

# interpretation

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# interpretation

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# Justice and Philosophy in Plato's *Republic*: The Nature of a Definition

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Socrates' approach to justice in Plato's *Republic* continues to attract comment in twentieth-century Platonic scholarship. Justice, during the course of the dialogue, is applied both to political concerns and to the condition of the individual. In the first instance, the definition of justice is extracted from a discussion which considers the proper ordering of a city. In the second instance, the definition is applied to the order of the soul. Several commentators have noted that the parallelism between city and soul seems to break down in the dialogue, leading some to conclude, on various grounds, that there exists a basic inconsistency between collective and personal conceptions of justice in the dialogue.

It will be advanced in the following analysis that this inconsistency may be a deliberate and intentional statement by Plato. There is little doubt, owing to the manner of argument in the *Republic*, that Plato could well have constructed a more effective connection between the justice of the city and the justice of the soul.<sup>1</sup> That such an approach is not forthcoming, I would suggest, is due to the essential objective of the discussion of justice in the dialogue—the indication of the basic insufficiency of political conceptions of justice, and, further, the absolute necessity of individual order as the most important concern of life. At the foundation of this objective is the important distinction between opinion and appearance on the one hand, and knowledge and truth on the other. This distinction permeates the *Republic*.

This is certainly not intended to demean or discount the political themes of the *Republic*. Unquestionably, the political occupies an important and pivotal position in the dialogue. Rather than constituting a revision of existing politics, however, the *Republic* stands as Plato's fullest commentary on how one should properly study politics.<sup>2</sup> Whereas the *Politicus* and the *Laws* confront matters of

An expanded version of this paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, 1980. An earlier version had been presented at the Annual Conference of the British Study Group in Greek Political Thought, London School of Economics and Political Science, 1978. All translations are mine, with line numbers referring to the Burnet Oxford Texts.

1. The most persuasive attempt to reconcile the two applications of justice is found in G. Vlastos, "Justice and Psychic Harmony in the *Republic*," *Journal of Philosophy* 66 (1969), 505–21 (especially pp. 519f.). See also K. J. Vouveris, *Psuche kai politeia: Ereuna ati politikes philosophias tou Platonos* (Athens, 1970; Bibliothek Sophias N. Saripolou 7). Vlastos considers the relationship established by Plato between justice in the city and justice in the individual to be one of equivocation (*op. cit.*, 517). It is precisely this absence of a precise identity which this paper will suggest constitutes a deliberate teaching on the part of Plato. To amend the argument, so as to remove the equivocation, is equivalent to discounting the very point which Plato wishes to make.

2. See K. Moors, "Plato's *Republic* on the Study of Politics," *Polis* 2, 2 (1979), 19f.

practical political rule and legislation in some detail, the *Republic* is curiously lacking in such discussion. Of course, the results of Socrates' attention to politics may well provide all manner of standard by which actual politics may be appraised, and the *Republic* may also provide bases for actual political revision. The basic intention of the political dimensions of the dialogue, however, is not focused upon such appraisals or revisions. The *Republic* deserves the distinction of being the first work in political philosophy because it provides the necessary conditions which a pursuit of knowledge about politics requires. Those conditions do not flow merely from the construction of an idealized polis.

The position of justice in the *Republic* owes its significance to the intermediary location of the concept—between concerns addressed by the collectively held standards of opinion in a political system and concerns addressed by the philosophic life. I shall contend that it is the latter which provides the most important and most essential realm of concern for Plato in the *Republic*. Part I of this paper considers the demands placed upon Socrates by the arguments on justice of Glaucon and Adeimantus at the outset of Book 2. Since dialogue is collective discussion, and since considerations of subject treatment and argument are advanced by participants other than Socrates, we have some need to consider first the point in discussion from which Socrates departs. Part II will consider the function of the city in speech which is constructed in the dialogue, and which comprises the groundsel of the political themes in the dialogue. Part III will address the relationships between the two applications of justice in Book 4—to city and to soul. Part IV will advance the position held by philosophic investigation in the understanding of the dialogue's approach to justice. Part V will suggest some of the significant dimensions which the concern for justice in the *Republic* has for the basic distinction between opinion and knowledge.

## I

The approaches to justice provided by Cephalus, Polemarchus, and Thrasymachus in Book 1 are all projected as personal opinions about what justice is, how justice should be regarded, and what types of actions are to be considered just. The Socratic responses to each comprise fine examples of elenchus in operation.<sup>3</sup> In each case, Socrates has as his primary objective the identification of inconsistency in the position held by his interlocutor. If justice is to be understood adequately, the definition arrived at should contain nothing lacking of the essence of the concept, and should be applied successfully to all situations within

3. Elenchus is the foundation of the "questioning" nature of Platonic dialogue. Through elenchus, the capabilities of interlocutors are tested. Elenchus is propaedeutic to the pursuit of truth because one must first be aware of the limited vision provided by opinion. See *Theaet.* 155c8–d3, and *Rep.* 475e4. This method undoubtedly contributed to Socrates' unpopularity. See *Apol.* 20b9–e2, and 22e6–23a3; cf. *Rep.* 539b2–7.

which justice is to be considered. Elenchus has as its primary objective the recognition of inconsistency in a held opinion, but it is not, by itself, the resolution of whatever difficulties are uncovered. Socrates' lamentations at the conclusion of the book (354b4–8, c1–3) indicate that he considers the discussants no closer to understanding justice than they had been at the beginning of the discussion. Throughout Book 1 we do not hear what Socrates thinks is justice. Rather, we are provided with three other individuals who provide their personal opinions on the subject. Each of these opinions is based upon what is experienced in life. Despite the character of the Socratic responses to these opinions,<sup>4</sup> relating justice to what is seen comprises the tenor of all of Book 1.

This situation is dramatically altered at the outset of Book 2. There, Glaucon and Adeimantus, unlike the tenor of Book 1, present conceptions of justice which require a full and concerted rejoinder by Socrates.<sup>5</sup> Each presents as forceful a defense of injustice over justice as he can, thereby hoping to occasion as forceful a defense of justice by Socrates in response (358d3–6, 367a8–b2). In each case, the argument which is presented is not viewed by the interlocutor as being the correct one.<sup>6</sup> Rather, each argument is viewed as being most fitted to compel Socrates to present his definition of justice. In the course of these arguments, however, Glaucon and Adeimantus introduce several basic considerations which will comprise major elements throughout the remainder of the dialogue, some of these predicated upon matters uncovered in Book 1.

Glaucon begins his argument by questioning whether Socrates wishes “to appear to have persuaded or truly to persuade that by all means it is possible to be better just than unjust” (357a5–b2). It is not simply persuasion which Glaucon wishes to receive from Socrates in response to the argument he is about to give; rather, he seeks persuasion which is also true. At the very beginning of Book 2, therefore, the nature and dimensions of persuasion have been changed drastically from what had been viewed during Book 1. It is not persuasiveness per se which is to be the “barometer” of discourse. The adequacy of argument will be determined by the degree of truth contained in persuasion. The outset of Glaucon's argument provides us with a distinction between truth (*ἀληθές*) and opinion (*δοκεῖν*), and that distinction will constitute a major element throughout the remainder of the dialogue. What Glaucon will present finds its roots in common opinion, not in the opinions held by a particular individual. It is a dialogue be-

4. In each case in Book 1, Socrates either provides an exception to the general situation created by an opinion of what justice is or takes issue with the particular argumentative form which an individual's opinion has taken. In no case does the Socratic rejoinder extend to the essence or nature of justice. The entire first book of the *Republic*, in this regard, acts as a grand elenctic exercise.

5. I have more fully treated the structure and import of these presentations in *Glaucon and Adeimantus on Justice: The Structure of Argument in Book 2 of Plato's "Republic"* (Washington, 1981).

6. See 358c1 and c6, e1, 359b5, 360c5, c8–d1, 361e3, 362a4–5, c6, 362e4–363a2, a5, a6–7, 363c5–364a1, c5–6, d3–5, e4, 364a1–b2, 366a6–b2, and 367a5–8. In each of these cases, either Glaucon or Adeimantus refers to others as speaking in defense of the argument being presented.

tween common opinion and Socrates on the question of justice which is at the basis of Glaucon's attempt to reformulate Thrasymachus' argument (358b7–c1), one which was directed to the contention that injustice should be preferred over justice (see 343c1ff.). Glaucon's approach will call the entire foundation upon which common opinion rests into question. This becomes manifest during his rendition of the myth of Gyges' ancestor, the first myth told in the *Republic*, and the only myth in the dialogue told by somebody other than Socrates.<sup>7</sup> In this myth (359c6–360b2), the tale of a ring capable of producing invisibility is told. Neither justice nor injustice is referred to in the myth. There is no other standard presented than the successful acquisition of political power, an acquisition which is effected through regicide (360b1–2).

Equally significant is the manner whereby Gyges' ancestor successfully gains the throne of Lydia. He succeeds through a basic deception—the ability to be present in fact but not appearing to be so. By allowing one to escape the sensual standards which comprise the conventions of existence, the myth undercuts the saliency of appearance. The myth calls the usage of opinion into question, requiring that a distinction be made between opinion, and its foundation in what appears to be, and true being. The power of the ring is first seen during an assembly (359e2: *συλλόγου*) of the shepherds employed by the king, of which Gyges' ancestor is one.<sup>8</sup> Others are unanimous in their opinion that Gyges' ancestor is not present, and they are wrong. Such proceedings, we are led to understand, are insufficient in identifying the proper manner of distinguishing between what is true and what is appearance (or, more precisely in the case of the myth, the lack of appearance). Opinion itself as a subject for serious discussion in the dialogue is introduced here.

Glaucon had initiated his presentation by asking whether Socrates believed there to be three goods—one regarded as a good for itself, another as a good both for itself and for what arises from it, and a third seen as a good for what arises from it only. Socrates agrees that these goods exist, and, in response to Glaucon's question, places justice in the second category. Not simply as something which is regarded as a good both for itself and for what arises from it, but, rather, considered to be so “in the finest sense,” for which “one who is to be blessed in the future would be grateful both for itself and for the things which arise from it” (358a1–3; cf. 419a9–10, and *Gorg.* 507e1). The examples which Glaucon had provided for each of these three categories of good make clear that, while a distinction is here intended between intrinsic and extrinsic worth, it is still the product—whether transient or long-lasting—which determines its value. Appearance remains as the primary means of ascertaining whether some-

7. The other two constructions specifically labeled as myths in the *Republic*, both presented by Socrates, are the myth of autochthony at the end of Book 3 (414b8ff.) and the myth of Er at the end of Book 10 (614b2ff.).

8. See 359d2–3. This is a reflection of the shepherd analogy with which Thrasymachus had initiated the final portion of his argument in Book 1 (343bff.). Cf. 416a2–6, 440d2–3, and 451d4–9.

thing is good. Socrates' initial response leads one to surmise that appearance may not be the proper standard with which justice is to be gauged.

Glaucon, for his part, indicates that common opinion usually places justice in the third category—something which is considered among the forms (*εἰδούζ*)<sup>9</sup> of drudgery, done for the sake of wages and reputation, but “for the sake of itself is avoided as being arduous” (358a6). Glaucon, however, wishes Socrates to tell “what each [justice and injustice] is and what power it has by itself in the soul, leaving aside the wages and things arising from them” (b4–7). To that end, Glaucon proposes that he will demonstrate “what they say justice is and from where it comes,” “second, that all who practice it do so against their will because [it is] necessary but not because [it is] good,” and “third, that it is reasonable that they should do this, for indeed then the life of the unjust is better than the life of the just, so they say” (c1–6).

In the process of articulating these three dimensions of his argument, Glaucon suggests that justice is actually a product of the commission and reception of unjust acts, at least in its political sense. Having suffered injustice, individuals agree not to do injustice nor to suffer injustice (358e3–359a2). At 359a3–4, Glaucon informs us that this is the beginning of the parties to the agreement “setting down laws and agreements among them, and the naming of that which the law orders as both lawful and just.” This is both the being and the genesis of justice (a5). Finally, at b4–5 Glaucon contends that this is “the nature of justice, and it is of this sort and it naturally results from such things.”

This is the first occurrence in the dialogue of the term *φύσις* (“nature”). The “nature of justice,” however, as Glaucon's argument makes clear, is produced by convention—the initial agreement among individuals to refrain from suffering or doing injustice, and the subsequent laws and further agreements established to ensure that injustice will be neither experienced nor practiced. Further, justice is practiced, not because individuals wish to live justly, but because they are not able to commit injustice and evade suffering in return (a8–b1, b6).

Glaucon offers a second conception of nature at 359c5–6, where it is contended that “any nature naturally pursues a good, but is distorted by law, through force, to the honor of the equal.”<sup>10</sup> A basic distinction between law and nature is here introduced. It is law, and not nature, which by force compels one to act justly. Left to their own devices, men would follow their natures and attempt to gain advantage through injustice. It is not natural to refrain from so doing, but only because men are unable to escape suffering in return, or at least are not sufficiently convinced that they can do so, is the original agreement made. If nature is presented as producing injustice as a good, then whatever answer Socrates provides must take its bearings from an understanding of what justice and injus-

9. The term *εἶδος* had been used for the first time in the dialogue by Glaucon at 357c5.

10. That is, law replaces an acceptance of equal treatment for the more natural propensity to commit injustice—which is a pursuit of the unequal to one's own advantage. Cf. Aristotle *N.E.* 1128<sup>a</sup>31ff., and 1130<sup>b</sup>8ff.

tice naturally are. Short of this, Socrates is put in the position of defending another conventional interpretation, but not pursuing the argument to its essential foundations. Unless the essence of justice is contrasted to the essence of injustice, Socrates cannot succeed in answering Glaucon's position. Such a concern with essence requires an examination of the natures of justice and injustice, not an examination of their appearances or results.

Similarly, the two natures presented in Glaucon's argument contrast the political with the individual. It is the nature of justice in the political sense to establish impediments to the commission of unjust acts, yet it is natural for individuals to attempt to gain advantage through injustice. The nature of man would pursue activities at variance to the standards of conduct set forth by law if that nature could reasonably expect to evade the force of law. The difficulties of applying one encompassing definition of justice to both individual and city is intimated. However, Glaucon's demand to Socrates that justice and injustice be viewed with regard to the power each has within the soul suggests that, for Glaucon, a true understanding of how each affects the individual possessing it implies that justice be considered as a standard for individual conduct, absent any reliance upon the external coercion of law or convention.

It is not, therefore, simple justice which is at issue. Rather, justice is applied to two considerations—one addressed to the conduct of the individual, and the other considering the position of justice in political life. The former is contained in Glaucon's desire to hear Socrates present the relationship between individual order and individual conduct. The latter is reflected by the presence and application of convention and law. Glaucon makes no attempt to bring these two conceptions within a common rubric. Both dimensions of his argument are merely posited. Socrates, however, owing both to the structure of Glaucon's argument and to the necessities which that argument puts forward, must pursue such a connection. The presence of injustice, or at least a desire to commit unjust acts, in the nature of man is prior to the presence of justice in the city, at least according to Glaucon's argument. Socrates cannot respond by demonstrating how justice can be made more secure in its political sense without also demonstrating how justice relates to the individual soul. Now Glaucon's presentation is predicated upon common opinion, and common opinion operates on the basis of appearance. The relationship between opinion and appearance, especially so in the case of justice, is reflected most clearly in the city, since political life is basically the application of a collectively held foundation of belief. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that upon completion of Glaucon's and Adeimantus' arguments Socrates will turn to the construction of a city in speech. This is not a city in fact, that is, it is not an existing city to which Socrates turns. Such a city would already possess and apply preconceived opinions, traditions, and the like. The city presented in the *Republic* is one completely founded "from the beginning." By so doing, Socrates can crystallize the positions of opinion and appearance and set the stage for the advent of philosophic pursuits. We should expect that the discussion

must eventually leave the realm of appearance, since Glaucon's essential demand of Socrates is that he demonstrate the conditions of soul produced by justice and injustice, absent any concern for advantages or what results in appearance from either.

While Glaucon's position establishes the regard held by common opinion on the subject of justice, it is not complete. There is little discussion of the foundation upon which that regard is constructed. Specifically absent from Glaucon's presentation are concerns for what the poets tell and the function of the gods.<sup>11</sup> Adeimantus, on the other hand, directs his attention to these points during his presentation. Adeimantus initially seeks to understand the arguments opposed to those of Glaucon—namely, those which praise justice and blame injustice (362e3). Justice is not praised, however, for itself, but for the good reputations resulting from it (363a1–2). It is a result of opinion (a3) that one who appears to be just (a2–3) will realize advantages. Appearance, therefore remains the standard in the introduction to Adeimantus' argument. It is not justice, nor even the advantages accruing from actually being just, which constitutes the basis of these arguments in defense of justice. It is the appearance of being just, and the advantages resulting from such appearance, which is at issue.

In justification of this approach, Adeimantus turns to the poets, specifically Hesiod and Homer for examples of the gods honoring the just (363a8–c2). According to the poets, apparently, justice is rewarded by the gods. Unfortunately, there is another form of speech concerning justice and injustice which is spoken in private and by the poets (363e5–364a1).<sup>12</sup> It maintains that moderation (*σωφροσύνη*) and justice are noble but arduous, while extravagance and injustice are pleasant and easily acquired, made shameful only by opinion and law (a3–4).<sup>13</sup> This form of speech contends that the unjust is more profitable than the just (a5–6), for the most part. Further, the gods are seen as giving ill-fortune and a bad life to many good men (b3–4), and the opposite fate (b5: *μοῖραν*) to those who are opposite.<sup>14</sup> In this second version of the relationship between the gods and justice there is no guarantee that living a just life will produce any tan-

11. The only entrance of the poets into Glaucon's presentation occurs at 361b7–8 and 362a8–b1 where Glaucon employs lines 592–94 of Aeschylus' *Septem*. The gods are introduced at the very end of Glaucon's presentation (at 362c1–8), almost as an afterthought.

12. The juxtaposition of form (*εἶδος*) and speech (*λόγον*) is significant. While *εἶδος* had appeared twice in Glaucon's argument (357c5 and 358a5), this usage by Adeimantus is the first in the dialogue to speak of the "form" by which argument is expressed. Socrates throughout the remainder of the discussion will consider both the substance of argument and the manner of its transmission.

13. This is the only appearance of the term *αἰσχρόν* in either brother's argument. It revises the relationship between injustice and law originally advanced by Glaucon (at 359c5). There, law, through force, compelled a perversion of nature. In Adeimantus' argument, it becomes a matter of shame, rather than force, which does so. This shame, being a result of law and opinion, is likewise a product of both convention and appearance.

14. *Μοῖρα* more properly meant "one's portion" in earlier literature, a usage also found in Plato. See *Critias* 121a9; *Crat.* 398b10; *Prot.* 322a3; *Soph.* 235c4; *Tim.* 35b5, 73d1; *Phaedr.* 250d7; *Charm.* 155d7 (quoting Cydias); *Phileb.* 53a7; *Epin.* 985a6; *Rep.* 474d1, and 533e8.

gible benefits. In fact, Adeimantus' rendition clearly implies that the gods may even choose to take cognizance of a man's goodness and still give him a bad life in return. Similarly, one who is not good by disposition may yet be blessed by the gods with honor and advantage. Neither actually being just nor appearing to be just will produce a better life with certainty.

As a result of this second approach in speech, both Hesiod and Homer are employed to indicate the ability of one to do unjust acts and evade punishment from the gods (c7–e2). The deficiency of the poetic counsel on the subject of justice is graphically indicated here, for the same poets are utilized as proof of two contradictory propositions—the first claiming that the gods reward the just; the second indicating that the gods can be deceived by those who commit injustice. Noting this confusion, Adeimantus asks what this does to the souls (365a6: *ψυχᾶς*) of the young hearing such things, specifically the young who have fine natures (a7: *εὐφροεῖς*) and are capable of determining how to follow the best life (365b1; cf. 496a9f., and 612e8–613b1).

It is not a concern with nature generally which occupies Adeimantus' attention, but the effect produced upon those with fine natures. Socrates is now obliged to present the path to be taken for the introduction and consideration of the proper ordering of those with philosophic capability. It is not surprising, therefore, that, when Socrates attempts to move the discussion from a consideration of the city in speech and its reflection of the order of the soul to a consideration of degenerate regimes and their consequent reflections of the disorder of the soul, it will be Adeimantus who challenges Socrates to present a "whole form of argument" he had intended to keep from the interlocutors (449c7–8; cf. Glaucon at 543c7f.).

During the course of his presentation, Adeimantus places demands upon Socrates on four occasions, although the essence of each demand does not constitute a separate requirement in argument in each case. At 366e5–9, he requests that justice and injustice be portrayed "in speech, [so] that one is the greatest evil a soul could have in itself, while justice is the greatest good." Adeimantus continues, "for if this had been spoken by all of you from the beginning and had you persuaded us from youth, we should not guard against each other so that injustice would not be done, but each would himself be his best guard, lest fearing doing injustice, he might be dwelling with the greatest evil" (cf. 503b5). Glaucon's demand has thus been revised. It is now incumbent upon Socrates to indicate, not that justice is a good, but that it is the greatest good. The further allusion to each individual being his own best guard will, of course, be reflected both in the rise of the guardians in the city in speech and in Socrates' final, and powerful, counsel on the subject—arising during the myth of Er in Book 10. There (618b6f.) we are advised that the pursuit of the soul's order is the greatest necessity during life, to be pursued to the exclusion of all else if such be required.

At 367b2–5, Adeimantus demands that Socrates "not only prove by speech that justice is stronger than injustice, but what each by itself does to the one hav-

ing it, on account of which one is evil, while the other is good." It is not sufficient that Socrates indicate in discourse why justice is to be preferred to injustice. Socrates must likewise indicate the essential justification for such a position, given the relationship between the possession of either and the condition of the individual possessing it."<sup>15</sup>

At 367d2–5, Adeimantus demands that Socrates praise justice in what advantage justice itself has to the one having it, and to blame injustice for what harm it does, but that Socrates leave aside wages and opinions for others to praise (cf. Glaucon at 358a6–7, and Socrates at 612a8–b2). The requirement that justice be praised and defended in speech by Socrates is also now extended to a defense of deeds. Not deeds alone, but the very manner in which Socrates has lived his life is now at issue (d8–e1). Whatever advantage is to emerge from justice is not to be one of common opinion or utility, but one of direct and personal benefit to the one possessing justice.

Finally, at 367e1–5, Adeimantus raises his last demand. This is substantially the same demand as that voiced at 367b2–5, with one addition, itself one previously mentioned by Adeimantus—it is to make no difference whether the good or evil exhibited by the presence of justice or injustice is recognized by gods and man or not (cf. 366e6–7). Appearance, with which Adeimantus had initiated his consideration of the praising of justice and the blaming of injustice is not to be relied upon in Socrates' rejoinder.

Now we have given some attention to the arguments of Glaucon and Adeimantus at the outset of Book 2 in the *Republic* to indicate a basic dimension of what will occur later in the dialogue. Rather than merely being personal opinions about what justice is, these two arguments have orchestrated a compelling challenge to Socrates—one which requires that Socrates extend discussion beyond what opinion and appearance generally provide on the subject of justice. Socrates is asked to defend justice, to justify its essential superiority, and to do so along lines which are introduced into discussion by Glaucon and Adeimantus, not by Socrates.<sup>16</sup> The manner in which the body of the dialogue will unfold is dictated both by the structures of these arguments and by the demands placed upon Socrates by Glaucon and Adeimantus. In the process, justice has been applied to both the political and the individual. It is manifest from what Glaucon and Adeimantus have presented, however, that each considers the truest indication of what justice is, and the most correct portrayal of its nature, to be found in the condition of the individual soul. It is important to recognize that, when Socrates sets about the task of responding to these arguments, he is obliged to relate justice both to the political and to the individual, but it is the expectation of

15. See A. A. Krystallis, "Dikaiosune kai dikaia psuche para Platoni," *Archeion philosophias kai theorias ton epistemon* 8 (1937), 147–84, 338–62; and C. Kirwan, "Glaucon's Challenge," *Phronesis* 10 (1965), 162–73.

16. This is far from uncommon in the dialogues. See Moors, *Glaucon and Adeimantus*, 48, n.

Glaucon and Adeimantus that the most correct understanding of justice is to be found in its relationship to the soul, not to the city. That understanding cannot rely upon opinion and appearance, but must concern itself ultimately with essence. Further, as Adeimantus' presentation makes clear, one cannot have recourse to tradition, especially as that tradition is presented through poetry, because such tradition reflects only the confusion with which justice has been regarded. A political existence requires such a tradition, and Socrates will provide one, altering the dimensions and objectives of poetry in the process. By itself, however, this is not sufficient to answer the demands placed upon him. Whatever approach to justice he espouses must present an essential justification for the coincidence of justice and goodness, a coincidence which is found in the soul without the sensual appearance necessary in the city.

## II

In response to all of this, Socrates sets about the task of constructing a city in speech. The initial reason is provided at 368d2f.—it would be easier to locate justice in a city, since it is larger than an individual. This is not meant to imply, however, that justice in the city, when finally realized, will be exactly the same as justice in the soul. There is to be a likeness of one to the other, but it is to be a provisional one. As Socrates suggests at 369a2–3, the interlocutors are to entertain such a likeness. The city, from its inception, is to be regarded as a grand heuristic device, one which establishes the dimensions of certain concerns which will eventually be considered at the level of the individual. This is the basic reason for the city's introduction. In the course of sketching this city, much will be presented and discussed which has a direct bearing upon political life, and the definition of justice which is ultimately provided for the political will, if believed and practiced, provide an ordering of the political. Nonetheless, despite these important considerations, justice in political life cannot be the conclusion towards which Socrates' analysis proceeds, at least not as the final objective of that analysis. The truest conception of justice, which Glaucon and Adeimantus have demanded, concerns the soul and the conduct of individual life; it does not proceed from a primary concern with politics, collectively held opinion, and the world of appearance.

As we have already observed, the presentation of the nature which political justice exhibits and its relationship to common opinion, as put forth by Glaucon, require that Socrates turn initially to the city. This very coincidence of opinion and political life further requires, however, that Socrates construct a city without recourse to existing political systems.<sup>17</sup> By fashioning a city from the beginning, the discussion completely controls what opinions are to arise and how they

17. It is not until Book 8, and the discussion of "degenerate" regimes, that Socrates turns to an existing political system. Timocracy is called "the Cretan and Laconian" (544c3) regime.

are to be regarded and applied. Such an approach would be quite impossible in a factual city, since such opinions would already be present. By constructing the opinion base upon which this city in speech is to operate, the discussants are made aware of the radically conventional nature of opinion. The defective aspects of that nature become more apparent. The force which opinion usually possesses in a city, therefore, is decisively undercut in dialogue.

Despite the claim often advanced that the city of the dialogue is meant to be one which is realizable, a city which is to be instituted, and, therefore, is presented by Socrates as a blueprint for political reform,<sup>18</sup> Socrates indicates on numerous occasions that the city's possibility is quite unlikely.<sup>19</sup> It is meant to be a city in speech, made from the beginning and taking its bearings from the needs of the discussion (369c9–10). As Glaucon is made to understand at 592a10–b1, it is a city made in speeches, not one which is to exist on earth.<sup>20</sup> This is a theoretical city, whose rationale is created by the direction and requirements of conversation. It is also, of course, a theoretical construct which may have some quite important bearings upon actual political life. The necessity of its entrance into the dialogue, however, is not one which speaks of the need to revise actual institutions or political life. Through the discussion occasioned by the city's founding, Socrates produces an awareness among his interlocutors of the essential dimensions of collective life, but it remains the order of the individual soul towards which discussion is directed.

Since the city is predicted upon the needs of the discussion, it undergoes several revisions as the dialogue proceeds. It is the groundsel of discussion, providing a continuous backdrop, a grand appearance, against which the elements of discussion can be reflected. We have the "city of staple needs" presented by Socrates at 369b5f. —owing its genesis to necessity (b7: ἐνδότης).<sup>21</sup> That city is transformed into the "city of luxuries" by Glaucon at 372d7–e1, identified as such by Socrates at e3. These luxuries introduce medicine (d1–2) and warfare (373e2), concerns not found in the original city. The necessity of fashioning and educating a guardian class transforms the city into a "city of the armed camp," the conclusion of which does not arise until the implications of the myth of au-

18. See, for example, W. Fite, *The Platonic Legend* (New York, 1934), 37–38; E. Zeller, *Plato and the Older Academy*, Rep. Ed., trans. S. F. Alleyne and A. Goodwin (New York, 1962), 483; M. Davis, "On the Imputed Possibilities of Callipolis and Magnesia," *American Journal of Philology* 85 (1964), 397; A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and his Work* (New York, 1957), 281; and M. Ostwald, "The Two Stages in Plato's *Republic*," in *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, ed. J. P. Anton and G. L. Kustes (Albany, 1971), 316–27.

19. E.g., 376d9–10; cf. 414b8–c2 and 459c8–d2 with 485c3–4; cf. 450c8–9 and 540d1–3 with 485b1–4, 466d6–8, and 472c4–d2; 473a1–7; cf. 485a10–b3 with 519c8–d9; 497b1–7; 499a11–14 (cf. c5: ἐκ τὴν ἰσχύος with 499d3–4: ἡ Μοῦσα πόλεως); 540e5–541a4; and 592a10–b5.

20. Socrates responds that it is a paradigm for the one who wishes to see it, and to found within himself what he sees, but it makes no difference whether it exists or will exist somewhere. For one would concern himself with what is of this city by itself, and of no other (592b2–5).

21. Socrates originally offers "the most barely sufficient city," as he calls it at 369d11. This city of four or five persons, however, is immediately expanded.

tochthony are presented at the end of Book 3.<sup>22</sup> The “city of virtue” arises in Book 4 (419a1–434c10): the “city of paradox” in Book 5 (comprising the “three waves of paradox,” 451b9–474c3).<sup>23</sup> The “city of degeneration” arises in Books 8 and 9 (comprising the four “degenerate regimes”).

What possibility for the city’s existence entertained in the dialogue is the result of the position which the city holds in the discussion itself. The city has no existence apart from the discussion. It is completely a creature of discussion and owes its existence in speech wholly to the forum in which it is presented. The primary focus throughout the development of the city in speech is the basic objective which the city presents—that is, the function it serves in making known, in terms of appearance, the presence of concepts with which Socrates is concerned. That objective is initially cast in a regard for what is required for the city’s material existence—what, in other words, provides for the most fundamental reflection in physical terms of the city, its survival. As the dialogue continues, however, so also does the rationale of the city develop. The “city of luxuries” introduces the need for a purging or a purification of the city. That is accomplished almost exclusively through a purging or purification of the soul of an individual citizen. While the long discussion of poetry, music, metre, and rhythm which occupies the discussants’ attentions throughout Books 2 and 3 is occasioned by the position poetic authority holds in the argument of Adeimantus earlier in Book 2, its conclusions address the proper conditions of the soul. This is seen most clearly in the dual nature possessed by the guardians—they must be both gentle and spirited (375c6–8). They are to possess moderation and courage. Additionally, as Socrates suggests at 375e9–11, those who are to be most skillful at guarding must also be philosophic in nature, that is, lovers of wisdom.<sup>24</sup>

Very early in the discussion of the guardians are posited the three virtues which, in Book 4, will produce Socrates’ definition of justice. The positioning of moderation, courage, wisdom, and the reason for their discussion—justice—will be further revised. Of more than passing interest, however, is the observation that each of these four concerns had appeared in the arguments of Glaucon and Adeimantus at the outset of Book 2. In each instance, the concern had been incorrectly applied—at least to be considered so with respect to how Socrates will position them in Book 4. Wisdom appears once, in Adeimantus’ presentation, at 365d4 (*σοφίαν*). It is there used to speak of the “wisdom” that teachers of persuasion can convey. It is the wisdom of the public assemblies and courts, and it will be employed to practice injustice without paying the penalty. Courage appears once in Glaucon’s presentation, at 361b4 (*ἀνδρείαν*), while its

22. While initially the entire warrior class is called the class of guardians, guardian becomes the proper term for ruler and auxiliary the proper term for warrior at 414b1–6.

23. See 475b7f.

24. Philosophers are specifically identified as the most precise guardians at 503b4–5. See J. R. Kayser and K. Moors, “*akribe logon, akribologeí, akribestatos*, in *Politeia* 340e–341b, 503b,” *Apeiron* 8 (1974), 31–32.

privative appears once in Adeimantus' argument, at 366d2 (*ἀνανδρία*). It is the courage of the perfectly unjust man, who nonetheless appears to be just, which is discussed by Glaucon, while Adeimantus suggests cowardice as one of the causes of men being unable to commit injustice and, therefore, praising justice. Moderation occurs once, at 364a2 (*σωφροσύνη*), where Adeimantus associates it with justice in introducing those who claim that both are difficult, while their opposites are easy. These same individuals are those who proceed to demonstrate how one can be unjust and yet still avoid divine punishment. Justice, of course, had provided the foundation for the entirety of Glaucon's and Adeimantus' presentations, and, as those presentations sought to demonstrate, is not to be preferred to injustice. Both Glaucon and Adeimantus had expressed a desire to hear what justice and injustice were in the soul. The coincidence of virtues being applied incorrectly and the development of the condition of the soul which is to be preferred, however, has placed obligations upon Socrates which will require the expansion of discussion beyond justice to order, and beyond proper regard to proper knowledge.

The entire treatment of education and poetry in the dialogue is made necessary by the prevailing position of common opinion in Glaucon's argument, and the specific discussion of the poetic portrayal of the gods in Adeimantus' argument. Justice cannot be located, however, if the understanding of order, be it of the polis or of the soul, is not likewise considered. While the discussion of education is seen as required by the discussants' desires to understand the nature of justice (367c7–d5), it is actually the condition of the soul, rather than the condition of the city, which constitutes the basic theme throughout Socrates' rather long treatment of poetry. The gravamen of the argument which Socrates is suggesting here is advanced at 403d2–4: it is not a favorable body which, through its virtue, makes a soul good. Rather, a good soul provides a body with its own virtue, thus making it as good as it can be.

The city in speech is meant to set the stage for a concerted attempt to understand the order required of the soul. As it is not the human body which is to determine the relationship of virtue to individual conduct, so also is it not the outward structure—if you will, the body—of the city which is to produce the presence of virtue. Nature, or essence, is not accurately reflected by outward appearance. The function of the city in speech in the *Republic* testifies to this. What is initially presented in terms of material necessity becomes progressively transformed into a device intended to counsel inward ordering. The "city of virtue" in Book 4 is designed to introduce the functions of the four virtues within the soul. In point of fact, however, the relationship between these virtues and the soul has already been introduced throughout the "city of the armed camp"—during the discussion of education and poetry. When we have reached the final "version" of the city in speech the "city of degeneration," we are provided with four inferior regimes, each presented, not in terms of its political structure, nor even in terms of its conception of political justice, but in terms of how each regime reflects a

corresponding, and inferior, ordering of the soul (see 544e4f.; cf. 575c8–d1, 580c9–d1, 581c3–4, and 590c8f.).

Despite the radical purification of political life which the city in speech exhibits in the “city of virtue,” and even with the introduction of the philosopher in the “city of paradox,” it remains, as with all cities, a conventional appearance. The ultimate answers to the themes put forward by Glaucon and Adeimantus must be found elsewhere. The city crystallizes the positions of appearance and opinion, but must, eventually, be transcended. So long as the correct definition of justice is pursued in a transient and superficial way, as one must in the political, it will escape the hunt. The *Republic* will provide an approach to justice which will be adequate for political life. That political application of justice, however, will not prove sufficient for a correct understanding of the concept. For that purpose, a more introverted, and philosophical, approach is required.

### III

Book 4 begins with Adeimantus suggesting that the guardians, whose strict regimen and life-style had been outlined in the discussion subsequent to the presentation of the myth of autochthony at the end of Book 3 (416d3–417b8), are not happy (419a2–3). They do not enjoy anything good from the city (a4–5); namely, material goods and riches. Socrates responds that, in founding the city, they are not seeking the special happiness of any one part, but, to the extent possible, that of the whole city (b6–8). As Socrates adds at 421c4–7, if the city is fairly founded, they must allow nature to give to each part its portion of happiness.

The question of happiness is advanced again at 427d3–7. The city is now judged as having been founded (c6–d1). It is now necessary to ascertain where justice and injustice are to be found in that city, how they differ from one another, and why it is that the man who is going to be happy possess justice, irrespective of whether or not gods and men see it. Socrates suggests that the city, if it has been rightly founded, is completely good (e6–7). It is, therefore, wise, courageous, moderate, and just (e10–11: “. . . σοφῆ . . . ἀνδρεία . . . σώφρων . . . δικαία”). The identification of “complete goodness” with the presence of the four virtues had been intimated by Socrates on several occasions during the discussion of education in Books 2 and 3. Since that discussion had been entered into as a necessary component of the discussants’ desires to understand the nature of justice, and since the presence of such virtues, or at least the disposition toward them, had been seen as a necessary element in the conception of good (see 409c3–e2), such an identification is consistent with the flow of dialogical development.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, J. R. Workman, *The Evolution and Meaning of agathos in the Philosophy of Plato* (diss. Princeton University, 1940); L. Quattrocchi, *L’idea di Bello nel Pensiero di Platone* (Rome, 1953); H. D. Voigtländer, *Die Lust und das Gute bei Platon* (Würzburg, 1960) [diss. Univer-

Positing that, having identified the first three virtues, justice must be what remains (427e13–428a6), Socrates proceeds to locate wisdom, courage, and moderation within the city. Wisdom is found as the distinguishing virtue of the guardians, or rulers, who as a class comprise the fewest number of individuals by nature (428e8–429a3). Courage is called the power and safe-keeping of the right and lawful opinion concerning what is terrible (or “wonderous”) and what is not (430b2–4).<sup>26</sup> It is located among the soldiers (429e8), that is, the auxiliary class. Finally, moderation is viewed as a certain kind of order and self-discipline over certain kinds of pleasures and desires (430e6–7).<sup>27</sup> It is located throughout the city, and produces a unity of its members (432a2–7).

Justice, however, continues to elude the discussants (witness the comical passage at 432c7–e3). Justice, as it turns out, was present “from the beginning” (d7; cf. 366e1–2, 367a1, 369c9, and 433a1), but had not been recognized. Justice is minding one’s own business and not becoming involved in the affairs of others (433a8–9).<sup>28</sup> This definition of justice in the city, which takes its departure from each doing that which his natures makes him naturally fit to do (a5–6), is presented very provisionally. Socrates adds that “minding one’s own business, when it comes into being in a certain manner, is likely to be justice” (b3–4). Initially, this provisionality seems the result of two considerations. First, from the standpoint of the city, each class must exhibit the proper virtue or virtues in practicing its correct function within the city. The difficulty of this situation actually arising is well attested to by the discussion in Book 3, a discussion which culminates in the necessity of a “false myth” being presented and somehow being believed by the citizens (see 414b8–d4). This myth is presented by Socrates with great reluctance (see 414c8–d2). It concerns a matter which has not come to pass in contemporary times, and could not, although the poets have contended that it happened before (c4–7), and requires much persuasion (c7).

Secondly, the definition of justice in the city in speech is presented provisionally because the most essential dimensions of justice, and justice’s corresponding relationship to order, cannot be adequately provided by a conventional enterprise like a city, even the city sketched in the *Republic*. That region is properly one of the soul. What can only be reflection with regard to the city, over which the

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sity of Frankfurt, 1959); N. Bousoulas, “He demiourgikotes tou agathou kai he metapsusike tes Platonikes meixeos,” *Platon* 14 (1962), 177–226; and E. de Strycker, “L’idée du Bien dans la République de Platon,” *L’Antiquité Classique* 39 (1970), 450–67.

26. This is, more properly, political (*πολιτικήν*) courage, as Socrates observes at 430c3.

27. See, for example, C. Hoffmeister, *Über den Begriff sophrosune bei Plato* (Essen, 1827); O. Knuth, *Quaestiones de notione tes sophrosunes Platonica Critica* (Halle, Saxony, 1874); J. A. Mourant, “Plato’s Doctrine of Temperance,” *The New Scholasticism* 6 (1932), 19–31; and A. Kollmann, “Sophrosyne,” *Wiener Studien* 59 (1941), 12–34.

28. See I. Ogienski, *Welches ist der Sinn des Platons ta hautou pratein?* (Trzmeszno, 1845); A. W. H. Adkins, “Polupragmosune and ‘Minding One’s Own Business’: A Study in Greek Social and Political Values,” *Classical Philology* 71 (1976), 301–27; V. Ehrenberg, “Polypragmosune: A Study in Greek Politics,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 67 (1947), 46–67; and W. J. Verdenius, “Rep. 433ae,” *Mnemosyne*, quatra ser. 8 (1955), 193–95. Cf. *Rep.* 551e6, 620c6–7, 434c8, 549c6–7; *Theaet.* 184e4; *Parm.* 137b6; *Gorg.* 526c4; and *Charm.* 161d11.

discussants have founding authority only in speech, may nonetheless present an image of what should be each individual's concern with respect to the order of his own soul. This very point will be made explicit by Socrates rather shortly in the discussion.

In addition to these two observations, there exists another basic reason for the provisional nature of the definition, and this relates to the very way in which justice is addressed, both by conventional undertakings and by the common opinion with which those undertakings are buttressed. It likewise is a consideration which relates to the very manner whereby Socrates effects the transition from a consideration of political justice to a consideration of soul justice. The essential underlying point which Socrates is drawing attention to, by progressively clear directions in dialogue, is not what justice is, but, in a fundamental sense, what the just life is. Justice may be addressed in two basic ways—either what constitutes just action or what identifies the just individual may be considered. It is the latter to which Socrates is leading his interlocutors. This is precisely what the demands of Glaucon and Adeimantus had required of him. The just individual, as we shall see, is just because of the internal order which structures his soul; he is not just by virtue of what he does. The actions, the outward appearances, of being just do not, themselves, make the individual just. Rather, the actions are a result, not a cause, of justice. That is, the extent to which an individual possesses internal ordering is the extent to which he is to be considered just. The projection of justice in conduct extends to the manner whereby the individual lives his life—also a demand placed upon Socrates by Adeimantus (that Socrates defend the manner in which he has lived his life). The just life is a condition, rather than a relationship. It is the concerted ordering of oneself; it is not primarily the way in which one relates to others, although that relatedness is at least implied later by Socrates (443a3f.). The just life is a life animated by an ordering of the soul, an ordering which will require philosophy, and as we shall see, having as its ultimate objectives concerns which cannot be adequately stated in speech. I would suggest, therefore, that the essential reason for the provisionality of the definition is occasioned by what Socrates intends to provide as the final statement on the nature of justice, one which will not admit of an adequate expression within the confines of nonphilosophical considerations nor within the limits of collectively held opinion.

Justice in the city is viewed by Socrates as that which provides the power allowing the other virtues to come into being and provides the other virtues with safekeeping so long as it remains (433b8–c1).<sup>29</sup> It is both a product of the other three virtues (since the presence of these virtues in the city is the *sine qua non* for the presence of justice) and that which allows the other three virtues to be present. The dialogue has experienced difficulty in locating justice within the city in

29. Here (433b8), *φρονήσεως* ("prudence") is employed instead of the "wise" (*σοφῆ*) of 428e8 or the "wisdom" (*σοφία*) of 433d8

speech because that city, as Socrates had suggested at 427e6–7, had been completely founded. Justice becomes indistinguishable from the order which the city exhibits. The very constructing of this order has been the concomitant development of justice in the city. To see justice it is necessary that one view the whole of the city, not the parts of the city and the virtues only of those parts. Only by identifying the other virtues can justice be uncovered, since it is only after isolating the other virtues, and understanding the relationship each has to constituent parts of the city, that the whole, both of city and of virtue, can be adequately expressed.

Justice, however, is also regarded as a match for (433d7 and d11) the other virtues in bringing about the virtue of the city. It is not, thus, simply that each of the remaining virtues governing its proper element or elements in the city, if taken by itself, will produce order. The order is accomplished from the condition of the whole, not of its corresponding parts in isolation. Justice is regarded as in competition with wisdom, courage, and moderation because it is only in the presence of justice that the remaining virtues are allowed to continue governing their proper spheres of the city. Justice, therefore, is the constant mediating virtue which identifies the correct application of the other virtues. The demands of justice place limitations upon the directions of the other virtues—deriving its perspective from the order of the whole city, justice necessarily proscribes the application of wisdom, courage, and moderation in a manner which none of these virtues can accomplish individually. There is, however, an unsettling aspect of this competition. If justice in the city is perceived as demanding certain actions (or, as is more likely, a refraining from certain actions) reflecting individuals' natures, it may actually appear at cross-purposes with one or more of the remaining virtues. It is for this reason that the later introduction of the philosopher-ruler becomes theoretically necessary. The competition between the city and the wise, which is not answered by the introduction of the philosopher-ruler, merely explained away by argumentative fiat, comes to light. Such competition will be addressed later in the dialogue, and we shall comment upon it.

The political definition of justice is applied to matters requiring legal attention at 433e3–434a1. There, those who rule in the city are to decide private disagreements, applying the same standard as that which encompasses the idea of justice in the city—one should possess what properly belongs to that person, not what properly belongs to others. Any of the three classes becoming involved in the affairs of others, or exchanging such affairs between classes, is regarded as the greatest damage to the city and is to be most rightly regarded as the most villainous (b9–c2). This condition is immediately identified as injustice against one's own city (c4–5). The application of justice to legal situations not only illustrates the definition of justice in that situation to which common opinion most often applies it, it also serves to undermine the material advantages which Thrasymachus and Glaucon had specifically associated with being unjust (see 343d8–344c8, and 362b2–7).

Further, injustice had been considered far more to the private advantage of an individual than had justice during Glaucon's argument in Book 2 (360c8–d1). Now, however, the private advantage is seen as being justice, and justice is the result of an ordered whole. There is, of course, the obvious addition in the city of a third party to adjudicate private contests; they are not to be left to the vicissitudes of individual conduct. Even here, however, an important dimension of the "whole" vision of justice is made manifest. There is no private interest apart from the order of the city. The private has been completely absorbed by the city. There transpires a radical revision in the *Republic* of the concept of "one's own." What is initially regarded as the seeking after advantage in material terms, comes, ultimately, to refer to the pursuit of individual order, an intense, almost erotic, concern with the condition of the soul. It is a concern which carries with it the distinct possibility that anything apart from the condition of the soul is to be relegated to less important realms. Included within the purview of this possibility is the household, the family, and even the city.<sup>30</sup>

Having completed the discussion of justice in the city, Socrates now turns to justice in the individual. It is not, however, justice simply, nor specifically the definition of justice in the city, which is addressed in the transition from city to soul, but, rather "the form" (434d3: τὸ εἶδος) of justice which is to be considered. At 435b1–2, Socrates suggests that the just man will be like the just city with regard to the form of justice itself. There is no specific equation of identity between the just city and the just man posited anywhere in the dialogue. A likeness between the two is presented, taking its direction from the manner in which city and man reflect the form of justice itself.<sup>31</sup> This is a consistent reflection of the initial passage at 369a2–3, at the very outset of the development of the city in speech. We are made aware that, in some decisive respect, the complete equation of justice in the city and justice in the soul is to be held as problematic. The very manner in which the discussion of justice in the soul is introduced indicates that Socrates is aware of this problem. At 435d1–3, Socrates notes that the precision which the discussants seek will not emerge from the road which argument has thus far traveled. A longer and more complete road is required. That road will lead to the intense discussion of philosophy's objectives and dimensions in Books 6 and 7.

Each of the three classes of the city, and the corresponding virtue of virtues associated with each, is quickly located in the component parts of the soul. We are advised, however, that the original pattern (443c1: τύπον) which the discussants chanced across during the founding of the city (b8) produced a "kind of

30. See Moors, *Glaucon and Adeimantus*, 114ff.

31. See T. J. Anderson, *Polis and Psyche: A Motif in Plato's "Republic"* (Stockholm, 1971); L. Galis, "The State-Soul Analogy in Plato's Argument that Justice Pays," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 12 (1974), 285–93; and the early line of analysis advanced by C. Frick, "Die sozialhygienischen Bestimmungen in Platons Staat und in der Lykurgischen Grundschrift in ihrem Verhältnis zu den *Antilogiai* der Protagoras," *Wochenschrift für Klassische Philologie* 29 (1912), 808–14.

justice" (c1). This justice posited that it is right (c5) for one to do that for which he is fitted by nature (*φύσει*). Socrates is here referring to the "division of labor" principle, by which each person was assigned a function in the city based on his ability (c5–7). This principle, however, is likewise that upon which the political definition of justice is founded in the city.<sup>32</sup> Socrates now calls this principle, and certainly by implication its presence in the city, a "kind of image of justice" (c4–5). "But indeed the truth is that justice was something of this kind, not concerning doing one's external business, but concerning [what is] one's own, truly concerning oneself and the things of oneself" (c9–d1; cf. 474c4–d2). The idea of "one's own" is now clearly associated with the condition of the soul. Further, that condition of the soul is considered to be the true interpretation of what is "one's own."

The formula advanced at 433a8–9—that justice is minding one's own business and not becoming involved in the affairs of others, is now (at 443d1–5) advanced as belonging properly to the individual soul and its three constituent parts. "One does not allow each part in oneself to do what is another's nor the classes of the soul to become involved in the affairs of each other, but one arranges one's own house well and rules oneself and orders oneself and becomes one's own friend and unites the three parts [of the soul]."

Having done so, the individual can then act in either political or private capacities (e4). "in all such things believing and naming as just and noble action that which both maintains and helps to complete this condition [of the soul]" (e4–6). Injustice becomes those activities which do not accord with the maintaining and completing of this condition—this proper ordering—of the soul. The relationship between justice and injustice so regarded and the nature of the soul is explicitly made at 444d8–11. Justice is produced when the parts of the soul are arranged both to govern and be governed by one another according to nature, while injustice is produced when the parts of the soul both rule and are ruled in a manner contrary to nature. Virtue thus becomes a certain health, beauty, and good disposition of the soul, while vice becomes an illness, shame, and weakness of the soul (d13–e2). Since noble activities are basically related to the maintenance of virtue while shameful activities are basically related to the prevalence of vice (e4–5), the dialogue then proceeds to a consideration of the advantages of practicing justice as it has now been identified (the proper ordering of the soul).

The connection between how one should properly regard the actor and how one should properly regard the action, alluded to earlier, is commented upon directly in this passage. The quality of action is a result of the quality of soul. The actions themselves do not determine the order or disorder of the soul, although they certainly contribute to the degree of virtue or vice existing. The individual ordering, however, is that which is considered when the correct approach to jus-

32. Cf. J. Adam, *The "Republic" of Plato*, 2 vols., 2d Ed. (Cambridge, 1969), I, 262, n. on 443bff, 263, n. on 443c16.

tice and injustice is employed. If there is correct order in the soul, then the actions which follow would also be considered just. If there is disorder in the soul, that disorder would be reflected in the actions entered into by that individual. The act, however, is not the controlling factor. The soul order of the actor is. The condition of the actor not the act is the primary determinant of just or unjust action.

Socrates is now (at 444e7f.) prepared to consider whether it is advantageous to do just and noble acts and to be just, whether or not they go unnoticed, or if it is advantageous to do unjust acts and be unjust. It is Glaucon, however, who contends that such an investigation is no longer necessary, since the proper nature has been identified, and, further, that the necessity of evading vice and injustice and pursuing virtue and justice has been demonstrated (445a5–b3). As far as Glaucon is concerned, these things have been adequately disclosed in the argument they have gone through (b3–4). Since it was Glaucon's argument at the beginning of Book 2 which had demanded that Socrates do so, this statement likewise relieves Socrates of an earlier obligation placed upon him. Socrates nonetheless proceeds to sketch how the likeness between city and soul can be made to exhibit the advantages of just action and the disadvantages of unjust action. Before the scenario of degenerate regimes can unfold, however, Adeimantus demands that the argument just completed be extended. The parabasis of Books 5 through 7 results.

The immediate reason for Adeimantus' demand that a "whole form" (449c2; *εἰδος ὅλον*) of the argument be presented concerns the common possession of women and children in the city (c4–5).<sup>33</sup> Yet there is a deeper manifestation of the likeness between city and soul which Socrates has not yet disclosed. The likeness between justice in the city and justice in the soul has been viewed from one direction. The order of the city had been presented and, only then, had the likeness of that order to the order of the soul been discussed. The dialogue has yet to discuss seriously the soul apart from the city. When the pursuits of the philosopher are finally introduced in Books 6 and 7, they stand as the necessary parallel to the initial presentation of likeness between city and soul. It is not the function of "like-to-like" comparisons in the dialogues to present an absolute identity between the compared subjects.<sup>34</sup> Such comparisons indicate a similarity which is of use in discussion. While the city in speech has developed in the dialogue, the correct view of the soul has not. While the objects to be sought by the city have been introduced, we have yet to hear a parallel discussion with regard to the soul.

33. See 423e6–424a2, where the communal concept is first introduced on the subject of women and children. See also 416e4, where it is maintained that the soldiers will live a "common life" (*κοινῆ ζῆν*).

34. On "like-to-like" comparisons, see *Rep.* 350c4–8; *Polit.* 269d5; *Euthyphr.* 5d1; *Gorg.* 476a8, 488c5–d2, 510b4; *Critias* 107d5; *Crat.* 436c5; *Soph.* 230b6. *Parm.* 148b4; *Laws* 722a1–2, 868a2–3; *Tim.* 30c6, 32b4; *Phaedr.* 240c2f.; *Ep.* 7. 323d10f.; *Minos* 313b1–3; and Aristotle *N.E.* 1169<sup>b</sup>5–10.

Additionally, the advantage of justice over injustice has been curiously skewed in the presentation of Book 4. Glaucon, to be sure, believes that the argument on this matter is closed, but the justification for regarding justice as preferable to injustice has not been established. At 442e4–443c2, Socrates had suggested, and Glaucon had agreed, that activities associated with being unjust—those entered into either to produce advantage for the one acting at the expense of others or exhibiting what would be considered simply unjust conduct—would not be done by those having a correctly ordered soul. No argument, however, establishing such a position is put forward. What may seem settled to Glaucon, requiring thereby, at least in his mind, no further explanation, may prove to be anything but settled upon serious reflection.

The definition of justice provided by Socrates acts as a synthetic prescription, in a manner common to many of the dialogues. It is a standard for discussion, itself predicated upon elements which have comprised foregoing discussion. Rather than serving as a conclusion of the concerns addressed to justice, the definition accentuates the need for movement from experiential foundations, or those based upon collective opinion, as sufficient indicators of what justice truly is. In its relationship to the city constructed in the dialogue, however, the definition retains a connection with something which possesses sensual dimensions. These dimensions are not the result of the city actually existing. Yet, in discussing the city, the dialogue is still projecting an entity which can be approached by the participants as containing understandable features. The ultimate, and most precise, understanding of justice, however, will compel the interlocutors to consider the soul—for which much use of imagery and symbol will be required. No equivalent feature of the sensual world exists for which a meaningful comparison can be made.

A concerted demonstration of the truly just man (that is, the one ordered according to the discussion of the soul in Book 4) as also conventionally just does not appear in the dialogue. I would suggest this difficulty arises because of the inability to equate precisely conventional standards to philosophic standards. Moreover, if viewed from the standpoint of what philosophy counsels, as we shall see, no amount of conventional regard for justice will be sufficient. There emerges a fundamental incompatibility between justice in the city, a conventional enterprise, and justice in the soul, a philosophic concern, if one seeks the most essential and truthful understanding of justice. Nonetheless, Socrates does provide a connection between city concerns and the definition of justice which, if believed, will provide a more ordered political situation. The distinction between an understanding of justice sufficient for the needs and capabilities of common opinion, and an understanding essential for the truth of the concept lies at the basis of the lack in the *Republic* of a Socratically argued assimilation of conventional justice into philosophic justice.

This is not an indication of the deficiency of Socratic argument nor an indication of inadequacy in Platonic dialogue. It is endemic to the relationship of opin-

ion to truth. Since any conventional enterprise, regardless of the beliefs espoused, operates on a series of accepted opinions, and, further, political life is, in this regard, the exercise of accepted opinions, it follows that any acceptance of what constitutes justice will be a function of opinion and the manner in which such opinion is re-enforced by appearance and sensual experience. What is observed will constitute the sinews of what is accepted—of what is to be called correct political opinion. The prevalence of appearance and the application of opinion become progressively, and mutually, justified by the polis. Opinion is deemed correct when it relates to appearance, and appearance is likewise entertained as useful or meaningful in terms of its affinity to prevailing opinion. Both opinions held and appearances recognized can undergo any manner of alteration in the collective perception of the community, but neither is transcended. While certain directions and insights can be gained, the difficulty of equating philosophic standards to conventional standards is that there ultimately is produced no significant common ground upon which to effect the equation. The city in speech in the *Republic* narrows the distinction between the two because its opinion foundation is entirely a product of the discussion. The discussion, in turn, as becomes quite clear from Book 5 on, draws its focus from the philosophic pursuit of truth. Still, this city remains a conventional enterprise, reflected in structure and conduct, and thereby remains one which requires opinion and appearance as standards of measure. The city in speech, as the shaft with which the dialogue is transfixed, serves to purify opinion, but, owing to the political necessities of a city, cannot go beyond opinion. The basic difficulty of equating philosophy and the political in the city in speech is “resolved” by fiat—with the introduction of the philosopher-ruler, who embodies the very interconnection of the two dimensions which discussion cannot precisely combine.

When the definition of justice is provided in Book 4, however, the discussants have not considered the dimensions of the philosophic life and the difficulties of applying those dimensions to political life. Various reflections of philosophic nature had been introduced in Book 3, but no concerted explanation of philosophy or its practice had been advanced. It is of interest to the present consideration, therefore, to indicate some of the dimensions of that explanation which address why the political and the philosophic cannot be expected to combine.

#### IV

Platonic dialogue is the use of collective speech. Dialogue seeks mutual agreement on a given subject, it does not seek victory in argument as its ultimate objective. Through the employment of dialogue, a specific discussion among specific individuals, various statements and themes concerning human nature and human activity can be fixed upon, and the essential aspects of those statements and themes made known. It is collective speech, therefore, which pro-

vides the most obvious vehicle by which standards are established and mutual understanding is brought about in Platonic dialogue.

Related to this objective, as the course of the *Republic* makes clear, is the unfolding of opinion's deficiencies and the inadequate standards provided by appearance. During the dialogue, Socrates undercuts the normal strength of opinion and appearance as the sufficient path to what is regarded as correct. The basic direction of mutual discussion is from the realm of what seems to be to the realm of what is truly.<sup>35</sup> Such is the essential direction of philosophy. Basic to this direction is the attempt to distinguish a true understanding of nature from opinion about nature. True speech is directed toward the essential nature of whatever is being considered.<sup>36</sup> To accomplish this, it becomes necessary to narrow constantly the range of discussion, at each stage further refining the way in which speech addresses the nature of what is being examined. What a thing is said to be must be made to approximate its nature as closely as possible. When what is being examined is man, that refining becomes the unfolding of the order and harmony of the soul.

Despite the dominant position of speech in Platonic dialogue, the dialogues also provide us with a staple tenet concerning the basic limitations of *λόγος*. Since they remain dialogues, however, the distinction between what is held by opinion and what is to be regarded as true must still be made in discussion. The limitations of speech require that Socrates resort to the use of abstraction in the attempt to bring into the purview of the discussants that which is, in its essence, fundamentally incapable of being precisely communicated. Through abstraction, one can be led to understand the deficiencies of reliance upon appearance and opinion. Abstraction, by its very presence, leads one away from the variegations related by actual experience. The *Republic* itself stands as a grand example in this respect, since there exists throughout the dialogue a radical deprivation of the body and its concerns.<sup>37</sup>

Abstraction, in its most concerted form in the *Republic*, is to be found in the Socratic use of image. When the highest level of philosophic discussion is reached in Books 6 and 7, Socrates presents three consecutive images to convey what cannot be related precisely in speech, and as we have already observed, it is a relationship based upon an image which connects polis and soul in Book 4. Image, however, since it is a device intended only to adumbrate the dimensions of philosophy and its objects, also has its limitations. Socrates tells Glaucon as much in the famous passage at 533a1–5:

35. See *Rep.* 413b4–c3, 476c9–478d10, 506c2–10, 589b8–c4; *Polit.* 277e6–278e10; *Euthyd.* 286d1ff.; *Crat.* 429d1ff.; *Soph.* 264a1–b3; and *Theaet.* 170b1ff.

36. Cf. *Theaet.* 189e6–7; *Soph.* 263e3–5; and *Phaedr.* 277b5–c6.

37. The discussion is "purified" of bodily concerns (this is seen most clearly in the text with the purging of luxuries from the city in speech, at 399e5–6). The entire discussion transpires, however, without regard for bodily stamina. Hussey contends that the dialogue lasts for twelve hours. G. B. Hussey, "The Incorporation of Several Dialogues in Plato's *Republic*," *Classical Review* 10 (1893), 83.

No longer will you be able to follow—not because of any lack of willingness on my part—rather you would not see an image of what we are saying, but the truth itself, as it appears to me. But if it is so or not, this no longer deserves to be affirmed confidently. But that something of this kind is seen, is most certain.<sup>38</sup>

It is at this point in the dialogue that the ability of symbolic manifestations presented in speech reach their apogee. To proceed further is to pursue the task of philosophy, and that task is one of self-persuasion, not one which can be accomplished in collective speech (cf. *Phaedo* 229e5–230a7).

Nonetheless, Socrates is still able to sketch how it is that the philosopher is capable of refining further, of “purifying,” *λόγος* to reach the highest plateau of understanding. This philosophic usage of *λόγος* concerns the essence of dialectic. Its import is advanced at 532a1ff. There dialectic is presented as an attempt through logos (a6–7: *διὰ τοῦ λόγου*), without recourse to the senses (*ἀνευ πασῶν τῶν αἰσθήσεων*), “arriving at each thing which is, and does not cease before one seizes by intellect itself what is good itself” (a7–b1). This use of *λόγος*, being beyond the realm of the senses, cannot be demonstrated by a proof predicated upon opinion or appearance, either concerning nature or reflecting accepted opinions or beliefs.

It is only at this point that the philosophic response concerning the essential “goodness in itself” which had been required by Glaucon in Book 2 can be made. It is likewise only at this point that the nature of one pursuing the good (required both by Glaucon’s introduction of the relationship between nature and good and Adeimantus’ connection of virtue and the “best natures”) can be equated clearly to the pursuit of goodness in itself. This point is made at 535a9–b3, where the nature of the individual who pursues the education culminating in dialectic is mentioned twice (at a9 and again at b2). The successful completion of this education produces a coincidence of the nature of what is truly and the nature of the one who can perceive it truly (537c3).

The nature which has been attuned to the dialectic, and thereby to the perception of things as they are truly (see 534b3–4), encompasses a correct understanding of both deed and knowledge (540a6). Those, however, who, while possessing some intelligence, nonetheless succumb to interpreting less than the highest things are prevented from governing the realm of the highest things. Socrates states at 534d3–4 that they have been raised and educated in speech and that the governing of the highest things should be prevented to them “if ever they were raised in deed.” Aside from this “rearing metaphor” relating to the education in the city in speech, it primarily concerns the dialecticians who pursue the nature of things as they truly are—only these individuals can themselves be possessors of natures which admit of the truth about speech and deed. Only when one is successful in reaching that level at which *λόγος* can be continued without

38. This passage is foreshadowed at 497e3–4, at 507a1–2, and again at 509c9–10, C1 590a10–b5; and *Tim.* 47a7–b8.

recourse to the sensory world will the ultimate, and most truthful, response be possible. Such a response, however, since it admits of no sensual verification, cannot be articulated effectively to meet the exigencies of common opinion.

Twice previously in the dialogue this separation of the philosophic pursuit of truth from the prevalence of opinion in the sensual world has been presented for specific comment. The first occurs at the end of Book 5, where Socrates confronts the texture of opinion. At 477a9–b1, Socrates states that knowledge is predicated upon what is, while ignorance is predicated upon what is not. The discussion must seek something which is between these two. Opinion is regarded as referring to one thing, while knowledge refers to another, each according to its power (b7–8). Powers are further considered to be a kind of being by which one is able to do what one can do, and, so, everything else is able to do what it can do (c1–2). Socrates distinguishes between powers in terms of what they are based upon and what they complete (c9–d1). Those which are based on the same thing and complete the same things are said to be the same power; those which are based on different things and complete different things are said to be different powers (c9–d5). Opinion is not the same as knowledge, since it does not consider what is (478b3–4). Likewise, it is not the same as ignorance, since it is not possible to have opinions about something which is not (b6–9). Since opinion's power is not the same as the power of knowledge, nor the same as the power of ignorance, it properly belongs between the two—between that which considers what is and that which considers what is not. Neither knowledge nor ignorance will be based upon opinion (d7–8). Rather, opinion has a different power from either, and, hence, a different existence.

Opinion rejects the existence of the noble itself and the idea of the beautiful itself (479a1–2). It maintains that there are many noble things (a3). Occupying a position between what is and what is not, these things opined as noble also appear as shameful, and similarly those things regarded as just also appear unjust, and holy things appear as unholy (a6–8).<sup>39</sup> The conventions of the many (d3–4)—the foundation of common opinion in the polis—“roll about somewhere between not being and being absolutely” (d4–5). “Lovers of opinion” (480a6, a12: *φιλοδόξους*), Socrates continues, believe many things just, but not justice itself (479e3), having opinions, but not knowing what they have opinions about (e4–5).<sup>40</sup> The argument, and the book, concludes with Socrates and Glaucon agreeing that the *philosophers*, the lovers of wisdom, rather than the *philodoxers*, the lovers of opinion, embrace each thing as it is itself (480a11–12), a passage with which the discussion of philosophic nature in Book 7 closely coincides.

There is no correspondingly detailed consideration of opinion's position to be

39. The coincidence of nobility, just actions, and holiness had been posited by Adeimantus in his argument in Book 2. See 365a4–b1, and 363a6–7.

40. The two usages of *φιλοδόξους* at 480a6 and a12 are the only examples of the term in the Platonic canon.

found elsewhere in the dialogue. The essential deficiency of opinion, as it operates in political life, is here intimated. The conventions upon which political life is predicated do not take their bearings from the truth of what is, but from the middle ground between what is truly and what is not truly. One can hardly expect, as Socrates observes, that opinion will produce correct interpretations about what is opined, specifically so with regard to the political conventions, and specifically so with regard to justice.

The second discussion in which the distinction between philosophy and the standards of opinion is addressed occurs at 488a2–495c6. This is, properly, the introductory portion of a longer section in Book 6 which, ultimately, will produce the images of sun and line. In point of fact, Socrates begins this discussion by referring to it as an image and apology (488a5). Socrates intends to indicate the difficulties which the philosopher experiences in a city.<sup>41</sup> Turning first to the image of the true helmsman (4–5), Socrates points out that the most suitable of those in philosophy are useless to the many (489b3–4)—those who comprise the majority of a city.

Philosophy has great difficulty in acquiring a good reputation (c9) under such circumstances, but it is Socrates' position that this reaction to philosophy is not the fault of the philosopher (d10–e1). Owing to the nature (e4) possessed by the philosopher, the one who is noble and good, he is directed by truth, following it totally and in all things, or else he is a braggart who in no way participates in true philosophy (490a1–3). The lover of learning naturally contests with what is, not with the various things believed to be.<sup>42</sup> He does not cease from this endeavor until he reaches the nature of each thing which is, realizing each with what of the soul lays hold of that sort of thing (a8–b4).

The philosopher is now contrasted to the multitude. While the few philosophers are useless, the many are bad, thoroughly evil (d3). It is not the argument, that is, the implications of the discussion, which is attracting the attention of Socrates here. It is the individuals themselves (d1–2) with which he is concerned. How is it that a nature can be so corrupted? While Socrates first turns to both the virtues of the lower segments of the soul—courage and moderation (491b9)—and the acquisition of goods, such as beauty, wealth, bodily strength, and relatives positioned well in the city (c2–3) as contributing causes of this corruption of nature, it is actually bad education (e2) which constitutes the principal cause. It is not the sophists themselves who are responsible for such bad education, but, rather, those who say such things who are the greatest sophists (492a8–b1). This “greatest sophistry” is characterized as taking place whenever many come together sitting down in assemblies or law courts, theaters or military

41. Socrates considers the position which the philosopher holds in the city to be arduous (488a2). This reflects the position of justice in common opinion, at least according to Glaucon's argument in Book 2 (see 358a6). Cf. Adeimantus at 364a2.

42. On the phrase, cf. 376b5, b8, c2, 411d1, 435e7, 475c2, 485d3, 535d4, 581b9; *Phaedo* 67b4, 82c1, 82d9, 83a1, e5; and *Phaedr.* 230d3.

encampments, or any other common gathering of the many (b5–7; cf. 359e2). At these gatherings, much blame and praise take place, always to excess (b7–9). In such affairs, what is the condition of the young man's heart hearing them (c2–4)? He will say that the same things are noble and shameful as they do, pursue what they pursue, and be as they are (c6–8).

Socrates is addressing these points to Adeimantus. The basis for the position here espoused is found in Adeimantus' argument on justice in Book 2, and the specific texture of Socrates' remarks here takes its bearings from that discussion. It is the opinions expressed about virtue, nobility, and shame by the city which constitute the correct understanding of sophistry and the corruption of one's nature. These are the things heard by the young, subverting thereby "fine natures" (cf. Adeimantus' injunction at 365a4–b1). Additionally, the praising of justice and the blaming of injustice, which Adeimantus had also demanded that Socrates address (see 362e2–3, 366d7f., and 367b6–c5), cannot be properly discovered in the standards set down by common opinion. It is precisely this common opinion which produces the corruption of young natures. If one persists in praising justice and blaming injustice according to the dictates of the city, there is no possibility to ascertain correctly what truly deserves praise or blame.

Those who are generally regarded as professional sophists—those who receive payment for their services (493a6)—actually teach nothing other than the beliefs of the many, produced by their opinionating when gathered together, calling such things wisdom (a6–8). Adeimantus in Book 2 had referred to the teachers of persuasion (365d4) who would provide the wisdom of assembly and law court (d4–5), allowing thereby the commission of unjust acts without the fear of punishment. Now, however, what the sophists see as "wisdom" is nothing other than a reflection of the accepted beliefs of the city. It is the city, by means of these beliefs, not the sophists through their teachings, which produces this "wisdom." The professional sophist merely parrots the real sophistry of the city—knowing nothing in truth concerning which of these beliefs and desires is noble, or shameful, or good, or bad, or just, or unjust, he names all according to the opinions of the city (493b7–c2), calling the necessary just and noble, while not considering how the nature of the necessity and the good are actually distinguished (c4–6). What originally had been required by Glaucon's argument in Book 2—that the perfectly just and perfectly unjust individuals be distinguished one from the other (360e1–3)—cannot be accomplished in the city. The standards of common opinion will not permit such a distinction. Similarly, the distinction between what is necessary and what is good, based on nature, directly addresses Glaucon's position at 358c2–4, where it was posited that individuals practice justice because it is necessary, not because it is good. It is the necessity of the city's common beliefs which makes such a coincidence a consideration, not the true understanding of the natures involved.

Anybody who involves himself with the beliefs produced in the assemblies of the city will invariably apply the city's view of what is necessary and thereby

provide what the city praises (493d5–7). Since the many cannot be philosophic (494a4), they will necessarily blame those who are (a6). Further, one possessing a philosophic nature, if his body matches his soul (b6), will be made use of by those in the city who desire to advance their own ends (b8–10). He will be corrupted, and believe that he is capable of becoming involved in the affairs of both Greeks and foreigners (c7–d1; thereby violating the definition of justice advanced in Book 4), and will possess pretensions and conceit (d1–2).

One who, despite all of this, is turned toward philosophy (e1–2) will be greeted with all manner of deed and persuasion aimed at drawing the individual away from philosophy (e4–7). The corruption of the best nature regarding the best pursuit (495b1–2) thus comes to pass, and there follows the greatest evil both to the city and to private individuals (b3–4)—that is, the greatest evil in both public and private pursuits. The few remaining who nonetheless retain a view of the value of the philosophic life leave the city and are replaced by those of no worth (b8–c6; cf. 347b5–c5).

While it is the city in speech to which Socrates will shortly turn, indicating that philosophers must rule in the city or philosophy must become the guiding pursuit of those who do rule (499a11–c2), and stating further that neither of these is impossible (c3), the entire discussion of philosophy vs. the beliefs of the city has made the possibility of a philosopher-king most unlikely. Aside from the considerations which meet the philosophically capable, and which contribute to the corruption of his nature, there exists as well the position of the city's beliefs as the true sophistry. This is the existence which is presented by any actual city, regardless of the specific regime or system of laws through which that regime is expressed. Only in a city completely founded in discussion "from the beginning" can such a coincidence of political ruler and philosophy be possible. In any city in fact, there would exist the elements of common opinion which undermine the rise, or continuance, of philosophy. Only in argument can Socrates make this profession of possibility, and it is for the purposes of discussion that the city must be regarded as possible, not for the purposes of political reform.

In Book 7, upon completion of the cave image, Glaucon questions whether they have committed an injustice against those who have seen the true sun by compelling them to return into the cave (519d8–9). Socrates responds by reminding Glaucon that it was not for one part of the city that the discussion was entered into, but, rather, for the whole city (e1–3). While it would be understandable that philosophers arising in other cities would feel no compulsion to rule, such is not the case with those of the city in speech, since these philosophers have been educated by the city and owe the city for the opportunity which they have been afforded (520a5–c3). No injustice, therefore, is committed against the philosophers, at least with regard to their relationship with the city. Such a connection between philosophy and opinion is controlling only in discussion; the same connection hardly holds for the presence of one philosophically capable in a city in fact. Resolving difficulties occasioned by the equation of jus-

tice in the soul with justice in the city does not result from placing great reliance upon the rubrics of the city in speech, since those rubrics are paramount only in dialogue, not in actual political life. While the discussants have succeeded in developing throughout the dialogue a body of common opinion which requires the emergence of philosophy, such does not occur in an actual city.

The importance of Socrates' application of a definition of justice to the city does not lie in that application producing a precise understanding of the nature of justice. Rather, the importance results from the necessity<sup>43</sup> of political order which the consideration of justice unveils. Political life is not predicated upon a precise understanding of existence. Despite the advantages which result from a philosophic investigation of political life, philosophy itself is not a staple commodity in collective existence. A city cannot produce within its structure the correct understanding of justice, since, regardless of the dimensions of the city, it remains an endeavor based upon opinion and appearance. Beliefs may be introduced which do no damage to philosophic truth, but belief itself can never be transcended. The precise understanding of justice is an individual commodity, one which requires the philosophic pursuit. The city in speech achieves, through its presentation and discussion, a recognition of this deeper source for precise understanding, but the city itself cannot provide it.

## V

Platonic dialogue, while taking its ultimate standards from the philosophic pursuit, is not conveyed to an audience of philosophers. Only a few of Plato's listeners possess philosophic capability (see 428e9–429a3, 494a4f., 503b6, and *Soph.* 254a8f.). Dialogue must perform a two-fold function—provide an avenue of departure from the realm of opinion for those possessing philosophic capability, and developing a structure of right-directed opinion (see, for example, 430b3 and 431c6; cf. *Symp.* 202a5–9, and *Meno* 97b1–d3) for the remainder. The latter will continue to employ opinion as the only foundation available to them. It is for this reason that Platonic dialogues say different things to different people. What is provided as instruction must be equated to the capabilities of the recipients. Only in this way can we regard Plato as having answered Socrates' misgivings about the written word, as those misgivings are presented in the *Phaedrus* (275d4ff.).

The definition of justice provided in the *Republic* operates in this manner. Ad-

43. The identification of what is necessary often is translated in a Platonic dialogue into a conception of what is compelled. In the *Republic*, see, for example, 344d3–5, 405c8–d4, 420d5–e1, 473a5–7, 505b5–10, c6–8, 509c3–4, 510b4–9, 511c3–d5, 515d1–7, 519c8–d2, 521b7–10, 522c5–8, 525d5–7, 526e2–4, e6–7, 529a1–2, 555d3–5, 556a9–b4, 565b2–3, 587a3–5, 600d7–e2, 610c6–d4, and 611b9–10. The term for "necessity" (*ἀνάγκη*) appears 197 times in the *Republic*.

dressing both the orchestrating of opinion and the essence of philosophy's pursuit of truth, justice becomes perhaps the most basic vehicle for the instruction of both the few who may pursue the philosophic life and the many who will not. Through the development of right-directed opinion, Socrates suggests a way whereby the beliefs of political life may be made less antagonistic to the philosophic. Still, the basis of political life remains one of opinion, and seeks standards found in appearance. The most essential Platonic counsel on political life to be found in the *Republic* surrounds this issue. Despite the unlikely presence of a philosopher-ruler in actual life, the very writing of the *Republic* offers a philosophically instructed approach to opinion. It is not, however, within the domain of opinion that one is to find the most precise understanding of justice, despite the instruction which is provided. The difficulty of equating justice in the city and justice in the soul arises because the essential foundations are different. The former is predicated upon opinion and reflected in appearance. The latter is predicated upon truth and admits of no external appearance. It is toward lessening the distinction between the two that Socrates posits the philosophic man as also participating in common standards of justice. That relationship, however, as we have observed, is not demonstrated in the dialogue. In Book 10, Glaucon agrees that Socrates has succeeded in demonstrating during the course of the discussion that justice is to be preferred to injustice with regard to what each accomplishes in the soul (612b1f.) The relationship which justice in the soul has to justice in the city, however, remains problematic. To suggest that the true nature of justice, that which is contained only in the individual ordering of the soul, can be achieved in political life, is tantamount to suggesting that collective activity and belief can replace the responsibility placed upon the individual himself, a matter which the concluding myth of the *Republic*—the myth of Er—clearly rejects (619b7).

This is not to say that the unlikely presence of philosophers in positions of political rule is meant to be a Platonic statement on the impossibility of individuals becoming philosophers. One with philosophic capability must still reside in a community. Socrates required an agora in which to conduct his philosophic inquiries. The philosopher is first nourished by the collectively held beliefs of the polis before entering upon the pursuit of truth. We should expect, therefore, that he would retain some measure of sympathy for them—although the pursuit of truth is an erotic pursuit (618b7–c4), one which conceivably could place the philosopher against his political comrades. The pursuit of philosophy is not a collective commodity. It is the most private of all undertakings (535b8). The undertaking is held out only for a few; the many not having capability for philosophy. The *Republic* thus counsels a certain subtle practice of philosophy. What cannot be generally conveyed stands subject to all manner of interpretation.<sup>44</sup>

44. Hence, the utilization of irony by Socrates. See K. Moors, "Plato's Use of Dialogue," *Classical World* 78 (1978), 83f.; and G. Müller, "Das sokratische Wissen des Nichtwissen in den Platonischen Dialogen," in *Dauer und Überleben des Antikens Geistes (Festschrift für H. Diller)*, ed. K. Vauveris and A. Skidias (Athens, 1975), 147–73.

The identification of a precise understanding of justice with the practice of philosophy—since the justice of the soul is found in the correct ordering of the soul and that ordering cannot be accomplished if the condition of the soul does not contain wisdom in its proper location—indicates the nonegalitarian foundation of Plato's regard for individuals. While some have attempted to suggest that the approach to justice in the *Republic* can be made egalitarian, there is no substance to the contention, given what the dialogue actually tells us. There is always the temptation to read Plato through the later developments of "classical" liberalism. We must acknowledge, however, that, for Plato in the *Republic*, a true understanding of justice would be possessed by but a few.

Socrates does not provide a complete coincidence of political and individual justice during the *Republic* because to do so would be to collapse the true nature of justice precisely understood into that which it is not—a convention, a dogma, an appearance. It is endemic to political life that it pursues less than the absolute realities with less than the absolute means. Political life does not pursue the whole, but only that part of the whole which admits of appearance. Its nature is limited, and by providing visibility to the distinction between the order of the polis and the order of the soul, Plato likewise comments upon that limitation from the standpoint of the wider whole.<sup>45</sup>

Aristotle gives wise counsel when he advises that one should look only for the precision admitted by what is being studied (*N.E.* 1094<sup>b</sup>11–14). The *Republic*, and its study of political life, indicates that Plato both agreed in such a counsel and practiced it.

45. See L. Strauss, *The City and Man* (Chicago, 1964), 138.