WHAT'S THE GOOD OF AGREEING? *HOMONOIA* IN PLATONIC POLITICS

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1. Introduction

ALL the citizens in the ideal city of Plato's *Republic*, the rulers as well as the ruled, agree that their city's rulers, the philosophers, should rule. This agreement is a feature of the city's moderation: the city's moderation is not only a condition in which 'the desires of the base majority are ruled by the desires and wisdom of the superior minority' (431 C 9–D 2) but also one in which the ruled, rather than being simply dominated by the rulers, believe that their rulers should rule over them.

SOCRATES. And if indeed in any other city the same opinion exists in both the rulers and the ruled [*ἡ αὐτὴ δόξα ἔνεστι τοῖς τε ἄρχουσι καὶ ἀρχομένοις*] concerning who should rule [*περὶ οὕστινας δεῖ ἄρχειν*], it would also exist in this one . . . In which of the citizens will you say moderation exists when they are like this? In the rulers or the ruled?

GLAUCON. In both, I suppose . . .

SOCR. Then . . . do you see that it was reasonable for us to surmise just now that moderation is like a sort of harmony [*ἁρμονίᾳ*]? . . . Because it is not like courage or wisdom, each of which, by being in a certain part, makes the city wise and courageous, respectively. Moderation does not work like that, but rather it is spread throughout the whole, making everyone, through everything, sing the same thing together [*διά πασῶν παρεχομένη συνᾴδοντας . . . ταὐτόν*]: the weakest and the strongest and

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> those in between, whether in terms of wisdom, muscle, numbers, wealth, or anything else of the kind. So we would say most accurately that this agreement [ταύτην τὴν ὁμόνοιαν] is moderation, concord [συμφωνίαν] between the naturally inferior and superior as to which should rule both in the city and in each one. (*Rep.* 431 D 9–432 A 9)[1]

Since agreement among the citizens as to who should rule is an aspect of one of the city's virtues, moderation, this passage clearly shows agreement to be a good. Modern students of Plato's political philosophy should find this of interest, since it suggests that Plato sees some value (we will have to see exactly what) in citizens' agreeing to their government, a condition which many modern political philosophers think is crucial for a governmental power to be a legitimate authority.

While it is common for fourth-century political writers to treat ὁμόνοια (Plato's uses of which I translate as 'agreement') as a key political virtue, most oppose it to faction (στάσις), and their approbation focuses on the unity among the citizens that is produced by their being, literally, 'same-minded' (hence the usual translations for ὁμόνοια are 'concord', 'unanimity', 'consensus').[2] So it is reasonable to think that in the *Republic* Plato is simply claiming that his ideal city, too, has the virtue of concord among citizens. A number of the *Republic*'s institutional reforms are easily explained in terms of the goal of concord or unanimity: the limit on wealth and poverty frees the city from the faction between rich and poor that divides most cities (422 E–423 A); the 'community of wives and children' that replaces the biological family among the guardians results in

[1] All translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own. I have used Burnet's Oxford Classical Text; this, together with other editions and commentaries I have found useful, is listed in the bibliography.

[2] In the 5th cent. Democritus writes that ὁμόνοια is necessary for a city to succeed in its undertakings (H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (3 vols.; Berlin, 1951–2) [DK], 68 B 250) and that ὁμόνοια and its many benefits are brought about when the rich are beneficent to the poor (255); Antiphon includes in his work *Περὶ ὁμονοίας* an evaluation of marriage in terms of the ὁμόνοια and ensuing benefits that marriage can bring to or take away from one (87 B 49 DK); Gorgias advocates ὁμόνοια among all the Greeks (82 B 8a DK). In the 4th cent. Demosthenes, Isocrates, Lysias, and Aristotle praise the Athenians for their ὁμόνοια; they are especially impressed by the ὁμόνοια shown in the decision of the democracy restored in 403 to repay the Thirty's loan from Sparta (and, one imagines, by the amnesty). See e.g. Dem. *Against Leptines* 11–12; Isocr. *Areop.* 68–9; Arist. *Const. Ath.* 40. For other praise, see Dem. *Against Leptines* 110; *Against Androtion* 77; *Against Timocrates* 185; Lys. *Fun. Or.* 2. 18. Isocrates frequently pleads for the Athenians to pursue a policy of ὁμόνοια among the Greeks and war against the Persians (*Paneg.* 3, 174; *Ant.* 77; *Panath.* 13), as does Lysias at *Ol. Or.* 33. 6.

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their being 'pleased and pained by the same things'—and, Socrates says, there is no greater good for a city than 'that which binds it together and makes it one' (462 A–464 A).

However, as I shall argue below, Plato's Socratic legacy prevents him from approving *ὁμόνοια*, understood as mere sameness of mind, irrespective of content and grounds. That legacy requires him to show that the *ὁμόνοια* he claims obtains in, and is a political virtue of, the ideal city is good for its citizens. Further, it requires that he provide an account of how a good *ὁμόνοια* can come about between those whose judgement as to who should rule is based on knowledge (of Justice and Goodness or the art of ruling) and those who lack such knowledge.

But first, a brief synopsis of my overall argument in this paper. I shall offer a reading of the *Republic* according to which the *ὁμόνοια* or agreement as to who should rule among the ideal city's citizens is the result of political justice, is an intrinsically good condition for citizens to be in, and is an indication of the goodness of the city and its government. The absence of such agreement in a city would indicate the failure of its government to achieve its end, the happiness of the citizens. I begin (Section 2) by sketching Socratic challenges to the possibility and desirability of *ὁμόνοια* in two dialogues, the *Clitophon* and *Alcibiades I*;[3] these, I suggest, make explicit the distinctive standards *ὁμόνοια* must meet if it is to be a virtue of the city as is claimed in the *Republic*. My positive account of political agreement in the *Republic* (Section 3) takes off from the point that, for Plato, the happiness of the city at which political rule aims depends on the citizens' knowledge and virtue, or, in the case of most citizens, approximations of knowledge and virtue. I suggest how different citizens' knowledge, virtue, and approximations of these might involve a grasp of the political rule under which they live. This will show how citizens' agreement to their government can have an intrinsic value, depending on the ethical importance, truth, and groundedness of the beliefs to which it is tied. Having reconstructed the *Republic*'s account and valuation of political agreement, I turn (Section 4) to the *Statesman*, and suggest a way

[3] It does not matter for my purposes whether these were written by Plato or his near contemporaries. The questions they raise are clearly Socratic, and even if the dialogues themselves were written after Plato's *Republic*, the issue—how justice could produce political agreement—could well have been live earlier, and is certainly of continuing relevance. In the *Republic* Socrates claims that justice produces agreement at 351 C–D and then again at 433 B.

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of reconciling the Visitor's claims about the irrelevance of consent to expert political rule with my reading of the *Republic*. Finally (Section 5), I highlight some important similarities and contrasts in the roles played by political agreement in Platonic political philosophy and the social contract tradition.

2. Socratic challenges to agreement (*ὁμόνοια*)

Socratic difficulties for *ὁμόνοια* are raised by the *Clitophon*. Here, one Socratic answers the challenge of saying what the product of justice is by proposing that it is 'to create friendship in cities', and then, because he maintains that the product of justice must be good, by specifying further that 'real and true friendship' is agreement on the basis of shared knowledge. Agreement based on shared beliefs may be harmful (presumably if the beliefs are false). But then the question arises: what good does this knowledge produce?[4]

CLITOPHON. Finally, Socrates, one of your circle [*σῶν ἑταιρῶν*] answered . . . that this was the distinctive work [*ἴδιον ἔργον*] of justice: . . . to create friendship [*φιλίαν*] in cities. When questioned again, he said that friendship is good and never bad; the friendships of children and those of animals, which we dub 'friendship', he would not accept as friendship—for it turned out that these are harmful more often than they are good. To avoid this, he said that these are not friendships, but that those who give them the name 'friendship' are speaking falsely. Rather, real and true friendship is most clearly agreement [*ὁμόνοιαν*]. Asked whether he said that agreement is shared opinion [*ὁμοδοξίαν*] or knowledge [*ἐπιστήμην*], he rejected shared opinion—for he had to conclude that many shared opinions are actually harmful for men, but he had agreed that friendship is wholly good and is the work of justice. So he said that agreement is the

[4] The *Clitophon*'s question threatens a regress: if only knowledge is always good or good-making, then whatever the product of the knowledge that is agreement, if it is good, then it will have to be knowledge as well. But what will this knowledge be about, and what will its aim be? The *Republic* puts an end to the threatened regress by positing an object of knowledge which is itself good (the Form of the Good), and which makes all particular good things, including the knowledge of it, good (505 A–B). This answer, while it addresses the problem of the regress, does not help with the *Clitophon*'s question about agreement, for we still need to know what the connection is between knowledge of the Form of the Good and the knowledge constituting agreement and friendship. Is agreement in theoretical knowledge of the Form of the Good supposed to constitute the friendship that is the product of justice? In that case, what about the non-philosophical citizens of the ideal city? (See below.)

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same, being knowledge, not opinion . . . [At this point, some bystanders objected:] 'Medicine too is a kind of agreement and so are all the other arts, and they are able to say concerning what. But of your so-called "justice" or "agreement", it escapes [us] what is its aim, and it is unclear what is its work.' (*Clit*. 409 D 2–410 A 6)

The *Clitophon*'s requirement that political agreement be always and only good motivates a Socratic restriction of the sense of *ὁμόνοια* to shared knowledge; this, in turn, raises the question of its subject matter (and results).[5] So we should bear in mind that for Plato, as important as the requirement that the cognitive state of *ὁμόνοια* be shared is the requirement that its content and epistemic standing be good. The emphasis in writers like Isocrates and Demosthenes, by contrast, falls on a view or purpose being shared rather than on its being true or well grounded.[6] The Socratic objection to *ὁμόνοια*

[5] Aristotle objects to this exclusively cognitive conception, pointing out that *ὁμόνοια* is agreement in thought and desire: this is why *ὁμόνοια* cannot be *ὁμοδοξία*—the latter is possible between people who do not know one another, and can be about purely theoretical matters like the heavenly bodies; the former must be about practical goals (*NE* 1167ª20 ff.; cf. *EE* 1241ª15–34; *MM* 1212ª14–27.) Cf. S. R. Slings, *Plato:* Clitophon (Cambridge, 1999), 319.

Nicholas Denyer comments, 'The etymology of the word *ὁμόνοια* ("sameness of mind") allows it to stand for any sort of agreement. In political contexts, however, the word was used for a rather special sort of agreement, and much of the philosophical discussion tried to articulate what sort of agreement that was . . . . Perhaps the best summary description of *ὁμόνοια* is *Rep*. 431d–e: "the same opinion [*δόξα*; it is, in spite of *Clit*. 409e, unreasonable to demand expert understanding from all parties to a consensus as broad as *ὁμόνοια* has to be] is present in both rulers and ruled . . . about who should rule . . ."' (*Plato:* Alcibiades (Cambridge, 2001), 202). I am not aware of any philosophical discussions about the content of *ὁμόνοια* apart from the Socratic ones, and I hope that my argument in this paper will show that the *Republic*'s account of *ὁμόνοια* is not a mere summary of general opinion.

[6] The following passage from Demosthenes illustrates how unimportant to *ὁμόνοια* it was generally to specify its content and to evaluate the truth of the judgements on which it was based: 'For you, Athenians, observing what I have called the natural bond of mutual kindness, live as a corporate body in this city just as families live in their private homes. How then do such families live? Where there is a father and grown-up sons and possibly also grandchildren, there are bound to be many divergent wishes; for youth and age do not talk or act in the same way. Nevertheless whatever the young men do, if they are modest, they do in such a way as to avoid notice; or if this is impossible, at any rate they make it clear that such was their intention. The elders in their turn, if they see any lack of moderation in spending or drinking or amusement, manage to see it without showing that they have seen it. The result is that everything that their various natures suggest is done, and done satisfactorily. And that is just how you, men of Athens, live in this community on humane and brotherly principles, one class watching the proceedings of the unfortunate in such a way that, as the saying runs, "seeing, they see not; hearing, do not hear"; while the others by their behaviour show that they are both on their

so understood is that it could fail to be good. Socrates' objection is borne out by Isocrates' remark that the ὁμόνοια that obtains among the Spartans is bad, since they use it to factionalize, weaken, and thereby control the rest of the Greek states: such ὁμόνοια is no virtue and is found even among robbers.[7] Similar considerations about agreement-no-matter-what-the-content lead Socrates to reject the view that the function of the ruling art (βασιλικὴ τέχνη) is to make citizens free from faction (ἀστασιάστους): being simply free from faction is neither good nor evil, but if the statesman's art results in something good for citizens, it must make them wise (*Euthd*. 292 B–C).

The *Clitophon*'s reasoning, that if political agreement is to be good then it must be shared knowledge, raises a particular difficulty for Plato's *Republic*, which explicitly restricts knowledge to one class of citizens, the philosophers. If the rest of the citizens are capable only of opinion, does this mean that they cannot agree, or that their agreement is not good? In Section 3 I shall argue on Plato's behalf that the opinion of the ideal city's citizens, that those who rule should rule, is true and the result of education; that the educated true opinion of the citizens that those who rule should rule is reliably connected with the facts that make it true; and that educated true opinions are good, and harmony-promoting, for those who hold them. This will show how political agreement can be a virtue.

But first, I want to note some further Socratic problems for

guard and alive to a sense of shame. Hence it is that a general harmony [ὁμόνοια], which is the source of all our blessings, is firmly established in our city' (*Against Aristogeiton* 1. 87–90, trans. J. H. Vince).

Rather than being an agreement in values, beliefs, or interests, ὁμόνοια here involves tolerating disagreement oneself and making it tolerable for others. The younger members of the family show through their gestures that they acknowledge the hierarchies in the family—even though they are not going to do all and only what their elders would want, they do conceal, or make it clear that they are trying to conceal, their departures from their elders' wishes. This is, of course, not a matter of upholding the authority of their elders; it is just a way of signalling that they do not wish their disobedience to be taken as defiance; they do not want to take on their elders. And the elders, for their part, are satisfied with this much acknowledgement of their authority and ignore the disobedience they notice. So their differences do not come out in the open to become the cause of overt conflict. This keeps the family together, and allows it, in the important matter of acting jointly as a family, to get along just fine. Clearly, the kind of accommodation described by Demosthenes could fail to be good.

[7] *Panath*. 225–7. On ὁμόνοια among robbers cf. *Rep*. 351 C–D.

ὁμόνοια. In *Alcibiades I* Socrates points out conflicts between the Socratic ideals of expert rule and political justice and the ideal of political agreement.[8] Having informed Socrates that he intends to acquire political expertise, i.e. knowledge of how to preserve and care for the city (124 E–126 A), Alcibiades explains that when the city is preserved and well cared for, there is mutual friendship (*φιλία πρὸς ἀλλήλους*), i.e. agreement (*ὁμόνοια*), in the city (126 C).[9] This agreement, Alcibiades says, is exemplified in the family:

ALCIBIADES. I suppose I'm talking about the friendship and agreement [*ὁμόνοιαν*] whereby a father agrees [*ὁμονοεῖ*] with a son he loves, as does a mother; and a brother with his sister, and a wife with her husband.

But Socrates challenges Alcibiades to show how, even in the family, agreement could be either possible or desirable:

SOCRATES. Do you think, Alcibiades, that a husband could agree with his wife about wool-working, when he does not know wool-working and she does?

ALC. Not at all.

SOCR. Nor is it necessary for him to, because that is women's knowledge . . . [So] according to your argument, some knowledge is women's knowledge and some is men's knowledge . . . There is, then, in these matters, no agreement between women and men . . . And there is no friendship, since friendship was agreement . . . . Then in so far as women do their own

[8] The thought that political agreement and political justice might be in tension with one another may not be uniquely Socratic: Nicole Loraux argues that the Athenian democracy's amnesty decree of 403, which forbade the initiation of legal proceedings against those who had sided with the thirty tyrants, needs to be understood in terms of a tradition of linking lawcourt justice to *στάσις* and opposing these to reconciliation and *ὁμόνοια* (*The Divided City* (New York, 2002), 229–42).

[9] By contrast, in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* Socrates seems to regard justice as the effect rather than the cause of agreement. Xenophon's Socrates identifies justice with obedience to law and praises Lycurgus for making Sparta better than other cities (and most successful in war and peace) by making its citizens most obedient to its laws (*πείθεσθαι τοῖς νόμοις μάλιστα ἐνειργάσατο*). Oddly, the passage reverses the usual claim that justice produces agreement: Socrates reports that everywhere, the elders (*γερουσίαι*) and the best men (*ἄριστοι*) command the citizens to agree with one another, and that throughout Greece citizens swear an oath (*ὀμνύουσι τὸν ὅρκον*) to agree with one another (*ὁμονοήσειν*)—not in order that they should choose the same choirs, flute-players or poets, but in order that they should obey the laws. For, Socrates says, the cities in which citizens obey the laws are the strongest and happiest, but without agreement (*ἄνευ ὁμονοίας*) no city can be well governed (*εὖ πολιτευθείη*) (*Mem*. 4. 4. 15–16). It is difficult to see exactly how citizens would be more law-abiding as a result of swearing an oath to agree with one another (as opposed to an oath to obey the laws); and I have been unable to find corroboration for this supposedly widespread oath.

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work, they are not befriended [φιλοῦνται] by men . . . Cities, then, are not well governed in this respect, when the citizens each do their own work [ὅταν τὰ αὑτῶν ἕκαστοι πράττωσιν]? (*Alc. I* 126 E 2–127 B 6)[10]

Socrates first suggests that agreement is impossible between the expert practitioner of a craft and the non-expert—for on what basis could the latter agree? He then suggests that agreement between experts and non-experts is in any case unnecessary. Finally, he argues that Alcibiades' view that good government results in agreement and friendship is incompatible with the ideal of expert rule and, in general, with the ideal of each doing his or her own work.

Plato's *Republic* maintains that only some people are political experts and that only they should manage political affairs; in general, it describes political justice as the condition in which each citizen, or at least each class, does his or her or its own work. Do these arguments in *Alcibiades I* commit Plato to holding that it is impossible and unnecessary for citizens of a just city to agree on their government or on civic matters generally? Plato's intention would seem to be quite the opposite: in the *Republic* Socrates claims that each citizen doing his or her own work is what produces and preserves moderation, courage, and wisdom in the city (433 B). And as we have seen, the moderation of the city involves political agreement.

To begin to answer the question 'How is political agreement even possible in the ideal city?', we need to supplement the *Republic*'s description of the political arrangements of the ideal city with its more general claims about the relationships between experts and non-experts:

SOCRATES. Then the virtue and beauty and correctness of each implement and animal and action is [determined] in respect of nothing other than whatever use each thing has been made or exists naturally for? . . . Then it's very necessary that the user of each thing be most experienced and become a messenger to its maker about what are the good or bad things that that which he uses produces in use.[11] For example, I suppose a flute-player acts as a messenger to a flute-maker about whichever flutes

[10] I translate ἕκαστοι 'citizens' here although at this point the discussion is about two groups: men doing men's work and women doing women's work (see τὰ αὑτῶν ἑκάτεροι πράττουσιν at 127 B 10). However, Socrates goes on to generalize the lesson to include citizens doing just things (see τὰ δίκαια . . πραττόντων ἐν τῇ πόλει τῶν πολιτῶν at 127 C 8). Nothing in my argument turns on ἕκαστοι here referring to 'citizens' as opposed to 'groups'.

[11] Here I am following J. Adam, *The* Republic *of Plato* [*Republic*] (Cambridge, 1902), ad loc., who translates, 'what are the good or bad things that which he uses does

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> serve him in flute-playing, and will direct him to what sort he should make, and the other will do his bidding . . . Then the one who knows acts as a messenger about good and bad flutes, and the one who believes and relies on him [ὁ πιστεύων] will make them? . . . Then the maker of an implement will have correct belief [ὀρθὴν πίστιν] about the fine and the bad by being with and having to listen to the knower, but the user will have knowledge. (*Rep.* 601 D 4–602 A 1)

Socrates here distinguishes between the expert in making and the expert in using a given product, and then notes an area of overlap in their judgements about the product made by the one and used by the other. The experienced user of a product knows something—perhaps what makes a product of a given kind good or bad, or simply what a perfectly good product of that kind would be—which the maker does not. On the basis of this epistemic superiority,[12] the user directs the maker's production by communicating to the maker true opinions about 'the fine and the bad'. So, for instance, the flute-player knows the perfectly good flute or what makes a good flute, and on this basis communicates a true opinion to the maker: 'this type of flute is good for such-and-such a performative aspect of flute-playing'; the maker now has a true opinion about good or fine flutes to guide his making, and will proceed to make flutes on this pattern. Flute-playing and flute-making are not self-sufficient expertises which make agreement about good or fine flutes unnecessary and impossible; instead, they are expertises in need of co-ordination (the flute-player requires flutes that can perform in certain ways; the flute-maker wants to make flutes that will perform according to the flute-player's demand). The need for co-ordination is met by the true opinions (about which flutes

in use' (i.e. what are the good or bad things effected by the maker's instrument); on this translation, the subject of 'does' (ποιεῖ) is the instrument used, and the opinion communicated is about the instrument's performance (e.g. 'this flute produces a clear high trill'; 'this flute produces a buzz') rather than simply the opinion 'this is a good flute' or 'this is a bad flute'.

[12] For a parallel to the user–maker distinction where the user has superior knowledge to the maker, and so directs his making, see *Crat.* 388 C–390 D. It might be thought that the *Republic* 10 passage is operating with a weaker sense of 'knowledge' than *Republic* 5–7, alongside a weaker sense of 'Form' since the epistemically inferior maker (but not the user) is said to look to a Form (e.g. 596 B). But instead of using stronger and weaker senses of 'Form' and 'knowledge' (without notice), Plato might simply be thinking that craft Forms and craft knowledge are more readily understood than the Forms and knowledge under consideration in *Republic* 5–7. Thanks to David Sedley for this point.

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play well) that both flute-player and flute-maker can grasp and share.[13]

In contrast to the isolationist treatment of expertises in *Alcibiades I*, the user–maker passage in the *Republic* offers an account allowing for overlap and communication between expertises, and between experts in a given sphere and non-experts in that sphere. The passage shows that one can make authoritative pronouncements on something one has not made, and without the slightest idea of how it is made—at least if one's judgement is based on expertise in using that thing. Although Plato does not apply this analysis of the relationship between users and makers to politics in the *Republic*, the analysis does illuminate political agreement.[14]

I can suggest two ways in which the user–maker analysis accounts for political agreement about who should rule. One is Aristotle's way. In the *Politics* Aristotle argues for the appropriateness of ordinary citizens electing and auditing political officers on the basis of their experience of being ruled. Aristotle decouples being a user from being epistemically superior, and generalizes the *Republic* 10 designation 'user' to apply to non-expert as well as expert users. To illustrate the claim that the maker may not be the only or the best judge of the products of his art, Aristotle compares the householder's judgement of a house with the housebuilder's, the steersman's judgement of a rudder with the carpenter's, and the diner's judgement of a banquet with the cook's (*Pol.* 3. 11, 1282^a14–23).[15] According to Aristotle, users, non-experts as well as experts, may be competent to judge products simply by being familiar with them.

Could political agreement in the *Republic* involve a similar user's competence on the part of the ruled? Aristotle's view, that even non-

[13] If knowledge and opinion have distinct objects, as a number of commentators think is the case in *Republic* 5, then both user and maker would have only opinions about flutes, types of flutes, aspects of flute-playing, but the user's opinion would be based on her knowledge of, say, what constitutes a good flute performance. The area of agreement between user and maker would be one of opinion only. On the other hand, if knowledge and opinion can have the same object, then agreement might be about matters one has knowledge of and the other true opinion.

[14] Plato does employ the user–maker contrast in discussing the art of ruling in the *Euthydemus*, when he says that the ruling art involves expertise in use (288 E–290 D). But the *Euthydemus* also warns us of the limited applicability of this analysis: the ruling art (identified at 291 C–D with the art of political rule) is not like the knowledge of how to make or play a lyre, harp, or flute—in cases like that, there is one art of making and a distinct art of using a given product, but the ruling art combines making and knowing how to use the thing made (289 B–C).

[15] Thanks to Stephen Menn for bringing this passage to my attention.

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expert citizens can competently judge the products of the ruler's expertise, requires, first, that the ruler be an expert in some kind of making, and not only in using, and, second, that citizens be in some sense users and not merely makers.

The *Republic* can meet the first requirement because the philosopher-ruler is a maker, a craftsman of popular or demotic virtue in both the individual and the collective:[16]

> If some necessity comes about for him [i.e. the philosopher] to . . . put the things he sees there [i.e. the Forms of the virtues] . . . into the characters of human beings, both individually and collectively [*αὐτῷ ἀνάγκη γένηται . . . εἰς ἀνθρώπων ἤθη καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ τιθέναι*], do you think he will be a bad craftsman of moderation and justice and the whole of demotic virtue [*δημιουργὸν . . σωφροσύνης τε καὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ συμπάσης τῆς δημοτικῆς ἀρετῆς*]? (500 D 5–8)

If the rulers are makers of demotic virtue, then it seems reasonable to think that the users of demotic virtue are the citizens—and this would fulfil the second requirement above. Plato might agree with Aristotle, that to regard citizens as users need not be to regard them as epistemically superior to rulers; after all, not every user can be an expert user.[17] Plato might also agree with Aristotle that there is something distinctive that citizens know, as a result of their experience of being ruled.

It is true that if we reserve the title 'user' for one whose epistemic rank is higher than the corresponding maker, then the users of demotic virtue could not be citizens as such, and would have to be none other than the rulers. But to what end would rulers use demotic virtue—their own betterment? Against Thrasymachus, Socrates maintains that the goal or product of ruling is the benefit of the ruled, not the rulers (342 E); against Glaucon, he maintains that the aim of the law is the good of the whole city, not only of one (i.e. the ruling) class (519 E–520 A). It seems preferable, then, to understand by 'users' those whom the art of ruling is for, whose benefit is its point. In this case, the users of

[16] Similarly, the *Euthydemus* envisages a distinct product of the art of ruling, namely, good and wise citizens (292 C), and even though the *Statesman* classifies the art of ruling as a theoretical and directive art (259 E–260 E, 305 D), it gives the art of ruling a distinctive product: moderate and brave citizens in agreement with one another (308 D–311 C).

[17] There is a suggestion in other writers that a citizen engaging in politics might be conceived of as a 'user'; to be a *χρώμενος τῇ πόλει* (Eur. *Ion* 602) or *τῇ πολιτείᾳ* (Hyperides *Euxen.* 28) seems to be equivalent to *πολιτεύεσθαι*.

the products of the art of ruling would be all the citizens, who benefit (somehow; exactly how remains to be seen) from demotic virtue.

The second way of applying the *Republic* 10 user–maker discussion to political agreement adopts only its lesson about the epistemic dependence of those who lack knowledge on those who have it. On this view, citizens come to hold their true opinion that philosophers should rule because the philosophers have educated them to be able to see that philosophers' rule is good and fine. This is not because the other citizens simply parrot the philosopher-rulers' judgement without any grasp of its truth; political agreement, as I shall argue, is the product of an education that cultivates citizens' capacities for judgement.[18]

3. The basis and value of political agreement

My account of Platonic political agreement will assume as foundational to Platonic political philosophy that the political goal (for cities, constitutions, and the law; for legislators and rulers) is the benefit of the city or the happiness of the citizens. As Socrates puts it,

> the law's concern is not that any one group in the city do surpassingly well; rather, the law contrives to bring this about in the whole city, harmonizing the citizens by persuasion and compulsion, making them give to one

[18] Malcolm Schofield suggests that the Stoics accepted the *Clitophon*'s argument against understanding *ὁμόνοια* in terms of *ὁμοδοξία*, and 'effectively' accused Plato of confusing *ὁμόνοια*, which they defined as shared belief about all matters of life based on knowledge of common goods, with *συμφωνία*, which they defined simply as *ὁμοδογματία* (shared belief about affairs of life, *δόγμα* not being associated with error or weakness as is *δόξα*) (*The Stoic Idea of the City* (Cambridge, 1991), 128–9, cf. 46–8). (Although the terms of the stipulated definitions of *ὁμόνοια* in the pseudo-Platonic *Definitions* do not line up, they seem to draw a similar distinction: *ὁμόνοια* is first defined as a *κοινωνία τῶν ὄντων . . . συμφωνία νοημάτων καὶ ὑπολημμάτων* (413 B 8–9), and second as a *ὁμοδοξία ἀρχόντων καὶ ἀρχομένων ὡς δεῖ ἄρχειν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι* (413 E 8–9). It seems likely that the first definition refers to *ὁμόνοια* among philosophers or wise men, and the second to political *ὁμόνοια*.) On my interpretation of *ὁμόνοια* in Plato, however, Plato is not guilty of any such confusion (whatever the Stoics might have thought): his conception of *ὁμόνοια* is more cognitively inclusive than the Stoics' (although its subject matter may be more restricted, i.e. to politically and ethically significant beliefs rather than to all matters), but not any and every *ὁμοδοξία* counts as *ὁμόνοια*, for the beliefs in which *ὁμόνοια* consists are true and formed reliably as a result of education guided by those who have knowledge.

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another a share of whatever benefit they each [ἕκαστοι] are able to give to the community. (*Rep.* 519 E 1–520 A 1)[19]

And my account will assume as foundational to Platonic ethical philosophy that a person's happiness depends on his or her virtue and understanding. In the *Republic*, this view is expressed in Socrates' contention that individual justice, a harmonious condition of the soul in which reason rules with knowledge of what is good for each part and for the soul as a whole, is intrinsically good and that a person with such a soul is always better off than a person with an unjust soul (441 E–442 D). More explicit statements are found in other dialogues; for example, in the *Gorgias* Socrates says that one's happiness is wholly determined by one's standing in education and justice (470 E). I will, however, need to argue that happiness, virtue, and understanding can come in degrees, and do, for the citizens of the ideal city.

Given these foundations, it is reasonable to infer from Plato's characterization of political agreement as a virtue of the city that political agreement must contribute (directly or indirectly) to citizens' virtue and understanding, or constitute it, or grow out of it. Plato cannot claim that citizens' agreement is good merely because it simplifies the task of ruling, or because it frees the city of faction, unless these consequences in turn contribute to, constitute, or grow out of (some) citizens' virtue and understanding.

Additionally, Plato's cognitive requirements for happiness suggest that political agreement, even if to a truth, will detract from the citizens' and city's happiness if it is based on or promotes false beliefs about ethically significant matters. For such false beliefs are bad for us:

isn't it bad to have been deceived about the truth [ἐψεῦσθαι τῆς ἀληθείας], but good to possess the truth [ἀληθεύειν]? Or don't you think that believing the things that are [τὸ τὰ ὄντα δοξάζειν] is possessing the truth? (413 A 6–7; cf. 382 A–C)

It might be thought that one could be happy on balance, even with a mixture of true and false beliefs, as long as there was a preponderance of the former, but Plato does not seem to have such a

[19] Cf. 420 B 5–9, 466 A. By ἕκαστοι at 520 A 1 some understand each group in the city (cf. γένος, 519 E 2), but the masculine gender points rather to the citizens (cf. τοὺς πολίτας, 519 E 4). Again (see n. 10 above), the referent of ἕκαστοι here does not affect my argument.

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straightforward calculation in mind. He does engineer that the citizens will hold some false beliefs: that they are all born of the earth, with different metals in their souls indicating what civic work they should do (414 B–415 C), that chance rather than the rulers determines their sexual partners (459 C–460 B), and so on. He compares these falsehoods to a drug (382 C, 459 C), the poison-cum-cure that a doctor may use to his patient's benefit, and he distinguishes them from false beliefs about 'the things that are'—beliefs which are entirely harmful (382 B–C). The falsehoods Plato approves seem to be falsehoods that experts can tell to lead their audiences to hold ethically significant true beliefs.[20] So, for instance, when citizens believe the Noble Lie, they believe what Plato considers to be ethically significant truths: that co-citizens are interdependent, and that different citizens have different natural aptitudes for the various civic functions, of which the philosophers' is of the greatest value to running the city. These true beliefs replace the ethically significant falsehoods they would believe in the absence of the Noble Lie: the privatizing falsehood that citizens achieve good things for themselves through competition rather than co-operation, and the egalitarian falsehood that all citizens are capable of making equal (and even the same) civic contributions.

I have so far been considering constraints upon my reconstruction of the *Republic*'s conception of political agreement in the ideal city: for it to be both compatible with political expertise (the *Alcibiades I* problem) and good, and only good (the *Clitophon* problem), citizens' agreement to philosophers' rule should consist in a true opinion that is appropriately related to philosophers' expertise in ruling (the *Republic* 10 user–maker passage); further, it must not involve those citizens in false beliefs about ethically significant matters—it should instead lead them to believe ethically significant

[20] So far, my account of the falsehoods Plato approves is like that of C. D. C. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's* Republic [*Philosopher-Kings*] (Princeton, 1988). However, Reeve goes on to say that while the subjects of the ideal city are not victims of false ideology, because their belief that they are happier in this city than in any other is true, their true beliefs are falsely sustained. Reeve suggests that it may be rational for someone to prefer to live in a city in which his ideology is falsely sustained, especially if the degree of falsehood involved is minimal, depending 'on what his natural abilities are, and what he most wants in life' (*Philosopher-Kings*, 212). I differ from Reeve on these last two points. First, I do not think the only beliefs at issue are beliefs about happiness, and in any case I think Reeve's account of happiness is un-Platonic (see below); second, I do not think Plato could accept the idea of anyone's rationally preferring falsely sustained beliefs: no one is voluntarily deprived of the truth (413 A).

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truths (the *Republic* 3 passages on medicinal lies). If my account can meet these constraints, then it can also show how closely connected political agreement in the ideal city is to improvements in individual citizens' virtue, understanding, and happiness.

Unfortunately, however, Plato's *Republic* gives a sketchy account of non-philosophical citizens, the bulk of those whose happiness, virtue, and understanding are the political goal, and whose agreement to philosophers' rule is in question here. Before turning to my own account, I want to review a couple of alternative accounts of political agreement in order to flag the difficulties my account must address.

(*a*) *Alternatives*

In *Philosopher-Kings*, C. D. C. Reeve argues that the unity (Reeve's term for *ὁμόνοια*) of the ideal city requires that the citizens be not only as happy as possible, but also aware of this fact.[21] The citizens' recognition of their maximal happiness in the ideal city is a necessary and sufficient condition of political agreement.

Reeve argues that all citizens in the ideal city are maximally happy—that is, happier than they would be in any other city[22]—because in it they reliably receive the most pleasant pleasures of which they are capable: the pleasures of wealth for the producers, the pleasures of being honoured for the auxiliaries, and the pleasures of wisdom for the philosophers. In addition to having maximal pleasure in the ideal city, the citizens either are aware of this fact or have the intellectual ability to become aware of it. For this, the citizens must have some understanding of the arrangements of the city,[23] and be able to compare these arrangements and their con-

[21] 'It is a necessary condition of complete unity or stability in a polis consisting entirely of rationally self-interested agents, who are not subject to coercion and are not the victims of false ideology or any other form of exploitative mystification, that its members should be happier there, and happier in their own terms, than in any other polis. But it is not a sufficient condition. For we can easily imagine such a polis being disunited and unstable because its members, or a significant number of them, are unaware that they are maximally happy. The unity of the Kallipolis requires, not just maximal universal happiness, but universal possession of the intellectual resources necessary to become aware of maximal happiness should doubt arise' (*Philosopher-Kings*, 204).

[22] Ibid.

[23] Reeve writes that in order for there to be agreement in the city, as supposed at *Rep.* 431 D, the citizens 'must have a sufficiently detailed conception of the Kallipolis, and the place and function of the three major classes within it, to enable them to

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sequences for themselves with those in other cities.[24] Reeve claims that the educational programme described in the *Republic* provides each class with a more or less adequate understanding, tailored to its characteristic desires and intellectual resources, of the structure of the ideal city and that class's own place in it. The philosophers see that the city is structured so as to best satisfy their desire for learning; the auxiliaries see that the city is structured so as to fulfil maximally their desire for honour (the auxiliaries' understanding includes true beliefs about the visible manifestations of the virtues and vices and their models, as well as the true belief that possessing and exercising the virtues will bring them honour); finally, the producers see that the city is structured so as to best satisfy their desire for wealth.[25] Crucial to Reeve's account is the claim that the lower classes' conceptions of the best city—as the one that maximizes wealth or honour—are partially successful attempts to grasp what is good about the ideal city (Reeve calls them 'images'), which philosophers know to be its maximization of wisdom.[26]

determine that they are indeed best off when the philosophers rule, the guardians protect, and the producers produce' (*Philosopher-Kings*, 205). Although the citizens are deceived about such civic arrangements as the rigging and true purpose of the marriage lottery (459 A–460 A) and the real basis for the division of labour (412 B–415 C), such lies are, according to Reeve, merely 'verbal lies': they lead citizens towards, rather than away from, true beliefs about the good (*Philosopher-Kings*, 209–11).

[24] This requires that citizens know their capacities compared to those of others, as well as the circumstances they can hope to live in given those capacities, in both the society they inhabit and the hypothetical one under examination. They also must know about their own and other people's desires and the conditions for their fulfilment.

[25] *Philosopher-Kings*, 205.

[26] Reeve's account of the metaphysics and epistemology of the *Republic* (*Philosopher-Kings*, 43–117) forms the basis for his psychology. His basic view is that the three classes' characteristic cognitive capacities map onto the three upper segments of the Divided Line: philosophers have *νόησις* and thus know the Forms; auxiliaries have *διάνοια*, which enables them to know 'figures' (intermediates between Forms and sensibles, including mathematical objects); and producers have *πίστις* and so can perceive ordinary sensible objects, but also the *εἴδη* of 402 B 5–C 8. Reeve's motivation seems to be to authenticate the lower class's conceptions of the good as in some sense correct (and thus their happiness as in some sense genuine). In her review of Reeve's book Jyl Gentzler points out that Reeve's account leads to an uncontrolled multiplication of properties to correspond to false belief-states (*Philosophical Review*, 101 (1992), 365–71). It is not entirely clear from Reeve's account whether he thinks that honour and wealth are by themselves images of wisdom, or whether the understandings of the city reached by the lower classes are images of the higher class's understanding. If it is the latter, we need to know more about their understanding of the city than that they see how it maximizes their possession of what they value, for that reduces to the former. We need to know,

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A basic problem with this optimistic account is that as long as members of the non-philosophical classes value the maximization of wealth and honour as their ultimate ends, it is not clear how philosophers' rule has improved them morally, and so it is not clear how philosophers' rule has benefited them. For even if non-philosophers in the ideal city do act in accordance with virtue more than they would naturally, and even if this brings them closer to virtue and happiness, it is not clear how acting in accordance with virtue itself makes for (any degree of) virtue and happiness.[27] Non-philosophical citizens still have and act on the ethically significant false belief that wealth or honour is the good. On the evaluative classification of the *Republic* (357 B–D) wealth and honour would have to be things that are good for their consequences, not for their own sake, and so would not be fit to be anyone's end. (To the plea that the best non-philosophers are capable of is valuing instrumental goods as final goods, the reply should be that they would do this even outside the ideal city.) It is hard to see the motivation for saying, as Reeve does, that the opinion that the good is honour or wealth is partially true rather than simply false. And citizens who have the false belief that the good is honour or wealth could only agree to philosophers' rule on the basis of these false beliefs. So even if they rightly believe that the good city maximizes their receipt of honour or wealth, non-philosophical citizens wrongly believe that honour or wealth is a sufficiently important good to cause one to determine how to run an individual life or a city based on what maximizes it.

This suggests that it is not necessary that non-philosophical citizens in the ideal city be genuinely virtuous or happy, in order for there to be agreement among all the citizens about who should rule. For that, it suffices that the same state of affairs satisfies each of their desires—whatever these may be. Thus it may appear, falsely, to members of the lower classes that the city benefits them, but these

for example, what true beliefs they have about the city, and how they are ethically significant. If it is the former, we need to know how honour is an image of wisdom, or money that of both wisdom and honour. We need to know why Plato would think that honour and wealth are approximately true conceptions of the good rather than simply false ones.

[27] The idea that acting in accordance with virtue results in some degree of benefit or harmony is falsified by the case of the oligarch, who is conflicted and so unhappy even when his actions conform to virtue.

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false beliefs can ground unity, stability, and the citizens' agreement to the city's arrangements for ruling and being ruled.[28]

In *Plato's Utopia Recast*, Christopher Bobonich embraces these conclusions for the interpretation of Plato's political philosophy in the *Republic*. Because non-philosophers do not base their valuing on an appreciation of non-sensible value properties, but instead value as their end honour or wealth, they lack genuine virtue and happiness, and do not value virtue for its own sake. As a result, there can be no 'substantive consensus' between philosophers and non-philosophers on the ultimate ends at which the ideal city should aim. Bobonich argues that Plato's middle-period pessimism about the ultimate ends of non-philosophers raises serious difficulties for the possibility and ethical value of the co-operative political community described in the *Republic*.[29]

I do not believe that there is such a mismatch between the *Republic*'s political ideal—the city and law that aim to make citizens as happy as possible—and its account of the ethical and intellectual capacities of ordinary human beings. There are good philosophical and textual grounds for taking Plato's view to be that even if philosophers are the only ones to be fully virtuous and happy, other citizens must be so to a lesser degree.[30] But a justified attribution of any degree of virtue and happiness to a non-philosopher requires an account of how their view of their end is improved over the ends

[28] Reeve may object to this characterization of his view; see his letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* (11–17 Aug. 1989), 873. But consider the following remarks from *Philosopher-Kings*: 'But because people have different natures, they have different interests, are made really happy by different things . . . These different natures are of three primary types: money-lovers, honour-lovers, and wisdom lovers . . . A money-lover is ruled by the desires in appetite. He wants the pleasure of making a profit more than anything else . . . An honour-lover is ruled by the desires in aspiration. He wants the pleasures of victory, reputation, and being honoured more than anything else' (36–7); 'the content of the best and happiest life is the pleasure of knowing the truth, which is the most pleasant, or purest and truest, pleasure, and the contents of the other decreasingly good and happy primary types of lives are the decreasingly pleasant pleasures of being honoured and making money' (154); 'Pleasure is having a desire satisfied with something which instantiates the form that is the natural object of that desire . . . happiness consists in the acquisition of as much pleasure as possible throughout life' (164). It is of course still possible that I have misunderstood Reeve, but even if that is the case, the interpretation I have attributed to him is worth discussing.

[29] C. Bobonich, *Plato's Utopia Recast* [*Utopia Recast*] (Oxford, 2002), 72–80 (79 on political agreement).

[30] I am here drawing on and developing the account in my paper 'Imperfect Virtue', *Ancient Philosophy*, 18 (1998), 315–39.

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of honour or wealth. Once we see what this improved conception of their end can be, and how it is achieved, we shall be in a better position to appreciate the *Republic*'s conception and valuation of political agreement.

(*b*) *Political and demotic virtue?*

Let us recall that political agreement is a virtue of the city, or at least an aspect of a virtue of the city. If political agreement can be based on shared beliefs, some of which are ethically significant false beliefs, and yet be a virtue of the city, the conditions for a property of the city to be a virtue of the city must be quite weak. A property of the city might be a virtue by contributing, even quite indirectly, to the virtue and understanding of only a subset of the citizens. So, one might say, political agreement is a virtue of the city because it enables or facilitates philosophers' rule, but it is philosophers' rule that makes for (some) happy citizens.[31] A virtue of the city, on this view, need be only of instrumental value for (some of) the citizens themselves.

But Plato nowhere discusses political agreement as a condition of philosophers' rule; rather, what he points out is that it is a result of philosophers' rule: the justice of the city, each class doing its own work, results in the moderation of the city (433 B). So even if it is true that political agreement would facilitate (future) philosophers' rule, that is not what interests Plato about it. Further, the instrumentalist account of political virtue is too inclusive: it would count as a virtue of the city every institution and arrangement in the city that facilitates philosophers' rule: the Noble Lie, the eugenic programme, the absence of great disparities of wealth among citizens, perhaps also the city walls and roads. But Plato lists only four virtues for a city: a city may be wise, courageous, just, and moderate. And he lists only two ways in which a city can possess a virtue. On the first, the city has a virtue because its guardians do: for example, the city is wise because its rulers are wise, knowing what is good for the city (428 B–429 A). On the second, the city has a virtue because of some relationship between the three classes (Plato says somewhat obscurely that moderation is 'spread throughout the whole [δι' ὅλης ἀτεχνῶς τέταται]', 432 A 2). So the city is just because each class does the work to which it is best suited, the rulers rul-

[31] Thanks to David Johnson for suggesting this possibility.

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ing, the auxiliaries helping them, and the producers obeying them (433 A–434 C); the city is moderate because the desires of the inferior many are controlled by the desires and wisdom of the superior few and because the rulers and the ruled agree as to who should rule (430 E–432 B).

The relationships among the classes that constitute the city's justice and moderation are in principle compatible with non-virtuous as well as virtuous motivations on the part of the lower classes; thus a city may be just and moderate without its citizens being individually just and moderate. However, in addition to saying that city and soul are analogous so that the virtues will be analogous structures in them, Socrates claims that the traits of a collective come from the individuals who make up the collective (435 D–E, 544 D). This suggests that the just and moderate city does house some just and moderate individuals, but perhaps these are all members of the ruling class, the class which shapes the city.[32]

Stronger evidence of virtuous motivations among the lower classes is found in a passage briefly discussed above, which reports that citizens individually have a kind of virtue, 'demotic' virtue, as a result of the philosopher-rulers' work on their characters:

> If some necessity comes about for . . . [the philosopher] to . . . put the things he sees there . . . into the characters of human beings, both individually and collectively, do you think he will be a bad craftsman of moderation and justice and the whole of demotic virtue? (500 D 5–8)

It may be thought that this demotic virtue is none other than the illusory and 'slavish' virtue described in the *Phaedo*, namely, behaviour that is in accordance with virtue, but that it nevertheless has as its goal bodily pleasure rather than wisdom (68 A–69 D). The *Phaedo* characterizes demotic and political virtue (*δημοτικὴ καὶ πολιτικὴ ἀρετή*, 82 A 11–B 1) as 'without philosophy and understanding' (*ἄνευ φιλοσοφίας τε καὶ νοῦ*, 82 B 2–3), and describes virtue apart from wisdom (*χωριζόμενα δὲ φρονήσεως*) as an illusion (*σκιαγραφία τις*, 69 B 5–7).[33] According to R. D. Archer-Hind, the hallmark of

[32] For this line of reasoning, see B. A. O. Williams, 'The Analogy of the City and Soul in Plato's *Republic*', in E. N. Lee, A. Mourelatos, and R. Rorty (eds.), *Exegesis and Argument: Studies in Greek Philosophy Presented to Gregory Vlastos* (*Phronesis*, suppl. 1; Assen, 1973), 196–205 at 200–1.

[33] I am following Roslyn Weiss in taking the expression 'with wisdom' at 69 B to mean 'with wisdom as one's goal', i.e. with philosophy. See R. Weiss, 'The Right Exchange: *Phaedo* 69a6–c3', *Ancient Philosophy*, 7 (1987), 57–66. Depending on

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demotic virtue, which makes it a mere appearance of virtue, is that the demotic individual values virtuous action merely as a means towards non-moral ends rather than for its own sake.[34] According to Bobonich, political and demotic virtue is illusory because it does not enable its possessor to grasp and value the non-sensibles that are genuinely valuable; the upshot is that '"Popular and political" virtue . . . is not sufficient to make the citizens' lives worth living.'[35]

Leaving to one side the issue of what demotic and political virtue is in the *Phaedo*, there seem to be sound reasons for thinking that demotic and political virtue in the *Republic* cannot be illusory or 'slavish'. In the *Republic*, demotic virtue is what the philosopher-rulers bring about in the citizens; if this is a mere appearance of virtue (rather than a degree of genuine virtue), then what is the point of engendering it in the citizens? Socrates insists that the political goal ought to be the happiness of the whole city, rather than of the ruling class, but would not sham virtue at best bring about sham happiness for non-philosophers? Rather than conclude that the *Republic* is so fundamentally at odds with itself, we should further investigate what its conception of political and demotic virtue might be.

At the end of his description of the musical education in *Republic* 3, Socrates says that this education develops in young guardians (among them future auxiliaries as well as future philosophers) a keen sense for judging whether a thing (natural or created) is fine (*καλόν*) or not (401 C–402 A). He goes on to characterize the musically educated capacity of young guardians as 'political' virtue:

SOCRATES. I say that such a power and preservation, through everything, of correct and lawful opinion [*δόξης ὀρθῆς τε καὶ νομίμου*] concerning which things are fearful and which are not, is courage—unless you say something else.

GLAUCON. I say nothing else . . . for it seems to me that correct opinion concerning these same things, which has come to be without education, and is animal and slavish, you do not consider to be lawful, and you call it something other than courage.

context, virtue 'without wisdom' or 'without philosophy' could mean either virtue unaccompanied by wisdom or philosophy (based, instead, on true opinion) or virtue which does not even aim at wisdom.

[34] R. D. Archer-Hind, *The* Phaedo *of Plato* (London, 1883), appendix I, pp. 181–6. But in fact, the passages that explicitly name demotic (or political) virtue do not characterize it as instrumentalist.

[35] *Utopia Recast*, 36, cf. 14–21, 29, 31.

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SOCR. What you say is most true.
GLAUC. Then I accept that this is courage.
SOCR. Accept it indeed, as political courage at any rate [πολιτικήν γε], and you will be accepting correctly. (*Rep.* 430 B 2–C 4)

Now one might read this passage as saying, simply: the city is courageous when (certain of) its citizens preserve correct, education-inculcated, and lawful opinions about what is fearful. Or one might read it as adding: those citizens who preserve correct, education-inculcated, and lawful opinions about what is fearful themselves have a kind of courage: political courage.[36] (In the *Phaedo*, political and demotic virtue are properties of individuals, and at *Republic* 500 D demotic virtue is a property of individuals and not only of the city.) So let us consider whether it would be plausible to attribute a kind of virtue to those who preserve correct, education-inculcated, and lawful opinions through everything.

The passage at 430 B–C suggests that correct opinions, when these are lawful and the result of education, are superior to the same opinions when they are not: the former constitute political virtue; the latter, apparently, can be had even by animals. To understand this ranking, we need to see what a correct opinion without education would be, why it would not be considered lawful or deserve the name of virtue, and what difference the cultural education described prior to this passage in the *Republic* could make to it. Take, for example, a slave's belief that he should confront the armed burglar jumping over the wall. The slave's belief may be correct, but it may be held on the bad, false grounds that the (physical) punishment he avoids by confronting the burglar constitutes a great harm. A disposition to avoid any punishment whatsoever will not reliably prescribe the correct action (as education and law might)—Plato might argue that it would, for example, move the slave who fails to confront the burglar to run away from the household to escape punishment.

What difference could a cultural education make to correct opinion? Like the justification that is supposed to anchor knowledge and make it superior to correct opinion in the *Meno* (97 E–98 A),

[36] I agree entirely with Adam, *Republic*, ad loc., that there are two senses of 'political courage': a characteristic of the city as a whole and an educated-opinion-based virtue in individual citizens. As Adam notes, Aristotle uses 'political courage' in the second sense in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (3. 8). Aristotle says that political courage is closest to true courage because it is due to virtue, shame, and to a desire to obtain honour (a noble end) and avoid disgrace.

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we have seen that the musical education is supposed to stabilize correct opinion, to enable agents to preserve their correct opinions through the pains and pleasures that might tempt, or otherwise cause, one to lose those opinions. The musical education exposes young guardians to noble exemplars in stories about gods and heroes, as a result of which they internalize cultural ideals of courage and moderation so that when, for example, they face dangers, they do so to live up to their standard of courage rather than to avoid the alleged harms of punishment or disgrace. So even though they lack the philosophers' knowledge and love of it, young guardians can have an order of priorities that mirrors philosophers': they grasp some of the intrinsically valuable properties of virtue,[37] and so they wish to be virtuous characters themselves and value virtuous actions for the contribution these make to their characters. Further, internalizing virtuous cultural ideals is intimately connected with virtuous action and psychic harmony: the philosophy-sanctioned ideal ensures that one's particular judgements about how to act are correct and do not conflict with one another, at least in circumstances that are sufficiently like those faced by the exemplars to allow one to infer what one should do.[38] After characterizing individual justice as a harmony in the soul when each part does its own work, Socrates says that the musical and gymnastic education he has described earlier—which results in true and stable opinions about the fine—makes the parts of the soul harmonize with one another:

> Then as we were saying, will not the mixture of music and gymnastics make these concordant [*σύμφωνα*], tensing and nourishing the one [part of the soul] with fine speeches [*λόγοις . . καλοῖς*] and lessons [*μαθήμασιν*], and loosening and soothing the other, making it gentle with both harmony and rhythm? (441 E 8–442 A 2)

This passage makes it sound as if early education is sufficient for the rational part of the soul to rule, so that the musically educated auxiliaries are just in that the rational parts of their souls

[37] One might object to this claim on the grounds that what is intrinsically valuable about virtue has to do with the Forms, so that non-philosophers cannot even grasp intrinsically valuable properties. But completely cutting non-philosophers off from the Forms like this seems too extreme: they may not accept the existence of a single Form of Beauty that makes all beautiful particulars beautiful, but it may still be the case that their judgement that the particulars are beautiful is guided by a (somewhat shaky) grasp of the Form. In other words, they might use the Form in their judgement without achieving a reflective understanding of the Form.

[38] 'Imperfect Virtue', 327–8.

rule in them (lacking wisdom, but on the basis of true opinion). But later in the *Republic* Socrates says that there are three kinds of people: wisdom-lovers, honour-lovers, and lovers of appetitive goods, ruled respectively by the rational, spirited, or appetitive parts of the soul (581 B–C). This could be simply an observation about what people are like, whatever the natural and environmental causes, rather than a claim that there are three fixed natures. But if it is the latter, then it would seem that auxiliaries must be ruled by their spirited part, and the producers by their appetitive part. In this case, non-philosophers' virtue would require an education of their ruling non-rational parts, in particular, one that led them to value as ends things other than their characteristic ends of honour or wealth.[39] In a still later passage, Socrates claims that for a person whose rational part is naturally weak, it is best to be ruled by someone else whose rational part rules within himself, for a naturally weak rational part is incapable of ruling, and would only pander to the appetites (590 C–D). This suggests that for an agent to possess some degree of virtue, her soul should be ruled by reason in some way, not necessarily by her own rational part. She may be virtuous even though her appetitive part rules, because her appetitive part is guided by someone else's reason (e.g. in the form of instructions, or law) to desire as ends genuinely good objects.[40]

It might be thought that what is distinctive about the motivation of non-philosophical citizens of the ideal city is not so much that they choose virtuous actions as, for example, fine (*καλά*) because they have been educated to see them as fine, but rather that they view the actions as lawful (*νόμιμα*), choosing them as commanded by the law.[41] To have this kind of motivation, they would have had to acquire the idea of an end that should override their appetitive

[39] Ibid. 334–5. This requires that the lower parts of the soul have beliefs, which may sound strange. But this is clearly how Plato is thinking: Socrates says that the individual is moderate when the parts share the same belief (*ὁμοδοξῶσι*) that reason should rule (442 D 1), so he thinks that the lower parts of the soul can have beliefs. In *Republic* 10 he also divides soul on a cognitive basis, arguing that it is possible for someone to have a belief (*δόξα*) about the size of something contrary to what measurement tells him is the size (602 E–603 A). The sense of *δόξα*, or belief, here may be weak—an appearance, rather than a judgement that something is the case. I would like to thank Jennifer Whiting for helpful discussion on this topic.

[40] Thanks to Terry Irwin for helping me to sort out the various alternative conceptions of non-philosophical virtue here.

[41] The view Myles Burnyeat develops in his 'Plato and the Dairy-Maids' (unpublished).

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and spirited desires, which is an important moral development. But Plato does not seem to think that doing something because it is the law suffices for any kind of virtue: even the democrat, who is a vicious character (449 A), does that (572 E). In any case, doing something simply because it is the law is a common motivation, and it is difficult to see why Plato should suddenly become so enthusiastic about it in the *Republic*. What is new and distinctive in the *Republic* is the account of early education, directed by those who know, which leads citizens (or at least all guardians) to focus their desires onto the virtuous actions that are genuinely desirable.[42] This does not give them wisdom or philosophic virtue, but it means that they respond appropriately, in their souls as well as by their actions, to genuine value.

(*c*) *The good of agreeing: ethical, not political*

So far, I have argued that the *Republic* allows for the possibility of good, well-grounded, and virtuous agreement—that is, agreement to philosophers' rule for reasons better than that it procures false goods for non-philosophical citizens. What remains is to survey the text to see what grounds for agreement Plato actually puts into the heads of his citizens. Below, I address the question 'On what basis do citizens in the ideal city agree about who should rule?' separately for each class of citizens—philosophers, auxiliaries, and producers.

In an imaginary speech addressed to philosophers who are reluctant to rule, Socrates offers the following reasons why they should agree to rule:

> We shall say that it is reasonable for such people [as you philosophers] who come to be in other cities not to share in their labours, for they grow up on their own, contrary to the city's constitution [*ἀκούσης τῆς . . πολιτείας*], and it is just for that which has grown by itself and owes no one for its nurture to be unenthusiastic about paying caregivers' wages. But you we have made rulers and kings, as if in a swarm of bees, both for your own sake and for the sake of the rest of the city; you have been educated better and more completely than the rest, and you are better able to participate in both [philosophy and rule]. So you must each go down in turn to dwelling among the others and accustom yourselves to seeing obscure things. For when you are accustomed to it you will see infinitely better than the others there and you will know each image—what it is and of what it is an image—because you have seen the truth concerning beautiful and just and good things. And

[42] Thanks to Chris Bobonich for discussion on this issue.

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in this way, in both our interest and yours, it will be waking rulers that govern the city, not dreaming rulers—as govern most cities today—who fight one another over shadows and engage in faction [*στασιαζόντων*] about ruling, as if that were some great good. I suppose the truth is that the city in which the prospective rulers are least keen to rule must be governed the best and with the least faction [*ἀστασιαστότατα*]. (*Rep.* 520 A 9–D 4)

First, the philosophers owe their good condition (having been educated to be philosophers, rather than having had to battle corrupting forces) to their city, and so they should repay it. Second, they are the best qualified of the citizens to rule (and so, according to the principle of political justice that each citizen does the work he or she is best qualified to do, this is what they should do).

Now presumably when philosophers agree that they should rule, what they are able to do is to see the relationship between Justice itself and the reasons of justice Socrates' speech provides. I do not want to get involved in the details of the debate over exactly why philosophers agree to rule. Commentators variously attribute to the philosophers a desire, either to imitate the Form of Justice in their actions, or at least not to dissociate themselves from Justice itself by refusing a just action or rejecting just reasons for action;[43] alternatively, to express their knowledge and love of Justice itself by reproducing it in actions;[44] or simply to obey the law (as justice demands), which in this case commands them to rule.[45] Despite their differences, these interpretations share the view that the phi-

[43] Richard Kraut says, 'one can be eager to perform an act because of one of its features and reluctant to do it because of another. Clearly, the philosopher has no interest in the mundane and practical activities she must undertake in order to govern the community; that is, she has no desire to exercise power over others, to give them orders, to correct their errors, and so on. But this is entirely compatible with her loving a different feature of what she does when she returns to the cave: in these circumstances, exercising power over others is precisely what justice requires. And of course, the philosopher must have a love of justice—a love, that is, not only of the moral Forms, but of people, institutions, and acts that participate in those Forms' ('Return to the Cave: *Republic* 519–21', *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, 7 (1993), 43–61 at 55).

[44] T. Irwin, *Plato's Ethics* (Oxford, 1995), 298–317.

[45] E. Brown, 'Justice and Compulsion for Plato's Philosopher-Rulers', *Ancient Philosophy*, 20 (2000), 1–17, makes excellent sense of Plato's repeated references to the compulsion that leads philosophers to rule: the compulsion here is the compulsion of law (which philosophers obey because it is just to obey the law). But we have also to think about how the philosophers are persuaded to rule (they are not only compelled), and about how the philosophers determine that they ought to obey the law (presumably they do not obey any law, but only just laws; to determine that this law is just, it would seem they have to appreciate the considerations of reciprocity

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losophers are averse to ruling *qua* ruling but embrace it *qua* just. Since the philosophers know what is good, their agreeing to rule is the result of something good, their knowledge (and is the cause of something good, their ruling). Perhaps, in addition, the judgement 'I should rule' is itself a further good—in so far as it involves the exercise of knowledge.

Plato's estimation of the cognitive and evaluative deficiencies of the two lower classes in the ideal city bars them from having the best reasons for agreeing, the philosophers'. But if their agreement is to be good for them, it should not promote false beliefs about value. The educated correct opinion I described above provides a middle path. The auxiliaries, although they lack knowledge, have received an education that enables them to judge, looking inward and at each other, that their own sense of how to act conforms to the law's and the philosophers' reasons, and that their behaviour flows from a harmonious rather than a conflicted soul. They can approve of their rulers by evaluating the product of expert rule that matters most to them, themselves. And there is a reliable connection between their judgements and what makes those judgements true. For their education has trained them to value acts, characters, and institutions that are genuinely valuable, and so their internalized ideals of virtue enable them to recognize, on the one hand, that the philosophers are better at being what they themselves would like to be, and, on the other, that it is philosophers' rule that has made them, the auxiliaries, into the virtuous characters that they are. And of course, the reason the philosophers should rule *is* that they are most competent to make all the citizens as virtuous (and thereby as happy) as possible. Auxiliaries' agreement to the philosophers' rule, then, grows out of their improved virtue and understanding, and so is good for them. But that is to make their agreement sound like a mere consequence of their virtue and understanding; in fact, however, the philosophers are the auxiliaries' most immediate models of virtue in action and so appreciating their fitness to be such is constitutive of auxiliaries' virtue and understanding.

The *Republic* provides a few further details as to what the auxiliaries' precise reasoning might be in agreeing to philosophers' rule. Their title, in the ideal city, of 'auxiliaries' (*ἐπίκουροι*) suggests that they conceive of themselves as the philosophers' helpers in

(invoked in Socrates' persuasive speech) that make it a just law, and perhaps also the considerations of benefit to the city that motivate the law in the first place.

ruling, and perhaps take pride in doing so.[46] But since the auxiliaries are the most likely of the citizens to be politically ambitious, it is important that this ambition be properly channelled. Interestingly, Plato emphasizes that they (like the philosophers) call the ruled their wage-payers (*μισθοδόται*) and food-providers (*τροφεῖς*), not slaves (*δοῦλοι*) as rulers in other cities call their subjects (463 B 2–5); and that the title they (like the philosophers) use for each other is 'co-guardians' (*συμφύλακες*), not co-rulers (*συνάρχοντες*), as do rulers in other cities (463 B 7–9).[47] It is noteworthy that in the degeneration of the ideal city into a timocracy the rulers enslave the producers—whom they had previously guarded and regarded as free friends and food-providers—turning them into their serfs and servants (*τοὺς δὲ πρὶν φυλαττομένους ὑπ' αὐτῶν ὡς ἐλευθέρους φίλους τε καὶ τροφέας, δουλωσάμενοι τότε περιοίκους τε καὶ οἰκέτας ἔχοντες*, 547 C 1–3).[48] In this degenerate city, the rulers no longer rule for the good of the whole but only seek their own (misconceived) good; no longer aiming at the good of their subjects, they now regard them as slaves.

The passage that tells us how the guardians view each other and their subjects also tells us that the third class of citizens, the producers, have a distinctive conception of their rulers and their relationship to their rulers: unlike subjects in other cities, who regard their rulers as masters (*δεσπόται*) or simply rulers (*ἄρχοντες*), they regard their rulers as preservers (*σωτῆρες*) and helpers (*ἐπίκουροι*), 463 A 8–B 1). But because the *Republic* tells us so little about the mental life of the producers, we will have to begin with an analogy in order to reconstruct the producers' reasons for acquiring this conception of rulers, and for agreeing to philosophical rule. There

[46] Further, since the ideal city puts an end to the privatization of interests among rulers and auxiliaries by erasing all evidence of their biological relationships (463 C–464 B), the auxiliaries (like the philosopher-rulers) may be moved by considerations of what is good for the whole, rather than just for themselves and their family and friends. And what is good for the whole is philosophical rule.

[47] In describing Plato's introduction of a new conception of the ruler in the *Republic*, Malcolm Schofield has observed that Plato does not call the guardians *ἄρχοντες* until 412 B 7—where it is likely he uses the word simply to distinguish the auxiliaries from the rulers proper—but from 374 D, where he first introduces them, refers to them as *φύλακες* (Laurence Seminar presentation, 'Some Questions about Philosopher-Rulers', 28 May 2002). I believe that the passage at 463 A–B shows that the philosophers and auxiliaries conceive of themselves as guardians, not rulers, of their subjects. Further, they conceive of their subjects as enabling them to do this important work of guarding, not as slaves to be used to serve their own interests.

[48] I am grateful to David Sedley for pointing this out to me.

is little evidence that producers receive any education apart from their craft education[49] and the Noble Lie, the story that all the citizens are born of the same earth with different metals in their souls (414 D–415 C). So to begin to see how producers could agree to philosophers' rule without receiving the extensive education of the other classes, we can turn to a passage in which Socrates describes what it would take for the ideal city to come about in the first place:

SOCRATES. If, then, there was some necessity for those outstanding in philosophy to take charge of a city in the infinite time past, or there is now, in some foreign place far away from our view, or there will be in the future, we are ready with our argument to contend that the constitution we have spoken of has existed or does or will exist, whenever this same Muse comes to be mistress of a city. For it is not impossible that it should come to be, and we are not speaking of impossible things. But it is agreed by us too that these things are difficult.
ADEIMANTUS. To me too, it seems so.
SOCR. . . . But it does not seem so to the majority, you will say?
ADEIM. Probably not . . .
SOCR. . . . Do not accuse the majority like this. For they will have a different opinion if you, renouncing the spirit of contentiousness [μὴ φιλονικῶν] and instead encouraging them and destroying their opposition to the love of learning, show them those whom you are calling philosophers, and define, as we did just now, the philosophers' nature and pursuits, so that they understand that you are not speaking of the people they are thinking of. And if they see it like this, you will say that they will adopt a different opinion and will answer differently. Or do you think that anyone who is gentle and not jealous is harsh with someone who is not harsh, or jealous of someone who is not jealous? In anticipation of your reply, I say that I think that a few people have such a harsh nature, but not the majority. (*Rep.* 499 C 7–500 A 7)

[49] 456 D refers to the education cobblers receive, to say that the education guardians receive makes them better men. Cf. G. F. Hourani, 'The Education of the Third Class in Plato's *Republic*', *Classical Quarterly*, 43 (1949), 58–60. Hourani points out that the only positive mention of education for the third class is this reference to the education of cobblers. And he argues that Plato's stratification by talent does not require equal education for children of all classes because Plato thinks the abilities of the talented are likely to 'shine through' despite a lack of education. But Hourani seems to overstate his case when he says that Plato would have considered education for the third class a 'waste of effort' (59). The only explicit reason for withholding education from a group of people is that it might mislead them or make them worse: this is why immature guardians are not allowed to study dialectic, lest they become misologists, and this is the general reason for censoring the stories in the guardians' early education. There is no reason to suppose that producers would be prevented from hearing these stories, for how could they harm them?

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Since Socrates assumes no special education for the majority whose acceptance of philosophers' rule is at issue, it seems safe to say that the producers in the ideal city could have at least as good reasons for believing that philosophers ought to rule as do the majority in this passage.[50]

To accept philosophers' rule, the majority have only to be convinced that philosophical rule will bring about the best constitution described in the *Republic*. Their worry seems not to be about the constitution, but rather about whether actual philosophers will rule as the best city's rulers do—rather than ruling to their own advantage, as Thrasymachus complains rulers everywhere do (338 C–339 A).[51] This is why they simply need to be shown what the philosopher is, i.e. what the philosophic nature and pursuits are. Socrates here refers back to his account of philosophers as knowers of Forms and lovers of wisdom (479 E–484 B), and as for that reason untempted by the pleasures or fears that come from the body (485 D–486 B). This account reassures the majority that the proposed rulers are not the naturally politically ambitious people they are afraid of. The language Plato uses here to describe what the majority is afraid of—the harsh and jealous—echoes his language in describing the non-philosophical guardians or auxiliaries, and the spirited part of the soul that is dominant in them (375 A–D, 410 D–E, 440 A–441 C).

This leaves it somewhat open whether the majority accept philosophers' rule on the grounds that the philosophers' love of wisdom ensures that they will rule disinterestedly, or that philosophers' love of wisdom takes them out of the competition for material goods and leaves these to the majority; or because they are awed by philosophers without understanding what they are awed by.

[50] I am not supposing here that everything said of the majority applies to the producers—that, for example, the producers in the ideal city will have persuasive speeches like this one addressed to them. For the purposes of reconstructing the reasons for agreeing to philosophers' rule available to the producers, the reasons available to an uneducated majority set a minimum standard.

[51] This dialectical context seems to be what allows Plato's *Republic* to assume a utilitarian type of political justification. Early in the *Republic*, Thrasymachus tells Socrates that in tyrannies, democracies, and aristocracies alike the rulers make laws to their own advantage; justice consists in the obedience of their subjects to these laws, and the rulers benefit from the subjects' obedience (338 C–339 B). In reply to Thrasymachus, in books 2–5 of the *Republic*, Socrates gives an account of what a constitution would be like in which rulers rule for the benefit of their subjects. The dialectical context makes it unnecessary for Socrates to argue, in books 2–5, whether the good of the ruled is what rulers and constitutions should aim at.

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Some of these reasons for accepting philosophers' rule seem to be better than others. For example, the view that philosophers should rule because their lack of interest in material goods will ensure producers a greater share of material goods than they might have had under other rulers relies on and reinforces the ethically significant false belief that securing material goods for oneself against too-tough competition is a very important good, important enough to be the basis for your judgement about who should rule. By contrast, the view that philosophers should rule because their rule is disinterested seems to be a good reason—perhaps too good a reason to be available to people unless they have been educated to appreciate the value of impartiality.

But the producers have an educational advantage over the majority in the last quoted passage in that the producers have been told the Noble Lie and so have come to acknowledge citizens' interdependence and differential contributions to the city. So while the majority may approve philosophers' rule because it is preferable to the alternative of rule by the politically ambitious, the producers can also approve of philosophers' rule because they have learnt the ethical truths embodied in the Noble Lie.

It is worth emphasizing that acknowledging the goodness of philosophical rule serves a more vital educational function for the lower classes than for philosophers. Since non-philosophers do not know the Forms, their handle on significant ethical truths depends on the models of goodness and virtue in their lives. The philosophers can come to have harmonious souls by contemplating and imitating the Forms (500 B–D), but non-philosophers have to imitate human or human-like role models: the gods and heroes of their stories, but also their rulers. When they acknowledge the value of expert rule, by those who know and who do not care for bodily goods, they learn significant ethical truths about the power of knowledge, about what is and is not worth pursuing, about how one should do one's job. Presumably acknowledging the goodness of the rule under which they live also includes acknowledging the goodness of the law that governs them and makes them receptive to other important true beliefs they might acquire from the structure or the functioning of their constitution. Reflection on political agreement suggests that civic life in the ideal city is a continuation of education, and so is good for citizens in the way that Plato says education is.

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4. The *Statesman*

Plato's *Statesman*, however, gives one the impression that the *Republic*'s recognition of the value of citizens' agreement to their government is short-lived. For in the *Statesman* the Visitor famously announces that in defining the correct constitution and true statesmanship, knowledge alone is the criterion (*τὸν ὅρον*); neither number nor consent (*τὸ ἑκούσιον*) nor wealth is relevant (292 C).[52]

To support his claim that expertise alone is relevant to correct rule, the Visitor calls upon the doctor as a model expert, pointing out that so long as he acts for the good of our bodies and makes us better through his expertise, a doctor is considered a doctor, whether he cures us with or without our consent, whether according to written rules or not, whether he is poor or wealthy (293 A–C). Similarly, the Visitor reiterates,

> Necessarily too among constitutions, it seems, that one is surpassingly correct and is alone a constitution, in which one could find rulers who truly know and do not only seem to know, whether they rule in accordance with laws or without laws, and whether over willing or unwilling subjects, and whether they are poor or wealthy; none of these must be taken into account [when determining] correctness. (293 C 5–D 2)

What has become of the *Republic*'s claim that the rule of philosophers brings about citizens' agreement to philosophers' rule?

We may reconcile the *Republic*'s and *Statesman*'s characterizations of the correct constitution by distinguishing the defining feature of the correct constitution—the rulers' knowledge—from features of the good or happy city that are the usual result of a correct constitution.[53] So the *Statesman*'s claim would be that the presence of consent does not contribute to the constitution's correctness, and the absence of consent does not detract from the constitution's correctness. For consent is not sufficient for correctness of constitution: other constitutions might have the citizens' consent without being correct. Nor is consent necessary: there may be particularly recalcitrant citizens who will not agree to the best

[52] For classifying actual constitutions (not ruled by expert knowledge), number, wealth, consent, and law are all relevant (291 D–292 A).

[53] The criterion is not merely a mark by which one discerns whether the constitution is correct—in the way that being the darkest man in the market place is the mark of being Coriscus. The criterion (definition, *ὅρος*) picks out the feature that *makes* the constitution correct.

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rule, and even educable citizens might not agree when the constitution is first established. So even if Plato supposes that agreement about who should rule is a usual result of the correct constitution, or the true statesman's rule, this fact is neither a cause of nor an exact indicator of its correctness. At the same time, the absence of consent or willing subjection to the ruler would detract from the goodness or happiness of the city and citizens at which the constitution aims. So a sharp contrast between the goodness of a city and the correctness of a constitution can reconcile the *Republic*'s claim that agreement to the rule of those who rule the ideal city is a virtue and thus a good-making feature of that city, with the *Statesman*'s declaration that the willingness of subjects to be ruled by the ruler is irrelevant to the correctness of the constitution.[54]

But one might worry that the *Statesman* seems to be making a stronger point against consent. The Visitor's declaration that consent is irrelevant to expert rule and constitutional correctness seems to conflict with his earlier claim that the willingness of subjects is what distinguishes the statesman's expertise from the tyrant's. Earlier, he has said that whereas the tyrant's expertise is exercised over forced subjects (*τὴν μὲν . . τῶν βιαίων τυραννικήν*), the statesman's is voluntary and is exercised over willing subjects (*τὴν δὲ ἑκούσιον καὶ ἑκουσίων . . . . πολιτικήν*) (276 E).[55] In the later passages, he emphasizes that this distinction is irrelevant. Plato seems to be forcing the question of whether or not subjects' consent to their

[54] In 'Plato's *Statesman* and Politics', John Cooper distinguishes the Visitor's claim that knowledge alone establishes the correctness and justice of the knowledgeable ruler's rule from the question of how that knowledge leads him to rule (*Reason and Emotion* (Princeton, 1999), 163–91 at 187–8). In response to the latter question, Cooper points out (181–2, 185) that educators and orators are co-causes of the statesman's product, which is the communal life of citizens who have been made as virtuous as possible by being given reasons for holding their true and settled opinions about what is fine and good. Cooper also thinks we are meant to question the model of the coercive doctor. He points out that when the 'whole topic of force and disregard for law is first introduced' Young Socrates speaks out in favour of introducing better laws by persuasion rather than force, and the Visitor says, 'Perhaps. But first things first' (185, on 296 A–B). Above, I try to identify what is misleading in the doctor paradigm (as the Visitor shows what is misleading in the shepherd paradigm.)

[55] The passage at 276 E does not specify whether the willingness of subjects is supposed to be a precondition or product of kingly rule; the passages at 292 C–293 D also do not restrict their claims about the irrelevance of consent to precondition or product; however, since the thought in the *Republic*, *Clitophon*, and *Alcibiades I* has been that agreement is a product of expert rule, this is what I focus on.

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government is important.[56] Could the final view of the *Statesman* be that the statesman's expertise does not even aim at obtaining subjects' agreement to his rule?

We may avoid that conclusion via the following line of reasoning.[57] The Visitor's judgement that the statesman is no less a statesman for ruling over unwilling subjects depends for its plausibility on the model of the doctor. But one of the early lessons of the dialogue is that our models may mislead us. In the first attempt to define the statesman, the model of the herdsman led to a mistaken conception of the statesman: unlike the cowherd (or the divine ruler), the human statesman shares in nature and nurture with his flock; again, the human statesman's caring for his flock does not involve all the tasks of rearing that the cowherd's does (274 E–275 E).

Now the doctor seems to be as misleading a model for the statesman as the herdsman.[58] For while the doctor may do his job of healing bodies whether he is coercive or not, it does not seem that the statesman can do his job by coercion. It is not that necessary uses of coercion, for example on recalcitrant citizens, detract from his being a statesman, but rather that because the statesman's job is to benefit citizens (as far as possible) (296 E), if he coerces them when he could persuade them, he is depriving them of the paramount good, a grasp of the ethical truths that might inform their lives. Further, to the extent that coercive measures win compliance in behaviour by using people's desires to avoid punishment, they might lead subjects to adopt the false belief that they should engage in virtuous rather than vicious actions in order to avoid

[56] According to Roslyn Weiss, the division of ruling arts into the forcible and the voluntary, suggested at 276 D–E, is not directed to distinguishing the human statesman from the god, is not related to the myth and its lessons, and is subsequently overturned, since the statesman too may rule forcibly, without his subjects' consent ('Statesman as ἐπιστήμων: Caretaker, Physician, and Weaver', in C. J. Rowe (ed.), *Reading the* Statesman*: Proceedings of the Third International Symposium Platonicum* (Sankt Augustin, 1995), 213–22 at 216). Instead, Weiss argues (220), the fact that the tyrant has no expertise but only pretends to (301 B–C) shows that there is no mistake in the earlier division and no need for a criterion like the forcible or voluntary by which to distinguish statesman from tyrant: knowledge itself is the criterion by which to distinguish them..

[57] Thanks to Chris Bobonich for suggesting this line of thought to me.

[58] This is not to say that either model, of herdsman or doctor, is entirely useless—both are caretakers like the statesman, after all—only that we need to be careful about exactly how we apply the model. In the *Laws*, Plato distinguishes the doctors of free citizens from slave doctors by whether or not they persuade their patients to follow the prescribed regimen (720 C–E); so qualified, the doctor model ceases to be misleading in the way I suggest it is in the *Statesman*.

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the evil of punishment. In this case, the coercive ruler positively harms his subjects. Making citizens better would seem to involve persuading them of ethical truths (309 C–D) rather than coercing them to perform virtuous actions. And indeed, in the closing pages of the *Statesman*, when the Visitor is describing what the true statesman's kind of weaving produces and by what means it does so (306 A), it emerges that the statesman aims to create in citizens a single opinion about the fine and good, which he does by supervising their education (310 E).[59] Education into this grasp of the fine and good is the drug (*φάρμακον*) (comparable to the rulers' lies in the *Republic*?) used by the statesman's expertise (310 A). We may here compare Plato's *Laws*, which advocates that citizens be rationally persuaded to obey the law, rather than merely being told the punishment for non-compliance (719 E–723 B); this requirement of rational persuasion is justified by its contribution to the virtue, and thus the happiness, of the citizens.[60]

The agreement brought about by expert rule in the *Statesman* is an agreement among the citizens, about the fine and good—rather than among ruler and ruled, about who should rule. But this need not be a sign that Plato no longer sees any value in citizens consenting to their rule. Recall that in the *Republic* the intrinsic value to each citizen of his or her agreeing that philosophers should rule derives from the fact that philosophers' rule is an exemplary instance of what is fine and good. If in the *Statesman* Plato's view is that citizens can grasp the fine and the good better by other means—perhaps by grasping some of the reasons behind particular judgements of fine and good—then it would be perfectly understandable for him to widen the scope of agreement to the fine and good. Still, grasping the fine and the good would enable citizens to appreciate the fine and good rule of a true statesman.

[59] The Visitor identifies this product with friendship and agreement (*ὁμόνοια*, 311 B–C.) This is not an agreement between ruler and ruled, but rather among the ruled, the brave and moderate types that populate the city; and its content concerns not who should rule, but the fine and the good. The thought seems to be that education about the fine and good can correct the self-praising and conflicting judgements naturally made by the brave and the moderate and bring them to appreciate what each contributes to the city.

[60] C. Bobonich, 'Persuasion, Compulsion, and Freedom in Plato's Laws', *Classical Quarterly*, NS 41 (1991), 365–88.

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5. Conclusion: agreement (*ὁμόνοια*) vs. contract (*συνθήκη*)

At the outset of this paper I suggested that Plato's positive evaluation of political agreement should be of particular interest to modern students of his political philosophy, given the importance many modern political philosophers confer upon citizens' consent—explicit, tacit, or hypothetical—to their government.[61] I have argued that while citizens' agreement is not, for Plato, a criterion for legitimate government, it is a measure of the happiness of a city and so a measure of how far its government has achieved its *raison d'être*, since a government that fails to obtain citizens' agreement fails, to that extent, to achieve the end of government. Further, I have argued that because he specifies the end of government in terms of citizens' virtue and ethical understanding, Plato is led to the view that citizens of the ideal city should and will have a cognitive grasp of the justificatory truths about their government (to the best of their ability), since the government is a model of goodness.

In the light of this account of political agreement, it may seem remarkable that the *Republic* is critical of the social contract (*συνθήκη*), the kind of agreement that modern political philosophers have been most interested in. Seeing why Plato criticizes the social contract will bring out some distinctive features of Platonic political agreement.

In the *Republic* Glaucon reports a view that (conventional) justice originates when people contract with one another to refrain from committing injustice (or harm) in order not to suffer it (*συνθέσθαι ἀλλήλοις μήτ' ἀδικεῖν μήτ' ἀδικεῖσθαι*, 359 A 1–2). Glaucon says that people make such a contract because they have calculated that the expected harm of suffering injustice without the hope of revenge outweighs the expected benefit of doing injustice with impunity. But, he observes, it is rational to cheat on a contract made on this basis and to do acts of injustice whenever this is or seems to be to one's advantage (359 A–C).

The problem Plato identifies here can be understood as follows:

[61] In the words of a recent encyclopaedia entry on 'Legitimacy', 'Whether due to or a cause of consent theory, the notion that government must rest on the consent of the governed has become an article of political faith, a conviction that much contemporary political philosophy labours to secure' (R. Flatham, 'Legitimacy', in R. Goodin and P. Pettit (eds.), *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy* (Oxford, 1993), 527–33 at 528).

the social contract depends on the contracting parties being so just that they will keep their (just) promises. Someone like Socrates may have such a commitment to justice (*Crito* 49 A–E), but social contractarians imagine a contract among parties who are equally ready to commit acts of justice and injustice;[62] they give no explanation of how the requisite commitment to the justice of promise-keeping might be produced and no justification for why we should make such a commitment.[63]

The agreement in Glaucon's account of the social contract is a social and public act, like swearing an oath or signing a contract, and it does not compel inner assent. However, recent social contractarians employ the notion of a hypothetical social contract, where consenting is nothing other than rationally endorsing a social or political arrangement. This may seem closer to Platonic political agreement; indeed, some recent interpreters have understood Platonic political agreement in terms of the hypothetical contract. So, for instance, in his recent book comparing ancient and modern theories of goodness and justice, Gerasimos Santas wonders:

> How does [Platonic social] justice promote the primary good of social temperance, civil harmony and the avoidance of civil strife? Justice provides the standard upon which assignments of rulers and ruled are made, but how does it promote agreement on this? Perhaps Plato thinks that the matchings his justice requires are so reasonable or rational, compared to the alternatives, that citizens are more likely to agree to them than to any of the alternatives; the matchings oligarchic justice, for example, requires would not be agreed to by the poor; or those of timocracy by the intellectuals.[64]

Santas assumes that Platonic political agreement is a convergence, from different perspectives, on a particular political arrangement

[62] Or if they are not, if parties to the contract come to honour equality (to have *τιμὴν τοῦ ἴσου*), it is due to their deficiencies: lacking in manliness and the power to do injustice with impunity, they have been forced by law away from the natural desire for more (*πλεονεξία*) (359 B–C).

[63] In his essay 'Of the Original Contract' David Hume complains, 'We are bound to obey our sovereign, it is said; because we have given a tacit promise to that purpose. But why are we bound to observe our promise?' Hume's own view is that we can see that society, which secures us many advantages, requires both that we keep our promises and that we obey our government. Thus, 'The obligation to allegiance being of like force and authority with the obligation to fidelity, we gain nothing by resolving the one into the other. The general interests or necessities of society are sufficient to establish both' (*Essays Moral, Political, and Literary* (Indianapolis, 1985), 465–87 at 480–1).

[64] G. Santas, *Goodness and Justice* (Oxford, 2001), 90.

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after consideration of the alternatives. Reeve makes the same assumption when he explains the philosophers' agreeing to rule in terms of the comparison they make between the lives they would live under different constitutions,[65] and the auxiliaries' and producers' agreeing to be ruled by philosophers on the grounds that this maximizes their receipt of honour and wealth.[66]

On my account, Platonic political agreement need not involve comparisons between constitutions. Further, the (for Plato) regrettable existence of different perspectives is met by educating citizens to appreciate what is genuinely valuable about their constitution and government—which is what brings about political agreement. For as long as nothing testifies to the truth-tracking capacity of a perspective—and what does, for the oligarchic and timocratic perspectives?—a judgement from that perspective is without value. Even if an indefeasible social contract could be achieved on the basis of such false judgements, the good of this would fall short of the good at which political rule aims. That good involves the education of citizens, and it is educated citizens whose political judgements can be a measure of the goodness of the city.

So Plato values as intrinsically good citizens' political agreement in the ideal city of the *Republic*, but not because, as a modern contractualist might argue, respect for citizens as persons requires securing their consent; nor because, as a utilitarian liberal might, each citizen is the best judge of his or her own happiness, so that citizens' agreement is vital information for a government seeking to maximize happiness. For Plato, citizens' agreement matters because a government that genuinely benefits its citizens is a gov-

[65] *Philosopher-Kings*, 204. We may be tempted to do so by the apparent similarity between the philosophers' comparison of their position under different constitutions and comparisons made by parties to social contracts in some modern versions of contract theory. So, for example, in Rawls's version of the social contract, the parties in the original position choose their favoured principles for distributive arrangements after comparing the lot of various representative social positions under an exhaustive list of different possible principles for social arrangements. A crucial difference here is that the parties in original position do not know their abilities or social positions. See J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford, 1999), 105–9, 118–23. Further, whereas for the Rawlsian social contract the comparison of alternative social arrangements is important because the arrangements chosen are just purely in virtue of the process by which they are chosen, for Plato philosophers' rule is already good, and the demand that they rule already just; the comparison of the situation of philosophers in other constitutions is only one step in the process of philosophers coming to see this.

[66] *Philosopher-Kings*, 184–91, 197–205

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ernment that enables them to see how the government itself is good.

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