
The question of Plato's notion of 'leadership' in the *Republic*¹

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Abstract

There is obviously no question that the notion of "leadership" is central in Plato's Republic, nor is there apparently any question that it is crucial, since it is foundational for Plato's society. Writing his Republic, Plato's aim as he says, was to write a "theoretical constitution" (or to critically present the theoretical framework and principles for a constitution - logô politeian)² in order to "establish a good society" (aristên polin oikizein)³. A good society, according to Plato's theory, is the one which is founded on a good principle and grounded on a good leadership, that is to say the principle of justice⁴ and the leadership of the philosopher⁵. However, along with his notions of "society" and "justice", Plato's notion of "leadership" has been questioned and challenged by many (often quite vehemently, especially in the 20th C. and particularly after the Second World War) and seen as a totalitarian State under a dictatorial justice of an authoritarian ruler⁶. Therefore, the trilogy of Society, Justice and Leadership, as the core of the Platonic Republic, demands and invites again a critical re-examination: What does Plato mean by "society", "justice" and "leadership" and what does he mean by "good" (aristê) as applied to them? Does Plato consider the holistic State as the best kind of Society and the hierarchical Jurisprudence as the perfect Principle? Does he consider the autocratic Potentate as the required Philosopher-king? What does he mean by the philosophical leader under the principle of justice which, in his view, is the bedrock for his constitutionally founded society? The present article proposes to re-examine this question relating to Plato's enigmatic and controversial notion of "leadership".

That Plato, in the first quarter of the IVth c. BC, tries to found a "good society" is arguably⁷, primarily - and intentionally - in Athens and for the sake of his fellow-Athenians. The Athenians, who in his view, having been since the death of Pericles in 429 BC, under the intellectual influence of the philosophy - and the socio-economic domination of the politics of the Sophists, have experienced and noticed, as a result, the degeneration of their society. This is obvious in his constant critique, in the *Republic* as well as in many other Dialogues, of the intellectual, artistic and political Athenian society of his time. Having decided for his own reasons, as he says, not to try to change the Athenian political situation by getting involved in practical politics⁸, Plato tries

in his *Republic*, to offer his contribution on the theoretical and constitutional level⁹. He realizes that when politics is not the most appropriate way to bring the deontological change, then the politico logical and *politeio* logical attempt is a better one. In the *Republic*, Plato tries therefore, to reverse this social and political trend which he had himself experienced (and by which he was sorely afflicted during his lifetime since his own birth coincided with the birth of this Sophistic society)¹⁰ and which he describes in great detail in the *Republic*¹¹. What Plato seems to have wanted was to revive, not the regime of the Thirty as many modern scholars have claimed and defended (with which he indeed disagreed as well)¹², but rather the Athenian society at least in its Solonian (and, perhaps, Periclean)¹³ state, which he considered as a true democracy. His direct attacks on the Sophistic philosophy of democracy and the Athenian societal life of his time as well as on its corrupted intellectual and political leadership made Plato then, as it had made his teacher Socrates before him, a direct target. Having been considered and labeled an enemy of "democracy" by the Neo-Sophists today as he had been by the Sophists of his own time, Plato and his political philosophy have been under siege again¹⁴.

Karl Popper's infamous and influential attack on Plato's thought has been, since the Second World War, a dominant one in the Western World for the obvious reasons of the wartime occurrences. Besides this coincidence, Popper - an avowed, and vitriolic, Neo-Sophistic individualist and libertarian¹⁵ - finds Plato's philosophy as objectionable as Plato would have found Popper's in exactly the same way - and for the same reasons - he had found that of his own Sophistic contemporaries. Yet, to reject any philosophy on grounds of principle is one thing; to reject it because of a misunderstanding or misinterpretation - and misrepresentation - is another. In Popper's case, although his principle would also be questioned, when he accuses Plato, in regard to the question of leadership of "a lasting confusion in political philosophy" in having asked the question "who should rule" (or "who shall rule the state") which, in Popper's view, "necessarily demands the specific answer" which Plato gave about the "best" as "the born ruler" (or "the general will", "the master race" etc.). Popper¹⁶ commits two unjustifiable grave errors, one of interpretation and a second of translation.

First, Popper interprets what he calls "Plato's question" as having asked necessarily "whose will should be supreme", a question which implies, in Popper's view, the "will" of a particular individual and this "will", being supreme, should be therefore enforced. This, in its turn implies, in Popper's interpretation, the "will" of an authoritarian "despotic tyrant" or the "general will" which, in consequence, implies a totalitarian "master state". Yet, this is precisely the "will" that Plato explicitly rejects in his *Republic*. According to him, if the sovereignty of the egocentric individual of the so-called "democratic

man" in the Sophistic sense of the times as Plato refers or that of the multitude of "average men" be defended (as Popper appears to accept)¹⁷, then it is not long before the "strongest" authoritarian individual would take over and become a despotic and tyrannic ruler in a totalitarian way. A ruler who, in the eyes of Plato, is indeed the most "abject slave"(τὸ ὀντι δούλος)¹⁸.

Popper's second error is that he translates Plato's terms *kratein* and *archein*, as well as *agein* and *hêgeisthai* (as does F.M. Cornford)¹⁹, interchangeably with the same word "rule" without the necessary critique and carefulness Plato uses them, carefulness which Plato always shows for the use of all his other decisive and meaningful technical terms. Probably in order to attain his goal, Popper does "not worry for the precise meanings of the terms", something which, interestingly and revealingly enough, he declares himself in his text²⁰. Yet, for Plato, the choice of the words is fundamental since "the principle of wisdom is to carefully examine the terms used" (*sophias archê hê tôn onomatôn episkepsis*). His careful choice of all the terminological uses is as crucial as his carefully technical definitional meanings are in their referential realities and, therefore, a translational misuse or abuse of Plato's terms would necessarily lead, as is often the case, to a serious misinterpretation of his thought.

That this problem is a rather common (albeit unfortunate and unscientific) translational and, consequently, interpretative phenomenon can be easily attested²¹. But Popper's interpretative uniqueness and importance, on the basis of his translation, lies not so much in his own direct attack of Plato's political philosophy (this attack coming, understandably, from a Neo-Sophist would have been understood along with many others) as in his post-war widespread influence specifically because of this particular war coincidence. Consequently, this attack has misled many a reader, innocent, or predisposed towards Plato's thought. Yet, when he studies the different human characters and the societal characteristics which would causally result from them, Plato appears not only to propose exactly the opposite polity of Popper's interpretation (as well as, evidently, Popper's Neo-Sophistic theory), but also to be extremely careful in his use of his terms *archein* and *kratein*. Evidently, a misuse or mistranslation of his terms, intentional or not, would very easily mislead anyone.

That any society [*polis*] firstly needs a foundational principle (*archê*), secondly a constitutional charter (*politeia*) and, thirdly, a dynamic leadership and effective administration (*hêgesia* and *dioikêsis*)²² is presumably, such a fundamental presupposition for any political theoretician and practitioner as it is, indeed, for Plato. On this point, Popper would apparently concur as well. Be that as it may, the question of Plato's notions of political principle,

constitution and leadership is not one of the easiest to answer, their controversial nature over the centuries attests to it. However, in his *Republic*, as he tries to tackle the problem of founding and establishing a *polis* based on a *politeia* and defining and portraying its *archôn* grounded on an *archê*, Plato is vigilant in spite of the often "disorienting" long labyrinthine dialogues, to clarify his thought about both the *politeiological* foundation of his society and the *archological* grounding of its leadership.

Returning at first to the question, at least as Popper put it, of "who should rule", Plato's answer, in this regard, is evidently not that any one particular individual - be it even the "best"- would "rule" since those who "rule", in Plato's *Republic*, are indeed the people themselves. Plato's proper term of *kratein* is clearly differentiated from *archein* as his term *demos* is different from - and even opposed to - *ochlos*, *plêthos*, *hoi polloi*. By *demos* and *pantes hoi politai*, Plato implies and presupposes three fundamental points. By these terms, he means, first, *all* the people as a *community (koinônia)*²³ without any distinctive physical discriminatory characteristics²⁴, not even only the "middle class majority" (a view defended by both the Sophists and Aristotle)²⁵, nor only the males since women, according to Plato, must also have equal rights²⁶. Plato is very careful in his use, in this case, of the terms *anthrôpos* in contradistinction to *ânêr* as well as to *idiôtês*²⁷. Over and above the individual rights based on liberty as may be defended in the Sophistic philosophy, Plato's emphasis, in his use of the term *anthrôpos*, is on human rights founded on freedom, human rights which imply and encompass the rights of the individuals and of the minorities²⁸. By those terms Plato implies, secondly, the "people" in the sense²⁹ that they are (or, at least, are supposed to be, since this had not been, in Plato's estimation, the case in his IVth c. Athens of *hoi polloi*) *personally*³⁰ *self-conscious* and, therefore, *well-informed* about and consequently fully *responsible* for their public as well as their private affairs. This thesis had also been defended before him by Solon and Pericles, as well as Socrates. In the use of those terms, he presupposes thirdly, that these "people" personally *consent* in regard to both the constitutional and the legislative matters [*politeia* and *nomothesia*]. The only Platonic discriminatory criterion, if this be one, is this personal intellectual maturity and ethical responsibility; the consciousness of one's self (*gnôsis*) and of one's affairs (*praxis*), the two fundamental conditions which, according to him, are necessary for a true democratic society. To Plato, this is the meaning and the reference of the term *demos* who is indeed, as such, sovereign³¹ and in whose hands must irrevocably be the power of ruling (the *kratein* and the *kratos*), this is therefore the only "true" *democracy*³². Thus, in the *Republic*, it is Socrates and his interlocutors always as "we" in *community* (it is important to notice that the verb is used in first person plural throughout or, Socrates addressing the interlocutors as the personification of the "people", in second

singular or plural)³³ who work to establish the founding Constitution of the *polis*; and in the *Laws*. In the same vein, it is the "Athenian"(as the personification of all Athenians) who legislates on the basis of the presupposed consented and already accepted Constitution (the *Nomoi*, therefore, presupposes the *Politeia* as its foundation as the latter presupposes the former as its fulfilment).

When Plato states, in the middle of his examination of the Sophistic philosophy and society, that the *plêthos* cannot be *philosophon*³⁴, he is judicious and clear in the use of both these terms which, therefore, must not be taken lightly. With the term *plêthos* he does not mean the "people", as one may inadvertently - or on preconception - take it to mean, but he means precisely the crowd *qua* crowd which, uncritical as it may be, is swayed and carried by the wave of persuasive rhetorical flattery. He juxtaposes and opposes this *plêthos* to the true *demos*, i.e. the people who, conscious of themselves, can - on critical thinking and reasoning - be truly *philosophon* in his Socratic sense of the "desirer of wisdom" (*epithymêtên*) as opposed again to the *sophistês* who claims to "possess all wisdom" in his *pas logos alêtheuei*³⁵.

It is thus only the self-conscious people who, as a community, can consequently "master and rule themselves" as persons and as a community³⁶. In addition, as far as the leader is concerned, Plato not only never uses the term *kratein*, but also he makes the clear distinction between the "true leader" and the "flatterer partisan petty politician" of the Sophistic kind³⁷. If there is, therefore, a "will" to be enforced, as Popper wants it, this "will" for Plato, is not that of the leader but that of the people who have, firstly, decided on the *polity* of the "society to be founded" and, secondly, have chosen the *leader* to govern this founded society. It is "we" who are the founders of the society and "we" who invite and compel him to lead it³⁸. It is then the "people's will" which is the "ruling power", the people who, in Plato's view, are neither a crowd nor a collectivity, both realities of which, despite their fundamental differences, imply a collectivity or a crowd of impersonal, unidentifiable and anonymous individuals (*idiôtês*).

If then, according to Plato's *Republic*, it is the "people" who as conscious and knowledgeable members of the *polis*, are the true *demos* and hold the ruling power (*kratos*), the *archôn* could therefore not be a ruler or a lord nor would the *basileus* be a monarch or a king, and as the *pholosophos* is not omniscient, the *kubernêtês* is not omnipotent. It may be observed, therefore, that as Plato's founding *polity* which includes each and every member of the *demos* is (in opposition to the Aristotelian as well as to the Sophistic *polities*)³⁹ neither majoritarian nor minoritarian, so his founded *polis* is neither anarchic

nor monarchic (or even oligarchic). His grounding *archê* is neither individualistic or collectivistic, nor totalitarian or authoritarian in the prevalent traditional sense⁴⁰. In his sense of *kratein* and *archein*, Plato's founding *politeia* is democratic and the founded *polis* is demarchic.

If, on the other hand, Plato's second question in Popper's critique, would be "who should lead or govern", then Plato's answer is, the "best" person available from the *dêmos*⁴¹. It is the "best" (*aristos*) who would be the principal leader (*archein* and *agein*). As a person of principle and upbringing (*archê* and *agôgê*), the *aristos* should be the *archôn* and the *agôgos*, whether the question is about children or adults, at school or in the marketplace. Thus, whether in *paedarchy* or *demarchy*, in *paedagogy* or *demagogy* (terms which must, obviously, be taken in the etymological and original sense that Plato may use them), the application and the administration of the *archê* and the *agôgê* must be in the hands of the "best" people. Yet, the distinction of demarchy must always be made in the case of democracy which refers to power. Plato, in his *Republic*, does not state nor imply that the *archon* has either legislative or even judicial power, instead, he is always discussed as having only executive office. In this case, the term "magistrate" often used in translations may be misleading because of its judicial and juridical nuances and insinuations. The *archontes te kai demos*, as Plato's expression and implication seem to make clear in this characteristic passage⁴², are distinct in their political duties as much as in their entities.

In Plato's view, if the principal and leader (*archôn* and *hêgetês*) is not himself a person both of principle and culture (*archê* and *agôgê*), of constitution and education (*politeia* and *paedeia*), then those who would be under his leadership and guidance would be intellectually misled and socially led astray to anarchy and tyranny. And this applies to all the members of society as he concludes, in the *Republic*⁴³, in his study of the *characters* of the people and the *characteristics* of the consequent society. And, in this sense, one may easily ascertain that the "best" person - Plato's "philosopher" - is not any particular individual claiming to be omniscient and omnipotent. Indeed, the very fact that one may come up with such a claim is a clear indication, if not the apodictic conclusion, that that particular individual is not, in Plato's consideration, the "best" person to lead. It is precisely this omniscience and this omnipotence that Plato tries to reject in his long critique of his understanding of what is the "true" *philo-sophia*, in opposition to the Sophistic *sophia* of *pas logos alêtheuei* ("every reason is right") which inevitably leads to the politics of *pas kolax epaineitai* ("every flatterer is praised")⁴⁴. The "best", for the Socratic Plato in his constant and persistent contrast of *sophistês* and *philosophos*⁴⁵, is precisely the one who realizes that he has neither the intellectual answer to every question, nor consequently, the political solution to

every problem, and the basis of his selection to lead is precisely his *autognôsia* (self-knowledge)⁴⁶. Indeed, it is the view of the pedagogically and politically untenable and unsustainable "promises" (current during his lifetime⁴⁷ in what he sees as the "corrupted" Sophistic Athenian thought and society, both in education and in politics, and which corrupted thought the "multitudes" call "wisdom"⁴⁸) that Plato rejects as empty rhetoric and flattery. Being conscious of his ignorance and of his impotence in the etymological sense of the Platonic use of the term *philosophos*, the Platonic *aristos* is, thus, the man of *arete* - and *ethos* -, i.e. the one who precisely *attempts* and *strives* for "excellence" (in the Greek and Platonic sense of *arete*) of becoming what one is capable of being, without committing either the *hamartia* of inaction nor the *hubris* of excess. The true philosopher in this sense can be every human being who reaches this level of logical and ethical *arete* (and aesthetic, he would add in Bks II-III and X), this intellectual and moral excellence of the *aien aristuein* ("trying to always excel") based on his personal "natural disposition"⁴⁹. A "disposition" which is the quintessential determinant for one's excellence in the pursuit of successful studies and irreproachable and blameless relationships.

If, according to Plato, all the people *qua* people (i.e. on the basis of their self-consciousness and self-responsibility) can "rule", though certainly, not all the people can "lead" and "govern". But that not all the people can be leaders would obviously be admitted by many political theoreticians besides Plato, except probably those who claim that *pas logos alêtheuei*. Not only electing a leader is demanding, but representing electors is even more so, let alone leading and governing the society as such. Not only must the electors have high qualifications, but they must also know the qualifications of those whom they would elect to lead them, let alone that those elected cannot be good leaders without the appropriate qualifications. Given that the distinction between leadership and representation has been made (a representation which is not instituted nor endorsed in Plato's *polity* of participatory direct democracy based on the irreplaceable personal presence), still a true *leadership* - beyond only Plato's acceptance - requires some necessary abilities which are special and specific. Having the proper and appropriate abilities and techniques to lead and govern obviously are not, for Plato, common property, let alone be the property of the "common man" or of the "average man" in Popper's Neo-Sophistic sense⁵⁰. Plato does not, however, imply that the leader is good at everything. What he does say though, is that "each and everyone is by his own nature good and valuable (*aristos, axios*) in something" (*pros ho epephukei hekastos*)⁵¹. The question again, is which are these abilities and essential characteristics of Plato's "true" leader (*alêthinos, tō onti*).

In case one accepts Popper's expression of "born leader" as applying to Plato's view, the clarification must still be made that, in the Platonic sense and distinction, the expression "born leaders" not does only mean "born *rulers*" in Popper's translation⁵² but does not even imply a "*birthright*" within certain social, economic or political *strata*, in Popper's interpretation. When he states that "each one of us is conceived in his personal nature, ...not any one is the same as another...[and] our personal nature differs from one another"⁵³, it is rather clear Plato is referring to a *personal* nature and nurture (*hekastos*). "*Born leaders*", in this sense, would be all those people who have proven their personal intellectual and moral abilities, educational and behavioral qualifications and who therefore, have fully proven themselves to be persons of integrity and dignity, of *paideia* and *ethos*. It is a *personal* natural "nobility" and "gentleness". Plato's careful use of the terms *hekastou physis* and *agôgê*, or *trophê* and *truphê* is evident⁵⁴. This is the meaning of their *Academic* preparation, in both senses of this term. Although the "true leaders" are excellent children (*exocha*) whose characteristic may not be common to all, yet the discrimination, in Plato's *Republic*, is based not on patrogenic descent (social, political, economic or other as, for instance, religious etc), but on personal ability and aptitude and on personal education and character. Plato's careful use, again, of the terms *eugeneia* and *ekgonos* (or *eugonos*) is evident,⁵⁵ as only the second refers to the patrogenic genetic descent, while the first refers to a personal noble, gentle and polite *character*, that fundamental distinguishing personal characteristic of justice which he discusses at length, in a comparative way, in Bks VIII-IX of the *Republic*⁵⁶.

The Platonic leader, as a "philosopher-king", does not seem to be, despite the traditional interpretations, a *particular* individual raised specifically from childhood in order - and with the expressed intention - to fill the role of a "king"⁵⁷ (as it has been the case even in many quasi-democratic: contemporary - as well as in ancient and medieval - dynastic monarchies)⁵⁸. Philosopher-king, as it may rather easily be discerned in a careful and objective reading of the text, could any person raised as any other intelligent child and educated well, along with many others. If there is a "birthright", it is precisely that on the basis of their intellectual abilities and motivated character to pursue their studies to the end, all children have the right and could equally be possible future leaders of society. The philosopher-king is first and foremost, an intellectual and educational leader as a "philosopher" and it is only a consequence that he may also be a political leader as a "king"⁵⁹. According to Plato's *Republic*, neither the political power or the royal throne is a "birthright", nor the educational favorable prospects or the eventual graduation. The only criterion of the philosopher-king seems to be his personal excellence (*aretê hekastou*).

Nor, evidently, is the philosopher-king a leader because he is, in his outward and public image, phenomenally or rhetorically charismatic, as it was the case with the Sophist politician who would be elected, as Plato relates, because he would charm, seduce and hypnotize the unconscious and uncritical crowds who "would clap and applaud until the rocks ring"⁵⁹. In Plato's view, the decorous and genteel external and projected appearance, rhetorical or physical, does not make a true leader. As Plato discusses it in Bk X, the true leader must be primarily an ethical agent (a *critês*), not a theatrical actor (a *hypocrites*) and this ethical characteristic applies to all the citizens (*pantes hoi politai*) as members of the true *demos* in the *polis*. According to Plato, it is precisely because of his gnoseological humility and nobility and his ethical honesty and sincerity, a truly gentle-person with dignity and integrity, that such a person would be elected or selected (drafted or compelled, if need be) by the people themselves to be their leader⁶⁰. It is firstly because "he leads well himself...in his own constitution"⁶¹ that he can lead society as a whole in its constitution. All the intelligent children would then be equally well educated and the leader would be, in the end, one of them. Anyone is a leader, who knowledgeable and responsible as he is, decides and acts first personally for himself.

Leadership, for Plato, does therefore not seem to be a "birth-right", either hereditary, because of idolized ancestry or random, because of unformalized sameness⁶². Leadership is grounded in the personal potential of each and every one (*heis, hekastos*). In the Socratic Plato's pedagogical scheme, all children (regardless of ancestry) with abilities and motivations (and not in any frenzied de-streaming) would be well educated, in public schools and on public funds, to as far and for as long as both their abilities and motivations allow and permit them to pursue their studies⁶³. And this personal potential applies to women, as well as to men in preparation for governing and administrative positions, including those of political and military leadership⁶⁴. These children (whose qualities, as Plato points out, are, nevertheless, noticeable at first from early childhood and then noticed in the first years of study) would be well led as children (*agôgê*) in order to lead well later as adults (*agêgoi-agein*). Plato's view is, epigrammatically and to the point, that the better educated as children, the better leaders as adults. Thus, they would be the future intellectual leaders and, elected from amongst them, they would also be the political leaders since the latter should come from the ranks of the *philosophically well* educated people⁶⁵ rather than from the ranks of the most manipulative of minds and hearts. The leader's erudition must not exclusively be rhetorical and oratorical (*dêmêgorikos* and *dikanikos*), but also axiological (logical and ethical) and gnoseological (ontological and metaphysical). For Plato, this is the true meaning and basis of *agôgê* and

hêgesia (*agein* and *hêgeisthai*) and, hence the true meaning of *pedagôgia* and *demagôgia*⁶⁶.

In Plato's *polity*, in regard to the *archôn-basileus*, not only is it not then a case of rulership, but even the leadership is not therefore a "birthright". If indeed, *sub iudice* and *ceteris paribus*, political "power" is already by birthright the domain of a particular individual, then the question arises as to how can Plato state, without being inconsistent, that such a "king" be "compelled" to that power by the people who would be already his own subjects and subordinates. Moreover, the fact seems to be that Plato's *archôn-basileus*, since he is elected or selected by the people on the basis of his character and his ethos, not only is not enthroned or appointed to power (*kratos*) on the basis of a birthright (a power which is nonetheless in the hands of the electing people), but even when selected as leader in office he is not placed in that office "for life". It is rather evident that the character and ethos of a person imply, in Plato's Socratic sense, a re-examination and a re-election to office. Furthermore, the *archôn-basileus* cannot be a sole leader, a monarch (or "anarch" or oligarch) which is the characteristic of the rejected tyrant⁶⁷. The plural *hoi basilês philosophisôsi* and *hoi philosophoi basileusôsi* is rather clearly implying a multiplicity of leaders. Yet, even if one may interpret it as implying a diversity of societies, still the constant use of the plural *archontes*, and specifically in the case of the *archontes te kai dêmos*, makes clear the plurality of leaders in one and the same society and their implied mutual equality. The probable interpretation (or the possibility) of the philosopher-king being the *primus inter pares* as a *kubernêtês* is an equivalent office to a prime-minister's.

If this interpretation is correct, the Platonic leader would not be elected or selected on what he would promise to do in a well organized and sophisticated campaign, or to accomplish in a seizure of power by might, nor on what he has possessed by hereditary ancestry or acquired by birthright. The Platonic leader would be elected or selected only on what he is by virtue of his personal dignity and integrity. Plato's notion of axiocratic and aristocratic leadership of the philosopher-king is based on his being, rather than his having. It is his personal philosophical disposition and education which are, according to Plato, the essential characteristics of the true leader. Yet, despite the fact that Plato consecrates the core of the *Republic* (as well as many other Dialogues) on the specific sense of the leader's philosophical disposition and education, devoting a considerable space in contrasting it to the 4th c. prevalent Sophistic notions, the answer to this question continues to remain contested and controversial. Plato's notion of "philosophy" and the consequent implication of "philosophical education" along with the connected notions of "idea" and "excellence", notions related to the question of

"leadership" in the expression of the "philosopher-king", not only remain the crucial question they have always been. They also equally retain in our contemporary utilitarian society their "para-doxical" aspect of which Plato was well aware⁶⁸ in his own contemporary society.

Within this philosophy of leadership, the specific and complete education of the future leader is fundamental in Plato's *polity* and subsequent *political* society; education and leadership are connate and related activities. And, since all the children are possible future intellectual and political leaders, education must be open to all. This is what Plato means when he states that all children's education would be in the state's care⁶⁹. Yet, as the abilities to lead and govern are not always common property (or the property of the "average individual"), so too not all individuals *qua* individuals are educable at least all the way to the final philosophical dialectical level. To consider that everyone is educable, as the Sophists claimed in their societal levelness and uniformal sameness, and in their stark training to rhetorical competencies, seems to be, in Plato's consideration, a mere illusion. For him, there seem to be degrees and limits of "educability". Certainly, by *human* nature, all humans are educable (of the "boy" in *Meno*). Nevertheless, by *personal* nature, not all are⁷⁰. Human ability and personal activity are distinct. Yet, each and every human being is good at something on a personal basis (*hekastos*)⁷¹; that is the personal human integrity and dignity (*axia-agein*). That all *should* be educated is, in Plato's view, imperative (and on public funds), that all *would* succeed, and definitely all the way to the dialectical level, is a clear deception since, aetiologically, some have the ability to learn while others do not (*eumathês ê dusmathes, anxious paideuseôs*)⁷². Mass education - especially for the sake of the "fee" as it was the case of the Sophistic scholastic enterprise - seems to have, according to the Socratic Plato, certain limits both institutionally and academically before it leads to the opposite result, namely to mass illiteracy. In leveling all the educational conditions and lowering school requirements and standards to the lowest common denominator in order that all graduate, society does not advance true equality, nor good education. By subsidizing with public funds those who lack all motivation to study or ability to learn for the sole reason of claiming scholastic accreditation, society perpetuates mass illiteracy and hubristic deception; in teaching the twisting of logic and truth, society destroys true education and ends in self-destruction. According to Plato, this notion of mass education may lead, to that *apaideusia* which he discusses at length in Bk VII of the *Republic* as well as in *Meno* and to that *kakê paidagôgia* and *anarchikê demagôgia* he attributes to the Sophistic "flattery" (*kolakeia*) both in school education (as in the case of *Meno*) and in state governance (as in the case of the *Republic*)⁷³. According to Plato, it is fundamental that a democratic societal polity and successful policy need and demand self-conscious and

responsible people who are well educated and well informed, otherwise true democracy does not work. Yet, he also emphasizes that true education must not be considered as an equivalent to a mere graduation.

As it may be ascertained in the *Republic*, in Plato's consideration the educable and educated person - and it is important to note again that this is on a personal basis and not on a socio-economic class level - fulfils the learning and apprenticing conditions as mental cultivation and erudition before he is considered a true leader, either intellectual or political. First, the "educable" person has to have and to manifest, at the beginning of his studies as a child, the desire to study, the love of learning, the motivation to work, that is to say the ability and the dedication implied in the *philia* of the Platonic sense of "philosophy"⁷⁴. Secondly, the "educated" person has to have reached, at the end of his studies as an adult, the consciousness of the Socratic ignorance and the pursuit of further research implied in the *sophia*. These are the fundamental conditions which, for Plato, are absent in the Sophistic education and leadership which, as he laments, "the crowds call wisdom"⁷⁵. The end of education is the wisdom of knowing oneself, that is to say the realization of limitations implied in the "Socratic" notion of *sophia*, that "human" wisdom which he elaborates in Bks V-VII and in the *Apology*⁷⁶.

Plato's notions of education and philosophy do not coincide with either the Sophistic or, for that matter, the Pre-Socratic ones. For him, true education, in contradistinction to the Pre-Socratic view, is not restricted only to an "instruction" into the *factual* information of a technical know-what⁷⁷, nor in contradistinction to the Sophistic practice of his time, can be restricted only to a "training" into the *artifactual* techniques of a rhetorical know-how⁷⁸. Exclusively it is neither *pragmatognôsia* nor *technognôsia* (knowledge of the facts or the techniques), it is neither absolute *epistemic* certainties nor relative *rhetorical* competencies. For the Socratic Plato, *paideia* means, ultimately and fundamentally, *autognôsia* (the "second navigation")⁷⁹, a necessary foundational condition for the meaningful - and comprehensive - attainment of true *pragmatognôsia* and *technognôsia*. It is on this self-knowledge that Plato's *Academic* curriculum, in its meaning and its goal, is based.

In the *Republic* as in *Meno*, contrasting his notions of philosophy and education to the Sophistic ones, Plato tries to make clear that, in this sense, treated as an individual, the Sophistic learner is simply trained, let alone instructed and informed, while the true *learner*, treated as a person, should rather be educated, cultivated and formed. A Sophistic individual is trained in *responsive* attitudes and *reactive* aptitudes to external stimulative commands⁸⁰, whether social or natural, while the Platonic person is educated in *responsible* attitudes and *creative* aptitudes to internal metaphysical

demands. A Sophistic individual is trained in technical skills and habitual mechanical competencies of the pragmatic and practical rhetorical victories⁸¹, while the Platonic person is elevated to critical and dialectical thinking and reasoning of the theoretical explanatory principles (*archai*)⁸². In the first case, in Plato's perspective, there is not even a transmission of knowledge, let alone the transformation of it which is supposed to be the *telos* of education. In the first, we have uncritical positive statements and fictional "poetry" - destructive, since it is hedonistic⁸³ - which bring *apaideusia*. In the second case we have critically self-examined and cross-examined interrogative research (*anazêtêtikê aporia*) and constructive poetry⁸⁴ which bring what Plato calls the true *paideia*. It is only those who have attained the second who are, in Plato's view, the true *epaiontes* and who can therefore be *archontes*. *Paideia*, as Plato says in the *Laws*, is "the attraction and the direction of children towards the correct reasoning"(hê *tôn paidôn holkê and agôgê pros ton orthon logon*)⁸⁵, a "correct reasoning" which, as "excellence" (*aretê*) is the opposite of the Sophistic "rationalization" (by twisting thought and truth) in order to persuade and convince the adversary about anything. This is why Socrates considers that he was not well educated on "excellence" by Prodicos, and nor was Meno by Gorgias, in spite of their teachers' "claim to professing education"⁸⁶.

True education not only implies the love of learning on the part of the child (*pais and*, hence, *paideia*), but, as in the case of the true *learner*, it also implies the "love of the child" on the part of the true *educator* (and not "of the salary", *misthon*, as he stresses in *Meno*)⁸⁷, something that Plato does not see in the Sophistic *teacher*⁸⁸. It implies a genuine *paedophilia* (as opposed to the *paederastia*)⁸⁹ in the unloaded sense of the true educational concern for, and care of, the child (*philia*), the sharing of one's knowledge and wisdom, that concern which is a disinterested dedication of teacher to student without the Sophistic financial (or worse, *erotic*) self-interest (*hêdonistikon xumpheron*). This is the fundamental distinction and differentiation that Socrates tries (not without difficulty, as history has shown) to make in the *Symposium* between Diotima's "love of *wisdom*" (proven logically and mythically) and the other interlocutors' views on "love" which cover (proven rhetorically) all the sexual references. It is the same dedication that Plato sees also in the true *demagogy* Pedagogy, for Plato, is a didactic and edifying "love affair" in the *scholê* between the scholar leader (*agein*) and the studious pupil (*agôgê*), between the *didaskalos* and the *pais*. In exactly the same way, true "demagogy" should be an advisory and uplifting "love affair" in the *polis* between the political leader (*agein*) and the demotic adults (*agôgê*), between the *politikos* and the *politês*, between the *archôn* and the *demos*. The true pedagogue or the true demagogue, by being first and foremost a logical *mustagôgos*, must be an ethical *psychagôgos* and a political *synagôgos* (both civil and civic) who

would uplift the personal character and bring the persons together by initiating them into the mysteries of the *orthos logos* of true *paideia*.

In regard to the education and leadership of the "philosopher-king", the paradox of the question is related to the notions of Philosophy and Kingship, both of which, in Plato's educational curriculum and political system, acquire and retain a specific meaning which not only must be noticed, but must also be seriously taken into account.

Plato's educational system and curriculum in the *Republic* is not altogether incongruent or unknown to our contemporary Western societies, nor does his educational theory seem to be inconsistent in itself or utopic compared to ours. Indeed, today's Western world follows at least the skeletal formality of his system, although it may have dismissed the essence of his theory⁹⁰. In this sense, not only is his system the same quadripartite one which is in fact present and acceptable today, but also his curriculum is distributed in exactly the same way. In addition to the Primary and the Secondary levels, Plato's system proposes also, for the first time in history in this explicit way, the Tertiary and the Post-Graduate levels which are still in place 25 centuries later. The basic Primary education of reading and writing would be available to all in the community (i.e. including merchants, farmers etc)⁹¹ which, taken for granted as it had been in practice all along and everywhere in the Ancient Greek world, is not analyzed nor discussed in detail in the *Republic*. Yet, it is necessary for the basic functioning of a democratic society. It is the Secondary Education of Letters and Athletics ("music and gymnastics" in his terms) that Plato discusses at length and in detail (with his critical analysis of all his ethical and aesthetic reservations to the "literary and plastic arts") in Bks II-III⁹². This level of education, although equally expected from, and available to all who desire to pursue their studies, would also prepare the "civil servants" (the "guardians" and "auxiliaries", in his terms). Although they may not have been needed in the rather perfect small *polis* (*telea polis*)⁹³, are nevertheless necessary in a fastidious and insolent larger society (*tryphosan polin*)⁹⁴, civil servants who include the technocratic and bureaucratic civic functionaries as well as the military and police forces personnel. The Tertiary Education of Logic and Sciences in our contemporary terminology ("arithmetic" and "geometry" in Plato's)⁹⁵ is discussed in detail in Bk VII⁹⁶. This post-secondary level would also be open and available to all who desire, since there are no admission limitations or restrictions (scholastic or other) mentioned in the text, but, as Higher schooling, would also prepare the higher administrators and governors.

It must be observed that even this Tertiary Education is not sufficient for the true philosopher, the principal leader (*archôn*) who would incidentally be,

qua philosopher, elected "king" (*basileus*). The Mastery of Arts and Sciences (*technas kai epistêmas*⁹⁷, that is to say Logic and Geometry, is only a "prelude" (*prooimion*), as he says, for the Dialectical level⁹⁸. Necessary but not sufficient, this Mastery still needs the Highest Education, the Philosophical "second navigation"⁹⁹, which becomes a requirement for the true philosopher-leader. The Mastery of Arts and Sciences is certainly a prerequisite for the Platonic Philosophical Dialectics, but it is at this last level that one realizes and reaches the consciousness of ignorance and consequently starts "researching", that final but critical step of *zêtêsîn* and *pragmateian*¹⁰⁰. What Plato's philosophical dialectics mean and imply is fundamental in the understanding of his thought in general and his political thought in particular.

This stage of research implies not only the consciousness of the unknown, nor only the desire to search for what has not yet been known, but in addition, the desire to search over again what has already been known and accepted so far as true and certain¹⁰¹. For Plato, the dianoetical concept (*ennoia, horismos*), mathematical as it may be, can always be re-questioned and re-examined since it never exhausts the *idea*. Everything known is subject to be re-conceived and re-defined. Unlike Aristotle, for whom only the ethical "values" are undefinable¹⁰², Plato makes it clear in his notion of *idea*, that all "values", logical as well as ethical and aesthetic, are ultimately undefinable. All *onta*, physical as well as political, are constantly re-defined since no definition can ever exhaust the *ontôs onta (idea)*. Unlike Aristotle, who equates the objective extra-mental *idea* to the subjective mental concept (*horismos*) once, through its abstractive power, the mind has conceived and defined *to on* and unlike the Sophists for whom the *idea* is purely subjective and relative mental entity¹⁰³, for Plato *idea* is neither a conceptual entity (mental and subjective), nor is it ever exhausted in the concept. The *idea* is the objective *reference* of the concept, the metaphysical "ontically ontic" reference of which the ontological understanding is only an approximation. Unlike both the Sophistic phenomenism and Aristotle's ontology, Plato opens to the metaphysics of the *ontôs on*. The concept never exhausts the idea and this is what the Platonic Socrates makes clear only a few lines before making his "paradoxical" statement¹⁰⁴. This is also the implication in the Platonic critique of the Sophistic notions of "knowledge" and "wisdom". And, according to this *Platonic* Dialectics (which must not be fused with the Dialectics of any other philosopher), no one who has not first mastered the Arts and Sciences would grasp the meaning of further re-search implied in the Platonic sense of Philosophy as the consciousness of ignorance in front of the *idea*. Besides his aporetic, zetetic and heuristic re-examination¹⁰⁵, Plato's *conditional entrance* requirements to the Academy (*oudeis ageômetrêtos eiselthêtô*) and his *conditional* scientific methodology (*hypothetikon... pros to anhypotheton*)¹⁰⁶

mean and imply exactly that. The Arts and Sciences, both pure and applied¹⁰⁷, are the mathematical achievements of the *dianoia*, i.e. the conceptual understanding (*horismos*) of the factual finite beings through the real numbers (*fa onta*) attained by the intelligence (*dianoia*), however, according to Plato (despite the usual interpretations) even this dianoetical mathematical achievement does not provide ultimate cognitive certainty. This is what the knower realises at this stage of his education and he starts *philo-sophizing*, i.e. striving through the conditional *horismos* (the dianoetical *hypothesis*) in order to approach, by participatory approximation (*methexis*), the unconditional idea (noetical *anhypotheton*). True Philosophy, over and above the tertiary level, is the dialectical "opening" by the *noesis* towards (*pros*)-and "vision" of (*horan*)- the ultimate "objective limit" and the "ideal infinity" of beings (*ta ontôs onta*). Wisdom is to realize the limitations of knowledge. This search, implied in the *philia*, is always "visioning" what is beyond the known (the Platonic *eidōs*), yet the search implied in the *sophia* is not and cannot be beyond the unknowable (the Platonic *idea*). It is important to notice, that for Plato, as there is a fundamental gnoseological difference between the dianoetical *horismos* and the noetical *idea*, there is also a fundamental epistemological difference between the *eidōs* and the *idea*¹⁰⁸. The ontological concept of the beings (*ta onta*) opens, in the post-tertiary level, to the metaphysical being of the very same beings (*ontôs onta*), opening which provokes and invokes as well as challenges and invites the true philosopher to research.

That is why true Philosophy is a *metaksu*, i.e. the Platonic *orthe doxa* is "between" the relativistic *doxa* of the Sophists and the absolutistic *epistēmē* of the Pre-Socratics¹⁰⁹ and of Aristotle. This re-search therefore implies "excellence": *arete* and *aien aristēuein*. Claiming to have reached the final and definitive answer on anything, as it is done by both the Pre-Socratics and the Sophists alike in their respective notion of "wisdom", is considered, by Plato, excessiveness and arrogance (*hubris*) in the ignorance of ignorance (cf. the first two steps in the Cave). The Platonic Dialectics (result of the concrete "dialogue" between the I and the Thou of the interlocutors who, together, search for the Truth in their "We") is an "eternally open road turned towards" (*pros*) Truth, towards the Really Real, towards the Idea, towards the reflexive faculty of self-consciousness (*[dialektikēn]... poreian...pros alētheian, pros ousian, pros idean, pros noēsin*).¹¹⁰ In the conscious realization that, although irresistible, ultimate and final, truth is also conceptually (cognitively) inaccessible, a realization which literally makes both possible and meaningful what has since been called "Re-search" (*aporein* and *anazētan, erōtan* and *hereunan*, etc.). Plato's Socratic *heuristic method* is opposed to the Sophistic *eristic technique*¹¹¹, his hypothetico-deductive is not the Aristotelian or Pre-Socratic categorical one. Thus, the true philosopher is a man of vision without

being a visionary or a dreamer (*ouk onar, hōs nun..*)¹¹²; he is a man who researches for *eutopia* without losing from sight its *outopia*¹¹³. This is why Plato, in the *Republic*, proposes only a "conceptual model" of what he considers, on critical examination and argumentation, the "best" society within the human possibilities, since he is conscious that the "ideal" is beyond any conceptualization, let alone realization¹¹⁴. In fact, precisely because he is the man of vision, this philosopher-leader is the most realistic, since having "looked" at the height of the *idea*, he realizes his own human limits and imperfections. This philosopher can be a leader (intellectual and political) since, having reached the *vision* of the invisible beyond the visible, he *lives* the visible hither the invisible; he knows how to live better (*bion.. tō onti plousios*) without staying and living either side in its exclusion¹¹⁵. Yet, a Sophistic society would "laugh at him" and try to "kill" him if he is asked to lead it as a man of thought and of action¹¹⁶.

Having gone not only further than the rhetorical level of persuasive opinion into the logical level of evidence and proof of the "educated opinion" (*orthē doxa*), but also further than the physical level of the scientifically known (*onta*), and thus opening beyond into the metaphysical unknown of the "really real"(idea) - both in the realization of his epistemic and political limitations.¹¹⁷ The "true" philosopher is, for that reason, the "best" qualified to lead and govern as a man of vision and foresight as well as a man of character and ethos. Far "better", according to Plato, than the "present corrupted" politicians (*fas nun diaphthoras*)¹¹⁸ with their rhetorically¹¹⁹ persuasive political "promises" to the unaware and uncritical "applauding" crowds¹²⁰. Arts and Sciences are providing the explanation of the phenomena, while Philosophy is providing the explanatory principles (*archê*). If on the one hand, the Sciences (dianoetically logical and mathematical) make a person, in his *pragmatognosia*, master of cosmos as "order" and of the universe as "unity" of all the things, it is much more fundamental, on the other hand, that Philosophy (noetically dialogical and dialectical in the Socratico-Platonic sense) makes a person, in his *autognōsio*, master of himself as *human* in both his abilities and his limitations, in that *human* wisdom of the *Apology*. Dialectical education is not, therefore, exclusively a training in technical proficiencies and competencies for effective but thoughtless communicative purposes in the Sophistic utilitarian sense.¹²¹ It is not only a skillful expertise or dexterity for mechanistic calculative purposes in the Sophistic managerial sense; it is, instead, the additional self-consciousness and self-knowledge of cognitive abilities and limitations in the Socratic spirit of *ouden oida* and *gnōthi sauton*. This Socratic reflexive self-consciousness, as well as reflective consciousness of the external world makes one be, precisely because of that, a person of excellence. As such then, he is the best leader of himself and, because of that, indicated and elected to lead the *others* as well (*aretê*,

aristos, arestos). This philosopher, then becomes the *basileus* who, as a man of education and culture (in the denoted Greek sense of term *basileus*)¹²², leads rather than rules society, governs rather than manages its affairs proposes rather than imposes its legislation. The "true" philosopher, as a man of "service" (*diakonia*)¹²³ rather than of "utility" (*ôphelia*), is precisely for that matter, the most appropriate to lead both intellectually and politically - both pedagogically and demagogically - the people who have chosen him as "the best amongst themselves". This seems to be the meaning and the implication of the "philosopher-king" and its referential reality. Thus, if as a philosopher in the sense of being turned towards the *idea*, the intellectual leader must be a man of vision, as a political leader ("king") he must be a statesman.

If there are any essential characteristics of the true philosopher-leader that Plato presents and discusses in the *Republic*, they are indeed the following three: the dignity for, the mastery of and the polity in *oneself*.

In Bk VI¹²⁴, before discussing the Higher Education, Plato concludes the discussion of the application of the simile of the Cave by saying that the true philosophical leaders are not "lovers of leading"(leading) (*mê erastas tou archein*) since they have a "better life to live" (*bion ameînô tou politikou*) - that of research for truth - and they are indeed the "really rich, not in gold, but in good and humble life which makes one rich in happiness" (*hoi to onti plousioi...*)¹²⁵. Because of their *dignity* for themselves, these people not only would not campaign for political office, but they would not even have any intention or ambition for it. Since they would not submit their candidacy and would not campaign for office, these philosophers would have to be elected and drafted as leaders by the consciously deciding people. Election, etymologically, implies that a person is chosen consciously and knowingly, after a well-informed decision, by his electors since he has been considered, critically and "syncritically" (comparatively), the best to lead and govern.¹²⁶ Yet as Plato tries to emphasize, that was not the case in the 4th c. Sophistic Athens (*hoi ge anterastai machountai*). If the person has not submitted his candidacy (as the true philosopher would not have), then he is drafted or compelled to lead and govern¹²⁷. It is important to notice that this person who has gone up, after a long process, out of the cognitive "cave"(*anabas anô*) is asked in fact to educate the people who apparently have not yet realized their cognitive limitations, i.e. the sophisticatedly-minded people who take their opinion (*doxa*) as wisdom (*sophia*): the leader, therefore, is fundamentally an educator¹²⁸. It is equally important to notice that, in this sense, this compulsion appears to be neither a violent act nor a coercive threat; since it is because of his excellence, this person is indeed invited by the people without being enticed, begged without being bribed.

In Bk IX¹²⁹, in comparing the despotic tyrant with the true leader in regard to excellence and happiness (*aretê kai eudaimonia*), Plato describes the tyrant as a flattering individual who is the most "abject slave" since, not being the master of himself, he is a slave to himself first and, as such, he is to others as well¹³⁰. This notion of slavery here is clearly taken in the existential and ethical sense rather than the social; the tyrant is the "abject slave" (*tô ontô doulos*) because he is neither self-conscious nor self-responsible since he survives on flattery and subservience. The tyrant is the politician who, instead of leading, follows the crowds since he relies and depends on "pleasing" them. Inviting his interlocutor, as a final judge and elector, the Platonic Socrates infers, in the name of all electors, that the best to be a leader, is therefore the one who is first the master of himself¹³¹.

Finally, at the end of the discussion on the personal characters and the societal characteristics in Bk IX¹³², Plato presents the leader as a man of principle (the *archôn* as the man of *archê*); he is the best leader since he is governed by the principle of perfection (*beltistos... en hautô to theion archon*). Obviously, this does not mean that he is perfect nor does it imply that he claims to be such: Indeed perfection (*to theion*) is governing in him as a principle; this person is the best precisely because, realizing his imperfection, he strives for perfection; his excellence is exactly that, in front of the perfection, he recognizes and admits his own imperfection and tries, both intellectually and morally, for his own betterment. It is humility and effort with their ameliorative effect that characterize him. It is important to notice here, firstly, that the best leader is a person of principle; secondly, that he finds this principle in himself; and thirdly, that he may be each and every human being¹³³. For both child and adult (cf. Bks II-III and X), the principle is one's own *polity*, as it is for society altogether, once one becomes self-conscious and self-responsible¹³⁴. This person then, is his own guardian and leader and, since he leads himself, he is *free*¹³⁵. This freedom (*eleutheria*), does not refer to the civil liberties nor, even more, to the civic liberalities (cf. *eleutheriotês* which is, in fact, *aneleutheria*)¹³⁶, but to the personal existential freedom of being self-conscious and self-responsible, the two fundamental and necessary conditions for a true, as Plato conceives it, democratic society¹³⁷. Both freedom and slavery ("abject slave") are used in the *Republic* in the existential and ethical sense rather than the social¹³⁸. Without this existential personal freedom, the individual civil liberties are groundless and they easily degenerate into licence and permissiveness, in which case society as a whole turns from ochlocracy to anarchy, as Plato tries to prove in Bks VIII-IX. In the case of a truly free person, the "entire soul" is involved¹³⁹ as he looks for his own inner constitution to guard and govern himself both in his private and public life¹⁴⁰. In this way, the good society and its polity is established, first, in each and every one's own personal state (*tê heautou polei*).

What then characterizes the Platonic person - especially if one becomes the leader of society - is that he is, first and foremost, the leader of himself with his ethical and political *paideia*, and thus truly *open* in his relationships with others. The notion of openness to others (*allêlois*) is crucial in the Platonic conception of person and community¹⁴¹. Plato's ethical and political agent-whether political *archôn* or not - must be an *allocentric* person in his exercise of justice (*hê de dikaiosunê homonoian kai philian [en allêlois parexeij]*)¹⁴², as opposed to the egocentric self-interested individual (*to hautô xumpheron*)¹⁴³; and a society which is formed of such allocentric persons has no difficulty in finding a true societal leader. The existentially egocentric, gnoseologically egotistic and, consequently, ethically egoistic individual is closed unto himself, and thus slave to his own hedonistic libertarian interests; and the society which is composed of such individuals, instead of being an open society, as Popper claims, is in fact, rather a very closed society.

By way of concluding and with the risk of useless reverberation, the two main points may be made once more and underlined. Although his *telos* was to see his *Kallipolis* with its *philosophical* leader and his *Academic* education be established in his own Athens, Plato was not however, disillusioned that this was not going to be the case. Of course Plato was well aware that his proposal would make the Sophistic society of his time and obviously, the Sophists of all times to the time of Popper "laugh at him" (*gelôti*) and ridicule him¹⁴⁴. But, after all, Plato states clearly and repeatedly that his *Politeia*, as any constitutional social contract (*xumphônian*), is primarily "conceptual" (*logo*) and even this conceptual constitution which he sketched in this Dialogue (*oikizontes polei te en logois*) is only an example and model which may not be found anywhere on earth. Yet, as he closes his discussion before the final "artistic" recapitulation and "mythical" conclusion of Bk X, he makes the crucial point that what is far more important is not whether it has been or it is to be found, as such, anywhere on earth, let alone in the Athens of his time (*ouden eite pou estin eite estai*), but is the very attempt and action to establish the best society (*an praxeien*).¹⁴⁵ It is this personal *praxis* which is the foundational act of the best society, it is the act that each and every one, on the condition of course that one sincerely desires it (*ethêlêsei pratein*), establishes first in himself¹⁴⁶. What counts is this personal *praxis* and that is why Plato not only repeats it constantly but also closes the dialogue on *polity* with that admonition, again in first person plural so that he include himself, of *eu prattômen*.

The second point is that the Platonic aretology, obviously not being the same as the Sophistic one, is not that of Popper's either nor Bentham's and Mill's. That the notion of *excellence* is central in Plato's thought is rather evident; its constant examination and emphasis in the *Republic* as well as in

Meno is only one apodictic attestation. Evidently on his notion of *aretê*, it is only a strong and fecund inference that the *polis* founded and populated by the best persons (*bellistas phuseis*), i.e. peopled by *aristous politas* and led by *aristous politikous*, would be a good state and a good society (*ariston kratos* and *aristê polis*). In Plato's aretology, the ethical and political excellence is that special and heroic *effort* in striving for the best (*ariston*), an excellence (*aretê*) which, as he says, is a "great struggle" (*megas agôn*)¹⁴⁷ - indeed he would have called it a Martial struggle (*Arês-aretê*) - and an eternal challenge [*aien aristuein*]. Yet, that challenge to become good (*aristos*) in his ethos and character results in a person being "likeable" (*arestos*) to his own fellow-citizens and, because of his "value", to be asked to lead (*axia-agein*). It is only a consequence that he eventually be chosen and elected (*ex-ligere*) to be also a *political* leader, the leader of the *politas* in the *polis*¹⁴⁸. If the prospective leader had been encouraged as a child to "valorize" his natural abilities and dispositions and had been chosen as an adult for having recognized his human limits and personal limitations, it is a sign of the maturity of the society as such. And if this emphasis and choice of intellectual and moral excellence is what is meant by "aristocratic" and "elitist" (a constant insinuation, if not accusation, against Plato's educational and societal philosophy), Plato might not have any hesitation to accept the epithets and insist that a society (as well as each of its members) which looks towards and strives for educational and societal excellence, should be, in this sense, both aristocratic and elitist rather than not be; better be excellent in the sense of this aretetic challenge than mediocre; better be selective in the sense of gnostic and ethic choice than pedantic. For Plato, it seems to be far better choosing (*élire*, "elite") as a leader - both educational and societal - someone for his logical abilities and his ethical characteristics than drawing, by blind lot, anyone uneducated or unconscionable¹⁴⁹ for his rhetorical skillful persuasiveness and technical manipulative campaigning. For him, it is not the hypocritical modesty and pretentious religiosity that make the leader; nor is the good leader the one with an overt piety hiding a covert wily authoritativeness. The good leader is the one with sincere ethical authority (*ethos*) and personal values (*axia*) rather than the one with an appealing public image and individual self-interests. The art of leading and governing is more than the skillful amplification of polling rates before, and of voting numbers at, election time by "pleasing the gullible crowds". If elections, in choosing a person as leader, are supposed to be the result of the people's knowledgeable decision and responsible choice, then they are in fact, and must be, both "elitist" and "aristocratic"; these are, in this Platonic sense, the truly *democratic* elections. If, on the other hand, the terms "aristocratic" and "elitist" are taken to mean what these terms mean today with all the semantic and semiotic dust of the centuries since, then Plato seems to be the least of both.

Notes

1. A short version of this article was delivered on 3 August, 1998, at the Ninth International Symposium of Philosophy of the International Center of Philosophy and Inter-Disciplinary Research, Olympia, Greece.
2. Cf., for instance, *Rep.* 369c (*tō logo ex archês polin oikizein*); 743a-b. 471c-473c. In the *Republic*, Plato tries, as he says, to write a Societal Constitution, a social contract, or to establish its theoretical principles: the title *Politeia* denotes exactly that. Like any Constitution, Plato's begins on the theoretical level; once accepted and followed, then it is lived on the practical level, that praxis which, for Plato, is evidently fundamental (cf. his constant *eu prattōmen*). The factual realization never exhausts the theoretical constitution nor does the theoretical constitution ever approach the ideal (473a: ἀρ οίον τέ τιπραχθήναι ὡς λέγεται, ἡ φύσιν ἔχει πράξιν λέξεως ἥττον αληθείας ἐφάπτεσθαι...).
3. Cf., for instance, *Rep.* 371 b ff; 449a ff. This is the core of the *Politeia*. In the *Republic*, Plato does not try to establish 'The Ideal Society', which is humanly impossible (*epekeina*), but 'The Best Society' or 'Good Society' among the humanly possible ones: the *aristê*. In Plato, the terms *aristos* and *agathos* do not mean the same thing nor do they refer to the same reality. Cf. below. Cf. Plato's notion of *arete* and, hence, his notions of *aristos archōn* and *ariston kratos*.
4. Cf., for instance, *Rep.* 432b ff. The question of Justice is the object of discussion in the *Republic* since Justice, for Plato, is the basis of the 'best' Society (hence the subtitle: *hê peri dikaiou*).
5. This is, the case of the famous and controversial text in *Rep.* 473c ff. What Plato means by *philosophos* and *basileus* and what he means by *aristos* is the purpose of this paper.
6. Karl Popper is the most prominent or better known post-war critic of Plato's Political Philosophy with his *The Open Society And Its Enemies*, vol. I, *Plato*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1945 (references to Paperback, 1969). Yet others before him or after him have been as forceful as Popper has. Popper attacks Plato from a Sophistic Libertarian standpoint.
7. If we take that the actual 'dialogue' had taken place approximately in the late 420s (when Plato was still a child) and that the approximate date of the written 'Dialogue' is the 380s (when Plato was in his 40s)(cf A. E. Taylor, *Plato, The Man and his Work*, Meridian Books, N. Y., 1963, pp. 16 ff; pp.263-64), then the Socratic critique had been a critique of the Sophistic Society which had already been in place - and therefore lived and tried - for some time and obviously, the Platonic attempt for its change came almost 50

years after its establishment. Nonetheless, that kind of society was to continue after Plato's death, to 317 BC.

8. Cf. *Epistle VII* 324a-326a.

9. Not only the *Republic* is theoretical, but by their nature all the Constitutions are. Cf. above.

10. In regard to Plato's affliction, cf. also Socrates's death.

11. That the Sophistic political situation is present in every page of the *Republic* is obviously clear and needs no detailed documentation here. However, it is constantly referred to in this article on the ground that ignorance or disregard, of the historical context (philosophical and intellectual, social and political) of the last quarter of the 5th c. and the first of the 4th necessarily leads to a misunderstanding of Plato's thought and writings (and Pericles's). The Thrasymachean thesis, as the central introductory position along with that of Cephalus and Polemarchus (Bk 1), is that which Socrates tries to study and obviously reject in the rest of the Dialogue. In the "luxurious society" (*truphōsan polin*] (372a ff) we find the implication of the individualistic hedonism of the Sophists; in the "corrupted society" of his time (487b-497a) and in the so-called "democratic society" which leads to the "tyrannical one" (555b-588a and ff), Plato is very explicit as he is, besides, in his critique of the *Sophistic* education and art (376e-398b-595a-608b). Pericles's lamentations in the *Epitaphios* (and in his "Plague Speech") are another strong reaction to the Sophistic philosophy of society (cf. *Peloponnesian War II*, 34-65 with Thucydides's remarks in #53).

12. Cf. *Epistle VII* 324a-326a. It must be emphasized that Plato had been against not only the Sophistic philosophy and politics, but also those of the 'Thirty' despite the fact that some of the 'Thirty' were his own relatives (and unlike some prevalent interpretations).

13. Plato's philosophy does not and cannot coincide entirely with that of Pericles. The philosophy of Pericles follows that of Anaxagoras (cf Plutarch, *Bioi*), while that of Plato, like Socrates', is not Anaxagorean (cf *Phaedo* 96a ff and the "*deuteron ploun*" 99e ff). Regardless of the fact of his Solonian biological descent, Plato's philosophy in general, and socio-political in particular, is rather closer to Solon's and Xenophanes's, a point whose discussion is, of course, out of the scope of this paper.

14. Unlike the prevalent interpretations, Plato's position is not against democracy as such, but against the Sophistic conception of democracy in its appropriation of the term. This Sophistic kind of democratic society is not obviously, in his eyes, the "best" polity nor is it a "true" democracy. The revival of democracy in modern times (17th c. AD onwards) was modeled and based on the Sophistic type (cf. Bentham's and Mill's) and, as a result of this

libertarian utilitarianism, Plato has often been seen as "anti-democratic" in his attack of "democracy" in Bk IX. However, a careful reading of Plato's text may lead to, and prove, a different conclusion which is the position taken in this article.

15. Cf. Popper's "Kantianism", *op.cit.* p.325. But Kant's Transcendentalism is only the generalization of the Sophistic Individual Ego into the Transcendental Ego in order to accommodate the scientific knowledge of his time (from Galileo's to Newton's), something which was impossible with the Sophistic individual subjectivism and relativism of the "persuasive opinion".

16. *Ibid*, chapter 7.

17. As one example, cf. *op.cit.* p. 123: "Those of us democrats...", i.e. in juxtaposition and opposition to Plato whom Popper considers as the enemy (or archenemy) of Democracy (cf. the title of his work). On the "sovereignty of the individual", cf. J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Introduction, in *Essential Works*, Bantam Books, NY., 1961, p. 263 : "Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign" (this is the "one very simple principle"; cf. on the individual liberty, utility and opinion in pp. 263-265 and cf. pp. 304 ff.

18. *Rep.* 555b-580a; cf. 579de.

19. Furthermore, there are many crucial Platonic terms which are translated or interpreted without the appropriate care (by Cornford, as well as by Popper), but the most important and fundamental ones are those of *eidōs* and *idea* (cf. below), terms which for Plato not only are distinct terms, but refer clearly to different realities and on which lies the foundation of the Platonic philosophy. In the English world, F.M.Cornford's *The Republic of Plato* (Oxford U. P., London, 1945) is the most influential among the translations as is Popper's among the interpretations. This perpetuated specific translation (and interpretation) has brought a permanent understanding of Plato's thought, understanding which may not correspond to the truth and the damaging influence of which is difficult to overcome.

20. Cf. *op. cit.* p. 12 1: "we need not worry about the precise meaning of these terms!" With this statement, paradoxically and unconsciously, Popper the libertarian appropriates that "the end justifies the means!"

21. Indeed, any translation is also an interpretation in the choice of words with their respective meanings and nuances.

22. Cf. *Rep.* 606e the term *diōikēsis*; cf. 462c: *arista diōikeitai*.

23. For instance, cf. 462b-463a: *koinōnia... pontes hoi politai... dêmos* (always opposed to *idiōsis...emon... ouk emon*; cf. *idiōsis dialuei... diaspa*).

24. Cf., for instance, *Rep.* 590d-591a.

26. For Aristotle's view, cf. *Politics* 1294a, 7: " ο, τι αν doxê topleioni merei tôn metechontôn tês politeias, tout' estin kurion " (cf.1293 b, 3: "esti gar hê politeia hôs hap lôs eipein mixis oligarchias kai dêmokratias"). Cf: also J.S. Mill, *On Liberty,op.cit.*, p. 258 : "The will of the people... practically means the will of the most numerous or the most active part of the people; the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves acceptable as the majority"(cf. above)(in this individualistic situation, it is the "majority of the individuals").
27. *Rep.* 445b-457b. It is important to note that Plato not only is not the "mysogynist" that he is often depicted to be, but is indeed the first to emphasize the equality of women as human persons and to insist on their right to be, constitutionally, in the leadership of society. Cf. also below.
28. Cf. *Rep.* 445b ff; cf. 466c (*gunaikôn koinônian tois andrasin*); cf. 462bc (*anthrôpos* as opposed to *idiotês* and *idiôsis*).
29. Cf. below on the notion of *eleutheria*.
30. I.e. "people" as opposed to "crowd".
31. I.e. rather than individually.
32. The sovereignty of the true *demôs* (people) as opposed to the Sophistic and Utilitarian "sovereignty of the individual". Cf. J.S. Mill, *op.cit.* (above).
33. It must be repeated that the Sophistic use of the term is, in Plato's consideration, only a misappropriation for the anarchic ochlocracy which replaced the true democracy in 429BC and which "democracy" Plato rejects in Bk VII of the *Republic*. In this Bk, therefore, Plato does not reject democracy as such, but what the Sophistic society of the 4th c. called "democracy". For Plato, as for Socrates before him, the true Athenian democracy ended with the death of Pericles. Cf above on Pericles in Thucydides's *Peloponesian War*, II, 60-64; cf. II, 53.
34. An example of the second singular is *Rep.* 580ab: "you as the final judge"(ΤΟι δη μοι... νυν ήδη ωπτερ ο διά πάντων κριτής αποφαίνεται) and 458c: "you are the legislator" (σύ ο νομοθέτης).
35. *Rep.* 494a: φιλόσοφον μεν άρα... πλήθος αδύνατον είναι.
36. Cf *Rep.* 475b; cf 474d-497d.
37. Cf..%?.580b-c.
38. Cf. *Rep.* 490e-494a.
39. Cf. *Rep.* 520a. Cf. 367e (*[hêmeis] oikizontes tèn polin... hêmeteron ergon... [hêmeis] eksanagazômen*).

41. The dictionaries give only the Aristotelian "definition" of the term "polity" as being the fundamental and the only one. Traditionally, reading Plato through the eyes of Aristotle or Plotinus has led most scholars to a Peripatetic or Neoplatonic understanding of Plato. This case of the term "polity" is only one among many others along with the most fundamental one, that of the *idea* (cf. above), which has proven to be a very detrimental one for the understanding of Plato.

42. Cf. Popper (*op.cit.* pp. 324-325), in reference to Plato, uses the descriptive epithets and terms "collectivist", "collectivistic ethics", "ethical collectivism", "distrust of common man", etc.

43. Plato makes a clear distinction between the *idiotês* and *hekastos* (or *heis*, *psychê*, *anthrôpos*, etc) terms which may be translated, respectively, with the terms "individual" and "person" (human). In Plato's use and reference of the two terms, one may easily notice the character and the characteristics of the *idiotês* (private individual) as egocentric and egoistic, unidentifiable and thus impersonal and anonymous, lost in and swayed by the *ochlos*, *plêthos*, *hoi polloi*. In contrast, the character and the characteristics of the *hekastos* as allocentric and altruistic, identifiable and, thus, personal and eponymous, part of and participant in the "true" *demos*. The *idiotês* is self-interested and selfish, *hedonistic*, the *hekastos* is self-conscious and self-master, *eudaimonistic*. The individual, therefore, can be flattered and also, as impersonal, can be represented; he debates (*logo-machein*) and applauds; he is an actor (*hypocritês*; cf the *kolakeia*). The person, on the other hand, is present and also, personally, a participant; he discusses (*dia-legesthai*) and decides; he is a "true" agent (*critês*; cf. the *eu prattômen*). Cf. the political implication of the *consent* in a participatory "true" democracy which Plato defends in the dialogical and direct discussion and decision in which the agent partakes personally and eponymously as opposed to the *consent* in a representative "democracy" of the Sophistic kind in the monological and indirect debates in which the individuals, lost in the impersonal and anonymous crowds, may be represented by any rhetorical flatterer. Cf. below.

44. Cf. *Rep.* 463a. Cf. 462b-463a on the *koinônia* as *arista politeuomenê polis oikei* and the *arista dioikeitai*. Cf. also 607 b sq. (*eu nomou menê polin*).

45. This is what Plato tries to make clear in Bks VIII and IX on the basis of what he had established in Bks V to VII.

46. *Rep.* 471c-502c (against Popper's interpretation in pp.122-123).

47. *Rep.*487b-497a. On the *sophistês*, cf. 491 b (*kakês paidagôgias*), 492a (*diaphtheiromenous tinas einai hupo sophistôn neous, diaphtheiromentas de tinas sophistas idîôtikous*), 495c (*anaxioi... anthrôpiskoi*), while on the *philosophos*, cf. 500cd (*kosmios te kai theios*), etc.

49. Cf. *Rep.* 519c-52 1 b. Cf. the famous passage in *Rep.* 473cd. The Platonic terms *basileusôsin* and *basilês*, must be translated with the words "to lead" and "leader" (or "to administer" and "minister") since they obviously do not mean "king" in our sense of the word and they are manifestly misleading the modern reader. Cf. below.
50. Cf. *Rep.* 489b; 490a and what follows 490e-497a.
51. Cf. *Rep.* 487b-497a and esp. 492b-d and 496a. Cf. 426cd.
52. Cf. *Rep.* 484e-485a (on the "excellence" and on the "innate disposition").
53. Cf. *op.cit.* P.325.
54. Cf. *Rep.* 374b: προς ὃ ἐπεφύκει ἕκαστος. Cf. 370ab (cf. below). Cf. ἕκαστος ἐφ' ὡ ἐτάχθη.
55. *Ibid.* P. 120.
56. Cf. *Rep.* 370ab: ἐννω γὰρ καὶ αὐτός εἰπόντος σου, ὅτι πρῶτον μὲν ἡμῶν φύεται οὐ πάνυ ὁμοίος ἕκάστῳ, ἄλλα διαφέρων τὴν φύσιν, ἄλλος ἐπὶ ἄλλον ἔργον πράξιν. The verb *phuetai*, obviously, does not denote the moment of "birth" (delivery), but the moment of "conception" (gestation) with one's particular personal essential characteristics.
57. Cf. *Rep.* 370ab, 445b-457b, 484a-487a.
58. Cf., for instance, *Rep.* 375a (*eugeneid*) and 459d, 461a, d, 508bc (*ekgonos*).
59. When Plato writes on *paidopoiiais* and he proposes that the *aristou.tais ristais syggignesthai... ekgona trephein*, with the terms *aristous-aristais* (or *phaulotatous-phaulotatais*) and *trephein* he implies an ethical rather than genetic sense.
60. The distinction must be made since the Greeks had the words: the *basileus*, for Plato, evidently is neither *anax* nor *tyrannos*. It must not be forgotten that Plato is even harsh on tyranny and the tyrant (Bk IX). The *basileus*, as the term was used during his time (473d: *hoi basilês te nun legomenoi*), denoted the minister responsible for educational and cultural ("religious": *hierôn*) affairs.
61. Cf. Popper was "knighted". Interestingly, the anti-Platonic Libertarian did not shy away from accepting the title of "lord" from none other than a hereditary monarch who claims a royal birthright.
62. Cf. *Rep.* 492b-d (in the context of the entire text on the "corrupted society of that time"): Cf. also the *Statesman* along with the *Sophist* of which it is a continuation.

60. If the leaders were either "elected" because of their individual rhetorically expert campaign and aesthetically external appearance or "drawn" by lot in a fortuitous and accidental way among any incidental and casual candidates (whether qualified or not, in the name of sameness) (cf. 519b: "uneducated" etc.), then those leaders not only would not necessarily be the "best" for society, but they would not even be "leaders" in the true sense of the word: they would in fact be, for the sake of the office, "pleasing followers" of the crowd's unconscious or uncritical whims and wills (cf. *Rep.* Bks VI and X), nor would it even be, in that case, a sign of true democratic "equality" (cf. below : equality is not synonymous to sameness).

61. *Rep.* 591e-592a (*en auto politeian... hêgeitai ameînô auton...*).

62. The Sophistic leveling-off and uniformization of all the individuals is not "equality" nor is it giving an equal opportunity to all. The Sophistic individuals are considered to be all the "same" like the grains of sand; unidentifiable and replaceable, *same* in mediocrity; the Platonic persons, on the other hand, are "equal" like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle: identifiable and irreplaceable, *equal* in axiocracy (in value and merit). The Sophistic and Neo-Sophistic view of education aims at giving the *same* (in the misappropriation of the term "equal") chance to everybody, bright or dull (with a "fee"; cf Plato's *Gorgias* and Aristophanes's *Clouds*) and reduces all to the lowest common denominator. The Platonic view, on the other hand, seems to make a distinction; first, that everyone (poor or rich) be given equal chance to education, but, second, only the bright would be seen to continue their studies to the fullness of their abilities without destroying much of proven value (one may insist here on: "everyone", as opposed to even "everybody" in which case the "body" implies a materialistic and hedonistic individual; see, in the last part of Bk X, 606e ff., the Platonic notions of *psché* and *physis* as opposed to the Sophistic ones).

63. There are different scholarly positions, on whether, according to Plato and Socrates, anyone is allowed to pursue his studies, depending on the conclusion of the philosophical relation of the Platonic to the Socratic thought. Some, like Popper and (his "student") I.F. Stone (*The Trial of Socrates*, Doubleday, N.Y., 1989), consider Socrates's thought just as wrong as that of Plato's. Others see a difference between Plato's thought and Socrates's and consider only Plato's wrong. On this last position, one example would suffice, that of W. Cragg (in *Interchange*, vol.2 1, no 3, OISE, Toronto, 1990): "The Socratic insight (corrupted by Plato in the pages of the *Republic*) that genuine knowledge is within the grasp of anyone who can be inspired to make the effort". We may notice that, according to Socrates, it "is within the grasp of anyone who can be inspired to make the effort", yet if our interpretation is correct, this seems to be Plato's view, as well in that very same *Republic*.

64. Cf. *Rep.* 445b-457b and especially 540c; cf 466cd.
65. This is the true etymological sense (in original Latin) of the terms "education" and "duke".
66. In view of the constant traditional reading of Plato, it may not be repetitive and tedious to underline, once more, that the terms must be taken in their original etymological sense of the *agôgê* of the children and the *agôgê* of the adults in which Plato uses them and not in the loaded meanings they acquired precisely because of the Sophistic abuse which Plato discusses in *Meno* and *Gorgias* as well as in the *Republic*.
67. Cf. *Rep.* 575a: *monarchos... anarchia kai anomia*.
68. Cf. *Rep.* 473c-e; 517a; 520c.
69. *Rep.* 457d ff.
70. Cf. the "boy" in *Meno* (82a ff) and cf. *Rep.* 370ab, 374c-e, 449a ff on personal nature and abilities.
71. Cf. the notion of ἑκατος ἐφ ὧ ἐταχθη.
72. *Rep.* 496a-e, 495c, 486c, 487a, 489e, 490c.
73. *Rep.* 491 e.
74. Cf. *Rep.* A76c ff. Cf. 475b: *ton philosophon soph/as phesomen epithumeten einai*. Cf. 476c ff.: *metaksu*. Cf. the notion of *philia* (of wisdom) in the teachings of Diotima in the *Symposium*.
75. *Rep.* 493a.
76. Cf. *Apol.* 20de and compare 21 b, 18b, 19b and 20a.
77. Cf. *Phedo* 95e ff (*peri phuseôs historian*).
78. Cf. *Protagoras* and Aristophanes's *Clouds*. Cf. also *Apology* and *Meno*.
79. *Phedo* 99d ff (*deuteron ploun*). Cf *Apology*.
80. To external stimuli in behaviouralistic and pragmatic responses. Cf. *Meno* 75cd: *tôn sophôn... kai eristkôn te kai agônistikôn* as opposed to *dialegesthai.. to dialectikôteron*.
81. Aristophanes's *Clouds* is very revealing (despite the obvious irony that the "Arch-Sophist" is represented by Socrates) along with Plato's Dialogues on Sophistic Education.
82. Cf. *Meno* 75c ff. "Archological": knowing the principles (*archai*).
83. Bks II-III and X; 607a-c.

85. Cf. Plato's critique of the arts and poetry in Bks II-III and X.
86. *Laws* 659d: ὡς ἄρα παιδεία μὲν ἐστ' ἢ παίδων ὀλκή τε καὶ ἀγωγή πρὸς τὸν ὕπο τοῦ νόμου λόγον ὀρθὸν εἰρημένον,... Cf. *Rep.* 536e-537a τὰ ἄλλα παίζοντας τρέφε... Cf. 536c etc.
87. *Meno* 95b, 96d.
88. *Meno* 90d.
89. Cf. *Gorgias* and *Symposium*.
90. In Plato, there is a clear distinction between *paederastia* and *paedophilia*. The use of the term "paedophile" is another misuse of a term in our days, along with so many like *demagogy* (one may also add *euthanasia* in the list), which leads to many misunderstandings. In this context, cf. the notion of "Platonic love" since Renaissance.
91. Although his system has been followed, his concepts of *philosophia* and *paideia* are missed or dismissed for the sake of the Sophistic ones.
92. *Rep.* 367e-372a.
93. Cf. 376c-412b.
94. Cf. 371 e; 372e: *he...alethine polis*. Plato makes this fundamental distinction; under these historical times and circumstances, the bureaucratic and technocratic administrations must at least be educated well.
95. Cf. 372c-e ff , i.e. hedonistic "as it is today" (*kai hoi nun echousi*)[cf. *truphê*].
96. What Plato means by "Arithmetic" is what is meant today by Logic as the logical thinking and reasoning applicable in all scientific knowledge; Plato's "Geometry" corresponds quite well to what is meant today by Sciences as the knowledge of the physical (and social) world. His admonition "*oudeis ageōmetrêtos*" implies the ignorant not only in geometry in the strict sense of the word, but ignorant in all sciences.
97. Cf. 521c-531c.
98. Cf. *Rep.* 533d.
99. Cf 531 cd: χρήσιμον μὲν ὄν... πρὸς τὴν τοῦ κάλου τε καὶ ἀλαθοῦ ζήτησιν... τὴν πραγματείαν καὶ οὐκ ἀνόητα πονεῖσθαι, εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἀνόητα... τοῦ προοιμίον... διαλεκτικὴν ταύτην τὴν πορείαν καλεῖς... μεταστροφὴν... ἐπαναγωγὴν.
100. *Phedo* (above). The emphasis by the different expressions of *orthos philosophountes* (82c), the *orthôs haptomenoi philosophias* (64a), the *pephilosophêkotes orthôs* (69b) makes clear that the Socratic philosophers,

once they have mastered the "natural history" (96a ff), take the "second navigation" (99d) and use the "hypothetical method" (*hypothésin*) which is the "dialectical method"(99d ff and *Rep.* 533c: *hê dialektikê methodos*).

100. *Rep.* 531 cd. Unlike Aristotle who wrote school manuals and textbooks (*egcheiridia*), Plato wrote scholarly treatises and monographs (*pragmateias*), albeit in dialogical style. Aristotle dealt mostly with factual information in a "scientific" way and in specific works. Plato dealt primarily, in a philosophical way with the explanatory principles and methods of science which applied on all phenomena.

101. Cf. 532b-541 b. The Platonic Dialectics should not be confused with the Parmenidian or the Heracleitian dialectics, nor with the Sophistic or the Aristotelian. Would that Ph.D. stand for "Philosophical Dialectics"?

102. Cf. *Nic. Eth.* A1, 1094 15-25 and compare with *Post. Anal.* 96b 23-24 and *Prior Anal.* 90b 30. Cf. Ethics is a branch of Politics [*Nic. Eth.* A2].

103. Aristotle sees the difference between the *idea* as objective and the concept as subjective, but once the idea is conceived the two become equal; Hume, like the Sophists, makes no distinction, so that the idea and the concept are the same mental subjective entity (phenomenalism). This is an important difference since today many read Plato through Aristotle or the Empiricists (or even Plotinus whose notion is also not the Platonic one) and Plato's notion of *idea* is thus misunderstood.

104. *Rep.* 473a.

105. Cf524e: *aporein kaizêtein... kaia anerôtan* etc.

106. Cf Philoponos, *Comment. In Aristot.* p. 117, 26 and Tzetzes, *Chil.* VIII 973. Cf *Rep.* 1; *Phedo*, *Meno* etc.

107. It is significant to notice the correspondence of the Platonic terminology to our contemporary one. In his presentation and discussion of the Arts and Sciences, what Plato means by "arithmetic" is what we consider today as General Logic (*logismos*, i.e. logistics and calculus: mathematical logic), presupposed for, and applied to, all sciences; by "geometry" he means what is called today pure science (theoretical and abstract); his "stereometry" is, in our sense, equivalent to Physics and Technology (the study and application of the 3-dimensional solids) and finally, his "astronomy", our Astro-physics, is the study and the application of the "movements" of the solids.

108. Cf. *Rep.* 597bc: there is only one *idea* of "Bed", yet there are three *eide* of "beds" (one of which is the *idea*).

109. *Rep.* 476c ff; *Meno* 96d ff. (Cf. the notion of *arete* connected with *orthê doxa*). If Plato, at times, uses the term *epistêmas* ("sciences"?), it is, as he

says, only "to keep the custom (TO ἔθος), but they need another more appropriate name, more than *doxa* and less than *episteme*" (*Rep.* 533a).

110. Cf. 522e ff; 532d. Note the term *pros* which, in Plato's thought, is important. Equally important is to note the Platonic difference between *dianoia* and *noêsis*; *noêsis* is not the "intelligence" (or "intellect") (traditional translations which, however, are misleading since "intelligence" would be a better translation of *dianoia*: *inter-ligere* as implying a mediation, that of the concept, *dia-noia*, rather than a direct and immediate "vision"). Nor is Plato's *noêsis* an intuition (an *enorasis*, "envision", which is a Neoplatonic notion and not Platonic). For Plato, the *noêsis* is that which *molis horasthai* (717b) the *idea*. Plato makes this difference between *noêsis* and *dianoia*, in his insistence (509d-511e; 521c ff; cf also *Phedo*), very clear; *noêsis* is the mental faculty of ideation which, as the "eye of the soul" (533d: *tês psychês omma*), comes only in "contact" ("vision", *thea*) with *to ontos on*, while the *dianoia* is the mental faculty of conception which "envisages" it *to on* as the faculty of perception (*eikasias*) "visualizes" it. Neither *noêsis* nor *dianoia* "envisions" (within the Oneness of *To on*) in the Neoplatonic sense. The *dianoia* is the scientific reflective consciousness and knowledge of the beings, while the *noêsis* is the philosophical reflexive self-consciousness and self-knowledge of the being of beings (cf the terms *peristrophê*, *periagôgê*, *metastrophe*, *epanagoge* etc., 511d, 521c, 532bc).

111. Cf. *Meno* 75c-e; cf. 518bc.

112. *Rep.* 520cd.

113. *Rep.* 592ab.

114. Cf. *Rep.* 592ab, 473a, 499cd.

115. *Rep.* 519bc.

116. *Rep.* 517a, 519c, 520a-d.

117. And also artistic (cf Bks II-III and X).

118. *Rep.* 491a.

119. It must be noted, that for Plato, there are two kinds of "rhetoric" (cf *Politicus* 303d-304a). The Sophistic rhetoric is, however, devoid of logic (cf the Aristophanic ridicule in the *Clouds*).

120. Cf. *Rep.* 492b-d. The Sophistic politicians of the 4th c. (*nun*) in the eyes of Plato were not only "corrupted" (491a ff), but they were not, historically, distinguished at all for any foresight and vision, nor for their character and ethos. Of course, for Plato, foresight and vision imply the inviting and challenging "idea" and "ideal". The so-called Sophistic "leader", in his kind of "democratic" society, turns into a follower by following the "crowds" for the

satisfaction of his own hedonistic desires and interests (*hedonai* and *epithumiai*) and if the tyrannical "leader" turns into a ruler by ruling the "masses" for the same satisfaction, then in both cases, in Plato's view, the leader stops being a "true" leader since the *thumoeides* sides with the *epithumetikon* against the *logistikon* and consequently the *epithumetikon* takes over alone. For Plato, the "true" leader must be both logical and courageous as well as passionate (586e ff: "entire soul") with the good kind of desires and pleasures (cf. *Rep.* 587b ff on the two kinds of *epithumiai* and the three kinds of *hedonai*). As the *thumoeides* sides with the *logistikon* rather than with the *epithumetikon* (the *thumoeides* siding either with the *logistikon* or with the *epithumetikon*), the leader has that inner power to master his passions first for his own personal and, consequently, for the communitarian ethical and political benefit.

121. Cf., for instance, *Rep.* 607cd.

122. It should not be forgotten, as it was noted above, that the term *basileus*, in Plato's time, was used to refer, not to a hereditary "king", but to an elected minister of Education and Culture (the term "king", with all its medieval and modern meaning, certainly misleads the reader; the *basileus* is not an *anax*, let alone a *tyrant* or a *despot* whom Plato openly and clearly rejects). However, one may recall the meaning of the evangelical "kingdom of God" and "kingship of Christ". Clarification must be made that, although there are semantic similarities between the Platonic and the Evangelical notions, there are no ontic ones. Plato's *Politeia* is "theoretical" (*en logos*) and his expression "heavenly paradigm" (592ab: *en oitranō isōs paradeigma*) has a *metaphysical* meaning and reference (*laeo*) and not a *hyperphysical* one to a supernatural deity. The Platonic view, not only differs in this respect from the evangelical one, but also from that of St. Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, with which it may be fused because of its Neo-Platonic aspect.

123. Cf. *Rep.* Cf. 371 d (*diakonoi*) etc.

124. Cf. 519e-521b.

125. Cf. 520e-521b.

126. Plato uses the terms *archon*, *hegetes* and *kubernetes* (cf. the analogy of the *alethinou kubetnetou* and the *mias neos* in *Rep.* 487e ff). It may not be a useless repetition if a recapitulation is made here; *archon* refers to the person who is the principal because he is a person of principles (*archein-arche*); so he is the *hegetes* who leads in the right direction (*age/n-agoge*) and governs as a man of integrity and expertise (*kubernan-government, tes neos archein*). Plato may play with the terms and their meanings (*agein* and *hegein, agogos* and *hegetes*; cf also *hegemon*). It is important to reiterate that, once well educated, the person is chosen to be the leader because of his expertise in

piloting and governing but, even more, because of his vision and foresight as well as for his dignity and integrity. The *archon*, as both *hegetes* and *kubernetes*, seems to be a *primus inter pares* among the governing ministers with whom he forms the Government. The meaning in the connection of the terms *archon*, *hegetes* and *kubernetes*, in the analogy of the "boat", implies this cooperation and collaboration of the captain with the rest of the officers rather than the superposition of the "autocrat tyrant" whom Plato rejects outright in Bk IX, and this cooperation is also indicated with the crew and the passengers despite the fact that not all the crew members can be easily trusted to pilot the ship. Plato's scheme of government (itself a derivative term of *kubernan*) is not any different from the current Western democratic governmental systems, except that Plato's concepts of polity and citizenship lead to the "political participatory democracy" rather than the Sophistic "cosmopolitical representative ochlocracy".

127. Cf. 521b, 520a.

128. Cf. 517a *gelota*... cf. 519bc: not let lead and govern those who are *apaideutos aletheias* etc.

129. Cf. 578c-580c.

130. *thopeuein... kolax...idiotes... to onti doulos... akratori heautou.*

131. *hosper ho dia panton krites apophainetai...ho Aristonos huos...ariston te kai dikaiotaton eudaimonestaton... basileuonta hautou.*

132. *Rep.* 590a-592b.

133. *panti ...en hautou... the ion kai phronimon archesthai.*

134. *kai he ton paidon arche... arche en hautois politeia... oesper en polei.*

135. *en hautou phylax kai archon... hegetai a me ino hauton,...eleutherous, eleutheron.*

136. *Rep.*590b; cf. 579d (abject slave) and compare with 580c and 592a (leads better himself). It is important to note here the different uses of the term *eleutheria*. Cf. the difference between the *theriodei kai alogo hedone* (in reference to the Sophistic *lusitelein adikein*) and the *to de hemeron eleutheroutai kai hole he psuche...Cl* 607a-c and 609bc on *hedone kai akolasia*. Cf. 560d-561d.

137. This *eleutheria* refers to the human ability to account to oneself (and consequently to others in the *polis*) for one's actions because of one's ability to answer logically and critically one's questions and solve one's problems (for the decisions and choices) which ability (accountability, or responsibility) B founded on one's existential and personal self-consciousness. This point is what Plato tries to illustrate with the example of the *kai he paidon arche* (*Rep.*

590c-591a). The civil liberty presupposes this existential freedom as the former is only a consequence of the latter and Plato makes this distinction between freedom and liberty quite clear when he says: τὸ μὴ ἔαν ἐλευθέρους εἶναι (existential freedom)... καὶ τότε δὴ ἐλευθέρων ἀφίεμεν (civil liberty). Cf. 560d-561d the different meanings of: *aneleutherian... anarch/an de eleutherian... hedun.. kaieleuftherion*.

138. Cf. the reference to the tyrant and the term *doulos*.

139. *hole he psyche, hapases tes psyches*. That is to say, not only any one part, even the *logistikon* or the *log ikon*.

140. *apobiepon pros ten en hautō politeia η kai phulaton...houtos kuvernon...idia kai demosia*.

141. *Rep.* 351 c ff. and *passim*, e.g. 358e ff, 53 Id etc. Cf. *Laws* 738e ff.

142. *Rep.* 351 d.

143. Cf. *Rep.* 342e ff. Socrates's remarks to Thrasymachus's view: καθόσον ἀρχων ἐστίν, τὸ αὐτῷ ξυμφέρον σκοπεῖ οὐδ' ἐπιτάττει, ἀλλὰ τὸ τῷ ἀρχομένῳ. Cf. 346e ff: ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀρχομένῳ... Cf. 347d the contrast between ὡσπερ νυκτὶ τὸ ἀρχεῖν... and τῷ δντι ἀληθινὸς ἀρχων.

144. *Rep.* 473e and d, 536b.

145. Not the "ideal" society which, as such, is humanly impossible (cf. Note 3 above).

146. *Rep.* 591 e ff. (*tén en hautō politeian...té heautou polei...heauton katoikizein*); 592ab (*epei gês ge oudamou oimai auten einai...en ouranō isōs paradeigma... tō boulomenō horan kai horōnti heauton katoikizein*).

147. *Rep.* 608b.

148. Cf. 606e ff. "Elite" and "elitism", as it comes from the Latin *e(x)-ligere*, means, in its original and etymological sense, "chosen and elected" from "outside by others". This "ex", in both terms elite and election, would imply, then, consciousness, freedom and objectivity on evidence and solid grounds. If one uses the term in its literal and original sense, the term "elite", like the term "aristos", would have more of an ethical reference than a genetic or societal.

149. *Rep.* 519bc.