

Structure of Plato's Republic

Bk I (327a) – Ch 1, p. 3 – Convention Under Attack (**Descent** to the Piraeus)= beginning of dialectic

Bk II (357a) – Ch 2, p. 44 – The Challenge to Socrates (**The Question: Is Justice better than Injustice?**) --> **beginning of Ascent - Genesis of the Polis**

Socrates must prove that justice is something good and desirable, that it is more than convention, that it is connected to objective standards of morality, and that it is in our interest to adhere to it.

Bk III (386a) – Ch 4, p. 79 – Primary Education for the Guardians

Bk IV (419a) – Ch 5, p. 122 – The Guardians' Life and Duty +Ch 6 Inner and Outer Morality (Analogy: turn from *Polis* to Individual – psychological structure (*Phaedrus* - “charioteer”)

Bk V (449a) – Ch 7, p. 159 – Women, Children & Warfare

Bk VI (484a) – Ch 8, p. 202 – Philosopher Kings + Ch 9 The Supremacy of Good (The Sun, The Line) – Socrates instructs Glaucon on becoming Philosopher-King

Bk VII (514a) – Ch 9, p. 240 – The Supremacy of Good (The Cave) + Ch 10 Educating Philosopher Kings --> **Height of Ascent**

Bk VIII (543a) – Ch 11, p. 277 – Warped Minds, Warped Societies (**Decline** of the Polis) --> **begin Descent**

- VIII.1—544e. **Aristocracy** (best state/person – realizes goodness and morality/justice)
- VIII.1—VIII.5. 543a—550c. **Timocracy**
- VIII.6—VIII.9. 550c—555b. **Oligarchy**
- VIII.10—VIII.13. 555b—562a. **Democracy**
- VIII.14—IX.3. 562a—576b. **Tyranny**

Bk IX (571a) – Ch 11, p. 312 – Warped Minds, Warped Societies (Dictatorial/Tyrannic type) + Happiness & Unhappiness (**Answer: Justice is Better than Injustice.**)

Bk X (595a) – Ch 13, p. 344 – Poetry and Unreality +Myth of Er (614a-621d) **End of Descent** (Underworld - Judgment of the Dead) “We should always keep to the upward path...” (621c). **End of dialectic...**

Note beginning of Republic

1. Clearing the ground
2. Morality vs immorality
3. Truth vs belief
4. Analogy of *arete* - justice with art/skill *techne*
5. Bk IV -bkV(pp.122-190): Development of outer morality and inner morality based on *logos + techne* (general absence of eros, based upon Noble Lie (389c/414b), often seemingly **unnatural – counter to physis**)

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433a **seeking universal principle** to define morality/justice

- definition of morality in polis/community: a communities (*polis*) morality consists in each of its three constituent classes doing its own job (*ergon*).” (441d)
- Moves from analysis of outer “**state**” (community **(field of external activities)**) to analysis of inner “**state**” (**individual (spere of individual’s inner activity)**)

wisdom (*sofia*), courage (*andreia*), self-discipline/moderation (*sophrosune*) & morality/justice (*dikaiosune*) are still the virtues (*arete*) being sought

- **1st definition of individual justice** is: **PROBABLY** practicing one’s own art skill (*techne*):”minding one’s own business”/”doing one’s own job” (433b) – that job (*ergon*) for which nature (*physis*) has made him most naturally fit.

= **circular argument** – the entire construction of the city has served as a vehicle for recollection

Inadequacy of first definition: **What is it that really constitutes a man’s own (spere of individual’s inner activity)???** → **beyond techne (field of external activities)** – CONFLICT is always present in inner man and **temperance** and **self-control (i.e., moderation)** are necessary to bring man into **balance/harmony** (i.e., to make one *kosmios, taxis* – “orderly”) in order to reach ultimate **Eudaimonia**.

- **2nd definition: Morality/justice** is an inner **state** = harmony of the parts of a person’s mind under leadership of the intellect. **Immorality/injustice** is anarchy and civil war between the parts. In order to define the inner nature of morality/justice, Plato will include a tripartite, PSYCHOLOGICAL analysis of the soul (*psyche*).

Example *Phaedrus* (246a–254e):

“**[E]very soul [psyche] of man has by the law of nature beheld the realities**, otherwise it would not have entered into a human being, but it is not easy for all souls to gain from earthly things a **recollection** of those realities, either for those which had but a brief view of them at that earlier time, or for those which, after falling to earth, were so unfortunate as to be turned toward unrighteousness through some evil communications and to have forgotten the holy sights they once saw.

We will liken the soul to the composite nature of a pair of winged horses and a charioteer.

One of the horses is noble and of noble breed, but the other quite the opposite in breed and character. [...] The horse of evil nature weighs the chariot down, making it heavy and pulling toward the earth the charioteer whose horse is not well trained. There the utmost toil and struggle await the soul. [...] The other horse leads one to] the colorless, formless, and intangible truly existing essence, with which all true knowledge is concerned [...] this region is visible only to the mind, the pilot of the soul.

Here we can assume that the charioteer is reason (*NOUS* – the power to think and deliberate) and has to control two horses – each wanting to go in a different direction. The noble horse is the spirited one (*thymos*) and the other horse represents physical desires/natural appetite and seeks satisfaction in earthly pleasures .

We may say that in any conflict that may arise between reason and the desires, the function of *thymos* is to side with reason and this is equivalent to strength of will (**WILL-POWER**).

The practice of an art (*techne*) requires knowledge (or right opinion) “know-how” of 2 kinds:

- Via imitation (of master)
- Via right opinion

Three kinds of arts (*techne*):

- Art of using
- Of making
- Of imitating

prudence (*phronesis*) = moderation + justice
separation unity

Still in separation mode up to bkV (till reach discussion of “philosopher king”) → new beginning
Return of *physis*, *mythos*, *eros*, TRUTH, BEAUTY, GOOD

Analogy healthy body-healthy soul (444c): In a healthy soul, one that is best organized for the best possible performance one will act according to nature (*physis*). “You create health by making the components of the body control and be controlled AS NATURE INTENDED... you create morality by making the components of a mind control and be controlled AS NATURE INTENDED” (444d)

Tending for the soul (psyche)– “the life force within us”(445b)

Bk V (p.159)

Eristic vs elenchus p.165 454-455

Speaks of similar natures of men and women, however, he also mentions many very **UNNATURAL** things (i.e., seemingly against *physis*)

- **Bred like animals** 459-60
- **Cs. Lie is ok**= placebo
- **Limit population**
- **Lottery system**
- **Communal children**
- **Abortion**
- **Absolute idy – individual = sum of parts**(462) vs holistic view – no psyche/eros
- **Incest**
- **Governed by FEAR and RESPECT** (465)
- Male and female warriors
- Ethnicity (470)

Ch8 (p.190) Phil. King = PARADOX

Seeks perfection as paradigm → we're trying to construct the theoretical paradigm of the Good Community (472d)

Is it possible for anything actual to match a theory? (473a)

Try to show what the flaw is in the current political systems (473b)

Unless communities have philas as kings or vice versa, there can be no end to political troubles... No other way for an individual or community to achieve happiness (*eudaimonia*).

Philosopher as lover → lovers of truth → desires truth (the whole) – (**dialectic necessary to relate to the WHOLE**)

Philo + Sophia vs “sight-seer” sees plurality (many) **the masses**

- Dream world vs Real World (of Forms) (476a)
- Belief vs knowledge
- Real – unreal (in between: belief -- ambiguous) 479b
- Beauty itself vs beautiful things (479a)

Philosophers are devoted to love of “KNOWLEDGE” of what is “REAL”

BkVI (p.202)

- In love with reality as a whole 485b
- Honesty 485c
- Broadness of vision 486a
- The best practitioners of philosophy are incapable of performing any public service –
- Problems of NURTURE vs NATURE p. 213
- Divine intervention (**THEIA MOIRA**) is necessary 492a 493a
- Potential to do the greatest harm, or the greatest GOOD 495b
- Daimon 496c
- **No current political system is good enough for a philosophical nature to grow** p. 220
- **Divine providence (THEIA MOIRA)** p. 222 499b
- Proposed system is possible ??? p.226

Ch 9 The GOOD

Socrates' task is to educate the founder of a city POLITEIA

ASCENT = process of education (**Glaucon is being led there**) → led to **BEGINNING OF PHILOSOPHY** = **DIALECTIC BEGINS** --- making transition from VISIBLE to INTELLIGIBLE

521c “consider in which way men will come into being and how one will lead them up to the light, just as some men are said to have gone from Hades up to the gods.”

The entire dialogue takes place in Piraeus (“Hades”) – the soul (PSYCHE) = what is being educated

Cave Allegory = height of dialectic in Republic

515^a “prisoners are no different from us”

Politicians, poets, artists: **the mythmakers**

515e **FEAR of the unknown** – “if he were forced to look at the actual firelight... he’d turn away and run back to the things he knows.”

→Dragged forcefully (by who???)

→At last he’d be able to view “the sun on its own, in its proper place” = **education complete – reaches 1st principle**

“Apply this allegory, as a whole, to what we’ve been talking about before.” 517a → the line

The region accessible to sight should be equated with the prison cell, and the firelight there with the light of the sun → the sight of things up on the surface of the earth as the mind’s ascent to the intelligible realm. → **in the realm of knowledge as goodness**

517c “The people who’ve travelled there don’t want to engage in human business”

DESCENT of dialectic begins – Heroic/Shamanic Journey → necessary to return to realm of everydayness

Lethe-Aletheia relation to Good ONE → ONE (the Good) shows itself **as it is not (shows itself only through images)**

Sun = “**child of the good**... visible region” (508b-c) = **erotic imagery** (outbreak of **EROS**)

Good = “**father**... intelligible region”—possesses **power of image-making**

Return to **the cave** (womb/tomb imagery) to the shadows of everydayness “overwhelmed by darkness” 516e → **the BODY** → **the receptacle (the “mother” -- kora)**

Visible things prove to be no more than the “place” (topos) where being and non-being, self-showing and self-concealing come to pass, as though the visible things have been swallowed up by the receptacle (kora)

Socrates =image-maker (= **Good...**) – one of those who has returned—plays role of **Midwife**

To know is not only to imitate the good, but also to participate in the birth of the children of the Good

Philosopher king = happiest man (**eudaimonia**) – does not rule over city, but over himself. “That man who is kingliest and is king of himself” (580c).

Bk IX – **a man with intelligence always considers** – in every connection – one single thing: the condition of his soul (psyche), or as Socrates says, **“the regime (politeia) within him”** (591 d-e).

When Glaucon claims that he “won’t be willing to mind the political things,” Socrates replies that “he won’t in his fatherland unless some divine chance (**theia moira**) coincidentally comes to pass. [... However, in heaven] **a pattern (model) is laid up for the man who wants to see and found a city within himself** [...] It doesn’t matter whether it is or will be somewhere. **For he would mind the things of this city alone, and of no other**” (592 a-b).