

# Glaucon's distinction between 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

[Type 2] goods which are intrinsically valuable, but are also valuable because of further consequences their possession tends to bring

[Type 3] goods which are not intrinsically valuable, but are only valuable because of further consequences their possession tends to bring

## ***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

# some important assumptions about happiness and human motivation presupposed in Glaucon's account

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

- 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*
  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)
- 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

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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)

## Republic II 358c (Glaucón speaking)

“This is what I propose to do...

358e-359b

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

359b-360d

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

360e-362c

**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.”

## *Republic* II 358e-359b (Glaucón speaking)

‘Now, listen to what I said I was going to discuss first—What is **justice** [*dikaiosunē*]? 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 [*dikaiosunē*]. 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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according to Glaucon (357b-358a)...

there are three types of goods

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Socrates' basic strategy for  
responding to the challenge of  
Glaucón and Adeimantus

why, according to Socrates, is his *Republic* Bk I  
refutation of Thrasymachus unsuccessful?

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### ***Republic* Bk. I 354b-d (Socrates speaking)**

“[We began our discussion by asking What is justice?] But before finding the answer to our first question—namely, *What is justice?*—I let that go ....

Then an argument came up about injustice being more profitable than justice, and I could not refrain from abandoning the previous one and following up on it.

Hence the result of the discussion, so far as I am concerned, is that I know nothing. For when I do not know what justice is, I will hardly know whether it is a kind of virtue or not, or whether a person who has it is happy or unhappy.”

philosophical questions of definition  
vs.  
other philosophical questions

Plato and Socrates famously teach that...

- to *make progress* in a philosophical discussion about something *X*, it's **crucial** to distinguish
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➤ e.g.:

- *If something is X, will it also have attribute Y?*
- *What results from something's being X?*

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**Republic II 368c-e (Socrates speaking)**

“Glaucon and the others begged me [= Socrates] *not* to abandon the argument but to help in every way to track down both

**what justice and injustice *are*, and**

**the truth about their respective benefits.**

So I told them what I [= Socrates] had in mind:

‘The investigation we are undertaking is not an easy one, in my view, but requires keen eyesight. So, since we are not clever people, I think we should adopt the method of investigation that we would use if—lacking keen eyesight—we were told to read **small letters from a distance**, but then someone noticed [& told us that] that **the same letters** existed elsewhere **in a larger size** and on a larger surface. [In this situation,] I think we’d consider it a godsend if we could try to read the larger letters **first**, and then to examine the smaller ones **to see whether they are really the same.**’

‘Of course we would [said Adeimantus]. But how is this case similar to our investigation of justice in your view?’

‘I’ll tell you. We say, don’t we, that there is a justice that belongs to **an individual human**, and also [a justice] that belongs to **a whole city** [*polis*]?’

‘Certainly’ [said Adeimantus]

‘And isn’t a city larger than a single human being?’

‘Yes’ [he said]

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# what is a *polis*?

- the Greek noun *polis* (plural = *poleis*)
  - usually translated '**city**'
  - difficult to translate because...
    - the kind of political unit ancient Greeks call a *polis*  
*isn't* exactly
    - the kind of political unit we these call a 'city'
  - basically
    - a *polis* = a **society** that constitutes an **independent city-state**

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# *Socrates wants us distinguish between three questions*

- [Q1]** Setting external consequences aside, is a life of justice **intrinsically better** than a life of injustice?
- [Q2]** What would it *be* for justice to exist **in an individual human soul** [*psychē*]?
- [Q3]** What would it *be* for justice to exist **in a city** [*polis*] of humans?

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Socrates tells us in *Rep.* II that it will be easiest for him to answer [Q1] and [Q2]

- by answering to **all three** questions, &
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JUSTICE

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The *Republic* will ultimately be arguing that:

- ✧ on an abstract level, it's one and the same **pattern** which
  - when implemented in a human soul makes that individual **just**
  - when implemented in a civic community makes that city **just**

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# Socrates on the origins of human society

*(Republic II 369a-372a)*

## Republic II 369a-c

**Soc:** 'If we could watch a city [*polis*] coming to be in our discourse [*logos*] couldn't we also see the justice and injustice of a city coming to be as well?' **Adei:** 'We probably could.'

**Soc:** 'And once that process is completed, could we expect to find what we are looking for more easily?'

**Adei:** 'Yes, much more easily.' [...]

**Soc:** 'Well, it seems to me that a city comes to be because none of us is self-sufficient, but we all need many things. Do you think that a city is founded on any other principle?' **Adei:** 'Not at all.'

**Soc:** 'Then because we have many needs, and because one of us calls on another out of one need, and on a third out of a different need, we gather many into a single settlement as partners and helpers. And we call such a shared settlement a city. Isn't that so?' **Adei:** 'Yes, indeed.'

**Soc:** 'And if they share things with one another—if they give something to one another, or take something from one another—don't they do so because each believes that this is better for himself?'

**Adei:** 'Of course.'

## *Glaucon's basic proposal about the origin of justice*

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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
3. So what's best for each of us is that we all agree to abide by a **norm of mutual non-interference**:
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## *Republic II 369e-370b*

**Soc:** 'Well, then, should each of them contribute his own work for the common use of all? I mean, should a farmer, although he is only one person, provide food for four people, and spend quadruple the time and labor to provide food to be shared by them all? Or should he not be concerned about everyone else? Should he produce one quarter the food in one quarter the time for himself alone? Should he spend the other three quarters providing a house, a cloak, and shoes? Should he save himself the bother of sharing with other people and mind his own business on his own?'

**Adei:** 'The first alternative, Socrates, is perhaps easier.'

**Soc:** 'There is nothing strange in that, by Zeus. You see, it occurred to me while you were speaking that, in the first place, we are not all born alike. On the contrary, each of us differs somewhat in nature from the others, one being suited to one job, another to another. Or don't you think so?'

**Adei:** 'I do'

**Soc:** 'Well, then, would one person do better work if he practiced many crafts or if he practiced one?'

**Adei:** If he practiced one.

## *Socrates' theory that...*

*the formation of human societies is a rational response to a problem grounded in human nature*

1. By nature, individual humans have many many **needs**; and satisfying all of them proves incredibly difficult without **help** from others
2. By nature, different human beings are born with **different talents**; and this makes different people **naturally suited** for different kinds of **work** [*ergon*]
3. By nature, humans are **finite** with the result that:
  - we can best develop our individual talents if we can **focus** on doing so,
  - & each of us **will most successfully accomplish** the work we are naturally suited for if we aren't burdened with having to do *other* kinds of work
4. So what will, by nature, be best for each of us is to form **societies**
  - whose members (develop and then) *use* their specialized talents to contribute to a **common pool of goods**, and
  - where **in exchange** for their respective contribution to the common pool of goods, the members each get some access to the common pool of goods

## *Republic II 371e-372a*

**Soc:** ‘Well, then, Adeimantus, has our city now grown to completeness?’

**Adei:** ‘Maybe it has.’

**Soc:** ‘Then where are justice and injustice to be found in it? With which of the people we considered did they come in?’

**Adei:** I have no idea, Socrates, unless it is somewhere in some need that these people have of one another.

from the city of pigs  
to a city of luxury

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**Soc:** ‘Perhaps what you say is right. We must look into it and not back off. First, then, let’s see what sort of life people will lead who have been provided for in this way. They will make food, wine, clothes, and shoes, won’t they? And they will build themselves houses. In the summer, they will mostly work naked and barefoot, but in the winter they will wear adequate clothing and shoes. For nourishment, they will provide themselves with barley meal and wheat flour, which they will knead and bake into noble cakes and loaves and serve up on a reed or on clean leaves. They will recline on couches strewn with yew and myrtles and feast with their children, drink their wine, and, crowned with wreaths, hymn the gods. They will enjoy having sex with one another, but they will produce no more children than their resources allow, lest they fall into either poverty or war.’

At this point Glaucon interrupted and said: ‘It seems that you make your people feast without any delicacies. [...] If you were founding a city of pigs, Socrates, isn’t that just what you would provide to fatten them?’

**Soc:** ‘What, then, would you have me do, Glaucon?’

**Glauc:** ‘Just what is conventional. If they are not to suffer hardship, they should recline on proper couches, I suppose, dine at tables, and have the relishes and desserts that people have nowadays.’

**Soc:** All right, I understand. It isn’t merely the origins of a city that we are considering, it seems, **but those of a city that is luxurious, too**. And that may not be a bad idea. For by examining such a city, we can perhaps see how justice and injustice grow up in cities’

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## *Republic II 372e-373c*

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'The life-style I described won't satisfy some people, it seems; but couches, tables, and other furniture will have to be added to it, and relishes, of course, and incense, perfumes, prostitutes, pastries—and the multifariousness of each of them. In particular, we cannot just provide them with the necessities we mentioned at first, such as houses, clothes, and shoes; no, instead we will have to get painting and embroidery going, and procure gold and ivory and all sorts of everything of that sort. Isn't that so?

**Gl:** Yes.

**Soc:** Then we will have to enlarge our city again: the healthy one is no longer adequate. On the contrary, we must now increase it in size and population and fill it with a multitude of things that go beyond what is necessary for a city—hunters, for example, and all those imitators. Many of the latter work with shapes and colors; many with music—poets and their assistants, rhapsodes, actors, choral dancers, theatrical producers. And there will have to be craftsmen of multifarious devices, including, among other things, those needed for the adornment of women. In particular, then, we will need more servants—don't you think—such as tutors, wet nurses, nannies, beauticians, barbers, and delicacy cooks and meat cooks, too? Moreover, we will also need people to farm pigs. This animal did not exist in our earlier city, since there was no need for it, but we will need it in this one. And we will also need large numbers of other meat-producing animals, won't we, if someone is going to eat them?

**Gl:** We certainly will.

“Cities come to be for the sake of **living** but [continue] existing for the sake of **living well**”

- Aristotle, *Politics* I.2 1252b30

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having turned to consider the ‘luxurious city’, Socrates’ plan is to follow a two-step strategy for getting at

- *what it is for a city to be just*

**[STEP 1]** construct (in speech) the **best** luxurious city that Socrates & his interlocutors can conceive of

- i.e. the **ideal luxurious city**:
  - an autonomous political community which **functions maximally well** in the sense that
    - given its resources, the city succeeds in providing the citizenry **as a whole** with
    - the greatest amount of **happiness** that
    - any such self-sustaining political community **inhabited** and **run by human beings** feasibly could
- (following Plato, we call this city ‘**The Kallipolis**’)

**[STEP 2]** analytically examine The Kallipolis constructed in Step 1 to determine what precisely its **being just** consists in