

# Book V

- ▶ 5 types of constitutions- a story for another time
- ▶ The subject turns to the role of women in the kallipolis

# On the distribution of the “natural capacities”

- ▶ Let's turn to the passage at 455d:
  - ▶ “Then, my friend, there is no pursuit relevant to the management of the city that belongs to a woman because she is a woman, or to a man because he is a man; but the various natural capacities are distributed in a similar way between both creatures, and women can share by nature in every pursuit, and men in every one ...” (455d).

# The Role of Women in the Kallipolis

- ▶ “... the women should share with the men, in the way described, in the areas of education, children and guarding the other citizens; that whether they remain in the city or go out to war, they must guard together and hunt together, as hounds do, and share everything to the extent possible; and that by behaving in this way, they will be doing what is best, not something contrary to the natural relationship of female to male, and the one they are most naturally fitted to share in with one another” (466c-d).

# Philosopher- kings

- ▶ At the end of Book V, we get a discussion of whether the kallipolis could ever actually come into existence, and if so, how this might take place. Socrates claims that philosophers would have to come to rule (473d).
- ▶ We need to know then, what a philosopher is.

# The nature of the philosopher

- ▶ A philosopher is a lover of wisdom (475b)-- and this love of wisdom is a general appetite for it. This is different than someone who wants to have a lot of experiences (475e), rather the philosopher wants to see the truth. (475e).

# Belief vs. knowledge

- ▶ Belief is the faculty by which we are able to hold opinions (that is, believe). Knowledge, on the other hand, deals with what is as it is. So, for example, I can believe that many individual things are beautiful, but beauty itself can only be known.
- ▶ Philosophers are not interested in the many things that are beautiful, but rather in the thing that is beauty. This topic continues in Book VI.

# Book VI- the philosophers, cont.

- ▶ In addition to understanding the things that are, the philosophers will be lovers of truth (485c), will desire “the pleasures that the soul experiences just by itself, and will be indifferent to those that come through the body ...” (485d), won’t care that much about money, won’t consider death to be so terrible, will be just and gentle (486b), fast learners, with good memories, musical, and full of grace. (486d).

# That's great, but ...

▶ Adeimantus observes:

▶ "... when it comes to facts rather than words ... all those who take up philosophy-- not those who merely dabble in it while still young in order to complete their upbringing, and then drop it, but those who continue in it for a longer time-- the majority become cranks, not to say completely bad, while the ones who seem best are rendered useless to the city because of the pursuit you recommend." (487d)



# Socrates replies...

Compare the situation to  
a ship at sea



# The Ship Analogy

“Each of them thinks that he should captain the ship, even though he has not yet learned the craft and cannot name his teacher or a time when he was learning it. Indeed, they go further and claim that it cannot be taught at all, and are even ready to cut to pieces anyone who says it can ... they rule the ship, use up its cargo drinking and feasting, and make the sort of voyage you would expect of such people.” (488b-c)

# The True Captain

- ▶ Socrates concludes: “When that is what is happening onboard ships, don’t you think that a true captain would sure to be called a “stargazer,” a “useless babbler,” a “good-for-nothing” by those who sail in ships so governed?” (489a).
- ▶ “It is not for the ruler ... to beg the subject to accept [their] rule.” (489c).

# The Nature of the Guardians, cont.

- ▶ It looks like the Guardians have inconsistent character traits:
  - ▶ -They are orderly, quiet and stable
  - ▶ -They are clever and spirited.
- ▶ How does such a character come to be?
- ▶ Answering this question will lead us to discuss the subjects to be studied by the Guardians.

# The Most Important Subject- The Good

- ▶ What is Good?
- ▶ Most people think it is enjoyment, while “the more refined believe it to be knowledge.”
- ▶ Which is it?
- ▶ “[the Good] is what every soul pursues, and for its sake does everything. The soul has a hunch that the good is something but it is puzzled and cannot adequately grasp just what it is or acquire the sort of stable belief about it ...” (505e).

# Discussion Question

- ▶ Plato says:
- ▶ “[the Good] is what every soul pursues, and for its sake does everything. The soul has a hunch that the good is something but it is puzzled and cannot adequately grasp just what it is or acquire the sort of stable belief about it ...” (505e).
- ▶ What is the best good?

# An Analogy

What is required to see?

- ▶ 1. The thing you are seeing.
- ▶ 2. Your eyes, brain, etc.
- ▶ 3. Anything else?

Light





# The Good

Now, ultimately all of our light comes from the sun in one way or another. Here is the analogy to the good:

“In the visible realm, light and sight are rightly thought to be sunlike, but wrongly thought to be the sun. So, here it is right to think of knowledge and truth as godlike, but wrong to think of either of them is the good-- for the status of the good is yet more honorable.” (508e-509a).

# How do the Guardians Learn About “the Good”?



They must study the following subjects in order:



1. Picture thinking (*eikasa*)- We do this as children. It is “imaging”-- dealing with sense data as sense data.



2. Natural Science (*pistis*)- develop theories about the sensory data we collect, looking for “patterns” in the data.



3. Mathematics (*dianoia*)- start to disconnect mathematical objects from being attached to sensory objects, we are now heading into the world of *knowledge*.



4. Philosophy (*nous*)- which “sees” things as they are (in the world of the unchanging “Forms”)