles, but contrast is continually drawn between the positive state of peace and the negative state of war. A clear example is the iconography of Achilles’ shield, which juxtaposes the activities of a peaceful city against those of a violent

⁴⁵ For a comprehensive discussion of this issue see Connor (2007), pp.83-110.

⁴⁶ Momigliano (1958), pp.199-211.

⁴⁷ Heraclitus *Fragments* B53, trans. Robinson.

⁴⁸ Shipley (1993), p.18.

one (*Il.* 18.490-540). In the former are weddings, festivals, dancing, and a functional judicial system. In the latter are the deities Hate, Confusion, and Death, ‘the clothing upon her shoulders stained strong red with the men’s blood’. Homer describes Ares as a ‘maniac who knows nothing of justice’, and he has Zeus name him ‘the most hateful of all the gods’ (*Il.* 5.831; 5.890).⁴⁹ In a similar vein, Herodotus has Croesus tell Apollo, ‘No one is fool enough to choose war instead of peace’ (*Hdt.* 1.87.4), and Callias states in the *Hellenica* that if mankind is fated to fight, ‘then what we should do is to be as slow as we can to start a war and as quick as we can to end it once it has begun’ (*Hell.* 6.3.6).

Perhaps a more accurate understanding of Greek attitudes to warfare, at least during the historical and intellectual context in which Plato composed the *Republic*, incorporates the notion of a tension. On the one hand, as Momigliano rightly asserts, war did serve as an important social, cultural, and political institution in Greek society.⁵⁰ This seems particularly true in Classical Athens, where warfare provided a major arena for the expression of civic ambition. The eagerness to commit huge numbers to the Sicilian Expedition in 415 BC, especially given the wider context of the ongoing Peloponnesian War, clearly rejects any widespread, anti-war reading of Athenian attitudes and beliefs at this time. Indeed, as I will discuss below, even after Socrates’ strong comments against inter-Greek warfare, Glaucon is still excited by the prospect of a united Greece waging war against the barbarians, a sentiment that is keeping with the expression of Athenian attitudes towards the Sicilian Expedition and beyond (*Resp.* 471b). On the other hand, Aristophanes’ play *Peace*, for example, composed in a context of expectant peace and performed only ten days before the historical Peace of Nicias in 421 BC, conveys a positive affirmation of the value of concord; Aristophanes writes: ‘How happy all the cities

⁴⁹ As Raaflaub points out, this is markedly different from the reputation enjoyed by the Roman war god Mars, who was hailed as an ancestor of the Romans, and who had a temple built in his honour at Rome’s centre; see Raaflaub (2007), p.15.

⁵⁰ Momigliano (1958), pp.199-211.

of Greece are now! All reconciled, chatting merrily away and laughing.’⁵¹ In this play, as well as the *Acharnians* and the *Lysistrata*, there is a unifying theme of the superiority of peace and the importance of its returning to a Greece ravaged by the Peloponnesian War.⁵² However, as Dover points out, this is certainly not pacifism by any modern standard, and is by no means a renouncement of warfare *per se*; in the *Acharnians*, conflict is presented as preferable to the loss of Athens’ position as the dominant Greek power, and in the *Lysistrata*, composed when Athens’ position was somewhat more precarious, the goal is still presented as peace between Athens and Sparta on equal terms.⁵³ Clearly then, there is a tension here between the undesirability of the emotional, physical, social and economic costs of war, and the competing ideals of civic prestige, security, self-interest, and ambition (cf. Thuc. 1.75.3; 5.90.1).

In Book V, during an extended discussion of the guardians at war, Socrates proposes a series of limitations and restrictions on the kind of conflict Kallipolis’ army is allowed to fight, which I suggest must be read through the ‘cost of war’ aspect of the tension described above (*Resp.* 469b-471c). The passage covers the behaviour of soldiers towards enemies, and is immediately noticeable for both its length and realism, particularly following Socrates’ shocking comments on women and children. Socrates begins by stating that in war, as far as possible, Greeks should not actively enslave, or even passively allow other cities to enslave, fellow Greeks (*Resp.* 469b-c). The first reason given is a pragmatic appeal to the danger of even victorious Greeks, weakened by war, being enslaved by barbarians (*Resp.* 469c); this clearly evokes a contemporary concern with the ongoing involvement and threat of Persia in Greek affairs throughout the fifth and fourth centuries BC (Intro. §§.3-4). Kallipolis’ army is also forbidden to despoil dead enemies of

⁵¹ Aristophanes *Peace* 538-40, trans. O’Neill; Dover (1972), p.136-9; Olson (1998), p.xxxi; Sommerstein (2005), p.xvii.

⁵² MacDowell (1995), pp.75-7; 197-8; 246-250; Tritle (2007), pp.184-5.

⁵³ Dover (1972), pp.84-88.

anything but their armour, as well as from displaying this armour in temples, lest it profane the gods and offend other Greeks (*Resp.* 469c-470a). Neither can the army ravage Greek land, nor burn Greek houses, only being permitted to destroy the year's harvest (*Resp.* 470a; 471a-b). Socrates offers a second reason for these measures, arguing that Greeks, as a race, belong to each other, whereas barbarians are 'strange and foreign' (*Resp.* 470c). When Greeks and barbarians fight, it is a case of natural warfare between natural enemies, but when Greeks fight other Greeks, who are natural friends, it is not even proper war but rather faction resulting from sickness (*Resp.* 470c-e). If Kallipolis is forced to fight other Greeks, then it will be with a view to reconciliation, not devastation and exploitation, and the fighting should be conducted, quite remarkably, in a spirit of friendship (*Resp.* 470e-471b). This passage does not go so far as to argue for the rejection of war, with Glaucon enthusiastically commenting that such measures would enable the Greeks better to fight barbarians (*Resp.* 471b). It does, however, suggest a series of practical measures to be taken by the army to limit the physical and emotional damage caused by constant fighting.

In order to appreciate the basis of these strong comments, I offer two explanations. First, as is well evidenced in the literary sources, when Plato wrote the *Republic*, he did so within a strong tradition of criticism by Athenian intellectuals of inter-Greek conflict specifically, and of inter-Greek division more generally. As van Wees makes clear, the Greeks did think of themselves as possessing a collective identity as descendants of the common ancestor Hellen, son of Deucalion.⁵⁴ This sense of an overarching bond can be seen clearly in Homer's catalogue of the Greek ships at Troy, as well as Herodotus' catalogue of Greek forces at Salamis (*Il.* 2.494-759; *Hdt.* 8.43.1-8.44.1). Nevertheless, the majority of wars fought over the Archaic and Classical Periods were those waged by Greeks against Greeks and, in what must clearly be Herodotus' own heartfelt belief, he has

⁵⁴ Van Wees (2004), pp.6-18.

a Persian observer wonder at why a people who speak the same language cannot find non-violent ways to settle differences (Hdt. 7.9 B1). This sentiment took a particular hold during the fourth century BC in a more widespread pan-Hellenistic movement, but there seems to be sufficient evidence to suggest that the belief was common, in Athens at least, by the late fifth century BC.⁵⁵ A clear example is the theme of Athenian and Spartan unity in diversity evident in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, particularly in the reconciliation scene between the Spartan and Athenian delegates, and the belief is further attested across a range of sources including Herodotus, Thucydides and Euripides, and then later and perhaps most prominently, by Isocrates.⁵⁶

Although criticism of inter-Greek warfare was an established literary motif at the time Plato wrote the *Republic*, and it seems likely therefore that this had some influence on his comments in Book V, I find this explanation incomplete. Criticism of inter-Greek warfare may have been common in Plato's intellectual context, but it must be remembered that this criticism ultimately stemmed from a historical context of pervasive Greek warfare in which Plato himself both directly and indirectly participated (Intro. §§.3-4). I turn now to make my second suggestion for why Plato is so critical of inter-warfare in the *Republic*, one that rests on his own experiences, and those of his family and friends.

In a fragmentary source Pindar states: 'To the inexperienced, war is pleasant, but when he has had experience of it, in his heart, he fears exceedingly its approach.'⁵⁷ When discussing warfare in antiquity, there is a temptation, indeed a tendency, to extract oneself from the emotional or 'human' aspect of the topic in order to focus on major protagonists, key themes, or underlying causes. With both historical and fictional sources, it is common

⁵⁵ See especially Flower (2000), pp.65-101. See also Perlman (1976), pp.1-30; Dillery (1995), pp.39-58.

⁵⁶ Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 1071-132; Hdt. 5.49.3-9; Thuc. 4.20.4; Euripides *Iphigenia in Aulis* 1266; 1400; Isocrates *Panathenaicus* 12.13; *Pol.* 1252b9.

⁵⁷ Pindar F.110; reproduced in Mathiesen (1999), p.89.

either to ignore or to downplay the human cost of fighting and to write off significant loss of life as incidental. However, it is important to remember the human element of warfare and to recognise that, as Ogden states, ‘Warfare is simply battle; battle is only fighting; fighting is always killing and dying.’⁵⁸ Therefore, in addition to the wider social and economic costs of war, it must be appreciated that Greek soldiers witnessed horrific scenes and experienced post-traumatic stress symptoms similar to those observed in combatants to the present day.⁵⁹ The awfulness of conflict fought during Plato’s lifetime is vividly portrayed in the following account of the aftermath of the battle of Coroneia in 394 BC. Xenophon writes:

Now that the fighting was at an end, a weird spectacle met the eye, as one surveyed the scene of the conflict – the earth stained with blood, friend and foe lying dead side by side, shields smashed to pieces, spears snapped in two, daggers bared of their sheaths, some on the ground, some embedded in the bodies, some yet gripped by the hand. Then, as the day was far spent, having dragged the enemy’s dead within their battle line, [the Spartans] supped and slept (Xenophon *Agesilaus* 2.14-5, trans. Heinemann).

This image of the exhausted Spartan troops confronting such appalling sights, then having to sort the dead bodies before returning to the practical necessities of everyday campaign is truly numbing. Admittedly, the Greek battle experience was in many ways different from the modern one. Extreme and prolonged conditions, such as jungle and trench warfare, were unknown, and the absence of explosives and gunpowder clearly limited casualties. However the impact of close range fighting is well attested, with the psychological and

⁵⁸ Ogden (1991), p.11. I note here the influence of the ‘Face of Battle’ approach to military history on this thesis, an approach popularised over the last thirty years following the publication of Keegan’s influential work; Keegan (1976).

⁵⁹ Tritle (2007), p.181.

emotional consequences of killing another human shown to rise exponentially with the increasing proximity of the act.⁶⁰ Consequently, it is no surprise to find accounts of Greek soldiers struck by temporary blindness, involuntarily soiling themselves, of panic attacks striking entire armies, and of men after battles having ‘fallen victim to useless labour, dreaded diseases, and hardly curable madnesses’.⁶¹

Whether or not Plato himself suffered from any of these symptoms or personally participated in any conflict like that described by Xenophon is impossible to tell. What is possible, though, is to make some generalised conclusions from what is known about Plato’s life. First, Plato knew many men who had fought and died in combat, some of them close friends and relatives as is attested in the examples of Socrates, Critias, and Theaetetus. Even if Plato did not see significant conflict firsthand, and with its horrors such as those described above, he almost certainly knew men who had. Second, Plato would have experienced the indirect hardships that the intense inter-Greek conflict of this period brought upon Athens; particularly the city-wide starvation in the final part of the Peloponnesian War, which forced Athens’ submission. Third, Plato would have been aware of the growing criticism in Athenian literature of contemporary inter-Greek conflict. A combination of these factors would certainly explain the strength of his comments on the limitations and restrictions imposed on Kallipolis’ army; comments that perhaps appear to run somewhat counter to the positive role previously accorded to warfare in the creation of the just state and for the institution of the guardians’ education.

So, having made sense of the criticism of inter-Greek warfare in Book V, one final question must now be asked: How does this criticism fit within the wider context of the work? Plato’s apparently contradictory treatment of warfare demands some comment, and it remains to be seen how this passage furthers our understanding of the *Republic* as a

⁶⁰ See Grossman (1995), pp.97-137.

⁶¹ Hdt. 6.117.2-3; Aristophanes *Acharnians* 241; Thuc. 5.72.4; Gorgias *Encomium of Helen* 16-7, trans. Kennedy.

whole. To answer this question, I point back to the concept of tension evident in Greek attitudes to conflict across the Archaic and Classical Periods, and I suggest that the *Republic* can be seen to fit neatly into this paradigm. Heraclitus' assertion that 'War is the father of all' speaks powerfully to the arrangement of Kallipolis.⁶² As I have discussed in Chapters One and Two, the just state is created out of the condition of war, the guardian class is instituted because of war, the city's social classes are defined in relation to war, and the guardian education is crafted with a view to war. For much of the *Republic*, Plato does appear to hold a very accepting and accommodating view of conflict, and this view underpins significant aspects of the work. At the same time, however, there is a tension, evident in the comments of Book V, where Plato acknowledges the fact that warfare is a destructive and harmful force. Rather than seeing this passage as breaking with the overall focus of the work, it may perhaps be better to see Plato's approach to warfare across the text as a consistent reflection of the attitudes of his wider social, intellectual, and historical context.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, in this chapter I have taken an explicitly historical approach to elements of the *Republic* in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the text. Although I have been cautious not to push this approach beyond what is reasonable, I have argued that there are, in fact, significant points of overlap between the Plato's historical context and his philosophical purposes, and that a proper understanding of the former will further an understanding of the latter.

⁶² Heraclitus *Fragments* B53, trans. Robinson.

I have approached this chapter from four angles. First, I have discussed Plato's approach to military training, giving particular consideration to the traditional ideal that military success stemmed as much from moral qualities as combat-specific training. I have argued that this explains why the physical education at Kallipolis takes the form of traditional leisure pursuits such as gymnastics, athletics, hunting and dance, even though Plato was aware of the growing shift towards military professionalisation. I have stressed the importance Plato accords to spiritual as opposed to bodily development in the *Republic*, and I have both situated and hopefully explained why he thought good physical training of the body flows from good cultural training of the soul, but not vice-versa.

Second, I have discussed some of the operational concerns of Kallipolis' army, particularly those of the navy and allies. Although Plato is generally unforthcoming on the question of Kallipolis' military units and combat-capabilities, I have argued that his non-discussion of the navy is difficult to ignore and that his silence on this point represents a rejection of the historical nature of navies and naval power, a point that builds on our understanding of the character of Kallipolis. Plato is far more explicit on the second operational concern discussed in this section, Kallipolis' use of allies, and his thinking at this point seems to have been significantly informed by his historical context. I have suggested that consideration of this point has important implications for our understanding of Kallipolis' foreign policy, explaining the high frequency of external wars, which runs somewhat counter to the city's introverted nature.

Third, I have discussed the inclusion of female warriors in Kallipolis' army. As a consideration of Plato's historical context demonstrates, Socrates' suggestions on this subject are nothing short of absurd. Greek military ideology generally affirmed the total dominance of the military realm by males and the social subjugation of females. Although there are historical examples of Greek females participating in conflict, they are limited to

defensive warfare, not offensive combat, which steps into the realm of myth. I have argued that Socrates' discussion of this topic clearly supports the reading of *Republic* as a Platonic thought-experiment whose purpose is to explore what would be needed for justice to be perfectly realised in the city, even beyond what is practicable; a point that speaks directly to the nature of the *Republic's* argument as a whole.

Fourth, I have considered the limitations Socrates imposes on warfare at Kallipolis in Book V. Although warfare holds a largely positive role in the argument of the *Republic*, here Plato demonstrates a high degree of sensitivity to the emotional, physical, and psychological cost of combat on warfare's participants, and on Greek society as a whole. This creates a tension that I have argued is evidenced in contemporary Athenian literature, and is informed by Plato's own direct and indirect experiences of conflict. I have suggested that this tension both explains the apparent contradiction between Plato's approach to warfare in Book V compared with the text more generally, and provides a paradigm through which the *Republic's* overall approach to the military and warfare may best be understood

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have sought to restore to its intended position the military character of Plato's *Republic*, and to address what I saw as a significant gap in Platonic scholarship. To this end, I adopted a two-pronged approach, seeking to demonstrate and explain warfare's importance as both an influence on, and a factor within, Plato's argument, as well as to explore the way in which Plato, as a fourth century BC Greek intellectual, engages with his historical context with regards to warfare. Having reached the end of this work, I will now offer a brief discussion, by way of a general conclusion, addressing the three following points: First, a summary of the *Republic's* military content; second, a consideration of why warfare and the military do represent such major concerns in the text; third, a discussion of how reading the *Republic* within its wider historical context furthers an understanding of Plato's more central, philosophical purposes.

As I have discussed above, warfare and the military *are* pervasive, if under-acknowledged, concerns within the *Republic*. When Socrates moves in Book II towards the construction of the just city, warfare is quickly introduced as the result of unrestrained desire, which causes corruption in the first city described as the 'true city'. The citizens seize neighbouring land to meet the pressures of satisfying luxurious appetites, and must defend themselves from neighbours who act in the same way. The presence of war means that the city now needs an army, and Socrates promptly institutes the class of guardians to meet this requirement. Contrary to expectation, Socrates refuses to say whether he believes the effects of war to be either good or bad; as will become clear, when war is responded to in the correct manner, he clearly accords to it a positive role.

The guardian class, whose lives dominate the remainder of Books II to VII, are a direct response to the presence of war, and their primary occupation is that of the military.

This occupation is described as the most important occupation in the city, requiring the most freedom, the most craft, and the most practice; it also requires a person of a suitable nature. Socrates initially focuses on the prerequisite spirit, strength, and courage of the guardians, and then introduces the final demand that the guardians must also possess philosophical natures, a love of learning that will ensure that they can balance the need for gentleness with the need for violence. Although Socrates will soon argue for a further division in the city's social structure, separating auxiliary-guardians who fight from complete-guardians who rule, military considerations remain a significant influence for the education of the guardian class as a whole.

To the age of twenty, all guardians will undertake the same education in two main areas, those of cultural and physical training. From birth, music, poetry and stories will be censored so that the city's guardians will only imitate courageous and temperate examples: Socrates stresses the point that this education is specifically designed for the raising of soldiers, and it is clear that a driving demand is that of application to war. Likewise, the guardians' physical training is shaped by the primary requirement that it be useful for warriors. The need for harmony between these two educational systems is emphasised, in order that the guardian does not become a 'feeble warrior' by neglecting the physical or 'a wild beast' by neglecting the cultural (*Resp.* 410c-412a).

At the age of twenty, the guardians are divided into two distinct classes, with the complete-guardians progressing to higher, philosophical education, and the auxiliary-guardians remaining in the army as their full-time occupation. As Socrates makes clear in Book VII, the complete-guardians will continue to participate in the army, as at the same time they rule in the city, and their philosophical education is continually linked to practical, military applications; Socrates explicitly states that philosophy, 'must not be useless to warlike men' (*Resp.* 521d-526d). Focus on this class, and ultimately the position

of the philosopher-king, continues to Book VIII, where Socrates concludes that for the city to be ‘eminently well governed’, the kings must be those who have proven best both in philosophy and war, and that as ‘athletes of war and guardians’, they deserve to be supported by the rest of the city (*Resp.* 534a-b).

I also note that warfare is not only a pervasive concern within Plato’s political argument; its presence is also significant to his account of human psychology. Within the *Republic*, it is the class of warriors who contribute the courageous component of the city’s composite virtue, and who provide the appropriate analog for the courageous part of a person’s soul.

To address the second point of this general conclusion, a consideration of why warfare and the military are so central to the argument of the *Republic*, I suggest that the military is presented as an essential requirement for the realisation of true justice. To this end, I will now recap two key ideas discussed over the course of this thesis: First, the role of warfare in the evolution of the just state; second, the role of warfare in the maintenance of the just state through its influence on the lives of the philosopher-kings.

With regards to the first idea, the role of warfare in the evolution of the just state, an important concept I have discussed is that of natural processes. Humans naturally congregate to satisfy economic desires, these desires naturally overstep those which are necessary, and warfare naturally follows. In consequence of warfare, the city will naturally need an army with soldiers to fill the ranks. This introduces the element of force into the city, which forms the natural basis for political power; the ability to dominate and influence the city as a whole. Each step of the process from basic community to the institution of the army is presented as both natural and inevitable. It is at this point, however, and *only* at this point, that the city is presented with the opportunity to follow a course of action that will lead to the condition of civic justice. By creating the class of

guardians, and habituating them to care more for the city and its citizens than for themselves, training them to stand guard against internal and external enemies, harmony and justice can be realised in the city. Here I refer to my substantial discussion in Chapter Two of the guardians' cultural and physical education, and Plato's major concern with carefully developing virtue in the guardians' souls. The spirited element, ruled by reason, both protects the appetitive element and keeps its unnecessary desires under control, a process as important for the soul as the city. But this process can only be initiated once the city has reached the necessary stage of evolution. And this stage can only be reached by the introduction of war. Warfare is significant because it comes as a result of the citizens wishing to look beyond basic necessities to higher, more civilized desires. As I have argued, this is the first indication of desires of the soul as distinct from desires of the body. It is this yearning for something 'higher' that will enable the city, under the right circumstances, to realise the guardian ideal and purge its former state of luxury and fever to achieve the condition of civic justice.

I turn now to the second idea, the role of warfare in the maintenance of the just state through its influence on the lives of the philosopher-kings. A key problem I raised with Socrates' first, so-called 'true' city, is that its conception of 'interest' is both self-focused and limited. The citizens are motivated by the desire to receive the biggest possible share for themselves; hence the focus on possessions, economic activity and trade. A key shift with the advent of warfare, in the second city, and then the third city, is that the citizens are asked for the first time to sacrifice in a manner that seriously challenges their concept of self-interest. In the *Republic*, Plato's concern with communal interest comes to the fore; the entire force of the guardian education is engineered to make the guardians care 'more for the city and more for each other' than for themselves as individuals (*Resp.* 415d; Ch.3-4).

As I have discussed, the paradigm of self-sacrifice, practiced within a military context, plays a major role in explaining why the philosopher-kings ultimately agree to rule for the city, and to forsake what appears to be at least on some level the more desirous life of private philosophy. I believe this is both a major consideration of the *Republic*, and the most important function of warfare in Plato's argument. In this thesis I have taken some care to stress the connections between the guardians' military participation, their primary, moral and higher education, and their practical activity as politicians and generals. As I have said, this topic has been largely neglected and by modern scholarship, or at the very least misrepresented, and I venture to suggest that the approach I have taken here provides a more accurate understanding of Plato's argument.

One of the more problematic aspects of the *Republic* is Socrates' assertion, repeated no less than seven times, that those who have ascended to knowledge of the Forms will have to be compelled to rule. This raises the question of motivation, in answer to which I have suggested two explanations: The first relies on the force of reason; the second relies on the force of sub-rational moral habituation. With regards to the former, I suggested that the 'compulsion' applied to the guardians actually takes the form of persuasion within the context of mentor-mentee relationships; the young philosopher-kings are led towards an understanding of the demands of justice, which can be separated from their desire to pursue wisdom. Here I drew a distinction between simple preference, and preference *all things considered*, and I argued that this deeper appreciation for the nature of justice, and the fundamental desire to imitate the Form of Justice, motivates the philosopher-kings to rule. Here Plato can be seen to elevate the demands of justice over the pursuit of wisdom, a feature in keeping with the nature of the work as a whole.

For my second explanation, I suggested that the moral qualities of courage and self-sacrifice, introduced because of the demands of warfare, and promoted across the course of

the guardians' entire lives, ally with the philosopher-kings' rational desire to act justly and provide the necessary resolve for them to do so in reality. Drawing on Plato's psychological theory as discussed in Book IV, particularly his account of Leontius and the corpses, I argued that neither the intellectual nor the pre-rational moral habituation explanation, when taken in isolation, provides a totally sufficient answer for why the philosopher-kings decide to rule; rather, the two work in tandem. Warfare comes to the fore, as it is warfare that provides the vehicle for the proper expression of the spirited element of the guardians' souls where these moral qualities are instated. It is this spiritedness which comes alongside as an ally to reason motivating the guardians to sacrifice, and it is sacrifice which is needed for the philosopher-kings to subordinate their personal interests to communal interests, resisting what may seem the more pleasant life of theoretical contemplation. The philosopher-king is an essential requirement for the presence of justice in the city, and warfare is an essential requirement for the presence of the philosopher-king.

I move now to address the final point of this general conclusion, a consideration of how reading the *Republic* within its wider historical context furthers an understanding of Plato's more central, philosophical purposes. Again, this is a topic that has been largely neglected in the scholarship; however, in this thesis it has yielded some tangible and significant results. I draw these together now under three key themes: First, the extent to which Plato takes a largely traditional approach to the *Republic's* military content; second, the question of Kallipolis' foreign policy and its relationships with external states; third, the reading of the *Republic* as a Platonic thought-experiment whose purpose is to explore what would be needed for justice to be perfectly realised in a city, even beyond what is practicable.

In the *Republic*, Plato takes a largely traditional approach to the subjects of warfare and the military. This is clearly evident in his discussion of Kallipolis' physical training, where he claims to explain the necessary patterns to discern the particular, 'dances, hunts, chases with hounds, athletic contests, and horse races', while not providing any consideration of the specific combat training Kallipolis' army will conduct (*Resp.* 412b). His confidence that this 'training programme' will enable the army to defeat much larger forces of external enemies may seem somewhat optimistic to a modern audience. A similar approach can be observed in his discussion of the prerequisite guardian spirit, and his assertion that Kallipolis' political rulers must be military men, a point that again jars with modern expectations. Not only in our present context, but even in Plato's own historical context, there are numerous examples of highly successful military leaders with no political background, and of highly successful politicians with no military background. Although Kallipolis' approach to warfare is of a far more rigorous and formalised manner than was common for the majority of contemporary Greek states, the text does not seem to have been heavily influenced by the cutting edge military reforms of its period. Plato does not, for instance, develop the details of his army much beyond the level of hoplite and cavalry, and one should hesitate to read such developments into the text.

Where I suggest this observation is not entirely adequate, however, is in Book V, where Socrates imposes a series of restrictions and limitations on the type of warfare Kallipolis will be allowed to engage in. This passage covers the behaviour of soldiers towards enemies, and is immediately noticeable for both its length and realism. Plato appears to demonstrate a high degree of sensitivity to the emotional, physical, and psychological cost of combat on both its participants and on Greek society as whole. Although reinforced by strong literary precedents, I argue that Plato's direct and indirect experiences of actual warfare are here clearly to the fore. This passage is significant as it

seems to contradict the positive role previously accorded to warfare in the construction of the just city, and the establishment of the guardian class. However, as I have suggested, this apparent incongruity can be explained through the notion of a tension in Greek approaches to warfare, evident in Plato's contemporary historical context. Here, I have argued that one can see in the *Republic* an overlapping of traditional attitudes to conflict and the influence of individual experience. This provides, in turn, a paradigm through which the *Republic's* overall approach to the military and warfare may best be understood

A second point of comparison between Plato's historical context and the philosophical purposes of the *Republic* concerns Kallipolis' foreign policy. Throughout this thesis, I have painted a picture of Kallipolis as a city characterised by deliberate introversion. Much of the focus of Socrates' reforms is for harmony to exist *within* the city, and for the relationships *amongst* the city's three social classes. Although the military is the primary occupation of the guardian class, a point that is constantly reiterated, very little focus is given in the *Republic* to the interactions between Kallipolis and other city-states. Socrates actively rejects the concern for revenue and domain that Thucydides paints as the source of the 'greatest power', and one almost gets the impression of an army that exists in principle, but not in practice (Thuc.1.16.1). However, this impression is quite untrue, and it is clear that the city will be frequently, if not continuously, at war.

A significant point I have discussed in this thesis is that Kallipolis does not exist in a state of isolation. In Book II, where Socrates presents the fevered city spiralling out of control and invading the territories of other city-states, he is quite clear that the city will also be forced to defend itself against neighbours who have likewise 'abandoned themselves to the endless acquisition of money and overstepped the limit of their necessary desires' (*Resp.* 373d). Although the fevered city is eventually purged, and with it the need to initiate external wars for luxury's sake, the reality of avaricious neighbours remains.

The topic is addressed most clearly in Book IV, where Adeimantus questions how Kallipolis would actually defend itself when faced with a 'great and wealthy' enemy, to which Socrates replies Kallipolis will make heavy use of allies. But alliances are two-way arrangements: in order to maintain the alliances that will ensure its survival, Kallipolis will be obliged to participate in the wars of its allies. This is in keeping with the historical reality of Classical Greece, where the prominent rise of hegemonic allegiances dominated warfare throughout much of the Classical Period, and where smaller city-states were frequently drawn into the affairs of larger powers, with the state of neutrality often treated as hostility

This conclusion is significant as it argues against the interpretation of certain scholars who say that Plato is merely taking an ironic stance when he both suggests a heavily practical education for the city's rulers and emphasises the application of mathematics and philosophy to warfare and politics. I suggest Plato's comments should be accepted as they appear, which is consistent with the wider thematic and narrative structure of the *Republic*. This point also suggests a further reason for the centrality of warfare to the text, and the importance of the army to Plato's argument. In consideration of Kallipolis' relationships with foreign states, and for the sake of its survival, the city will frequently be at war. The city will therefore need an army *out of necessity*, and this army will need to be ruled by competent officers who are naturally drawn from the class of the guardian-rulers.

One final point where an understanding of the *Republic* within its wider historical context furthers an understanding Plato's more central, philosophical purposes, is on the reading of the *Republic* as a Platonic thought-experiment whose purpose is to explore what would be needed for justice to be perfectly realised in the city, even beyond what is practicable. I raised this idea in my discussion of the philosopher-kings' motivation to rule the city in Chapter Three, where I suggested that in the *Republic*, Plato elevates the

demands of justice above all else. This causes the philosopher-kings to forsake lives of private philosophy within the context of Kallipolis, even though within other city-states there would be no such obligation. Looking back over the text, it is possible to see other examples where this consideration is similarly prominent; the uses of deception in the form of the Noble Lie and in the city's breeding programme are two examples. Where this occurs most prominently, in this thesis at least, is with regards to the inclusion of females in the city's army.

In Book V, Socrates not only argues for the presence of females within the guardian class, but also argues that they will share in every task performed by the men, including participation in both offensive and defensive combat. Although these comments seem largely plausible in a modern context, taken within Plato's own military and social context they are nothing short of absurd. Plato treats this topic again in his *Laws*, in terms that more closely match his historical context. However, the important distinction to note between the two works is that in the *Republic*, Plato largely rejects normal constraints in order to follow his conclusions wherever the discussion leads. Plato's concern to establish justice in the city pushes his thinking beyond the point of practicality, on the subject of females particularly. As I have suggested, the ultimate point of this may be to show that the *Republic's* thought-experiment is always destined to remain a 'daydream'.

The aim of this thesis has been to restore to its original position the importance of the military character of Plato's *Republic* and to provide a fuller and more accurate understanding of this important aspect of Plato's thought. My motivation throughout has not been to define myself in opposition to the vast body of Platonic scholarship, but rather to push towards an increasingly more accurate and faithful interpretation of this rich and engaging text. I hope that this work will both stimulate and provoke further discussion, serving in turn as a stepping-stone for future research.

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