## THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO

SECOND EDITION

TRANSLATED WITH NOTES AND AN INTERPRETIVE ESSAY BY

ALLAN BLOOM



A Member of The Perseus Books Group

Copyright © 1968 by Allan Bloom
Preface to the paperback edition copyright © 1991 by Allan Bloom
Library of Congress Catalog Number: 68–54141
ISBN 0-465-06935-5 (cloth)
ISBN 0-465-06936-3 (first edition paper)
ISBN 0-465-06934-7 (second edition paper)
Manufactured in the United States of America
Designed by Jacqueline Schuman
DHAD 02 03 04 05 35 34 33 32 31 30 29



## BOOK I

Socrates: I went down to the Piraeus<sup>3</sup> yesterday with Glaucon, son of Ariston,<sup>4</sup> to pray to the goddess; and, at the same time, I wanted to observe how they would put on the festival,<sup>5</sup> since they were now holding it for the first time. Now, in my opinion, the procession of the native inhabitants was fine; but the one the Thracians conducted was no less fitting a show. After we had prayed and looked on, we went off toward town.

Catching sight of us from afar as we were pressing homewards, Polemarchus, son of Cephalus, ordered his slave boy to run after us and order us to wait for him. The boy took hold of my cloak from behind and said, "Polemarchus orders you to wait."

And I turned around and asked him where his master was. "He is coming up behind," he said, "just wait."

"Of course we'll wait," said Glaucon.

A moment later Polemarchus came along with Adeimantus, Glaucon's brother, Niceratus, son of Nicias, and some others—apparently from the procession. Polemarchus said, "Socrates, I guess you two are hurrying to get away to town."

"That's not a bad guess," I said.

"Well," he said, "do you see how many of us there are?"

"Of course."

"Well, then," he said, "either prove stronger than these men or stay here."

327 a

b

С

327c

328 a

b

c

d

e

"Isn't there still one other possibility . . . ," I said, "our persuading you that you must let us go?"

"Could you really persuade," he said, "if we don't listen?"

"There's no way," said Glaucon.

"Well, then, think it over, bearing in mind we won't listen."

Then Adeimantus said, "Is it possible you don't know that at sunset there will be a torch race on horseback for the goddess?"

"On horseback?" I said. "That is novel. Will they hold torches and pass them to one another while racing the horses, or what do you mean?"

"That's it," said Polemarchus, "and, besides, they'll put on an allnight festival that will be worth seeing. We'll get up after dinner and go to see it; there we'll be together with many of the young men and we'll talk. So stay and do as I tell you."

And Glaucon said, "It seems we must stay."

"Well, if it is so resolved,"6 I said, "that's how we must act."

Then we went to Polemarchus' home; there we found Lysias<sup>7</sup> and Euthydemus, Polemarchus' brothers, and, in addition, Thrasymachus,<sup>8</sup> the Chalcedonian and Charmantides, the Paeanian,<sup>9</sup> and Cleitophon,<sup>10</sup> the son of Aristonymus.

Cephalus,<sup>11</sup> Polemarchus' father, was also at home; and he seemed very old to me, for I had not seen him for some time. He was seated on a sort of cushioned stool and was crowned with a wreath, for he had just performed a sacrifice in the courtyard. We sat down beside him, for some stools were arranged in a circle there. As soon as Cephalus saw me, he greeted me warmly and said:

"Socrates, you don't come down to us in the Piraeus very often, yet you ought to. Now if I still had the strength to make the trip to town easily, there would be no need for you to come here; rather we would come to you. As it is, however, you must come here more frequently. I want you to know that as the other pleasures, those connected with the body, wither away in me, the desires and pleasures that have to do with speeches grow the more. Now do as I say: be with these young men, but come here regularly to us as to friends and your very own kin."

"For my part, Cephalus, I am really delighted to discuss with the very old," I said. "Since they are like men who have proceeded on a certain road that perhaps we too will have to take, one ought, in my opinion, to learn from them what sort of road it is—whether it is rough and hard or easy and smooth. From you in particular I should like to learn how it looks to you, for you are now at just the time of life the

[4]