



## **The Development of Plato's Political Theory.**

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*The Journal of Politics*, Volume 49, Issue 2 (May, 1987), 644-646.

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represented in the title of the book. The book is, however, a useful and stimulating compilation of topics related to nuclear deterrence. Some of the essays are highly thought-provoking and, one hopes, will be expanded upon in future work by the author.

Duplication does possess one important virtue. It is difficult, if not impossible, for the reader to miss Quester's main points. He argues persuasively for the necessity, the unavoidability, of contemporary nuclear deterrence. In order to prevent the ultimate catastrophe, he asserts, one must continue to threaten it. While there exists an entirely understandable effort to move from countervalue to counterforce weapons, Quester feels this only presents the world with the unsettling choices of either making war less horrible or making war less likely. One cannot have it both ways. "Peace may now depend on civilians' being the target and on the military's natural inclination toward counterforce targeting being overcome and renounced" (p. 149).

Some readers may be somewhat shocked at Quester's sanguine embrace of deterrence, even in the face of its apparent violation of standards of traditional morality. His approach is both straightforward and instrumental: "The world must try to overcome its moral and practical problems on nuclear deterrence, for the simplest of arguments: that there is currently nothing better" (p. 119). In many respects this quotation summarizes Quester's principal argument and points the way toward the future. While acknowledging that governments should continue to explore possibilities for moving closer to conventional deterrence and away from heavy reliance on nuclear weapons (the "ultimate substitution," p. 215), escaping from our atomic conundrums is not a very likely eventuality. Nuclear deterrence does have a future, therefore. Indeed, nuclear deterrence *is* our future.

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*The Development of Plato's Political Theory.* By George Klosko. (New York: Methuen, 1986. Pp. xviii, 263. \$31.00 cloth, \$12.95 paper.)

In his introduction George Klosko notes that there has not been a comprehensive treatment of Plato's political theory written in English since the 1918 publication of Ernest Baker's *Greek Political Theory: Plato and His Predecessors*. Klosko's own book is intended as a remedy to this situation, and it is remarkably successful in achieving this ambitious goal.

Although focusing upon Plato's concern for moral and political reform, Klosko is nevertheless careful to introduce the reader to those larger historical and metaphysical issues which are necessary for a comprehensive understanding of Platonic politics. As the title indicates, Klosko attempts to demonstrate the theoretical development in Plato's political

thought as he moved away from his initial preoccupation with the historical Socrates and towards his analysis of those themes which are more characteristic of the middle and late dialogues. Specifically Klosko argues that the middle dialogues (including the *Gorgias*) develop a Platonic metaphysics, morality, and psychology that are both different from and more realistic than their corresponding Socratic versions. At the political level, although Plato remains consistent in his belief that the necessary political and moral reforms can be achieved only by operating outside the currently existing structural and cultural framework, he does, nonetheless, become increasingly pessimistic in his estimation of human nature and as a consequence comes to rely increasingly upon the efficacy of "second-best" institutional arrangements.

As Klosko reads the early dialogues, Socrates' political position contains three elements. First, virtue is knowledge; second, it is better to suffer an injustice than it is to commit one; and finally, inasmuch as the very nature of philosophy presupposes the endless examination of all opinions, each individual is to become morally autonomous and to live strictly according to his or her own best judgment. Beginning with the middle dialogues Plato rejects Socrates' overly intellectualistic understanding of human nature and develops the more complex psychology of the tripartite soul. Given that the Platonic soul must be formed in such a way that the spiritual and appetitive elements are subordinated to the instrumental and normative rule of reason, the educational system of *The Republic* requires the creation of an intensive conditioning program and the establishment of an authoritative social hierarchy. These features, in turn, presuppose the rejection of Socrates' commitment to moral autonomy. In the middle dialogues Plato has come to the realization that the moral betterment of the individual requires more than simply a gadfly's effort to awaken the slumbering citizen to thought. Inasmuch as wisdom presupposes a certain moral ordering of the human psyche, it can be achieved only if the appropriate existential prerequisites have been met.

Although Plato's *Republic* and *Gorgias* represent a break from the earlier Socratic commitment to critical rationalism, they still retain his original faith in the political efficacy of philosophical virtue. In the *Statesman* and *Laws*, however, Plato becomes increasingly sensitive to the human tendency to resist actively the authority of the philosophic life. Perhaps less certain about the doctrine of the Forms (see his *Parmenides*) and no doubt disappointed by the outcome of his visits to Syracuse, Plato develops a much more chastened political program. Accordingly, the second-best regime of the *Statesman* and the mixed constitution of the *Laws* reflect Plato's increasing willingness to investigate the applicability of both customary practice and historical experience to the creation of the good society. This turn towards the concrete and the particular is not

so much a rejection of the ordering reality of the philosopher's noetic experience as it is Plato's concession to human and social corruption. In Plato's later dialogues the rule of philosophy gives way to the rule of law. Yet as Klosko rightly concludes, "He [Plato] did not withdraw from politics out of a lack of interest, but out of a lack of hope" (p. 243).

*The Development of Plato's Political Theory* is a clearly written and well organized book. The author's decision "to be reliable rather than new" (p. xii) makes the book particularly appropriate for classroom use. Klosko has thoroughly researched his materials and is obviously aware of the differences among the major interpretive traditions. The specialist will recognize where the author stands, but the text itself is presented in a direct and unencumbered manner. Beginning with a helpful introduction to Platonic scholarship and to Greek politics, the text moves patiently through the major arguments of the *Republic*, *Statesman*, and the *Laws*. Although, when necessary, Klosko incorporates materials from both Platonic dialogues and other external sources—especially Aristotle—the text retains sharp focus and clear direction.

Given the richness of the Platonic corpus there will always be an occasion for certain disagreements. For example, I would question Klosko's apparently rigid distinction between the rule of reason in the *Republic* and the rule of faith in the *Laws*. Similarly I am not convinced that the moral psychology of Socrates is as distinct from that of the Platonic middle period (especially that found in Book IX of the *Republic*), as the author seems on occasion to suggest. However, on the whole, this is one of the most balanced, accessible, and thoughtful presentations of Plato's political theory currently available to us.

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*Empires*. By Michael W. Doyle. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986. Pp. 407. \$14.95 paper.)

*Empires* is an attempt to develop and apply a theory of imperialism that will become both an integral component of broader international relations theory and an encompassing interpretation and analysis of the many variations in the structure, dynamics, and progress of past, present, or even future empires. The application of contemporary social science methodology to a review of various theories of empire and the historical development of empires provides an interesting conceptual framework for the understanding of imperial phenomena. While some aspects of the author's arguments will not go unchallenged, this book represents a useful and important contribution to the literature on imperialism in particular and on international relations theory in general.