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ABSTRACT

The theme of 'becoming like god' in Plato's *Republic*

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The theme of *homoiôsis theôi* is famous in the history of Platonism but has been less thoroughly studied in the context of Plato's own thought. At the Granada conference of the IPS David Sedley in his stimulating paper on the theme of 'becoming like god in the *Timaeus* and in Aristotle' remarked that remarkably little research had been done on the theme. Since then a little more has been done, but it remains largely unexplored. In my paper I wish to focus on the two key passages in the *Republic* where this theme is prominent: 500b-d and 613a-b. First I shall look at the passages in their context and examine problems of detail associated with them. In the case of the former particular attention will be given to the lack of clarity about the identity of the *onta* in 500b9. I shall also ask how it links up with the more famous text on a similar theme in *Tht.* 176a-c. The connection invites questions of chronology. For the second *Republic* passage I shall examine its role at the end of the work and make a comparison with the same theme in *Tim.* 90a-d, which is also located towards the end of that work. Finally I examine two other related themes, the virtuous person as god-beloved (*theophilês*) and the rewards that are proffered to the person who becomes like god. The paper will thus offer insight into the structural role of the theme of 'becoming like god' in the *Republic* as well as how it relates to the writings of his later period.

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