



PROJECT MUSE®

Wisdom for the Living: *Sophia* in Plato's *Republic*

Claudia Yau

Journal of the History of Philosophy, Volume 63, Number 4, October
2025, pp. 497-521 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/hph.2025.a971096>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/971096>

Wisdom for the Living: *Sophia* in Plato's *Republic*

CLAUDIA YAU*

ABSTRACT In proposing an account of wisdom (*sophia*), Plato was intervening in a longstanding debate about the nature of the highest intellectual virtue for a human being. Despite its historical and philosophical significance, wisdom has received limited scholarly attention. This paper offers an account of wisdom in Plato's *Republic*. I reject the interpretation that wisdom is identical to knowledge of Forms. Rather, wisdom of the city (or soul) is the ability to make good judgments, by the standard of the Forms, about how the whole city (soul) would best fare. This account has implications for Plato's disagreement with Protagoras, the Two Worlds Debate about *epistēmē*, and the limitations of human wisdom.

KEYWORDS Wisdom, knowledge, good judgment, *sophia*, *epistēmē*, *euboulia*, *Republic*, Plato

INTRODUCTION

IN PROPOSING AN ACCOUNT OF WISDOM (*sophia*) in the *Republic*, Plato was participating in a vigorous debate about the nature of the highest intellectual virtue and its characteristic activity. *Sophiē* and *sophia* in the archaic and classical periods were terms of epistemic distinction that denoted a virtue thought to be bestowed by gods and aimed at divinely inspired ends.¹ Those considered to be wise, such as the Seven Sages, Homer, Hesiod, expert statesmen and lawmakers, religious experts, and skilled craftsmen, were thought to possess divinely conferred insight that distinguished them from ordinary practitioners in their domain of expertise. At the same time, wisdom had a firm practical, human orientation: wisdom was

¹Examples of wisdom connected to the divine include wisdom in shipbuilding as a gift from Athena (*Il.* 15.410–13), wisdom of the Seven Sages and Apollo at Delphi (*Prt.* 343a8–b3), gifts of technical wisdom from Hephaestus (*Prt.* 321c–322d), wisdom and the Delphic Oracle (*Apol.* 21a4–7), and the wisdom of Anaxagoras and Thales, which involves grasping the divine (*EN* 6.7, 1141b7; cf. *EN* 1141a15). On wisdom as a term of epistemic distinction and its relation to the divine, see Billings, *Philosophical Stage*, 160; Broadie, *Sun-Like Good*; Cooper, *Pursuits of Wisdom*; Kerferd, "Image," 21; Kurke, *Aesopic Conversations*, 101; Moore, *Philosophers*, 69–72; and Nightingale, *Spectacles of Truth*.

* Claudia Yau is an assistant professor of philosophy and classical studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

thought to be an ability to make some domain or aspect of the world—such as a craft-object, one’s household, or one’s political community—better. Both of these aspects of wisdom contributed to the significant authority and prestige associated with being a wise individual.

By the fourth century, suspicion over claims to wisdom had proliferated, but the archaic cultural cachet survived. As Kurke puts it, “*Sophia* is still [in the fourth century] and later the bearer of tremendous cultural and political prestige and authority—a form of ‘symbolic capital’ to which all participants in the cultural field want to be able to lay claim.”² Given the stakes of this contest, it is no surprise that philosophers and sophists in the fourth century intensely debated the nature of wisdom, the characteristic features of the wise, and the authority and power a legitimate claim to wisdom ought to confer on its possessors. The debate about which intellectual ability constitutes genuine wisdom was, in no small part, a competition for the power and prestige that still accompanied the title. Plato was acutely aware of the implications of this debate. He forcefully rejected sophists’ claims to wisdom and criticized the wealth and reputational gains awarded to sophists such as Protagoras for their perceived wisdom (493a6–c6, 600c7–d5).³ Against this background, Plato advances an account of wisdom in the *Republic*.⁴

Despite the growing body of work on the cultural significance of wisdom and philosophy in the fifth and fourth centuries and the wealth of literature on epistemic powers in the *Republic*, there has been limited direct, sustained treatment of the account of *sophia* in the dialogue. In stark contrast with the rich work on *epistēmē* and *doxa*, there is hardly any systematic discussion of what *sophia* is—what wisdom is set over and what it accomplishes—and how it relates to other epistemic powers.⁵ The historical and cultural context makes clear, however, that the question of what wisdom is according to the *Republic* merits investigation in its own right. The goal of this paper is to offer such a treatment. In adopting this approach, I am rejecting a thoroughly deflationary stance toward *sophia* in the *Republic* according to which Plato is flexible and variable in his account of wisdom because he is flexible with his epistemic terms in general.⁶ Given the stakes and import of what merits the title *sophia* in Plato’s cultural context, and given the character Socrates’s sensitivity to the ongoing dispute—he claims, after all, to have

²Kurke, *Aesopic Conversations*, 120. Cf. Billings, *Philosophical Stage*, 163–64.

³Cf. *Meno* 91c6–92a6.

⁴Socrates identifies the virtue that makes the city “truly wise” (*sophē tōi ontī*) (428b3, 428d10). He contrasts this with what sophists call ‘wisdom.’

⁵There is no comparable discussion of *sophia* in the *Republic* in Ferrari, *Cambridge Companion to Plato’s “Republic,”* Santas, *Blackwell Guide to Plato’s “Republic,”* or McPherran, *Plato’s “Republic”: A Critical Guide*. Cooper’s highly systematic book, *Pursuits of Wisdom*, carefully treats Socratic wisdom but does not offer a similarly thorough discussion of Plato’s conception of wisdom outside of the Socratic dialogues. Cooper’s characterizations of *sophia* in the *Republic* tend to be asserted in the context of comparing Plato and Plotinus, and they imply that wisdom is *epistēmē* of Forms (cf. note 8). Commentators have offered helpful characterizations of wisdom, but these characterizations are often ambiguous between several of the options I consider in this paper (e.g. Bobonich, *Utopia Recast*, 43; Irwin, *Ethics*, 263; cf. 280n2; Kamtekar, “Powers,” 149; McPherran, “Gods and Piety,” 92; Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings*, 238; and Singpurwalla, “Defense of Justice,” 266).

⁶That Plato uses an epistemic term (e.g. *epistēmē*) flexibly is compatible with the idea that there is still a considered and determinate account of the power to which the term, in the strict sense, refers. See Moss, *Being and Seeming*, 126, on Plato’s flexibility in his epistemic vocabulary.

identified *true* wisdom and rejects the account that he attributes to sophists—such a deflationary reading is unlikely to fully satisfy.⁷ Yet unless it can be shown that the *Republic* contains a coherent and consistent notion of wisdom, this deflationary approach cannot be set aside. A central aim of what follows will be to show that Plato advances a single, unified account of wisdom in the *Republic*.

One *prima facie* attractive interpretation is that *sophia* is identical to *epistēmē* of Forms (call this the Identity Reading).⁸ According to this interpretation, the correct account of *epistēmē* is also the correct account of *sophia*. Thus, according to the Identity Reading, the candidate accounts for *sophia* are just the familiar and much-debated candidates for *epistēmē*.⁹ Alternatively, one could deny the Identity Reading. In this case, one's preferred account of *epistēmē* need not be an account of *sophia* as well.¹⁰ One way to deny the Identity Reading would be to maintain that *sophia* and *epistēmē* are distinct and *not* closely connected. Annas argues that in Book IV, *sophia* is the "ability to use one's practical intelligence in a way that rises above one's own concerns."¹¹ Guardians exercise wisdom by deliberating about what is best for the city as a whole, rather than about what is good for themselves as individuals. Annas notes that, so specified, *sophia* does not seem to require any significant theoretical study at all, let alone contemplation of Forms.¹² Granting that *epistēmē* is (or requires) theoretical study of some kind, it follows from this view of *sophia* that it is neither identical to, nor does it require, *epistēmē*.

I defend a third option: *epistēmē* and *sophia* are distinct but closely connected. In the *Republic*, wisdom is the ability to make good judgments, by the standard of

⁷Here and throughout, by 'Socrates' I mean the character of Socrates in the *Republic*. Unless otherwise indicated, when I attribute views to Plato, I mean the view Plato presents in the *Republic*.

⁸The reading is suggested by Kerferd, who writes of "the unchanging world of the Forms which alone can be the object of knowledge and so of *sophia* or wisdom" ("Image," 20). Cooper suggests a similar view: "it is actual, unqualified wisdom itself, the full human virtue, consisting in a final and complete knowledge of the whole system of Forms, and, especially, knowledge of that system as having at its apex the Form of the Good. . . . When Socrates comes back to discuss the virtues in the later passage, in book VI, he says that, through knowing the Forms in their full perfection and paradigmatic mutual organization and orderliness (i.e. through their wisdom), properly prepared philosophers will at once wish to imitate the Forms by maintaining a corresponding orderliness and proper organization within their own soul" ("Psychology of Justice," 356; cf. 63). McPherran writes, "This is their quest for wisdom—for direct apprehension of the Forms—that focuses directly on making oneself 'as much like a god as a human can' (613a–b)" ("Gods and Piety," 92). Wolfsdorf remarks that Plato "uses '*sophia*' and '*epistēmē*' (among several other terms such as '*phronēsis*') interchangeably" ("'*Sophia*' and '*Epistēmē*' in the Archaic and Classical Periods," 24). One of the definitions of *sophia* in the Pseudo-Platonic *Definitions* (414b5–6) defines wisdom as knowledge of what always is, though other listed definitions are broader.

⁹See Moss, *Being and Seeming*, for an overview of the debate and arguments that *epistēmē* is exercised exclusively in relation to Forms. Another view holds that *epistēmē* has a privileged but not exclusive relation to Forms and can be exercised in relation to perceptibles (e.g. Harte, "Knowing and Believing"; Kamtekar, "Powers"; and Vogt, *Belief and Truth*). A third proposal is that although *epistēmē* relies on Forms as material, it can have either Forms or perceptibles as its subject matter (Smith, "Power"; cf. *Summoning Knowledge*, chap. 3). A final account is that *epistēmē* is set over the set of true propositions, and it relates exclusively to true propositions (Fine, "*Republic* V"; "*Republic* V–VII"). These accounts are silent on the relationship between knowledge and wisdom.

¹⁰It is possible to hold any of the accounts of *epistēmē* in the literature without accepting the Identity Reading.

¹¹Annas, "Introduction," 113. Annas's observation may be restricted to the discussion of wisdom in Book IV.

¹²Annas, "Introduction," 112–13.

the Forms, about how the whole city or soul would fare best. Thus, wisdom, the highest intellectual virtue, is not identical to knowledge of the Forms, but rather a privileged kind of good judgment or judiciousness (*euboulia*) about the city or soul. Nevertheless, *epistēmē* is necessary for and partly constitutive of *sophia*.

I begin (in sections 1 and 2) by arguing that Books IV–VII offer a unified conception of wisdom. I develop and regiment this account (in section 3) by applying Plato's claim that "powers" or "capacities" (*dunameis*) are individuated by what they are "over" (*eph' hōi*) and what they "accomplish" (*apergazesthai*). Wisdom of the city (soul) is *set over* the city (soul) as a whole and the work (*ergon*) of wisdom is to make good judgments by reference to the Forms as the standard. Since no account of *epistēmē* takes it to be *set over* the city or soul, it follows from this account of *sophia* that it is distinct from *epistēmē* no matter which account of *epistēmē* we accept. Still, the two are closely related in that *epistēmē* is necessary for and partly constitutive of *sophia* (section 4). I conclude (in section 5) by discussing upshots for understanding how Plato's account fits in its historical context, the Two Worlds dispute about *epistēmē*, and Plato's view of the limitations of human wisdom.

1. REPUBLIC IV: WISDOM IN OUTLINE

The most explicit treatment of *sophia* in the *Republic* is in Socrates and Glaucon's search for wisdom in the city and soul. The search can be divided into two main parts. In the text leading up to the conclusion of Book IV's search (428a11–c11), Socrates guides Glaucon to the correct conception of wisdom by drawing from shared assumptions about it, especially the assumption that wisdom is closely related to good judgment.¹³ These shared assumptions help situate Plato's account within the broader dispute about wisdom. They also give us *prima facie* reason to doubt the Identity Reading. In the conclusion of the search (428c11–d10), Plato presents three features of wisdom that form the cornerstone of my account: (1) wisdom is a kind of good judgment, (2) it is the virtue by means of which one makes good judgments about how the city or soul would be best, and (3) wisdom in the city is identified with guardianship knowledge (*hē phulakikē epistēmē*) (428d6).¹⁴

Socrates and Glaucon begin their search for wisdom in the city in a surprising way. They start by agreeing that the fact that the city is "judicious" (*euboulos*) justifies their conviction that the city is "truly wise" (*sophē tōi ontī*) and thereby has the virtue, true wisdom (428b4–5).¹⁵ Then, rather than immediately discussing wisdom, they turn to a brief investigation into the nature of good judgment:

[T1] But this is clear, is it not, that this very thing, good judgment [*hē euboulia*], is some sort of knowledge, for it is surely not by ignorance, but by knowledge, that they make judgments well [*eu bouleountai*]. (428b6–8)¹⁶

¹³I follow Schofield, "Euboulia"; and Woodruff, "Euboulia as the Skill," in translating *euboulia* as good judgment, rather than good deliberation. What is important for my purposes is that *euboulia* includes the ability by which one comes to form a judgment as well as the issuing of the final judgment (cf. *Prt.* 318c5–319a2).

¹⁴*Epistēmē* here is not knowledge of Forms, since the *epistēmai* in this context include various crafts.

¹⁵"The city which we have detailed seems to me to be truly wise [*sophē tōi ontī*], for [*gar*] it is judicious [*euboulos*], is it not?" (428b4–5).

¹⁶References are to the Greek text in Slings and translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

In other words, the capacity to make judgments well—good judgment or judiciousness (*euboulia*)—must be some kind of knowledge.¹⁷ Wisdom, which is putatively the subject of inquiry, has momentarily receded from view, and *euboulia*, a term that appears only four times in the Platonic corpus, comes into focus.¹⁸

These initial steps of the search make clear that Socrates presupposes—and Glaucon readily accepts—a close connection between true wisdom and good judgment: being judicious is a sign of being truly wise, and studying the nature of good judgment helps the pair identify true wisdom. What licenses them to make either of these assumptions? By the end of the argument, it is clear that Socrates and Glaucon implicitly endorse the view that wisdom is a particular *kind* of good judgment. The suggestion, then, is that the assumption that wisdom is a kind of good judgment is already in play in the opening stages of the argument.

After establishing that good judgment is a kind of knowledge, and after presupposing that wisdom is a kind of good judgment, Socrates and Glaucon proceed to examine the kinds of knowledge (*epistēmai*) that might plausibly be identified as wisdom.¹⁹ The idea that wisdom is a kind of good judgment structures this next stage of the search. Socrates characterizes each candidate for wisdom according to a fixed schema: each is a kind of knowledge by which one makes good judgments about how the objects in its respective domain would fare best. Carpentry, for instance, is characterized as a kind of knowledge that enables the city to make good judgments about wooden objects (428c2–3).²⁰ Similarly, bronzeworking and farming are kinds of knowledge that enable people to make good judgments about how bronze objects and crops, respectively, would be best. Each of these, then, is a kind of knowledge *by which one makes good judgments* about objects in the respective domain of that knowledge. Given the earlier agreement that good judgment is a kind of knowledge by which one makes judgments well (428b6–8), it is reasonable to assume that Socrates conceives of each rejected

¹⁷This inference relies on the premise that if one makes judgments well by means of some cognitive capacity, then that capacity is (a kind of) good judgment (*euboulia*). Plato very plausibly conceives of *euboulia* as the power by which one makes good judgments about how its objects would be best. See linguistic parallels in I.353b2–d2.

¹⁸*Euboulia* appears infrequently in Plato's works: *Prt.* 318e5, *Resp.* 348d2 and 428b7, and *Alc.* I.125a, assuming its authenticity. The adjective appears only in the *Republic*. We must not infer from this that *euboulia* is an unimportant concept. The activity, making good judgments, appears frequently in Plato without the noun, *euboulia*. More significantly, where the term *euboulia* does appear, it marks a concept that is closely associated with *sophia* and *phronēsis*. Protagoras as depicted by Plato advances *euboulia* as the wisdom (*sophia*) that he teaches (*Prt.* 318e5–319a2; *Meno* 90e10–91a6) and calls this skill political expertise (*Prt.* 319a3–5).

¹⁹The inference is: (1) good judgment is a kind of *epistēmē* by which one makes judgments well (just now established). (2) Wisdom is a kind of good judgment (presupposed). Thus, wisdom is a kind of *epistēmē* (by which one makes judgments well). *Epistēmē* here is used in a broad sense (cf. note 14). See also Hulme, "Knowledge Vocabulary," on Plato's use of *epistēmē* and its relation to *technē*.

²⁰I read *bouleuomenē* in 428c3 with the manuscripts (Slings) and reject Heindorf's emendation to *bouleuomenēn* (which is accepted by Adam). There is no problem (*pace* Adam) with reading *bouleuomenē* while adopting *hē* in 428d1: "is there some knowledge *that* judges." Plato first describes the city making judgments before stating more precisely: the *knowledge* in the city that (*hē*) makes judgments on behalf of the whole city. Plato often attributes the action, knowing, to the power, knowledge, where we might expect it to be attributed to the person who has knowledge. See, for example, 478a11–12, where Plato asks whether opinion opines the same thing that knowledge knows.

candidate—carpentry, bronzeworking, and farming—as a kind of good judgment.²¹ The upshot is that, at this early point in the argument, the field in which the interlocutors conduct their search for wisdom has been restricted to kinds of good judgment, and that wisdom and the various crafts are each kinds of good judgment.

Socrates and Glaucon agree that although carpentry, bronzeworking, and farming each enable the city to make good judgments about *some* domain—wooden objects, bronze objects, and crops, respectively—none of these crafts is true wisdom because each of these crafts only enables one to make good judgments about how *some* of the things in the city would fare best (428c11–d1). True wisdom, by contrast, makes good judgments about how the *whole city* would fare best:

[T2] SOC. So, is there some kind of knowledge in the city founded by us just now, in some of its citizens, which²² does not judge [*bouleuetai*] on behalf of some one thing among the things in the city, but on behalf of the city as a whole, in what way it would associate best with itself and other cities?

GLAU. There is.

SOC. What is it? And in whom is it?

GLAU. Guardianship knowledge, and it is in those rulers which we just now called complete guardians.

SOC. Then because of this knowledge, what do you call the city?

GLAU. Judicious and²³ truly wise. (428c11–d10)

The argument that *euboulia* is a kind of knowledge (T1) relied on the premise that if one makes judgments well by means of some cognitive capacity, then that capacity is (a kind of) good judgment (*euboulia*).²⁴ Here in T2, Socrates states that *wisdom* is a kind of knowledge by means of which guardians make good judgments on behalf of the city as a whole. Thus, wisdom is a kind of good judgment—our first key feature of wisdom.

Significantly, Socrates and Glaucon never *argue* that wisdom is a kind of good judgment but simply presuppose it. This suggests that they accept this feature of wisdom and take it to be relatively uncontentious. Indeed, some of Plato's principal interlocutors in the dispute about the nature of wisdom seem to have endorsed it.²⁵ Socrates's acceptance of the view that wisdom is a kind of good judgment gives us *prima facie* reason to favor a non-Identity Reading of wisdom. Good judgment is the power by which one judges well about how the objects in some domain would be best. Knowledge of the Forms, however, cannot be a kind of good judgment, or else it would be something by which one judges well about how Forms would be

²¹This implies that *euboulia* and *sophia* are not synonymous, since *euboulia* includes carpentry, farming, and the like, and *sophia* (the target of the search) does not include these crafts.

²²Reading *hē* with the manuscripts, contra Slings.

²³*Kai* is best read here as exegetical and restrictive. Only guardianship makes the whole city judicious in the sense of (*kai*) being *truly* wise.

²⁴See note 17.

²⁵Protagoras, at least on Plato's characterization (*Prt.* 318e5–319a2, 319a3–5; *Meno* 90e10–91a6), accepted that wisdom is a kind of judiciousness, and Isocrates emphasized the importance of *euboulia* as an important intellectual ability or virtue (*Ad. Demon.* 34–35; *Antid.* 270–71; *Panath.* 86.6; and helpful comments by Nightingale, *Genres*, 28). See also Moore, *Philosophers*, 97–104; Nehamas, *Authenticity*, chap. 5; Nightingale, *Genres*, chap. 1.

best—but talk of making judgments about how Forms would be best is nonsense, since Forms are perfect.²⁶

In addition to showing that wisdom is a kind of good judgment, T2 establishes two additional features that are central to Plato's subsequent discussion and his finished account of wisdom. First, wisdom in the city is the virtue that enables one to make good judgments on behalf of the city as a whole. Plato later argues by analogy that wisdom in the soul is the virtue by which one makes good judgments on behalf of the soul about how it would be best (441e3–5, 442b5–9, 442c4–8). Second, true wisdom in the city is identified with guardianship knowledge. The argument ends by reiterating this point: Socrates concludes that guardianship knowledge “alone among the kinds of knowledge in the city should be called wisdom” (428e7–429a3).²⁷ This feature will be important in what follows, since it establishes that Plato's discussions of guardianship knowledge or expertise in later books of the *Republic* are treatments of wisdom in the city.

Book IV leaves us with the following outline of wisdom: wisdom in the city is the virtue by which one makes good judgments on behalf of the whole city about how it would be best (how it would best deal with itself internally and externally). By analogy, wisdom in the soul is the virtue by which one makes good judgments on behalf of the soul about how it would be best. This account, I will argue in the next section, is true but incomplete.

2. COMPLETING THE ACCOUNT: WISDOM JUDGES BY THE STANDARD OF THE FORMS

Book IV identifies wisdom in the city with guardianship expertise. In Books V–VII, Plato says a great deal more about guardianship expertise and the ability to make good judgments on behalf of the city. Thus, although Plato's most explicit account of *sophia* is in Book IV, we should expect Books V–VII to say more about wisdom in the city and, by analogy, wisdom in the soul.

In reading Books IV through VII together in this way, I resist two prominent alternatives. The first is that Book IV contains Plato's complete and finished account of wisdom in the city and soul, so that Books V–VII offer no further information about Plato's account of wisdom. On this view, given that Forms make no appearance in the Book IV discussion, knowledge of Forms must not be required for wisdom. The second conflicting interpretation is that Book IV contains a *mere* placeholder for wisdom (and presumably, on this reading, the other virtues). Once Plato develops his account of knowledge of Forms in Book V, he discards the Book IV conception of wisdom and replaces it with knowledge of the Forms.

²⁶The work of *epistēmē* is knowing what is as it is (478a6). One might argue *epistēmē* is a kind of *euboulia* by holding that, although *epistēmē* is set over Forms, it makes good judgments not about Forms but about how the city or soul would be best. The problem is that, on this picture, *epistēmē* makes good judgments about something besides what it is set over. Yet, in every example of *euboulia*, good judgments are about how what it is set over would be best. Carpentry is set over wooden objects and makes judgments about how wooden objects would be best. If knowledge of the Forms were itself a kind of good judgment, then it would be the only kind of good judgment that does not follow this structure, and it is difficult to explain in a principled way why it is the case.

²⁷As before, *epistēmē* here means knowledge or expertise in the broad sense rather than in Book V's restricted sense, since carpentry and farming are listed among the *epistēmai*.

Against the latter proposal, it must be noted that Socrates never indicates that the account of *sophia* in Book IV is *false* or needs retraction. Moreover, Socrates explicitly couches the search for wisdom in Book IV as a search for the virtue that makes the city *truly* wise, and he appears ready to accept the results of the search as at least partly successful. Socrates never abandons Book IV's identification of wisdom in the city with guardianship expertise, and, as we will see, in Books VI–VII, rather than retracting the view that guardianship expertise (i.e. wisdom in the city) makes good judgments for the benefit of the city, Plato preserves this idea while arguing that these judgments are made by the standard of Forms. Against the former interpretation, Plato flags Book IV's account of wisdom as *imperfect*: it was “insufficiently exact” (*akribēs*) and “incomplete” (*ateles*) (504a4–c4). He calls Book IV's account of the virtues an “outline” (*hupographē*) and indicates that they will build upon the established account (504d6–8).²⁸ To complete the account, one must understand the Form of the Good and its relation to its participants (504b1–505b3). These considerations militate against taking Book IV to present a complete account of wisdom or Plato's final word on the subject.

On my reading, Book IV offers a true but incomplete account of wisdom of the city and soul.²⁹ Although Plato marks the discussion in Books V–VII as a “detour” (*exetrapometha*, 543c5), they are not digressions from the point of view of understanding *sophia*. These books supplement and complete Book IV's outline of wisdom by explaining the role of the Form of the Good. This way of proceeding is attractive for the additional reason that Book IV leaves important explanatory work to be done. Plato distinguishes guardianship expertise—i.e. wisdom of the city—from farming and carpentry on the grounds that the domain of guardianship expertise is the whole city, whereas farming and carpentry range over part of the city. This argument assumes that *only one* expertise has the whole city as its domain (429a2), but Socrates does not explain in Book IV why no other expertise could have the same domain. Moreover, Socrates does not explain what special feature of guardianship enables it to have such a broad domain. One might be skeptical that *any* single expertise can have a domain as broad as an entire city. Finally, as Annas argues, the Book IV account of wisdom fails to explain why wisdom is so difficult to attain that only a limited few can be wise (428b1; 428e7–429a3). She emphasizes the political stakes of the question, objecting that Plato “commits himself without argument to the anti-democratic thesis that the citizens with the wisdom that will make it [the city] well governed will be the smallest class in the city.”³⁰

²⁸A “sketch” or “outline” (*hupographē*) in the *Republic* tends to be preserved, not discarded (e.g. 501a9–10). An outline can be imprecise if it lacks all the details (548c–d). Moreover, the length of the conversation meets due measure (484a1–4, *metriōs*; 484b8), implying that the detour was constructive or philosophically useful (cf. *Plt.* 277a–283e).

²⁹This interpretation is endorsed in the accounts of guardianship expertise defended by e.g. Bobonich, “Rule,” 153–55; *Utopia Recast*, 43; Moss, *Being and Seeming*, chap. 4; Schofield, *Political Philosophy*, 162–63; Schwab, “*Epistēmē*”; and Sedley, “Art of Ruling,” 261. It is assumed by Nehamas, *Authenticity*, 324–27. Of the routes sketched by Scott, *Levels*, chap. 3.2, it is perhaps most similar to what he calls “the middle route.” This leaves open the possibility that Plato makes available multiple routes on different rereadings.

³⁰Annas, *Introduction*, 113.

These problems are resolved if we accept that Book IV's account of wisdom points beyond itself by raising questions that it does not answer. Plato does not retract or replace his account, but indicates that it requires completion and development. My guiding assumption in what follows, then, is that Book IV presents the *outline* of Plato's account of wisdom to which he remains committed and upon which he builds in Books V–VII. Plato never abandons the Book IV conception of wisdom—a conception that captures the established idea, in Plato's cultural context, that wisdom's orientation is toward improving our own affairs or some aspect of the world around us. In Books V–VII, however, he makes the radical claim that such a power must use Forms as objective standards for judgment. As we will see, by capturing the role of Forms, the completed account will address the questions left unanswered by Book IV regarding the unique domain of wisdom and the difficulty of attaining it.

Plato prepares the reader early on for the idea that the wise person makes judgments by reference to good standards or models (*paradeigmata*). In Book III, Socrates distinguishes the wise jurors from the vicious ones and takes for granted that any juror—virtuous or vicious—issues judgments (*krinei*) by looking to a model or standard for judgment.³¹ The vicious jurors look to models of injustice in their own souls to make judgments, which they acquire through acquaintance with injustice (409c4–d4). By contrast, the virtuous, wise jurors avoid acquaintance with injustice when they are young, and later acquire models of justice and injustice through knowledge (409b4–e2).

Just as the best judges rely on their knowledge of justice and injustice to supply a model or standard for issuing judgments, the best doctors look to the standards of medicine to make judgments about particular bodies, and the best carpenters look to the standards of carpentry to make judgments about how to manipulate wood. Similarly, the philosopher guardian—who makes “judgments” (*bouleuetai*) on behalf of the city (428d1), who issues “judgments” (*krinei*) better than the lovers of honor or benefit (582d1–2, d7–e2), and who will become a judge in the city (433e3–4)—must make judgments by reference to some standard for judgment.

To identify the standard, consider the kinds of judgments guardians make. Whereas carpenters make judgments about a narrow domain, guardians must make judgments that cover a large and disparate set of topics to do with the city, such as how the educational system would be more just and how to promote beauty through the arts. Guardians must also make comparative judgments concerning different kinds of value. They weigh, for instance, norms that would promote the city's justice against norms that would promote its beauty. The standard for goodness employed by wise guardians must therefore have a broad reach. In the context of Platonic metaphysics, the natural candidate for being an objective, perfect, and unwavering standard for judgment about a wide range of disparate matters in the perceptible domain are the Forms themselves, especially the Form of the Good.³²

³¹Plato sometimes uses *krinein* interchangeably with *bouleuesthai*. Other times, *krinein* denotes the issuing of the final judgment (*Resp.* 399e1, 478b2), which is part of the process of forming a judgment (see note 13). *Krinein* can imply that the judgment happens quickly without a lengthy deliberative process. Many thanks to David Sider for helpful discussion.

³²Broadie (*Sun-Like Good*, chaps. 1–2) also explains that the guardian uses the Form of the Good to make the city better. My account does not assume Broadie's central claim that the Good is an interrogative.

This point is confirmed in Books VI and VII, where Socrates explains the role of Forms in making judgments for the benefit of the city. Socrates argues that guardians must have knowledge of the Forms, which provides them with a clear model (*paradeigma*) in their soul (484c7–8).³³ Guardians must know the Form of the Good, the most important object of learning, because everything is useful and beneficial by its relation to the Form of the Good. In fact, Socrates argues, unless one knows the Form of the Good, knowledge of other things is of no benefit and no advantage to us (505a1–4; cf. 505e1–506a8). Thus, at the end of the educational program designed to cultivate guardianship expertise, guardians must use the Good as a model to “order the city, its citizens, and himself for the rest of their lives” (540a9–b1). Once guardians grasp the Forms, they will be able to, “like painters, look to what is truest, and *always refer to that and study it as precisely as possible, and, in this way, establish here* customs about the fine and just and good, if they must be established, and guard and preserve the customs that have been laid down” (484c6–d2, emphasis added). Notice that the activity of the guardians described here, which is the exercise of their guardianship expertise (that is, *sophia* in the city), has two components: (i) referring to and studying the Forms, and (ii) ruling the perceptible city by reference to the Forms as standards or models. In order to incorporate both components, guardians must possess knowledge of Forms as well as the requisite experience (*empeiria*) and virtue.³⁴ For this reason, Socrates undertakes to show how one can have *both* knowledge of the Forms *and* experience and the other parts of virtue (484d4–6).³⁵ The emphasis on both knowledge of Forms and experience required to rule the city further indicates that Plato has not left behind the conception of wisdom presented in Book IV, but has rather supplemented and completed it with the role of Forms.

This interpretation of *Republic* IV–VII offers a single, unified account of wisdom, which can be broadly characterized in the following way. Wisdom of the city (or soul) is the ability to make good judgments, by the standard (*paradeigma*) of the Forms (especially the Good), about how the whole city (soul) would be best. Books V–VII complete the conception of wisdom in the city by arguing that wisdom takes Forms as objective standards, and VI–VII explains how Forms can play this role.

We are now in position to answer the questions that Book IV raises but does not resolve. First, we can explain why wisdom alone has a domain as broad as the whole city. The expert marble sculptor knows the standards for an excellent marble sculpture, but these standards are limited to that narrow domain. Wisdom, by contrast, has a broad domain because it uses Forms as standards of judgment, and Forms can explain the goodness, justice, beauty, and the like of any domain within the city. We are also prepared to answer Annas’s charge, namely, that it is unclear why wisdom, as described in Book IV, should be so difficult to attain that

³³This echoes Book III’s claim that wise jurors use knowledge to grasp models of justice, whereas vicious judges lack good models in their souls (409b4–e2).

³⁴Sedley (“Art of Ruling,” 271) argues that knowledge of Forms is not sufficient for successful ruling. Smith (*Summoning Knowledge*, 64–65) argues that Plato’s theory accommodates cognitive states with “mixed contents” (Forms and perceptibles) and argues that guardians use Forms as exemplars of, for example, justice (*Summoning Knowledge*, 66–68; cf. chap. 4). Moss (*Being and Seeming*, 126) discusses the importance and role of both knowledge of Forms and experience in guardianship expertise.

³⁵See Adam, *Republic*, on 485a2.

only the few who are capable should rule. Once we complete the account in Book IV, we see that true wisdom uses Forms as standards for judgment, and knowledge of Forms is exceedingly difficult to attain.

3. REGIMENTING THE ACCOUNT

As we have seen, Books V–VII complete the account of wisdom in Book IV by showing that wisdom uses Forms as standards for judgment. These books develop Plato's account in another significant way. In Book V, Plato sets out his conception of a power or capacity (*dunamis*), and the conceptual resources from this account enable us to regiment and further elaborate on the *Republic's* account of wisdom.

It is widely accepted that wisdom is a power. Those who identify *sophia* with *epistēmē* accept that wisdom is a power, because *epistēmē* is a power (477d7–9). Those who explicitly distinguish *epistēmē* from *sophia* also characterize wisdom as an ability or power.³⁶ The discussion of powers in Book V, then, should be understood to apply to wisdom too. According to that discussion, powers are identified and distinguished from one another by “what they are over” (*eph' hōi*) and what they “accomplish” (*apergazetai*) (5.477c6–d6). Wisdom must therefore also be identified and distinguished from other powers by these two features.

3.1 What Wisdom Is Set Over

Although there is disagreement about how exactly to characterize the set-over relation, there is general consensus about the typical linguistic markers used to refer to it (such as *eph' hōi* or a simple genitive) and about specific cases in which Plato has this relation in mind (such as the discussion of what shepherding, medicine, and navigation are set over—*eph' hōi tetaktai*—in 345d2). To identify what wisdom is set over, I rely on linguistic markers for the set-over relation in the passages about wisdom and on parallels with passages in which the set-over relation is uncontroversially in play. As a result, my conclusions about what wisdom is set over do not depend on a particular conception of the set-over relation.

In Book I, Socrates infers the following from a discussion of crafts:

Shepherding does not care for anything other than what it is *set over* [*eph' hōi tetaktai*], how it would *provide what is best for this*. . . . Every kind of rule, insofar as it is a kind of rule, seeks nothing other than what is best for this, what is ruled and cared for, *both in political and personal rule*. (345d1–e2; cf. 342b4–5, emphasis added)³⁷

He reiterates that no rule works to provide for its own benefit but the benefit of what is ruled (346e3–6). Thus, he establishes the following principle:

Benefit Principle: A craft or rule (as such) *exclusively* seeks to benefit or “provide what is best” (*hopōs to beltiston ekporiei*) for what that craft or rule is “set over” (*eph' hōi tetaktai*). (345d2–3)

³⁶Annas, *Introduction*, 112–13. For the argument that the virtues are powers, see Anderson, “Power of Courage.”

³⁷Harte (“Knowing and Believing,” 150, 154) argues that Book I's discussion of crafts or skills should be brought to bear on our understanding of the account of powers in Book V and advances a related principle about the *ergon* of a craft or rule. See also Barney, “*Technē*”; Benson, “Socratic Wisdom”; and Lane, “*Technē* and *Archē*,” esp. 9–18, 22–23, for helpful treatments of this passage. For related discussion, see Barney, “Carpenter and the Good”; Hulme, “*Technē*”; “Knowledge”; Lane, “Value of Knowledge in Ruling”; and *Of Rule and Office*.

According to the Benefit Principle, we can determine what a craft or rule is set over by identifying that for which the craft or rule aims to provide what is best, or for which it aims to provide a benefit.

We can use the Benefit Principle to identify what wisdom in the city and wisdom in the soul are set over. In Book IV's search for wisdom, Socrates uses a specific schema for describing crafts, the language of which recalls the Benefit Principle:

A craft, *x* (e.g. carpentry, bronzeworking, farming), makes judgments (*bouleuetai*) on behalf of (*hyper*) *y*, about how *y* would be best (*hōs an echoi beltista*).

Carpentry makes judgments "about" or "on behalf of wooden objects" (*hyper tōn xulinōn skeuōn*), and it judges "how wooden objects would be best" (*hōs an echoi beltista*) (428c2–4).³⁸ Bronzeworking makes judgments on behalf of bronze objects (*hyper tōn ek tou chalkou*), and it judges how these objects would be best (428c5–6). According to the Benefit Principle, we can determine what a craft is set over by identifying the class of objects for which it provides what is best. Carpentry, then, is set over wooden things, and bronzeworking is set over bronze things. In each case, Socrates marks the relationship between each craft and what it is set over with the preposition *hyper*.³⁹ In each case, *hyper* marks precisely what we would expect these crafts to be set over given Socrates's explicit statements about the objects of other crafts: medicine provides what benefits bodies and is set over bodies, and horse-breeding seeks what benefits horses and is set over horses (341c5–342c5).

Whereas carpentry, bronzeworking, and farming make judgments on behalf of (*hyper*) a part of the city, wisdom of the city makes judgments "on behalf of [*hyper*] the city as a whole, how it would associate best with itself and with other cities" (428c11–d3). As in the case of carpentry and the like, *hyper* here marks the relationship between wisdom and what it is set over (the whole city). It is reasonable to conclude, then, that wisdom in the city is set over the whole city. We can identify what wisdom in the soul is set over in a similar way. Socrates characterizes wisdom in the soul as knowledge of what is beneficial for each of the three parts of the soul and the whole soul in common (442c4–7). Wisdom in the soul seeks to benefit the whole soul. Thus, according to the Benefit Principle, wisdom in the soul is set over the whole (tripartite) soul.⁴⁰

The fact that wisdom in the city (soul) is set over the city (soul) has two important consequences. First, it requires rejecting the competing assumption that wisdom is set over the Forms.⁴¹ The Forms are, clearly, distinct from the city

³⁸The schema is confirmed by 428c11–d3: each craft is an *epistēmē* that makes judgments on behalf of something in the city. Cf. note 20.

³⁹Slings (*Notes*, 61–62) asks why Plato employs *hyper* rather than a genitive. The *epistēmai* under consideration are crafts or rule, which benefit what they are set over. Carpentry makes judgments which benefit and hence judges "on behalf of" or "for" (*hyper*) wooden things. See e.g. *Leg.* 697d1–2; *Th.* 1.70.6.1–3.

⁴⁰Wisdom of the city and wisdom of the soul are different powers in that they are set over different things. As this section makes clear, both are structurally similar to crafts, but wisdom of the city and wisdom of the soul, unlike the crafts mentioned, use Forms as standards for judgment. Unlike these crafts, which are only set over a part of the city (bronze objects, wooden objects, etc.), wisdom of the city is set over the city as a whole.

⁴¹"What then is this *sophia*? . . . it is a cognition of those identities which 'are,' and 'are forever,' and are 'imperceptible'; these are the Forms" (Havelock, *Preface*, 282). Kerferd ("Image," 20) refers to "the unchanging world of the Forms which alone can be the object of knowledge and so of *sophia* or wisdom." Jaeger (*Fundamentals*, 82) argues that *phronēsis*, which he uses interchangeably with *sophia*

and from the soul. Since wisdom of the city is set over the city—and given that each power is set over just one domain of objects—wisdom of the city is not set over the Forms. The same argument, *mutatis mutandis*, shows that wisdom of the soul is not set over the Forms.⁴²

The second consequence of the fact that wisdom of the city (soul) is set over the city (soul) is that wisdom is distinct from *epistēmē* as it is narrowly defined in Book V. Crucially, this result holds on any account concerning the nature of *epistēmē* and the set-over relation. While there is disagreement about the set-over relation and about whether *epistēmē* is exclusively exercised in relation to Forms, all interpreters with the exception of Fine argue that *epistēmē* is set over the Forms and not set over any perceptible objects. Fine argues that *epistēmē* is set over the set of true propositions. On either view, knowledge and wisdom must be distinct.

Suppose that knowledge is set over the Forms. Since wisdom of the city and soul is set over the city and soul (respectively) and since the city and soul are not identical to the Forms, wisdom and knowledge are set over different things. This is sufficient to show that they are different powers.⁴³ We can run a parallel argument starting from the view, shared by the majority of commentators, that knowledge is not set over anything perceptible even if, as some argue, knowledge can be exercised in relation to perceptibles: since wisdom is set over the city or soul and both are perceptible, wisdom and knowledge are set over different objects and must be different powers.

Suppose knowledge is set over the set of true propositions. Since wisdom is set over the city (soul), clearly, knowledge and wisdom are set over distinct objects. Therefore, given the criteria in Book V for individuating powers, wisdom and knowledge are distinct powers. Thus, on either view concerning what knowledge is set over, knowledge and wisdom are distinct. The Identity Reading, according to which knowledge and wisdom are identical, is ruled out.

3.2 What Wisdom Accomplishes

Powers are identified not only by what they are set over but also by the work they “accomplish” (*apergazetai*) (477c9–d1). Unlike the set-over relation, however, there is no linguistic marker that reliably distinguishes the work accomplished by a given power from other activities it happens to do. Litigating a principle for identifying what a power accomplishes is beyond the scope of this paper, but even without relying on such a principle here, there is strong indication that the work accomplished by wisdom is to make judgments by the standard of the Forms.⁴⁴

As we saw in Book IV, Socrates suggests that what good judgment enables one to accomplish is making good judgments (*eu bouleuesthai*): “But this is clear, is it

in Plato, “took to itself the Form or standard as its object, and thus became the intellectual intuition of the good and the beautiful in themselves.” Talk of *the* object of wisdom, I take it, picks up on what wisdom is *set over*.

⁴²Can wisdom of the city be set over the Form of a City? No: the work of wisdom of the city is to make judgments for the benefit of the city. Wisdom cannot benefit the Form of a City, since such an entity would already be unchanging and ideal.

⁴³If *x* and *y* are the same power, they must both be set over the same thing and accomplish the same thing (477c9–d6; cf. 478a11–b2). Since wisdom and knowledge are not set over the same thing, they are not the same power.

⁴⁴This picture is supported by the principle defended in Harte, “Knowing and Believing,” 152.

not, that this very thing, good judgment [*euboulia*], is some knowledge, for it is surely not by ignorance, but by knowledge, that they make good judgments [*eu bouleountai*]" (428b6–8).⁴⁵ Since Socrates and Glaucon take wisdom to be a kind of good judgment, it is plausible that what wisdom accomplishes is making good judgments in some way.

This is corroborated by the discussion of the wisdom of the guardians and the wisdom of the rational part of the soul. As we will see, in both the city and the soul, the characteristic activity of the guardian class and of reason is at least in part to make judgments (*bouleuesthai*). We can infer from this that making judgments at least partly specifies the characteristic activity of wisdom, since wisdom in the city (soul) is the virtue by which guardians (the rational part) perform their characteristic work well. Thus, it is reasonable to think that making good judgments at least partly specifies the work that wisdom in the city (soul) accomplishes.

Socrates identifies the three classes of the city as those suited to "moneymaking" (*chrēmatistikon*), "auxiliary activity" (*epikourētikon*), and "judging" (*bouleutikon*) (440e8–441a3). In referring to the guardian class as the *bouleutikon*, Socrates identifies this part of the city by the activity that it is uniquely suited to performing: making judgments. Adjectives such as *bouleutikon*, which contain an *-ikos* ending and are derived from a cognate verb (here, *bouleuesthai*), signal either the *capacity* to or *suitability* for the activity of the verb.⁴⁶ In the context of arguing that in a just city, each part must do its own particular work, it is clear that Socrates's point is that different parts are not only *capable* of different kinds of work, but they are suited to it. After all, the problem with members of the auxiliary class meddling by doing the work of the moneymaking class is not that they are doing something of which they are *incapable*, but that they are doing work for which they are not *suitable*. Since moneymaking is the characteristic activity for which the moneymaking class is particularly well suited, this class is called the *chrēmatistikon*. That Socrates refers to the guardian class as the *bouleutikon*—the one suited to the activity of making judgments—shows that making judgments is (at least part of) the distinctive or characteristic activity of the class. Wisdom is the virtue that enables the guardian class to perform their characteristic activity *well*, and so making judgments is part of the specification of the work of wisdom in the city.⁴⁷

We can give an analogous argument for wisdom in the soul.⁴⁸ Socrates defines justice as each part of the soul doing its own (433d6–11), that is, accomplishing its own work (*ergon ergazesthai*, 434a4), and proceeds to specify the work of each part of the soul. It is crucial for his account of justice that each of the three parts of the soul accomplish *distinct* kinds of work. Socrates is sensitive to this point when he remarks on the roles played by reason and spirit in guarding the city and soul:

⁴⁵The idea that making good judgments is the *ergon* of *euboulia* is supported, first, by the fact that Plato often specifies a thing's *ergon* with a cognate verb phrase as he does for *doxa* (*doxazein*) (though this does not always hold for powers). Second, the argument mirrors the language of 353b2–d2, where Socrates establishes that each *ergon* has a corresponding virtue by which that work is accomplished well.

⁴⁶Kühner and Blass, *Ausführliche Grammatik*, pt. I, ii. 287; cf. Lorenz, "Desire and Reason," 184.

⁴⁷Socrates sometimes calls the rational part of the soul the *logistikon*. Calculating what is best for the soul is part of the activity of judging how the whole soul would be best (cf. 604c5, *tōi bouleuesthai*, picked up with *toutōi tōi logismōi* in d4).

⁴⁸*Bouleuesthai* is an *ergon* accomplished by the soul (353d5).

"Then," I said, "wouldn't these two [reason and spirit] guard the whole soul and the body as well as possible against external enemies—the one, making judgments [*to men bouleuomenon*], and the other, defending, following the one ruling, and through its courage, bringing about the judgments that were made [*ta bouleuthenta*]?" (442b5–9)

Both reason and spirit guard the soul and body, so guarding must not be the activity distinctive of either part. What distinguishes the way reason guards from the way spirit guards is that reason guards through making judgments (*bouleuomenon*), whereas spirit guards through defending. Thus, while it is true that reason guards and rules, it does these activities by making judgments. Making judgments is therefore the distinctive activity of reason. This passage is instructive. Plato attributes to reason many activities—guarding, caring, ruling—not only in Book IV but well after (e.g. 590c7–d6), and reason performs these activities *by making judgments*. Again, given that the characteristic activity of the reasoning part of the soul is to make judgments, wisdom, as the virtue of the reasoning part of the soul, must be that by which reason makes judgment well.

This, however, is an incomplete specification of what wisdom accomplishes. As I suggested in section 2, one makes good judgments by reference to a standard of judgment. Once the Forms are in play, Socrates emphasizes that wisdom takes the Forms, especially the Form of the Good, as objective standards for judgments. Thus, Plato describes what the guardians accomplish in the following way:

Then, I think, as they do their work, they would look frequently in each direction, toward what is by nature just and beautiful and moderate and all such things, and in turn toward what they produce in humans, mixing and blending the flesh-colored pigment from their pursuits, making judgments from this, which, in fact, Homer also called, when it springs up among men, 'divine' and 'god-like.' (501b1–7)⁴⁹

Part of the work guardians accomplish by their wisdom is using Forms as normative standards for bettering the city. What wisdom of the city (soul) accomplishes, then, is making judgments by the standard of the Forms about how the city (soul) would be best—that is, as like the Form of the Good as possible.

We now have a complete account of wisdom: wisdom is the ability to make good judgments, by the standard of the Forms, about how the whole city or soul would fare best. It is set over the whole city or soul. What wisdom accomplishes is making good judgments by the standard of the Forms. Moreover, it follows from this account that, contra the Identity Reading, wisdom is distinct from knowledge (in the strict sense) on any interpretation of knowledge in the literature.⁵⁰ However, wisdom does involve knowledge of Forms.⁵¹

⁴⁹Many thanks to Phillip Mitsis for helpful discussions and suggestions about this passage.

⁵⁰It rules out three alternatives: (1) wisdom is knowledge of the Forms, and its work is to contemplate Forms; (2) wisdom is knowledge of the set of true propositions, and its work is to know these propositions; (3) wisdom is knowledge, and, although knowledge is set over Forms, it can be exercised in relation to certain perceptibles, so that one can know, for instance, what is good for the city. Each is ruled out because each presupposes the Identity Reading.

⁵¹This rules out any account on which wisdom does not require theoretical reasoning or knowledge of Forms at all.

4. WHAT WISDOM GRASPS

An implication of this account is that wisdom involves both the grasp of Forms as standards and the grasp of contingent facts about perceptibles. In what follows, I develop and defend this result by appealing to Plato's models for wisdom: medicine and navigational expertise.⁵² As we will see, it is partly in virtue of having knowledge of Forms that one is wise and, in this sense, *epistēmē* partly constitutes *sophia*.⁵³

Consider first the model of medicine. Plato, in line with the rationalist tradition, holds that medical knowledge or expertise consists in part in the knowledge of human nature and the explanations for and causes of health and illness (444d3–4).⁵⁴ Nature is the standard used by medical expertise, and it is partly in virtue of knowing what accords with nature—e.g. the natural condition of various bodily organs—that one counts as a medical expert. We find a parallel in the discussion of navigational expertise in the simile of the Ship of State. In a contest for the role of the steersman, the genuine navigational expert will be cast aside by the rest of the crew as “a stargazer,” “a babbler,” and “useless” (488e3–489a1). Socrates diagnoses their error as follows: “[The sailors] do not understand that the genuine steersman must pay attention to the seasons of the year, the sky, the stars, the winds, and everything that belongs to the craft, if he will be a true ruler of a ship” (488d4–8). It is partly in virtue of attending to the stars, which are guides or models for steering, that the genuine steersman has navigational expertise. Just as medical expertise consists partly in grasping the standards of medicine and navigational expertise consists partly in attending to the stars and the sky, so too guardianship expertise consists partly in knowledge of the Forms.⁵⁵ In these cases, one is an expert partly in virtue of knowing the standards or models relevant to one's domain. Thus, one is wise partly in virtue of knowing the Forms.

It is plain that medical and navigational expertise consist in more than grasping the relevant standards alone. In addition to attending to the stars—which enables the steersman to determine the direction of navigation—the steersman must know how to adjust to seasonally variable wind patterns. Similarly, the doctor's cognition of medical standards only enables him to know how a body should be by nature. The doctor must also understand whether a body is healthy or unhealthy, and this requires knowing which facts are relevant in making such a judgment and grasping these facts. If a body is unhealthy, the doctor must know what medical tools are available for treating the patient and which treatment option is best. Thus, one counts as a medical expert not only by grasping facts that hold of biological necessity, but also by grasping various nontrivial contingent facts about perceptibles. Both of Plato's models for wisdom, medical expertise and navigational expertise, consist in grasping necessary facts about the standards relevant to their domain as well as contingent facts about the objects over which these forms of expertise are set. The same holds true for wisdom.

⁵²E.g. *Resp.* 342d3–8, 489b8–c7; cf. Lane, “*Technē* and *Archē*”; and Schwab, “*Epistēmē*.”

⁵³Thus, although the significant literature on the nature of *epistēmē* cannot by itself capture the nature of *sophia*, it nevertheless illuminates an aspect of *sophia*.

⁵⁴Cf. Schiefky, *On Ancient Medicine*, appx. I.

⁵⁵Ferrari and Griffith, *Republic*, 191n4; Keyt, “Ship of State”; Reeve, “Goat-Stags,” 186; Sedley, “Art of Ruling,” 261.

Following these models, knowledge of the Forms provides the expert guardian with an objective, changeless standard and direction for how to organize the city and soul. Yet just as one is not a medical expert solely in virtue of knowing the nature of bodies, one is not an expert guardian solely in virtue of knowing Forms. An expert guardian must, in addition, understand a host of contingent facts in order to identify and weigh up a range of available courses of action to better the perceptible city. Thus, one is wise partly in virtue of knowing Forms and partly in virtue of knowing further, contingent, facts about the city. This is why Socrates describes what the guardians accomplish as a kind of “looking” toward what is beautiful, just, good, and so on, by nature, *as well as* toward the city and its constituents (501b1–7; cf. 484c4–d2). Wisdom is an ability to “look” or “see,” Plato’s metaphors for knowledge or successful cognitive contact, in two directions: toward Forms and toward the city or soul. The former is certainly more controversial in the face of competing accounts of wisdom presented by Plato’s contemporaries, but the latter is a nontrivial cognitive achievement in its own right.

It follows from this picture that, although wisdom is set over the city or soul, it nevertheless grasps objects that it is not set over, that is, Forms. As others have convincingly argued, it is possible for powers in general to have a *reach* beyond what each is set over, and it is a commitment of my account that wisdom is one such power.⁵⁶ This feature, as we have seen, is not unique to wisdom. Navigational expertise is set over sailors (341d2–4; 342e3–5), but it grasps stars and uses them as reference points for steering a ship (488d4–8).⁵⁷ Medical expertise is set over (perceptible) bodies, but it grasps the standard for medicine, the nature of the body and its parts, and uses it as a standard for treating the body.

This interpretation neatly explains Socrates’s insistence that guardians must have both knowledge of Forms and experience and the other parts of virtue (484d4–485a2): guardianship expertise consists in both knowledge of Forms and the grasp of contingent facts about the city gained through experience.⁵⁸ Thus, after ten years of mathematical training and five years of dialectical training, candidate guardians take up leadership positions in warfare and assume offices “so that they are no worse than others in experience [*empeiriai*]” (539e5–6). The educational program trains guardians for leadership in their particular city, and, by including training in the offices there, it creates guardians with expertise in ruling that city.⁵⁹

5. UPSHOTS

5.1. *Sophia and Euboulia*

As we saw in section 1, the fact that *sophia* is a kind of *euboulia* guides Socrates and Glaucon’s search for wisdom in the *Republic*. One might now ask, Does the fact that *sophia* is a kind of *euboulia* have any theoretical or historical significance? What, if anything, is at stake for Plato in making this claim?⁶⁰

⁵⁶Harte, “Knowing and Believing”; Kamtekar, “Powers”; Smith, “Power,” 154; *Summoning Knowledge*, chap. 3; and Vogt, *Belief and Truth*.

⁵⁷Sedley, “Art of Ruling,” 261.

⁵⁸Moss, *Being and Seeming*, 124–26; Smith, *Summoning Knowledge*.

⁵⁹See Lane, *Of Rule and Office*, for an important and illuminating discussion of offices and office-holders in the *Republic*.

⁶⁰Many thanks to an anonymous reviewer for raising these questions.

This feature of wisdom has significant theoretical import. The fact that *sophia* is a kind of *euboulia* explains why it has a certain epistemic structure: wisdom makes judgments for the benefit of what it is set over, by reference to a standard for judgment.⁶¹ Not every intellectual power has this structure. For instance, *epistēmē* of Forms, which is not a kind of *euboulia*, knows Forms as they are. In addition, this feature of *sophia* is important for understanding how the account fits into the broader dialectical context, at least as Plato understands it. Recall that Socrates and Glaucon introduce the idea that wisdom is a kind of good judgment (428b3–8) by presupposition rather than by argument. This implies that Plato takes the association between *sophia* and *euboulia* to be part of the common ground. Indeed, in the *Protagoras*, Plato attributes this assumption to the character of Protagoras, one of his principal competitors in the dispute about the nature of wisdom. Plato's Protagoras, when pressed to specify the virtue he teaches, answers,

The lesson is good judgment [*euboulia*] about one's own affairs, so that one could best manage one's own household, and [good judgment] about the affairs of the polis, so that one could be most capable of acting and speaking about affairs of the polis. (*Prt.* 318e5–319a2)

In the next lines, Socrates identifies this kind of good judgment with “political skill” (*tēn politikēn technēn*, *Prt.* 319a3–5). This virtue described by Protagoras also appears in the *Meno* as a contender for the title *sophia*. Meno, Socrates claims, “desires this wisdom and virtue [*tautēs tēs sophias kai aretēs*] by which people manage well their household affairs and those of the city” (*Meno* 90e10–91a6). Socrates remarks that Protagoras enjoys a distinguished reputation for this wisdom and has amassed more wealth than anyone else by charging fees for teaching this virtue (91c6–92a6). Plato alludes to the association between *euboulia* and *sophia* in the *Republic* as well. It is because Thrasymachus associates injustice with *euboulia* that injustice becomes associated with *phronēsis* and *sophia* (348d2–34). In all these cases, Plato depicts certain prominent sophists as accepting that *sophia* is closely connected to or is a kind of *euboulia*.⁶²

Although Plato agrees with Protagoras that *sophia* is a kind of *euboulia* (428b4–8), he nevertheless contrasts his account of *sophia* with a rival view, which he attributes to “sophists” generally (493a6–9). We can now specify with precision the way in which Plato thinks this “sophistic” view goes astray. As we saw in the discussion of Book IV, Plato does not completely abandon the idea that wisdom is a kind of good judgment that enables one to manage the city and one's own affairs well. In stark contrast with Aristotle, Plato does not sharply and completely distinguish *sophia* from *euboulia*. Rather, as Plato explains in Book VI, the sophistic view fails to see that the kind of good judgment that constitutes true wisdom must use *Forms*

⁶¹How do *sophia*, *euboulia*, and *epistēmē* relate? 428a11–d10 indicates that *sophia* is a kind of *euboulia*, and that *euboulia* is some sort of *epistēmē*. *Epistēmē* is here used in a general or loose sense, as is clear from the fact Plato includes carpentry and the like among the *epistēmai* (428b10). *Sophia* partly consists in *epistēmē* in the strict sense (*epistēmē* which is set over Forms). Plato does not claim that every kind of *euboulia* consists partly in *epistēmē* of Forms but that the kind of *euboulia* that is *sophia* must partly consist in *epistēmē* of Forms.

⁶²Isocrates argues that a man is wise if he can use his *doxa* to attain what is generally best (*Antid.* 271.2–8; cf. *Antid.* 270). For other places where *euboulia* seems to mark an important intellectual virtue or capacity, see Isoc. *Ad. Demon.* 34–35; *Evagoras* 46; *Panath.* 86.6.

as the standards for judgment. Sophists, according to Plato, deny the existence of Forms and take popular opinion—unobjective, unstable, and explanatorily inert compared to Forms—as their models. The Sophist does not understand

which one of the opinions and desires [of the many] is fine or shameful, good or bad, just or unjust, but he applies these terms according to the opinions of the great animal; he calls what that animal is pleased with “good,” and what it is vexed by “bad,” and he has no other account of these things. (493b7–c4)

Mastery over these opinions is “what the Sophists *call* wisdom [*sophia*]” rather than genuine wisdom (493a6–9, b6, emphasis added). As Socrates explains, the person who has what Sophists call wisdom does not know which of the beliefs is *truly* good or bad, and they cannot explain the *nature* of the alleged good. By contrast, the genuinely wise person—the person who has what Plato takes to be wisdom—relies on Forms as standards for judgment, and so will be able both to give an account of the fine, good, and just, and to explain which convictions are genuinely good (493b7–c6).⁶³

The fact that the *Republic* advances an account of wisdom as a privileged kind of good judgment is significant in the dialectical context, as Plato presents it. It shows that the *Republic's* account of wisdom succeeds in securing the result promised by Plato's Protagoras: the ability to reliably make one's own affairs and the affairs of the city as (objectively, according to Plato) good as possible. By capturing the features that many would have found compelling about Protagorean wisdom—wisdom enables one to better one's own soul and one's city, is a kind of good judgment, and is a form of political expertise—Plato shows that what he argues is true wisdom is more desirable than Protagorean wisdom even for securing the very results promised by Protagoras.

As I have suggested, that *sophia* in the *Republic* is a kind of *euboulia* marks an important difference between Plato's view here and the account that Aristotle will defend. In advancing this account of *sophia*, and especially in rejecting the idea that wisdom in the *Republic* is set over Forms, I also mean to resist a competing narrative according to which Plato and Aristotle largely *agreed* that the proper objects of wisdom are unchanging, perfect intelligible beings, and the proper exercise or work of wisdom is to contemplate these beings.⁶⁴ This narrative is advanced by Kerferd, who ascribes to Aristotle the view that wisdom is “the study of things divine, above the world and unchangeable” and remarks, “in this case there are surely affinities with Plato's view of the unchanging world of the Forms which alone can be the object of knowledge and so of *sophia* or wisdom.”⁶⁵ Cooper appears to endorse this picture as well. He agrees with Kerferd's characterization of *sophia* in Aristotle and suggests that wisdom in the *Republic* is identical to knowledge,

⁶³This passage can be fruitfully added to a list of texts presented by Barney (“*Technē*,” 115) as evidence for the idea that Plato's claims about *measure* or *standards* in a host of dialogues targets sophists such as Protagoras, and that Plato often has in mind his own commitments about what might be a suitable measure or standard.

⁶⁴This assumption, which I mean to challenge, is different from the related view that, according to Plato, wisdom is both theoretical and practical, whereas Aristotle conceived of *sophia* as a purely theoretical virtue. This rejected assumption is compelling if one endorses the Identity Reading.

⁶⁵Kerferd, “Image,” 20.

which is set over Forms and contemplates Forms exclusively.⁶⁶ This narrative, I have argued, gets Plato—at least in the *Republic*—wrong. It obscures crucial points of continuity between Plato and his predecessors and contemporaries about the nature of human wisdom and the corresponding activity of the best human life, and it understates the extent to which Aristotle diverged from and innovated on the Platonic conception of *sophia*.

5.2. *Wisdom and the Two Worlds Debate*

In defending my account of wisdom and arguing that it is distinct from *epistēmē* of Forms, I remained largely neutral about the Two Worlds Debate. The central question of the debate is whether knowledge (*epistēmē*) is exclusively exercised in relation to Forms, and whether opinion (*doxa*) is exclusively exercised in relation to perceptibles. The account of *sophia* that has emerged is consistent with a range of interpretations of *epistēmē* put forward on the various sides of the debate. While this is no place to attempt to settle the Two Worlds question, I do want to spell out an important implication of my account for it.

A well-known challenge to the view that *epistēmē* can only be exercised in relation to Forms (call this the Traditional Reading) is that it is difficult to see how *epistēmē* could be necessary for or relevant to ruling the city if it cannot be exercised in relation to the city.⁶⁷ I want to focus on a version of this challenge: how can *epistēmē* be the epistemic virtue or power by means of which guardians rule well, if *epistēmē* cannot be exercised in relation to the city? This objection, which relies on the assumption that *epistēmē* is the ruler's virtue, is taken to pose a significant challenge to the view that *epistēmē* is exclusively exercised in relation to Forms. As Smith argues, *epistēmē* cannot be that by which guardians do their work well, if *epistēmē* is exclusively exercised in relation to Forms, "unless the judgments involved in ruling are judgments *about* the Forms . . . , which they plainly would not be."⁶⁸

One strategy for responding to the original challenge is to show that although *epistēmē* is exclusively exercised in relation to Forms, it is *relevant* and *necessary* for ruling because it grasps Forms, which are models for ruling the city. Notice, however, that this solution does not by itself resolve the version of the challenge that interests us here. A proponent of the Traditional Reading can argue successfully that *epistēmē* is *necessary* for ruling, but this does not suffice to show how *epistēmē* can be *the virtue by which* guardians rule the city well. As Smith argues, the ruler's virtue should be the power by which one makes judgments *about the city*, but this cannot be the case, on the assumption that *epistēmē* is the ruler's virtue, if *epistēmē* can only be exercised in relation to Forms. Thus, two claims stand in tension: the Traditional Reading—according to which *epistēmē* is exercised exclusively in relation to Forms—and the claim that *epistēmē* is the virtue by which guardians rule the city well. Smith, like many other commentators, have rejected the Traditional

⁶⁶Cooper, *Pursuits of Wisdom*, 63, 356, 313–14, 424n44.

⁶⁷Annas (*Introduction*, 194) puts it in terms of *relevance*. Fine ("Republic V–VII," 86) puts it in terms of *necessity*. See also Moss, *Being and Seeming*, chap. 4; Schwab, "*Epistēmē*," 42; Sedley, "Art of Ruling"; and Smith "Power," 143–44.

⁶⁸Smith, "Power," 154.

Reading and expanded the *reach* of *epistēmē* so that it can be exercised in relation to perceptibles.⁶⁹

My account makes available an alternative response: the proper specification of the ruler's virtue is not *epistēmē*, but *sophia*, which has *epistēmē* as a partial constituent. *Sophia* (of the city or soul) does reach perceptibles—in fact, I have argued that it is set over the city or soul. This captures the intuition of challengers of the Traditional Reading that the reach of the ruler's virtue should at least extend to perceptibles like the city. But since the ruler's distinctive virtue is *sophia* and not *epistēmē* alone, this account removes one source of philosophical pressure for thinking that it is *epistēmē* that grasps perceptibles. In adopting this approach, I am sympathetic to the suggestion from other commentators that there is some cognitive state besides *epistēmē* that is the epistemic power or virtue of the ruler.⁷⁰ I have identified *sophia* as the power in question and, crucially, I have shown that this power is distinct from *epistēmē* on grounds that are independent from the Two Worlds Debate.

The account of wisdom I have defended makes one further contribution to the literature on the Two Worlds Debate. Wherever one falls in this debate, one needs an account of the nature of guardianship expertise and how it relates to knowledge. In addition to offering such an account, I have argued that Book IV's discussion of *sophia*, which many commentators on the Two Worlds Debate have neglected in favor of Books V–VII, is crucial for understanding the power in question. For a full account of the ruler's virtue, these texts can and ought to be read together. As we have seen, Book IV's classification of *sophia* as a kind of good judgment and the richly illuminating analogy between *sophia* and various crafts are important for understanding the structure and nature of the ruler's virtue.

5.3. *The Scope of Wisdom in the Republic*

My discussion has focused on the *Republic*, but one might worry that in other dialogues, Plato claims that the best activity of the soul is to contemplate the Forms. Socrates famously argues in the *Phaedo* that the philosopher would welcome the separation of the soul from the body: the body interferes with the soul's ability to attain *phronēsis* and truth (66a6), and, as long as the soul is embodied, one cannot “know” (*gnōnai*, *eidenai*) in the purest way (66b7–67b5). The *Phaedrus* also establishes that the soul strives to contemplate Forms (*Phdr.* 248b5–250c4). In fact, even in *Republic* X, Socrates implies that the best condition of the soul is for it to contemplate divine beings (611d8–e4). These passages all suggest that the best activity of the soul is to contemplate Forms. It may be surprising, then, that wisdom of the soul in the *Republic* is not identical to knowledge of Forms and, what is more, that it is so practically oriented toward ruling particular cities and souls.

⁶⁹For the importance of distinguishing what an object is *of* or *about* from what an object is *set over*, see Smith, “Power”; *Summoning Knowledge*, 64–66.

⁷⁰Moss (*Being and Seeming*, ch. 5, 126, 130) argues that, while Plato has no fixed vocabulary for this ability, it has a practical and theoretical aspect—the latter of which is *epistēmē*. Schwab (“*Epistēmē*,” 76–82) argues that it is a privileged kind of opinion. Smith (*Summoning Knowledge*, 64) would class this under ‘mixed content cognition.’

The key is to recognize that, in each of the passages just mentioned, Plato's discussion focuses on the disembodied soul—the disembodied soul of the *Phaedo*, the desires of reason as the steersman of the soul in *Phaedrus*, or the disembodied soul briefly mentioned at the end of the *Republic*. In fact, in the *Phaedo*, Plato *contrasts* the disembodied soul with the embodied one, arguing that when the soul is embodied, nature commands the soul to rule the body, so that the nature of the embodied soul is to lead and rule (79e8–80a5). However, in Book X, Socrates explains that the account of wisdom in the *Republic* concerns wisdom as the virtue of the *embodied* soul. He claims that, in everything that precedes, we studied the soul not in its pure state, but in its association with the body and other evils (611b10–c4). Moreover, he emphasizes that what has been established thus far is *true* of the soul in its embodied state, but to discover the true nature of the soul, we must turn to the soul's *philosophia* to see what it loves and would become *if* it were to follow this impulse entirely and remove itself from embodiment and its effects (611d8–612a6). Socrates does not take himself to have completed this project in the *Republic*. He raises and sets aside the question whether the soul in its original, disembodied state is one or tripartite, indicating that the nature of the disembodied soul and its virtues are beyond the scope of the inquiry (612a3–4). He does, however, tell us what the foregoing discussion accomplished: “Presently, we have adequately gone through the conditions and parts [of the soul] *in a human life* [*en tōi anthrōpinōi biōi*]” (612a4–5, emphasis added). Thus, in the *Republic*, Plato gives us his considered account of wisdom as a cardinal virtue of the living, embodied human soul. Since wisdom enables the *embodied* soul to flourish, it must ensure the wellbeing of the whole, tripartite soul as well as that of the body.

What does Socrates mean when he claims that, so far, we have only studied the soul in its association with the body and other evils? Consider Book IV's discussion of wisdom, where Socrates argues that the soul is wise in virtue of reason's ability to make good judgments on behalf of the whole tripartite soul, as well as the body, against external enemies (442b5–8, c4–7). These external forces include excessive wealth, poverty, and inappropriate honors (591c1–592b5), which are problems for souls in conditions of embodiment. In the allegory of the cave as well, Socrates compares the embodied and disembodied souls. He compares two educational errors that compromise one's ability to govern. The first error is to fail to be educated, but the second, which is more pertinent to our present topic, is to allocate too much time—indeed all of one's time—to education. Socrates explains,

The former [will not be able to govern] because they do not have one end [*skopon*] in life, aiming at which they must do all that they do in the private and public domains; the latter because they would not act [viz. manage their affairs] willingly, believing that they have settled far away in the Isles of the Blessed, *while they are still living* [*zōntes eti*]. (519c2–6, emphasis added)

Those who spend all of their time contemplating Forms have an erroneous belief about the way they ought to live their lives: in exclusively engaging in contemplation, they are behaving as if they were no longer *alive*. In truth, their souls are embodied—they are *living*—and, since right action requires experience, they cannot spend the entirety of their lives engaged in contemplation of Forms. Thus, although, as the allegory of the cave illustrates, education turns the soul

upward toward Forms, and although the soul that grasps the Forms desires to continue contemplating them, and although Plato implies that the happiness of the disembodied soul consists exclusively in contemplating Forms, wisdom and happiness for a living, embodied soul cannot consist exclusively in contemplating Forms. Socrates states explicitly that when anyone with good sense evaluates the soul that “has come from a brighter life and is dimmed by unfamiliarity” after returning to the perceptible realm, he will “call this soul happy *in experience as well as in life*” (518a1–b3).

The *Republic*, then, is a dialogue about the happiness *in a human life*, and the best lived human condition and activity. Plato's account of wisdom is by no means less significant for being restricted to the virtue of the living, embodied soul. After all, the long-standing dispute about wisdom in which Plato self-consciously participates is about wisdom as the cardinal virtue and the best intellectual achievement for human beings under conditions of embodiment. In the *Republic*, Plato offers a significant contribution to the debates about wisdom of his time. He departs radically from his predecessors and contemporaries by arguing that wisdom partly consists in the knowledge of Forms as objective, unchanging, and perfect standards for judgment. Yet in conceiving of wisdom as a highly privileged kind of *good judgment*, Plato offers an account of wisdom that is more continuous with its cultural context than some commentators have allowed.⁷¹

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adam, James. *The “Republic” of Plato*. 2nd ed. Cambridge University Press, 1965.
- Anderson, Merrick. “The Power of Courage in Plato's *Republic*.” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 62 (2024): 1–23.
- Annas, Julia. *An Introduction to Plato's “Republic”*. Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Aristotle. *Ethica Nicomachea*. Edited by I. Bywater. Oxford University Press, 1894. [EN]
- Barney, Rachel. “The Carpenter and the Good.” In *Pursuing the Good: Ethics and Metaphysics in Plato's “Republic”*, edited by Douglas Cairns, Fritz-Gregor Hermann, and Terry Penner, 293–319. Edinburgh University Press, 2007.
- . “*Technē* as a Model for Virtue in Plato.” In *Productive Knowledge in Ancient Philosophy: The Concept of Technē*, edited by Thomas Kjeller Johansen, 62–85. Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Benson, Hugh H. *Socratic Wisdom: The Model of Knowledge in Plato's Early Dialogues*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Billings, Joshua. *The Philosophical Stage: Drama and Dialectic in Classical Athens*. Princeton University Press, 2021.
- Bonich, Christopher. *Plato's Utopia Recast: His Later Ethics and Politics*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
- . “Why Should Philosophers Rule? Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Protrepticus*.” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 24 (2007): 153–75.
- Brémond, Émile, and Georges Mathieu, eds. *Isocrate: Discours*. 4 vols. Les Belles Lettres, 1929–62.
- Broadie, Sarah. *Plato's Sun-Like Good: Dialectic in the “Republic”*. Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Cooper, John M. “The Psychology of Justice in Plato.” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 14 (1977): 151–57.

⁷¹For generous feedback on this paper, I am deeply grateful to Melissa Lane, Hendrik Lorenz, Benjamin Morison, Jessica Moss, Alexander Nehamas, and Gabriel Shapiro. I am also thankful to Merrick Anderson, Corinne Gartner, Sukaina Hirji, Brad Inwood, Mirjam Kotwick, Harvey Lederman, Sara Magrin, Evan Rodriguez, and Whitney Schwab for discussions and suggestions that have improved this work. My thanks to the audiences at the Princeton-Penn Conference in Ancient Philosophy, the University of Michigan Ancient Philosophy Working Group, PIKSI Boston, and the Ancient Philosophy Conference at Humboldt University for their thought-provoking questions. Finally, I am grateful to three anonymous referees for *JHP*, Deborah Boyle, Vincent Navarro, and Henry Southgate for their generous and helpful comments.

- . *Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy from Socrates to Plotinus*. Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Ferrari, G. R. F. and Tom Griffith, eds. *The Republic*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Fine, Gail. "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic V*." *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 60 (1978): 121–39.
- . "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic V–VII*." In *Epistemology*, edited by Stephen Everson, 85–115. Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Harte, Verity. "Knowing and Believing in *Republic V*." In *Rereading Ancient Philosophy: Old Chestnuts and Sacred Cows*, edited by Verity Harte and Raphael Woolf, 141–62. Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Havelock, Eric. *Preface to Plato*. Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Homer. *Iliad*. In *Homeri Opera*, edited by D. B. Monro and T. W. Allen. Clarendon Press, 1958. [Il.]
- Hulme, Emily. "Is Farming a *Technē*?" *Ancient Philosophy* 42 (2022): 443–51.
- . "Plato's Knowledge Vocabulary and John Lyons's Structural Semantics." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 61 (2022): 1–24.
- Irwin, Terence. *Plato's Ethics*. Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Jaeger, Werner. *Aristotle. Fundamentals of the History of His Development*. Edited and translated by Richard Robinson. Clarendon Press, 1934.
- Kamtekar, Rachana. "The Powers of Plato's Tripartite Psychology." *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium of Ancient Philosophy* 24 (2009): 127–62.
- Kerferd, George. "The Image of the Wise Man in Greece in the Period Before Plato." In *Images of Man in Ancient and Medieval Thought Studia Gerardo Verbeke Ab Amicis Et Collegis Dicata*, edited by Gérard Verbeke and Fernand Bossier, 17–28. Leuven University Press, 1976.
- Keyt, David. "Plato and the Ship of State." In *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's "Republic"*, edited by Gerasimos Xenophon Santas, 189–213. Blackwell, 2006.
- Kühner, Raphael, and Friedrich Wilhelm Blass. *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*, pt. I. Hannover, 1892.
- Kurke, Leslie. *Aesopic Conversations: Popular Tradition, Cultural Dialogue, and the Invention of Greek Prose*. Martin Classical Lectures. Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Lane, Melissa. *Of Rule and Office: Plato's Ideas of the Political*. Princeton University Press, 2023.
- . "Plato on the Value of Knowledge in Ruling." *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 92 (2018): 49–67.
- . "*Technē* and *Archē* in Plato's *Republic* Book 1." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 57 (2020): 1–24.
- Lorenz, Hendrik. "Desire and Reason in Plato's *Republic*." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 27 (2004): 83–116.
- McPherran, Mark L. "The Gods and Piety of Plato's *Republic*." In *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's "Republic"*, edited by Gerasimos Xenophon Santas, 84–103. Blackwell, 2006.
- , ed. *Plato's "Republic": A Critical Guide*. Cambridge Critical Guides. Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Moore, Christopher. *Calling Philosophers Names: On the Origin of a Discipline*. Princeton University Press, 2019.
- Moss, Jessica. *Plato's Epistemology: Being and Seeming*. Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Nehamas, Alexander. *Virtues of Authenticity: Essays on Plato and Socrates*. Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Nightingale, Andrea Wilson. *Genres in Dialogue: Plato and the Construct of Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- . *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy: Theoria in Its Cultural Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Plato. *Alcibiades*. Edited by N. Denyer. Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics. Cambridge University Press, 2001. [Alc.]
- . *Apology*. In *Platonis Opera I*, edited by E. A. Duke, W. F. Hicken, W. S. M. Nicoll, D. B. Robinson, and J. C. G. Strachan. Clarendon Press, 1995.
- . *Definitions*. In *Platonis Opera V*, edited by J. Burnet. Clarendon Press, 1907.
- . *Laws*. In *Platonis Opera V*, edited by J. Burnet. Clarendon Press, 1907. [Leg.]
- . *Meno*. In *Platonis Opera III*, edited by J. Burnet. Clarendon Press, 1903.
- . *Phaedo*. In *Platonis Opera I*, edited by E. A. Duke, W. F. Hicken, W. S. M. Nicoll, D. B. Robinson, and J. C. G. Strachan. Clarendon Press, 1995. [Phd.]
- . *Phaedrus*. In *Platonis Opera II*, edited by J. Burnet. Clarendon Press, 1901. [Phdr.]
- . *Protagoras*. In *Platonis Opera III*, edited by J. Burnet. Clarendon Press, 1903. [Prt.]
- . *Republic*. Edited by S. R. Slings. Oxford University Press, 2003. [Resp.]
- . *Republic*. In *Platonis Opera IV*, edited by J. Burnet. Clarendon Press, 1902.
- . *Republic*. Translated by G. M. A. Grube and C. D. C. Reeve. Hackett, 1992.

- . *Statesman*. In *Platonis Opera I*, edited by E. A. Duke, W. F. Hicken, W. S. M. Nicoll, D. B. Robinson, and J. C. G. Strachan. Clarendon Press, 1995. [*Plt.*]
- . *Theaetetus*. In *Platonis Opera I*, edited by E. A. Duke, W. F. Hicken, W. S. M. Nicoll, D. B. Robinson, and J. C. G. Strachan. Clarendon Press, 1995. [*Tht.*]
- Reeve, C. D. C. "Goat-Stags, Philosopher-Kings, and Eudaimonism in the *Republic*." *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium of Ancient Philosophy* 22 (2006): 185–209.
- . *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's "Republic"*. Hackett, 1988.
- Santas, Gerasimos Xenophon, ed. *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's "Republic"*. Blackwell, 2006.
- Schofield, Malcolm. "Euboulia in the *Iliad*." *Classical Quarterly* 36 (1986): 6–31.
- . *Plato: Political Philosophy*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Schiefky, Mark J. *Hippocrates On Ancient Medicine: Translated with Introduction and Commentary*. Vol. 28 of *Studies in Ancient Medicine*. Brill, 2005.
- Schwab, Whitney. "Understanding *Epistēmē* in Plato's *Republic*." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 51 (2016): 41–85.
- Scott, Dominic. *Levels of Argument: A Comparative Study of Plato's "Republic" and Aristotle's "Nicomachean Ethics"*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Sedley, David. "Philosophy, the Forms, and the Art of Ruling." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's "Republic"*, edited by G. R. F. Ferrari, 256–83. Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Singpurwalla, Rachel G. K. "Plato's Defense of Justice in the *Republic*." In *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's "Republic"*, edited by Gerasimos Xenophon Santas, 263–82. Blackwell, 2006.
- Slings, S. R., Gerard Boter, and J. M. van Ophuijsen. *Critical Notes on Plato's "Politeia"*. Mnemosyne, Bibliotheca Classica Batava 267. Brill, 2005.
- Smith, Nicholas D. "Plato on Knowledge as a Power." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 38 (2000): 145–68.
- . *Summoning Knowledge in Plato's "Republic"*. Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Thucydides. *Historiae*. Vol. 1, edited by H. S. Jones and J. E. Powell. Oxford University Press, 1942. [*Th.*]
- Vogt, Katja Maria. *Belief and Truth: A Skeptic Reading of Plato*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Wolfsdorf, David. "'Sophia' and 'Epistēmē' in the Archaic and Classical Periods." In *The Philosophy of Knowledge: A History*, edited by Nicholas D. Smith, 11–29. Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.
- Woodruff, Paul. "Euboulia as the Skill Protagoras Taught." In *Protagoras of Abdera: The Man, His Measure*, edited by Johannes M. van Ophuijsen, Marlein van Raalte, and Peter Stork, 179–93. Brill, 2013.