

Chapter 1 : SparkNotes: The Republic

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The Question and the Strategy 1. After Socrates asks his host what it is like being old and rich and rather rude, we might think Cephalus says that the best thing about wealth is that it can save us from being unjust and thus smooth the way for an agreeable afterlife. This is enough to prompt more questions, for Socrates wants to know what justice is. Predictably, Cephalus and then Polemarchus fail to define justice in a way that survives Socratic examination, but they continue to assume that justice is a valuable part of a good human life. Thrasymachus erupts when he has had his fill of this conversation, and he challenges the assumption that it is good to be just. The strong themselves, on this view, are better off disregarding justice and serving their own interests directly. See the entry on Callicles and Thrasymachus. The brothers pick up where Thrasymachus left off, providing reasons why most people think that justice is not intrinsically valuable but worth respecting only if one is not strong enough or invisible enough to get away with injustice. They want to be shown that most people are wrong, that justice is worth choosing for its own sake. More than that, Glaucon and Adeimantus want to be shown that justice is worth choosing regardless of the rewards or penalties bestowed on the just by other people and the gods, and they will accept this conclusion only if Socrates can convince them that it is always better to be just. So Socrates must persuade them that the just person who is terrifically unfortunate and scorned lives a better life than the unjust person who is so successful that he is unfairly rewarded as if he were perfectly just. The challenge that Glaucon and Adeimantus present has baffled modern readers who are accustomed to carving up ethics into deontologies that articulate a theory of what is right independent of what is good and consequentialisms that define what is right in terms of what promotes the good Foster, Mabbott, cf. Prichard. But the insistence that justice be shown to be beneficial to the just has suggested to others that Socrates will be justifying justice by reference to its consequences. In fact, both readings are distortions, predicated more on what modern moral philosophers think than on what Plato thinks. At the beginning of Book Two, he retains his focus on the person who aims to be happy. But he does not have to show that being just or acting justly brings about happiness. The function argument in Book One suggests that acting justly is the same as being happy. But the function argument concludes that justice is both necessary and sufficient for happiness, and this is a considerably stronger thesis than the claim that the just are always happier than the unjust. After the challenge Glaucon and Adeimantus present, Socrates might not be so bold. Even if he successfully maintains that acting justly is identical to being happy, he might think that there are circumstances in which no just person could act justly and thus be happy. This will nonetheless satisfy Glaucon and Adeimantus if the just are better off, that is, closer to happy than the unjust in these circumstances. See also Kirwan and Irwin. He suggests looking for justice as a virtue of cities before defining justice as a virtue of persons, on the unconvincing grounds that justice in a city is bigger and more apparent than justice in a person, and this leads Socrates to a rambling description of some features of a good city. This may seem puzzling. The arguments of Book One and the challenge of Glaucon and Adeimantus rule out several more direct routes. But Book One rules this strategy out by casting doubt on widely accepted accounts of justice. Socrates must say what justice is in order to answer the question put to him, and what he can say is constrained in important ways. Most obviously, he cannot define justice as happiness without begging the question. But he also must give an account of justice that his interlocutors recognize as justice: Moreover, Socrates cannot try to define justice by enumerating the types of action that justice requires or forbids. We might have objected to this strategy for this reason: But a specific argument in Book One suggests a different reason why Socrates does not employ this strategy. When Cephalus characterizes justice as keeping promises and returning what is owed, Socrates objects by citing a case in which returning what is owed would not be just. Wrongful killing may always be wrong, but is killing? Just recompense may always be right, but is recompense? So Book One makes it

difficult for Socrates to take justice for granted. What is worse, the terms in which Socrates accepts the challenge of Glaucon and Adeimantus make it difficult for him to take happiness for granted. If Socrates were to proceed like a consequentialist, he might offer a full account of happiness and then deliver an account of justice that both meets with general approval and shows how justice brings about happiness. But Socrates does not proceed like that. He does not even do as much as Aristotle does in the *Nicomachean Ethics*; he does not suggest some general criteria for what happiness is. He proceeds as if happiness is unsettled. But if justice at least partly constitutes happiness and justice is unsettled, then Socrates is right to proceed as if happiness is unsettled. In sum, Socrates needs to construct an account of justice and an account of happiness at the same time, and he needs these accounts to entail without assuming the conclusion that the just person is always happier than the unjust. Socrates can assume that a just city is always more successful or happy than an unjust city. The assumption begs no questions, and Glaucon and Adeimantus readily grant it. If Socrates can then explain how a just city is always more successful and happy than an unjust city, by giving an account of civic justice and civic happiness, he will have a model to propose for the relation between personal justice and flourishing. There must be some intelligible relation between what makes a city successful and what makes a person successful. It works even if it only introduces an account of personal justice and happiness that we might not have otherwise entertained. Although this is all that the city-person analogy needs to do, Socrates seems at times to claim more for it, and one of the abiding puzzles about the *Republic* concerns the exact nature and grounds for the full analogy that Socrates claims. At other times Socrates seems to say that the same account of justice must apply in both cases because the F-ness of a whole is due to the F-ness of its parts. Again, at times Socrates seems to say that these grounds are strong enough to permit a deductive inference: At other times, Socrates would prefer to use the F-ness of the city as a heuristic for locating F-ness in persons. Plato is surely right to think that there is some interesting and non-accidental relation between the structural features and values of society and the psychological features and values of persons, but there is much controversy about whether this relation really is strong enough to sustain all of the claims that Socrates makes for it in the *Republic*. Williams, Lear, Smith, Ferrari. Rather, it depends upon a persuasive account of justice as a personal virtue, and persuasive reasons why one is always happier being just than unjust. What Justice Is 2. So his account of what justice is depends upon his account of the human soul. According to the *Republic*, every human soul has three parts: This is a claim about the embodied soul. In Book Ten, Socrates argues that the soul is immortal and says that the disembodied soul might be simple, though he declines to insist on this and the *Timaeus* and *Phaedrus* apparently disagree on the question. At first blush, the tripartition can suggest a division into beliefs, emotions, and desires. But Socrates explicitly ascribes beliefs, emotions, and desires to each part of the soul. In fact, it is not even clear that Plato would recognize psychological attitudes that are supposed to be representational without also being affective and conative, or conative and affective without also being representational. The *Republic* offers two general reasons for the tripartition. First, Socrates argues that we cannot coherently explain certain cases of psychological conflict unless we suppose that there are at least two parts to the soul. The core of this argument is what we might call the principle of non-opposition: Because of this principle, Socrates insists that one soul cannot be the subject of opposing attitudes unless one of three conditions is met. One soul can be the subject of opposing attitudes if the attitudes oppose each other at different times, even in rapidly alternating succession as Hobbes explains mental conflict. One soul can also be the subject of opposing attitudes if the attitudes relate to different things, as a desire to drink champagne and a desire to drink a martini might conflict. Last, one soul can be the subject of opposing attitudes if the attitudes oppose in different respects. Initially, this third condition is obscure. The way Socrates handles putative counter-examples to the principle of non-opposition might suggest that when one thing experiences one opposite in one of its parts and another in another, it is not experiencing opposites in different respects. Stalley; Bobonich, 31; Lorenz, 23. That would entail, apparently, that it is not one thing experiencing opposites at all, but merely a plurality. The most natural way of relating these two articulations of the principle is to suppose that experiencing one opposite in one part and another in another is just one way to experience opposites in different respects. But however we relate the two articulations to each other, Socrates clearly concludes that one soul can experience simultaneously opposing

attitudes in relation to the same thing, but only if different parts of it are the direct subjects of the opposing attitudes. Socrates employs this general strategy four times. In Book Four, he twice considers conflicting attitudes about what to do. First, he imagines a desire to drink being opposed by a calculated consideration that it would be good not to drink *a*€”d. We might think, anachronistically, of someone about to undergo surgery. This is supposed to establish a distinction between appetite and reason. Then he considers cases like that of Leontius, who became angry with himself for desiring to ogle corpses *e*€”b. These cases are supposed to establish a distinction between appetite and spirit. In Book Ten, Socrates appeals to the principle of non-opposition when considering the decent man who has recently lost a son and is conflicted about grieving *e*€”b cf. Austin and when considering conflicting attitudes about how things appear to be *c*€”b cf. Moss and Singpurwalla. These show a broad division between reason and an inferior part of the soul Ganson ; it is compatible with a further distinction between two inferior parts, spirit and appetite. In the Protagoras, Socrates denies that anyone willingly does other than what she believes to be best, but in the Republic, the door is opened for a person to act on an appetitive attitude that conflicts with a rational attitude for what is best. How far the door is open to *akrasia* awaits further discussion below. First, what kinds of parts are reason, spirit, and appetite? Some scholars believe that they are merely conceptual parts, akin to subsets of a set Shields , Price. They would object to characterizing the parts as subjects of psychological attitudes. At face value, Socrates offers a more robust conception of parts, wherein each part is like an independent agent. Indeed, this notion of parts is robust enough to make one wonder why reason, spirit, and appetite are parts at all, as opposed to three independent subjects. But the Republic proceeds as though every embodied human being has just one soul that comprises three parts. No embodied soul is perfectly unified: She must, as we shall see, in order to be just. But every embodied soul enjoys an unearned unity: It is not as though a person is held responsible for what his reason does but not for what his appetite does. There are questions about what exactly explains this unearned unity of the soul see E.

Chapter 2 : Mimesis - Wikipedia

Contents. v. Early colonial literature, v. 3. Literature of the revolutionary period, v. 4. Literature of the republic, pt. 1,

Plato[edit] Both Plato and Aristotle saw in mimesis the representation of nature , including human nature, as reflected in the dramas of the period. In *Ion*, he states that poetry is the art of divine madness, or inspiration. As Plato has it, truth is only the concern of the philosopher. As culture in those days did not consist in the solitary reading of books, but in the listening to performances, the recitals of orators and poets , or the acting out by classical actors of tragedy, Plato maintained in his critique that theatre was not sufficient in conveying the truth c. He was concerned that actors or orators were thus able to persuade an audience by rhetoric rather than by telling the truth b. Socrates warns we should not seriously regard poetry as being capable of attaining the truth and that we who listen to poetry should be on our guard against its seductions, since the poet has no place in our idea of God. Those who copy only touch on a small part of things as they really are, where a bed may appear differently from various points of view, looked at obliquely or directly, or differently again in a mirror. Art is not only imitation but also the use of mathematical ideas and symmetry in the search for the perfect, the timeless, and contrasting being with becoming. Nature is full of change, decay, and cycles, but art can also search for what is everlasting and the first causes of natural phenomena. Aristotle wrote about the idea of four causes in nature. The first, the formal cause , is like a blueprint, or an immortal idea. The second cause is the material cause, or what a thing is made out of. The third cause is the efficient cause, that is, the process and the agent by which the thing is made. The fourth, the final cause, is the good, or the purpose and end of a thing, known as *telos*. *Poetics* is his treatise on the subject of mimesis. Aristotle was not against literature as such; he stated that human beings are mimetic beings, feeling an urge to create texts art that reflect and represent reality. Aristotle considered it important that there be a certain distance between the work of art on the one hand and life on the other; we draw knowledge and consolation from tragedies only because they do not happen to us. Without this distance, tragedy could not give rise to catharsis. However, it is equally important that the text causes the audience to identify with the characters and the events in the text, and unless this identification occurs, it does not touch us as an audience. Aristotle holds that it is through "simulated representation", mimesis, that we respond to the acting on the stage which is conveying to us what the characters feel, so that we may empathise with them in this way through the mimetic form of dramatic roleplay. It is the task of the dramatist to produce the tragic enactment in order to accomplish this empathy by means of what is taking place on stage. In short, catharsis can only be achieved if we see something that is both recognisable and distant. Aristotle argued that literature is more interesting as a means of learning than history, because history deals with specific facts that have happened, and which are contingent, whereas literature, although sometimes based on history, deals with events that could have taken place or ought to have taken place. Aristotle thought of drama as being "an imitation of an action" and of tragedy as "falling from a higher to a lower estate " and so being removed to a less ideal situation in more tragic circumstances than before. He posited the characters in tragedy as being better than the average human being, and those of comedy as being worse. Michael Davis, a translator and commentator of Aristotle writes: Imitation always involves selecting something from the continuum of experience, thus giving boundaries to what really has no beginning or end. Thus the more "real" the imitation the more fraudulent it becomes. Mimesis shows, rather than tells, by means of directly represented action that is enacted. The narrator may speak as a particular character or may be the "invisible narrator" or even the "all-knowing narrator" who speaks from above in the form of commenting on the action or the characters. He distinguishes between narration or report *diegesis* and imitation or representation *mimesis*. Tragedy and comedy, he goes on to explain, are wholly imitative types; the dithyramb is wholly narrative; and their combination is found in epic poetry. When reporting or narrating, "the poet is speaking in his own person; he never leads us to suppose that he is any one else"; when imitating, the poet produces an "assimilation of himself to another, either by the use of voice or gesture". In ludology , mimesis is sometimes used to refer to the self-consistency of a represented world, and the availability of in-game rationalisations for elements of the gameplay. In this context, mimesis has an associated grade: This

usage can be traced back to the essay "Crimes Against Mimesis". Dionysian imitatio Dionysian imitatio is the influential literary method of imitation as formulated by Greek author Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the 1st century BCE, which conceived it as technique of rhetoric: Coleridge begins his thoughts on imitation and poetry from Plato, Aristotle, and Philip Sidney, adopting their concept of imitation of nature instead of other writers. His middling[citation needed] departure from the earlier thinkers lies in his arguing that art does not reveal a unity of essence through its ability to achieve sameness with nature. Coleridge instead argues that the unity of essence is revealed precisely through different materialities and media. Imitation, therefore, reveals the sameness of processes in nature. Luce Irigaray[edit] The Belgian feminist Luce Irigaray used the term to describe a form of resistance where women imperfectly imitate stereotypes about themselves so as to show up these stereotypes and undermine them. He describes how a legendary tribe, the "white Indians", or Cuna, have adopted in various representations figures and images reminiscent of the white people they encountered in the past without acknowledging doing so. Taussig, however, criticises anthropology for reducing yet another culture, that of the Cuna, for having been so impressed by the exotic technologies of the whites that they raised them to the status of gods. Girard notes the productive potential of competition:

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Socrates at this juncture in the conversation establishes the program of studies that will govern the lives of the future philosopher-rulers. This program, portions of which Socrates has discussed previously throughout the dialogue, is divided into six parts: From early childhood and until they are about 18, the students will receive their early training in gymnastic and the arts, and they will receive training in elementary mathematics, but the intellectual studies are to be lightly enforced. Socrates argues that rigorous training does not harm the body at this age, but enforced intellectual studies may cause the learner to rebel. And, as previously discussed, the children will ride to battle accompanied by their families so that they may learn warfare and witness courage in action. At this stage, the best of the students will be selected to further their education in a strict regimen of physical and military training discussed earlier. This physical and military training will be rigorous, and the students will have no time for intellectual pursuits. This stage will last two or three years. Apparently the students winnowed out at this stage "dismissed, that is, from advanced study" will be given lesser positions in the Ideal State. After the intensive physical training, when they are 20, the young students will be tested, and a further selection will be made. The best students will be given the advanced studies in mathematics discussed earlier; the course in mathematics will last for 10 years. The students winnowed out at this stage will form up the second class of the state as auxiliaries. When the students are 30, a further selection is made. Socrates does not specify what happens to the students who are not selected at this stage. The students who are selected will study Dialectic for about five years, and care must be taken to show the students that the study of Dialectic is a serious enterprise; it is not a game of wits undertaken for personal grandeur. When they are 35, having now become trained philosophers, the students will receive the practical experience necessary for them to accept their role as leaders of the state. They will take positions in the military and politics and begin teaching their fellow citizens to "see the light," so to speak. This period of service will last 15 years. At the age of 50, the philosopher-rulers will be fully matured. They will now spend the rest of their lives in philosophical contemplation and in ruling and governing the Ideal State. Now that they know Goodness, they will best be prepared to serve the good of the state. Analysis Thus it is that Plato argues that the best rulers must be philosophers. Only philosophers know Goodness; it follows logically that they will act in the best interest of their fellow citizens because, as philosophers, they will have attained knowledge at every level. Athenian statesman and lawgiver:

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