



Athens Victorious: Democracy in Plato's Republic

Greg Recco

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Plato's Republic is typically thought to recommend a form of government that, from our current perspective, seems perniciously totalitarian. Athens Victorious demonstrates that Plato intended quite the opposite: to demonstrate the superiority of a democratic constitution. Greg Recco provides a brilliant rereading of Book Eight. Often considered an anticlimax, Book Eight seems to be a mere catalogue of mistakes but is in fact one of Plato's most neglected literary creations: a mythic or epic restaging of the Peloponnesian War that pitted Sparta's militaristic oligarchy against Athens' democracy. In Plato's reenactment, Athens wins. Recco argues that the values identified in Book Eight as distinctively democratic were the very ones that served as the unannounced touchstones of moral and political judgment throughout the dialogue. Athens Victorious is an important reinterpretation of The Republic. It is an excellent resource for students and scholars of Classical Studies, Philosophy, and Political Theory.

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