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SOCRATES' PICTURE

1. a truly **happy** human life (a life of ***eudaimonia***) is a human life that's lived well
2. the **virtue** of a human being is the quality (or constellation of qualities) that enables one to live a human life well
3. the virtue of a human being is **justice**
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- vigorously contends that this picture is ‘childish’ and gets everything wrong

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Thrasymachus' definition of justice (a bold-sounding but perplexing proposal)

according to Thrasymachus:

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Thrasymachus' initial moves (338d-339)

1. what's just is to obey the laws [*nomoi*] of one's society
2. the laws of one's society were put in place by the ruling classes in order to benefit *them*
3. so what's just is what's to the advantage of the stronger, i.e. the rulers in power

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THRASYMACHUS' PICTURE

- justice **isn't** a virtue (NB 348c-d)
 - it's a kind of artless 'simplicity'
 - it's a disposition of character that makes a person ripe for being dominated and exploited by others
- it's not the perfectly just person who has some special *technē* by which they lead their life
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- a **truly happy** human life would be

- the life of an **unjust person** who successfully pursues his/her personal self-interest completely unconstrained by either law or concern for others

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Republic II 357b-358a

Glauc: Tell me, do you think there is a sort of good we welcome, not because we desire its consequences, but because we would choose to have it for its own sake—enjoying, for example, and all the harmless pleasures from which nothing results afterward beyond enjoying having them?

Soc: Certainly, I think there is such a thing.

Glauc: And is there a sort of good we love for its own sake, and also for the sake of its consequences—knowing, for example, and seeing, and being healthy? For we welcome such things, I imagine, on both counts.

Soc: Yes.

Glauc: And do you also recognize a third kind of good, which includes [laborious] physical training, being healed when sick, and both healing itself, and ways of making money? We would say that these are burdensome but beneficial to us, and we would not choose to have them for their own sake, but for the sake of their rewards and other consequences.

Soc: Yes, certainly, there is also this third kind. But what of it?

Glauc: In which of them do you place justice?

Soc: I myself put it in the finest one—the one that anyone who is going to be blessed with happiness must love both because of itself and because of its consequences.

according to Glaucon (357b-358a)...

there are three types of goods

[Type 1]

[Type 2]

[Type 3]

according to Glaucon (357b-358a)...

there are three types of goods

[Type 1] goods which are intrinsically valuable, but aren't also valuable because of further consequences their possession tends to bring

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the challenge of Glaucon and Adeimantus

Glaucon's distinction between three types of goods

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Republic II 357e-358a (trans. Grube/Reeve, lightly edited by Crager)

Glauc: “Where [in this classification of goods] would you [Socrates] put justice?”

Soc: “I myself put it among the finest goods, as something to be valued by anyone who is going to be blessed with happiness, both because of itself and because of what comes from it.”

Glauc: “And yet that isn't how it seems to most people. They think that justice belongs to the onerous class---that it's something to be practiced for the sake of the rewards and esteem which come from a [good] reputation, but that [apart from that] justice itself in its own right is to be avoided as it's truly burdensome.”

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Republic II 358a-d (Glaucon to Socrates)

“You see, [Socrates], I think Thrasymachus gave up before he had to, as if he were a snake you had charmed. Yet, to my way of thinking, there was still no proof on either side.

For, I want to hear what justice and injustice are, and what power each has when it is itself by itself in the soul. I want to leave out of account the rewards and the consequences of [justice and injustice] So, if you agree, I will renew the argument of Thrasymachus. [...]

It isn't, Socrates, that I believe [this argument] myself... But I have yet to hear anyone defend justice as being better than injustice in the way I want. I want to hear it praised *on its own*, and I think that I am most likely to learn this from you.”

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Republic II 362e-363d, (Adeimantus to Socrates)

“When fathers speak to their sons they say that one must be just, as does everyone who has others in their charge. But they do not praise justice itself, but only the good reputation it brings: the inducement they offer is that if we are reputed to be just, then, as a result of our reputation, we will get political offices, good marriages, and [and other such good things in this world]. But these people have even more to say about the consequences of reputation. For by throwing in being well thought of *by the gods*, they have plenty of good things to talk about—all the ones the gods are said to give to those who are pious. [...]

Musaeus [and other poets] lead the just to Hades, seat them on couches, provide them with a drinking party of pious people, crown them with wreaths, and make them spend all their time drinking—as if they thought eternal drunkenness was the finest wage of virtue. [...] In these and similar ways [these poets] praise justice. But as for the impious and unjust [such poets] bury them in mud in Hades; force them to carry water in a sieve; and bring them bad repute while they're still alive... And [when it comes to praising justice such poets] they have nothing else to say.”

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Republic II 367c-e (Adeimantus to Socrates)

“You agree that justice is one of the greatest goods, the ones that are worth having for the sake of their consequences, but much more so for their own sake—such as seeing, hearing, knowing, being healthy, of course, and all the others that are genuine goods by nature and not simply by repute. This is what I want you to praise about justice. How does it—*because of its very self*—benefit its possessor, and how does injustice harm him?

Leave wages and reputations for others to praise. I can put up with other people praising justice and blaming injustice in that way. [...] But I won't put up with that from you ... For you have spent your whole life investigating this and nothing else. So do not merely show that in theory justice is stronger than injustice, but show what effect each one itself has, because of itself, on the person who has it—the one for good, the other for bad—whether it remains hidden from gods and human beings or not.”

Glaucou's account (358b-362c) of
the nature and value of justice

Republic II 358c (Glaucón speaking)

“This is what I propose to do...

First, I will state what sort of thing people say that justice is, and what its origins are.

Second, I will argue that all who practice [justice] do so begrudgingly, regarding it as something necessary—not as something good [in itself].

Third, I will argue that [in so practicing justice] they act rationally. For, as they say, the life of the [ideally] unjust person would be far better than that of the [ideally] just one.”

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presupposed in Glaucon's account

on the issue of happiness [*eudaimonia*]...

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- Glaucon's speech presupposes (see 360e-362c):
 1. **unhappy** would be the life a *poor* and *powerless* person who
 - is considered *disreputable* and *unjust* by their community, and
 - lives a life filled with intense *bodily pains* but deprived of all but the most humdrum *bodily pleasures*

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 2. **happy** would be the life a *wealthy* and *powerful* person who
 - "rules his city because of his reputation for justice, marries into any family he wishes, gives his children in marriage to anyone he wishes, has contracts and partnerships with anyone he wants, ... comes out the winner in any contest, public or private, [he enters], ... [and] makes adequate sacrifices to the gods and sets up magnificent offerings to them" (Rep II 362b-c)

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- Glaucon clearly seems to be assuming:
 - **happiness** means having sufficient **wealth** and **power** to fill one's life with a **massive share** of
 - **bodily pleasures,**
 - **social honors,**
 - **material possessions,** and
 - (more generally) the kinds of goods that *excessive wealth and power* suffice to attain

some important assumptions about
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on the issue of human motivation...

- Glaucon's speech assumes:
 - while just and unjust people may *act* in different ways,
 - they don't really differ much *on a psychological level*
 - their *ultimate motivations* are essentially the same
 - everyone is ultimately motivated by pleasurable gratification (and nothing more)

the ring of Gyges thought experiment

Republic II 360b-d (Glaucón speaking)

“Now, let’s suppose that there were two such rings [of the kind Gyges had]. Suppose one worn is by the just person, the other by the unjust. Now **no one, it seems, would be so adamant** [*adamantinos*] **that he would stay on the path of justice**, or bring himself to keep away from other people’s possessions and not touch them, when he could take whatever he wanted from the marketplace with impunity, go into people’s houses, have sex with anyone he wished, kill or release from prison anyone he wished, and do all the other things that would make him like a god among humans. And in so behaving, **he would do no differently than the unjust person, rather both would follow the same path.**”

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Republic II 358c (Glaucón speaking)

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Republic II 358e-359b (Glaucón speaking)

‘Now, listen to what I said I was going to discuss first—What is **justice** [*dikaíosunē*]? and Where has it come from?

People say that **by nature**: to do injustice is good and to suffer injustice is bad, but that the badness of suffering injustice **far exceeds** the goodness of doing it.

The result is that when people have had experience of both doing injustice & suffering injustice, and [find themselves] unable to **both** avoid the one **and** do the other, they think it profitable to make a mutual agreement to *neither* do injustice to each other *nor* suffer injustice from each other.

And from there, they start instituting laws and contractual agreements; and what’s commanded by the law [*nomos*] they call ‘**lawful**’ [*nomimon*] and ‘**just**’ [*dikaion*].

This, they say, is the genesis and the very being of justice [*dikaíosunē*]. It is in between the best and the worst.

The best would be to do injustice without paying the penalty for it; the worst would be to suffer injustice without being able to take vengeance. **What’s just** is in the middle between these two extremes. It’s not to be cherished as something good [in itself], but as something valuable given [our] feeble vulnerability to injustice. ‘

Glaucon's basic proposal about the origin of justice

1. By nature, every human is ultimately driven by an insatiable desire for his/her own personal **pleasurable gratification**
2. But because humans are **fragile** and everyone has (more or less) comparable strength, our pursuits of pleasurable gratification can be easily derailed by the actions of other humans

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3. So what's best for each of us is that we all agree to abide by a **norm of mutual non-interference**:
 - everyone agrees to pursue his/her own pleasurable gratification without interfering in anyone else's pursuit of *their* pleasurable gratification

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4. Whatever this **norm of mutual non-interference** commands is called "just" [*dikaion*] and "lawful" [*nomion*]
5. For a human individual to be just is simply for him/her to **insistently abide by this norm**