CHAPTER 1

Appreciating Republic *1*

> Don't you know that the beginning is the greatest part of every work?
> Socrates, *Rep.* 377a

The first book of Plato's *Republic* does not get much respect. Nor is its reputation enhanced by being part of the revered larger work. If anything, the stark difference in tone, style, and substance between Book 1 and Books 2–10 inclines fans of the later books to look upon Book 1 with disdain. There are those who conclude from the glaring differences between Book 1 and the remainder of the *Republic* that Book 1 was not originally part of the *Republic* at all but was belatedly tacked on to it. Some even think Plato included it for the express purpose of repudiating its "Socrates" and the philosophic method and views associated with him. Most scholars think that at best Book 1 introduces themes to be developed more successfully in the *Republic*'s later books.

As an alternative to these dominant views, I propose that *Rep.* 1 is critical to the *Republic* – but neither because what occurs subsequently in the *Republic* exhibits Plato's distancing himself from Socrates, nor because the later books develop more fully or more deeply ideas that appear only in embryonic form in Book 1. On the contrary, *Rep.* 1 is needed, I argue, because, were it not for Book 1, later ideas in the dialogue would be wrongly taken at face value. In truth, even without Book 1 there are ample textual grounds for being suspicious of some of the views espoused by Socrates in Books 2–10, but Book 1 is our biggest and best clue to the dubiousness of these later claims: It primes us to approach them skeptically and cautiously. Book 1 warns us in particular against two ideas that are prominent in the *Republic*'s later books: (1) Book 4's notion that justice, whether of a city or a soul, is internal, a matter of how the city's and soul's

parts relate to one another;[1] and (2) Book 7's advocacy of rule by philosophers who must be compelled to govern. *Rep*. 1, it will be shown, teaches that justice is external,[2] a matter of how one is disposed to treat others; and that the mark of the best rulers is their devotion to those in their care. Surely something is amiss if rulers regard ruling as an utterly distasteful enterprise to be avoided if at all possible (347b–d). Should not good men – good rulers – care about the moral condition of those in their charge?[3] Socrates, for one, surely does (see *Gorg*. 521d).

1.1 The Relationship between *Rep*. 1 and Later Books of the *Republic*

As noted above, there are broadly three established scholarly approaches to the relationship between *Rep*. 1 and later books of the *Republic*. One of these regards the later books as continuous with Book 1; another sees Book 1 as originally a separate dialogue; a third views the later books as breaking with – even repudiating – Book 1. A. E. Taylor (1949: 264) is among the proponents of the first view; for him it is simply "inconceivable" that *Rep*. 1 was ever planned as anything other than "the introduction to a work covering the ground of the *Republic* as we have it." Kahn (1968: 367–368), who regards this first book as "proleptic" to what follows, finds "wildly implausible" the idea that *Rep*. 1 was at any time its own dialogue. Guthrie (1975: IV, 437) says that "it yet remains difficult to conceive of book I as ever intended for any other place than that which it now occupies."

Several intriguing proposals have been advanced in support of the idea that *Rep*. 1 introduces themes taken up later and is for that reason inseparable from the rest of the dialogue. Tulin (2005: 313) points out that the "very strange assertion" in Book 1 that justice is excellence of the soul is taken up in Book 2 and developed later: "This, then, is proof that the 'attachment' of *Republic* I was no mere afterthought, but that it formed an integral part of Plato's conception of the dialogue *ab initio*" (314). Corinne

[1] As Demos recognizes (1971: 53–54), Platonic justice is odd because of "its seemingly startling departure from ordinary usage. Customarily, justice indicates the relations of a given person to other persons; it is a virtue which operates in social contexts. But Platonic justice is a personal virtue, defined purely in terms of the agent . . . how a person behaves toward himself . . . . But, so defined, justice is self-regarding."

[2] As used here, "external" (*exō*) connotes relations between entities; "internal" (*entos*), relations within an entity. These are the terms Socrates uses respectively at 4.443c10 and 4.443d1.

[3] The unsuitability of the rulers of Book 7 to rule is the subject of my 2012 book, *Philosophers in the "Republic": Two Platonic Paradigms*. This matter is therefore treated only tangentially and in passing in Chapter 5.

Sze suggests in her 1971 doctoral dissertation that *Rep*. 1 replicates dramatically the stages of ascent out of the Cave. She proposes that the allegory of the Cave, so central to the *Republic*, is represented in dramatic form in *Rep*. 1, where Socrates descends from the realm of light (Athens) into the Cave (the Piraeus), just as those released from the Cave must return to it. Cephalus, who is unable to travel to Athens, she further contends, is the counterpart of the chained prisoners; he remains unaffected by his conversation with Socrates. Polemarchus goes a small step further, relying on poetry and not thinking for himself. Thrasymachus the sophist, she continues, breaks his bonds – he breaks with traditional views and advances a view of his own – and so sees the shadows on the wall for what they are, though he cannot emerge into the sunlight. A second, similar, proposal, defended by Hayden Ausland in his 1987 doctoral dissertation, is that *Rep*. 1 is a precursor to the Divided Line and the allegory of the Sun. A third proposal, that of Tad Brennan (2022), contends that Book 1 contains, in Cephalus' speeches, the *structure* of the argument that runs from Glaucon's challenge in Book 2 – is justice that looks like injustice better than injustice that looks like justice? – to Socrates' response to it. Cephalus, Brennan maintains, draws three comparisons that set up the argumentative paradigm later taken up by Glaucon. The first compares old age and youth, each with and without good character. The second, based on an anecdote Cephalus relates about a meeting between the Athenian Themistocles and an unnamed Seriphian, compares (implicitly) a Seriphian and an Athenian, each with and without good character. The third compares wealthy old age with impoverished old age, each with and without good character. Cephalus' point in all three, according to Brennan, is that good character "dominates" (414); any combination that lacks good character is necessarily inferior to any combination that has it.

I am not fully persuaded that all or any of these later developments in the *Republic* map quite so neatly onto the *drama* of Book 1. With regard to Sze's view, does the succession of characters in Book 1 really replay the ascent out of the Cave? Does it not contain stages that have no counterpart in the Cave allegory itself? And is Thrasymachus, for all his brazenness, really less steeped in shadows than Cephalus and Polemarchus? It is similarly not at all obvious that, as Ausland maintains, Book 1 foreshadows the allegories of the Divided Line and the Sun. With regard to Brennan's suggestion that the argumentative structure of the *Republic* may be traced to Cephalus in Book 1, it may be said that, although Cephalus starts off identifying character as determinative of how a man fares in old age, and,

for that matter, also in youth (329d5–7),[4] he cannot be said to be setting up a consistent argumentative structure. For, when Socrates registers his skepticism (protesting on behalf of the many) – is it really character that is determinative or is it wealth? – the anecdote about Themistocles to which Cephalus has recourse *concedes* the importance of wealth; the anecdote does not dismiss wealth as relatively inconsequential. For Cephalus, *both* wealth and character are necessary conditions for bearing old age well; neither is sufficient. Cephalus does not, then, as Brennan claims, "separate the essential [viz. good character] and filter out the irrelevancies [viz. youth, wealth]" (2022: 410–411). Indeed, because of Cephalus' concession, wealth now becomes the focus of the conversation as it continues. It turns out, then, that neither Glaucon and Adeimantus' stance nor Socrates' is like Cephalus'. The brothers argue that *only* the appearance of justice guarantees a good life and that actually being just may well ruin one's life (in other words, being just is most certainly not a necessary condition for a good life); and Socrates argues (through most of the *Republic*, at least until Book 10) that being just is the only thing that matters, and seeming just matters not at all (seeming just is not a necessary condition for a good life). Furthermore, Brennan dismisses Glaucon's hypothetical cases of the just man who seems unjust and the unjust man who appears just as (2022: 418–419) "a thought-experiment of the most preposterous and unrealistic kind, an unnatural forcing of our intuitions into realms beyond any experience we could have." Yet, the just man who appears unjust is surely Socrates; and who has not trusted people who seemed honest and good until they were revealed as utter cads?

Even if later developments in the *Republic* do somehow map onto Book 1's drama, Book 1 would arguably still be unnecessary; at the very least there would not have been the need for the meticulous care with which Plato crafts Socrates' *arguments* in Book 1. In my view, were the sole purpose of *Rep.* 1 to plant the seeds of what is to come, the *Republic* could well have done without it. Indeed, a case could be made that the dialogue would have been more cohesive and thus more satisfying without its first book. After all, Glaucon reprises in Book 2 the challenge to justice posed by Thrasymachus in Book 1,[5] and it is

[4] In Chapter 2, n. 25, I offer a conjecture as to why Cephalus suddenly mentions youth.

[5] Glaucon's views depart in several ways from those of Thrasymachus: (1) Thrasymachus thinks justice originates with the strong who impose it on the weak (338d–339a); Glaucon thinks it originates with the weak who impose it on each other (2.358e–359b); (2) in Thrasymachus' view the ruled do not participate in the setting down of the laws and compacts that constitute justice and also derive no benefit from the institution of justice (339a); in Glaucon's tracing of the origins of justice, it is the weak

Glaucon's formulation of the challenge that Books 2–10 of the *Republic* address.[6]

Those scholars who think Book 1 was originally a distinct "early," "aporetic," or "Socratic" dialogue do not, for the most part, think Plato included it only to divorce himself from it. Friedländer (1964: II, 50), taking his cue from Dümmler (1889) (along with Wilamowitz, Schleiermacher, and Hermann [see Friedländer 1964: II, 305, n. 1]), who in turn relies on the stylometric analyses of von Arnim and Ritter, calls *Rep*. 1 "the *Thrasymachus*." He argues (1969: III, 63) that Plato at the height of his career as a writer could hardly have composed a work so characteristic of his earlier literary style. (I find this presumption dubious. For a writer of Plato's caliber, a writer who has a pitch-perfect ear for the speech patterns of others, reproducing accurately an earlier style of his own would hardly be difficult.[7]) Friedländer recognizes but a single passage – 345b–348b – in *Rep*. 1 that presages the polis limned later on in the *Republic*. In this passage Socrates considers the case of good and decent men who rule if they must, but do so only reluctantly. Regarding this passage, Friedländer writes, "the ideal state emerges, like a mirage, in contrast to tyranny" (1969: III, 67). Friedländer suggests (1969: III, 66) that Plato composed and inserted this new section when he attached the aporetic dialogue *Thrasymachus* to the rest of the *Republic*, introducing a

who "set down their own laws" for their own benefit (2.359a2–4); (3) Thrasymachus gives no thought, as Glaucon does, to the importance of seeming just (see Frank [2018, 221]): He thinks that if one is powerful and cunning enough to be able to do whatever one wants with impunity, one is envied and admired for one's injustice (344b7–c1); (4) some of the good things that Glaucon and Adeimantus associate with the appearance of justice are things that Thrasymachus thinks *in*justice secures: political offices, the wherewithal to do good to friends and relatives, and getting the better of one's enemies (343c5–344a3; cf. 2.362b2–c8, 363a1–8); also, Thrasymachus does not seem to appreciate some of the things Glaucon and Adeimantus value, such as favorable marriages and entering into contracts and partnerships (362b2–4); and (5) Thrasymachus' ruler, a "craftsman in the precise sense" (340e–341a), is merely one who unerringly promotes his own advantage; the sense in which Glaucon's unjust man is a "craftsman" is that he knows "what is impossible in his craft and what is not" (2.360e7–361a1). Despite the differences between them, however, Glaucon does indeed successfully distil the essence of Thrasymachus' view: that it is far better to be unjust than to be just; so, too, Socrates in Book 9 at 590d, when he reports as Thrasymachus' view the opinion that the ruled are ruled to their own detriment. Interestingly, in Book 2, we see not only Glaucon but also Socrates ascribing to Thrasymachus a view he has not espoused, namely, that justice, as a form of drudgery, should be shunned as something hard and practiced only for the sake of the wages and reputation that comes from how one seems (2.358a).

[6] See Everson (1998: 127), who observes that, because from Book 2 on Socrates is responding to Glaucon, "[o]ne could in fact lose book I without making any substantial difference to the success of the argument given in the rest of the *Republic*."

[7] Might Plato be the "sacred, wonderful, and pleasing" man Socrates describes at 3.398a–b, the poet who can imitate all things? Plato certainly does not restrict himself to imitating the style of the "decent" man.

paradox so provocative – concerning the "wage" that would motivate the best and most decent men to rule – that Glaucon, who was silent up to this point, was moved to demand an explanation.[8] (There are, it must be said, no solid grounds for Friedländer's suggestion that Plato belatedly added this section: Unless one already assumes that Plato had to find a way to connect a separate, already extant dialogue to the later books of the *Republic*, one would probably not be inclined to see this section of the *Republic* as a late addition.) Friedländer does not disparage *Rep*. 1 as unworthy of the rest of the *Republic*. Rather, he thinks Plato found in the *Thrasymachus* a suitable beginning for his later dialogue and, in order to make it even more apt, included the just-mentioned addition.

Turning now to the third approach, there is no dearth of scholars who think *Rep*. 1 differs so starkly from – and is clearly so philosophically inferior to – the *Republic*'s ensuing books that its inclusion in this otherwise brilliant work expressly signals Plato's *dis*satisfaction with it. Those who are convinced that Plato is unhappy with Book 1 and with its Socrates believe so for a variety of reasons. Vlastos (1991: 250–251) thinks Socrates trusted that elenctic conversation could yield knowledge, but, since *Plato* came to realize that it could not, he has Socrates express diffidence at the end of Book 1 (353c). According to Vlastos, Socrates' confession that, not knowing yet what justice is, he cannot know whether or not it is a virtue, effectively undermines his earlier presumed discovery at 351a that justice is wisdom and virtue. In Vlastos' view, the simplest way to account for this evident "discrepancy" is to say that Plato wished to make known that "the results reached ... by the elenctic method are insecure." It strikes me, however, as most unlikely that Socrates sees knowledge as something achievable via elenctic argument, for he seems to regard every conclusion arrived at via elenchus as open to challenge. (I should think this would include the view he defends at 351a.) Whereas Vlastos thinks Socrates recognizes a kind of knowledge that is not completely secure, I think it improbable that Socrates would confer the term "knowledge" on anything that is less than certain.[9] This is surely why Socrates never claims, other than colloquially, to know:[10] He disclaims knowledge of the most

[8] Friedländer (1969: III, 67) notes, correctly, that the philosophers-kings of Book 7 also receive a reward: "a life dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge." It is worth adding that without such a reward they surely would not rule.

[9] I am not persuaded by Vlastos (1985) that there is a second kind of knowledge, "elenctic knowledge," which, though distinct from "certain knowledge," still counts for Socrates as knowledge.

[10] See Weiss 2001: "Conclusion."

important things (*ta megista*), knowing of these only that he does not know them; knowledge of the important things is, he says, something only the god has (*Ap*. 23a). For Socrates, even arguments of iron and adamant (see *Gorg*. 509a1–2) do not amount to knowledge: "For what I say is always the same: I do not know how these things are" (*Gorg*. 509a5).

Irwin (1977: 178) thinks the reason Plato in the *Republic* distances himself from the Socrates of Book 1 is that he is critical of the craft-analogy – that is, of the view that justice is a craft or is craftlike; the prominence of the craft-analogy in Book 1 is, he says, "meant to expose the weaknesses in Socrates' views on justice." Reeve (1985: 263) deems all Socrates' arguments in Book 1 poor; he thinks Plato means to shine a light on their defectiveness. In the later books of the *Republic*, says Reeve, Plato replaces Socratic elenchus with "positive political and psychological theory," "as Thrasymachus said they should." Reeve thus thinks both that Plato agrees with Thrasymachus' complaints about Socratic method – Thrasymachus takes Socrates to task for wielding his elenchus only to refute the views of others (336c) – and that Plato takes quite seriously Thrasymachus' views on justice (even though he disagrees with them): "Book 1 contains anti-Socratic arguments which led Plato to see the need for the new departure in moral theory." Both Irwin and Reeve think the *Republic* abandons the Socratic craft-analogy after Book 1.

In Everson's view (1998: 129), although Plato composes *Rep*. 1 to call attention to the need to abandon Socrates' method, he thinks it also serves as "a genuine introduction for the positive theory of justice which Plato begins in Book 2" insofar as it "highlight[s] difficulties and inadequacies in existing views" – that is, in the deficient views of Socrates' early interlocutors. According to Everson, Plato thinks philosophical progress can only be made "with the more docile and passive interlocutors we find in the rest of the *Republic*." (I offer a rather different take on Glaucon and Adeimantus later in this section.)

Sesonske (1961: 31), too, sees Plato "most clearly" acknowledging in the first book of the *Republic* "Socrates' failure." Sesonske thinks Book 1 "displays the reasons" for that failure, "thus justifying his [viz. Plato's] departure from Socrates in the remainder of the dialogue." Like Everson, Sesonske lays some of the blame for the inadequacy of Book 1 on its interlocutors, viewing them as people who won't or can't listen. (We note that Polemarchus even says at 327c: "Could you really persuade if we don't listen?") Socrates' interlocutors in Book 1, Sesonske asserts, are unable to understand; they love the demos; they seek only pleasure and entertainment. The interlocutors who replace them for the duration of the *Republic*

are, by contrast, Sesonske thinks, people who can comprehend and will listen. Blondell (2002: 178) thinks Plato gives Socrates weak interlocutors in *Rep*. 1 and then "uses those weaknesses to evade the need to give Sokrates more persuasive arguments."

Sparshott (1957: 54–55), like Vlastos, sees at the end of *Rep*. 1 a confession of "intellectual bankruptcy" on Socrates' part, and the beginning of Plato's "free[ing] himself from the Socratic hypnosis." Were Plato satisfied with the results achieved in Book 1, Sparshott contends, he would have had little reason to write the other nine. "Plato must be dissociating himself from the Socrates of the first book." Sparshott does not see how a single author could equally endorse the "technique and approach" of Book 1 and that of Books 2–10.[11]

Kraut (1997: 216), straddling the first and third approaches to Book 1, supposes, on the one hand, that "Plato must have believed that the arguments of Book I were in some way deficient – otherwise there would be no need to reopen the question in Book II" – but Kraut considers, on the other hand, the possibility that the arguments are deficient because they are "schematic," needing "to be buttressed by political theory, metaphysics, and psychology." In other words, whereas Irwin and Reeve think, as Kraut puts it, that "the earlier arguments are entirely of the wrong sort," Kraut considers as an alternative that they are merely incomplete.

Let us consider each of the specific grounds advanced by the various scholars cited in support of their view that Plato wishes to distance himself from the Socrates of Book 1. First, there is the matter of Socrates' confession of ignorance at the end of Book 1. Is there, however, anything at all unusual in Socrates professing ignorance? As I understand this profession (and others like it, e.g. *Meno*: "I don't know at all [*to parapan*] what virtue is" [71a7, 71b3; cf. 71b5, 80d6]), all Socrates means by it is that the epistemic state in which he finds himself falls short of knowledge. He is quite forthcoming several times in *Rep*. 1, as we shall see, about having *beliefs* about justice (337c, 345a, 347d, 347e); what he consistently claims to lack is knowledge. (Whereas Thrasymachus claims to know [338a1] but in fact knows nothing, Socrates disclaims knowledge [337e] but admits to having some [quite probably true] beliefs.) Moreover, it is

[11] Guthrie (1975: IV, 441) sees the progression from Book 1 through the later books as representing Plato's "own pilgrimage" comprising the following stages: "the morality of the ordinary citizen, the Socratic elenchus in its crudest form, as practised on the unwary in the belief that the end justifies the means, the Sophistic case and Socrates' answer to it, and finally the Platonic philosophy." Note the implication in this quoted passage that Plato abandons Socratic method as well as Socrates' views; "Platonic *philosophy*" is said to take their place.

not as if Socrates conducts his elenchus in order to attain knowledge concerning the topic under investigation; he enters the elenchus with his well-formed and well-founded beliefs in hand and expects to exit it in the same way.[12] The questions Socrates tackles are ones to which he has devoted much thought (as Adeimantus attests at 2.367d7–e1: "[B]ecause you have spent your whole life considering nothing other than this"). In speaking to and guiding others, Socrates has the assuredness not of one who knows but of one whose opinions have both stood the test of time and withstood sustained scrutiny. In elenctic exchanges Socrates is in charge: He steers all conversations in the direction in which he wants them to go – even when responding to questions and objections raised by his interlocutors. Testing the views of others is not a game for him (the way it is fun for young people [see *Ap.* 23c–d; cf. *Rep.* 7.539b]); he tests them because they are inadequate at best and noxious at worst. And even if Socrates sees his examination of others as also a way of examining his own views, this can only be so if, first, he has his own views, and, second, if with each refutation of opposing views he further confirms the more likely truth of his own.

Although Socrates does indeed conduct *elenchoi* to refute, he does so not solely to refute; he does so for truth's sake.[13] For the sake of truth it is imperative not only that he try to refute but that he prevail.[14] If Socrates cannot get his interlocutors to come to share his views, he will settle for getting them to hold beliefs that are better than the ones they currently hold.[15] And if he cannot achieve even this much, he will at least rattle them: He will shake their self-assurance and their confidence in their false beliefs. Furthermore, the last nine books of the *Republic* are framed as a

[12] Everson (1998: 129) says that Book 1 finds Socrates "ending up without having gained any understanding of the nature of virtue." But the fact is that Socrates does not "*gain* understanding" even in Books 2–10.

[13] See Lycos (1987: 74): "Socrates' *elenchos* is not, as on the surface it appears to be, merely a negative, critical, discussion of views and opinions. His logic, is, precisely, despotic [a term borrowed from Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*] because beneath its formal structure there lurks a constant and relentless effort to get interlocutors to abandon their customary ways of talking and thinking about moral excellence in favour of a new way." In other words, or as I would put the point, Socrates' goal is not solely to get people to think but to get them to think rightly. As Lycos continues (1987: 77): "His aim is not merely to produce a healthy moral scepticism in place of thoughtless dogmas of tradition, but also to improve moral convictions."

[14] See Weiss 2000.

[15] I have argued that although Crito might not be able to share Socrates' views on justice, he might be made less cavalier about breaking the law. Meno can perhaps be taught that there is no easy road to the excellence he craves. And there is hope that Glaucon might come to hold both justice and philosophy in higher esteem. On *Crito*, see Weiss 1998; on *Meno*, Weiss 2001; on Glaucon, Weiss 2012.

protracted refutation, a refutation of the view of Thrasymachus as appropriated and revised by Glaucon. None of this is to say that Socrates' arguments are flawless – far from it. But what choice does he have? When his interlocutors do not (and cannot or cannot yet) share his moral outlook, any substantive argument he might advance would scarcely get off the ground. Yet their positions must be combated – somehow. Socrates' arguments, even when imperfect, are not pointless. There is something to be learned, as I hope to show, from each argument, no matter how ostensibly poor.[16]

Just how disappointed is Socrates in himself as Book 1 draws to a close? It is significant that at the start of Book 2, Socrates is far less self-deprecatory regarding his accomplishments in Book 1 than he appears to be at the end of Book 1. As Book 2 begins, it is Glaucon who is dissatisfied; he admonishes Socrates for failing "truly to persuade us that it is in every way better to be just than unjust" and of being content with merely seeming to be doing so (2.357a–b). Had Plato wished to convey the impression that Socrates was aware of his dismal failure in Book 1, he surely would *not* have had him say, just a bit later at 2.368b: "I thought I showed in what I said to Thrasymachus that justice is better than injustice." Nor would he have had him express regret that Glaucon and Adeimantus were not convinced. Any self-doubt that Socrates expresses in Book 2 is not about his past performance but about his future one, "for in my opinion I am not capable (*adunatos*) of it" (368b4–5) – that is, of establishing justice's superiority to injustice – and this because his first efforts, his *Rep*. 1 efforts, were his finest, yet they apparently fell flat. Nevertheless, he will do his best even now to defend justice – it would be impious not to – despite his having already made what he considers to be a strong case, perhaps the strongest case he feels he can make.

Moreover, Socrates' characterization of himself at the end of Book 1 as a glutton who seizes upon whatever is placed before him (354b) and as the one, rather than Thrasymachus, who is therefore to blame for his not having had a fine feast, is belied both by the undeniable fact that the issues

[16] The arguments in *Rep*. 1 are hardly worse than those in respected Platonic dialogues such as the *Gorgias*. The argument that Socrates produces at *Gorg*. 474c–475e, for example, designed to convince Polus that it is worse to commit than to suffer injustice – since committing it is more shameful – is a very bad argument, collapsing by verbal sleight of hand the very real difference Polus sees between being worse and being more shameful (see Weiss 2006: 87–93). The argument contains nothing substantive, nothing that would explain *why* committing injustice is a bad thing.

he takes up are prompted by the series of outrageous pronouncements advanced in Thrasymachus' tirade at 343b–344c and are thus indeed Thrasymachus' fault, and by the systematicity with which Socrates proceeds to consider these issues. At 347e Socrates carefully charts his course: They will consider "at another time" whether the just is the advantage of the stronger (he never does return to this question, the question of what justice *is*, admitting at 354b4 to having neglected it in favor of others), but will turn first to the "far bigger" thing (*polu meizon* – 347e2–3), namely, Thrasymachus' assertion that the life of the unjust man is "stronger than" (or superior to – *kreittō*) that of the just man. At 350e11–351a2, Socrates says that he will now ask "what I asked a moment ago" "so that we can *in an orderly fashion* (*hexēs*) make a thorough consideration of the argument about the character of justice as compared to injustice." Next, at 351a6, when Socrates determines that the question of whether it is justice or injustice that is mightier ought not to be – though it could be – treated "so simply," he devotes to it a separate argument, which I call T6 in Chapter 6. Finally, once it is resolved that the just are "wiser and better and more able" to accomplish their goals with one another than the unjust are (352b7–c1), Socrates concludes by addressing the question of whether it is the just or the unjust who are better and happier. Nothing in the procedure of the argument is haphazard.

With respect to Plato's alleged disenchantment with the craft-analogy, it is important to note that a principle that persists throughout the *Republic*, namely, that the job of a ruler is to care for the ruled rather than for himself, is one established in Book 1 by the craft-analogy. Furthermore, as late as Book 10 (597d–598c), Socrates has recourse to the craft-analogy when discussing the nature of poetry and poets; even here the craft-analogy is his go-to explanatory device. To be sure, it is not justice that Socrates compares to a craft in Book 10; rather, he faults poets, as imitators, for being further removed from reality than craftsmen. But, as I argue, the craft-analogy in Book 1 is also not applied to (ordinary) justice (which I call lay-justice or l-justice), but only to justice as a *technē* or *t*-justice. In the case of *t*-justice – which is the forerunner of ruling – the analogy is in fact most appropriate: When Polemarchus defines justice as giving good things to friends and bad things to enemies, it is hardly out of the way for Socrates to speak of justice as requiring a kind of expertise and, as such, being a *technē*. And since it is Thrasymachus who compares *ruling* to other crafts – medicine, calculation, and grammar (340d–341a) – here, too, arguably, the craft-analogy is quite fitting. Furthermore, as I try to show, even in the argument that I designate T5 (in Chapter 6), the argument

concerning *pleonektein* (exceeding), in which it may seem that Socrates likens justice to a craft, he in fact claims only that the just man resembles a variety of competent *laymen* who share with him the desire to exceed those who are unlike themselves, namely, the incompetent man or the unjust man, and not those who are like themselves, another competent man or just man. Note that Cephalus' justice is not compared to a craft; his justice is l-justice. (The distinction between *t*-justice and l-justice figures centrally in Chapter 3.)

For those who think Socrates' failure in Book 1 is in part the fault of his deficient interlocutors, let us recognize that, so long as there are interlocutors – any interlocutors – what Socrates says will reflect their needs and demands, as well as their intellectual and moral limitations. This is as true of Books 2–10 as it is of Book 1. We oughtn't think that Glaucon's and Adeimantus' willingness to listen, or even their possible intellectual superiority to Cephalus, Polemarchus, and Thrasymachus, in any way obviates the need for Socrates to take into consideration who it is that he is talking to as he makes his case to them. Socrates' arguments are, in their way, always ad hominem. When Socrates says he fears he cannot offer a proper defense of the superiority of justice to injustice, it is because he knows he must persuade Glaucon and Adeimantus on their terms. Glaucon and Adeimantus want to know how one benefits from justice – how it is more profitable to *be* a just man (as opposed to appearing to be such a man) than to be an unjust one. Socrates finds himself having to respond to this challenge, even though this is surely not the way he would frame the question of justice. In his conversation with Cephalus, for example, Socrates asks Cephalus how *wealth* benefits him (330d), not how justice does. Glaucon and Adeimantus dictate the parameters of what Socrates can say – and of what he ultimately does say – about justice in the later books of the *Republic*.

Perhaps the strongest reason to doubt that Plato severs his ties with the Socrates of Book 1 is that he does not change Socrates' name. The same Socrates who will address Glaucon and Adeimantus addressed Cephalus, Polemarchus, and Thrasymachus. Socrates' dominance in all ten books of the *Republic*, including Book 1, attests to the versatility and agility with which Plato endows him as he faces a variety of interlocutors having different temperaments, views, social status, occupations, concerns, and flaws.[17]

[17] Blondell (2002: 165) sees a "fracture line" in Socrates' character between Books 1 and 2 (a shift from an "elenctic" Socrates to a "constructive" one), and thinks Plato presents "two different avatars of Sokrates." In fact, however, the transition between Book 1's Socrates and Book 2's couldn't be more seamless; there is no hint of a change in him. What changes is his interlocutors: Different interlocutors call for different approaches.

Just as *Rep*. 1 is not needed to lay the ground for ideas revived later in the dialogue, so, too, it is not needed to signal Plato's displeasure with Socratic method or thought: Arguably, had the *Republic* begun with Book 2, commentators would have been no less keen to conclude that the Socrates of the so-called Socratic dialogues has been abandoned and has been superseded by another philosopher who, perhaps oddly, bears the same name. Book 1 is needed, I believe, to arouse readers' skepticism as they encounter in the *Republic*'s later books ideas that are inconsistent with its early lessons.

1.2 How to Read *Rep*. 1

One advantage of the third of the three approaches discussed in Section 1.1 is that it is sensitive to the extent to which *Rep*. 1 is at odds with the rest of the *Republic*. It recognizes that later books of the *Republic* do not simply expand on or flesh out or develop further what is said in Book 1. Yet the adherents of this third approach tend to focus their attention on Socrates' method and on his use of the craft-analogy as the elements of Book 1 that are abandoned in the later books rather than on any substantive positions he advances.

This attention to Socratic method and the craft-analogy may in part reflect the belief of many scholars that Socrates holds no positive views in Book 1.[18] I show in the chapters that follow that this is not so: Socrates indeed has firm beliefs of his own in Book 1 and even indicates quite openly that he does (337e), though his views, whether explicit or implicit, often (but certainly not always) appear as negations of his interlocutors' views. If justice is not, as Polemarchus affirms, helping some and harming others, then justice for Socrates is not harming anyone; maybe it is even, as will be suggested, helping everyone. (It will be argued that it is specifically *t*-justice that helps everyone.) If ruling is, as Thrasymachus maintains, the advantage of the stronger, then ruling is for Socrates precisely the opposite: the advantage of the weaker. If the just man is not the sucker and easy mark that Thrasymachus takes him for, then he

[18] Cross and Woozley (1964: 1) contrast Book 2's "more positive approach" with what they dismiss as Book 1's "just clearing away misconceptions." Blondell (2002: 187) credits Thrasymachus with "at least tak[ing] the risk of expressing substantive ideas," but sees Socrates engaging only in "negativity" and "logic-chopping." See, too, Purshouse (2006: 5), who contends that in Book 1 Socrates "offers no positive teaching on his subject-matter; rather, as in the early dialogues, he simply undermines the claims of others." This accusation is especially misdirected when it targets the Socrates of *Rep*. 1: this Socrates has positive views and states them outright.

is for Socrates a good man who does well; he fares better than the unjust man. And so on.

Whether or not *Rep*. 1 was ever a separate dialogue, we shall treat it as a self-standing, independent work, a work like, say, the *Gorgias*. The *Gorgias*, too, has three interlocutors whose views build on one another, and Socrates in that dialogue takes issue, seriatim, with their views. It is no more difficult to discern Socratic views in *Rep*. 1 than it is in the *Gorgias*, and, in both cases, Socrates' views may be assumed to be those opposed to the views of his interlocutors. One reason, then, to read the first book of the *Republic* as a self-contained work is so that we can see it as having something important to teach us – just as the *Gorgias* does.

A second reason for treating *Rep*. 1 as an independent work is that doing so helps us to identify its Socratic views. If Socrates does indeed have moral beliefs that he articulates in Book 1 or that emerge from his challenges to the interlocutors he engages in Book 1, we can ask what those beliefs are. We needn't assume that they are either consistent with or, a fortiori, the same as, those he expresses subsequently in the *Republic*; we needn't struggle to reconcile the two when they are or appear to be at odds. This is not to say that later views never return to earlier ones to amplify or develop them further; but it is to say that when they don't, we needn't pretend they do or force them to.

A third reason, related to the second, is that by approaching *Rep*. 1 as a self-contained unit, we can avoid what I call "reading backward" – that is, reading retrospectively. Several scholars think the *Republic*'s later books expand on themes found in Book 1 such that Book 1 cannot be properly understood apart from them. Barney (2006, 59), for example, says: "The Book I arguments are arguments on the way to the first principles (that is, the full account of justice in Book IV), and we can only really appreciate them when we have seen how they serve that function – which means, when we come to them again after reading the book as a whole." So, too, Everson (1998: 27). Burnyeat (1997: 4) writes the following in a similar vein: "So far from the opening scene teaching you how to read the philosophy that follows, it is the philosophy that tells you how to read the opening scene." Even though Burnyeat is concerned specifically with the first words and opening scenes of Platonic dialogues, so that his remarks are not directed to the whole of *Rep*. 1, he, like Barney, is an advocate of reading backward. He compares a Platonic dialogue to an opera, in which "the opera explains the overture, not vice versa. Only when you know the opera, can you 'read' and really savour the overture" (Burnyeat 1997: 4). I would argue that, on the contrary, the early part of a Platonic dialogue functions like the opening

scene of a play, introducing the audience to the characters and, by providing a sense of their dispositions, concerns and quirks, preparing it for what follows.[19] In addition, however, I contend that, occasionally, the early part of a Platonic dialogue makes it possible for the reader to *resist* ideas that appear later in the work, when later ideas conflict with earlier ones. I call the way of reading I propose "reading forward" – prospectively.

In my view, reading backward causes one to read into *Rep*. 1 what was never there and to filter (improperly) what is there through what is said later. One example of this, as I shall argue, is the matter of the "good and decent men" of 347b–e. Read in light of the description in Book 7 of philosophers distinguished by their aversion to ruling, the Book 1 passage would be reasonably taken to imply that Socrates in all seriousness thinks that genuinely good men would do anything to avoid helping others by ruling them (see, e.g., Sedley [2007: 274–275]) . Reading forward, however, allows readers to take whatever doubts they had about Socrates' earnestness in Book 1 (for reasons that are elaborated in Chapter 5), and extend them to his apparent approval of Book 7's reluctant philosopher-rulers. Another example would be how justice within an entity – that is, among the entity's parts – affects the justness of the entity itself. In Book 4, harmony within an entity makes the entity itself just. Reading backward, we might think that the argument I call T6 in Chapter 6 makes the same point. Yet T6 makes quite a different – even opposed – point, namely, that the *injustice* of an entity is enhanced by internal harmony: an unjust city is better able to harm other cities if its parts cooperate; and so, too, in the case of smaller groups and of individuals bent on injustice. Reading forward might make Plato's readers less disposed to regard the new conception of justice in Book 4 as Socratic (or Platonic). As I read the *Republic*, only if Book 1 is properly understood – in its own right – can we interpret correctly the rest of the *Republic*. If my way of reading is a better

[19] Burnyeat (1997: 11) cites, as one of his examples of the need to read the whole dialogue in order to understand its opening, the phrase *polemou kai machēs* ("war and battle") with which the *Gorgias* begins. But surely Plato begins the dialogue with this phrase in order to prepare the reader for what is to come. It is oriented forward: We will understand the rest of the *Gorgias* better if we bear this phrase in mind as we proceed through the dialogue. The same could be said of the *Meno*'s first line: "Tell me, Socrates." This line alerts the dialogue's readers to the problematic nature of learning by simply being told, something that will occupy the dialogue later on. If we are attuned to the nuances of Plato's writing, we know to listen for the later revival of Meno's objectionable initial demand. Several of Burnyeat's other examples also seem to work against his thesis: the *Laws*' first word, "god" (*theos*), or the *Phaedo*'s *autos*. It is true, of course, that to appreciate fully any rich and complex work, repeated reading or hearing is required. A strong case can thus be made for a "circular hermeneutic" (see Thanassas 2021: 135 and 135, n. 12). But, as Thanassas points out (2021: 121), many an overture is performed on its own.

way, then Book 1 is indispensable to the *Republic*: not only does it orient us to what is to follow but, more importantly, it also serves as a prophylactic, an inoculation, against some of the startling proposals to come. I would argue that Book 1 of the *Republic* could stand without the rest of the dialogue, but the rest of the *Republic* could not do without Book 1.

A fourth reason is that if we read *Rep.* 1 on its own we can allow ourselves to read it slowly and carefully, to attend to each of its arguments and transitions, to appreciate all its intricacies and nuances. If we don't have the sense that there is more important "philosophy" to get to, we won't feel the need to rush through and sweep aside the subtleties of Book 1.

Perhaps the strongest argument for reading forward in the *Republic* is how well this strategy works in other Platonic dialogues. In several cases, it is hard to see the point of the early part of a dialogue when both its approach and its content seem to be superseded by the later part. For example, if the speech of the Laws in the latter part of the *Crito* represents Plato's (or even his character Socrates') view, for what philosophical reason would we have all that precedes it? Similarly in the *Meno*: If in the early part of the *Meno* Socrates teaches nothing about the nature of virtue, the *Meno* might well have begun with "Meno's Paradox" and the Theory of Recollection.[20] As I understand both these dialogues, the truth as Socrates sees it appears in the early part of the dialogue. In the *Crito*, Socrates refuses to escape because of a universal no-harm principle to which he has long subscribed (49a–e) and not because of anything the personified Laws have to say about the *special* demands the city is within its rights to make of its citizens. In the *Meno*, virtue is doing whatever one does justly and temperately – a result reached early on, at 78d–e; Socrates does *not* subscribe to the notion with which the dialogue ends (99b–c), namely, that virtue comes by "divine dispensation": In the latter part of the dialogue, Socrates indulges Meno and entertains, against his will, the teachability of virtue question that Meno wants answered. A similar point might be made about the *Euthyphro*. The nature of piety is revealed midway (at 14a–c): Piety is providing assistance to the gods in their special noble work, a work which, alas, Euthyphro is not capable of identifying. And in the first scene of the *Protagoras*, Hippocrates – and through him the reader – is warned to beware of sophists. The hedonism that surfaces toward the dialogue's end is therefore best seen as mocking sophistic

[20] On the *Crito*, see Weiss 1998; on the *Meno*, Weiss 2001. In both books I argue that Socrates' views are those that emerge early on from the elenctic conversations he conducts with his interlocutors. They prepare the reader to resist what follows.

education as if education in virtue is or ought to be the salvific *technē* (356d3) of measuring pleasures and pains; it is not Socrates' view.[21] Even within the *Republic* itself, as I argued in my book *Philosophers in the "Republic,"* there is an earlier depiction (in Book 5, and in Book 6 until 502c) of philosophers who are to rule, and a later one (from 502d in Book 6 and continuing into Book 7 and beyond); and Socrates favors the earlier group. Whereas the philosophers limned in the first version yearn for the transcendent, the philosophers in the second are at first quite contented in the Cave, unaware of anything better or higher; indeed, when they are released, they have to be dragged against their will into the light; they certainly do not long with every fiber of their being for what is truer or more real. Whereas the first set of philosophers are disposed to philosophy by their nature, the second set must be forcibly turned into philosophers by the founders of *kallipolis*, the *Republic*'s "noble city." Whereas the first set of philosophers are not said to excel in combat, the second are philosopher-warriors. One unfortunate consequence of reading *Rep*. 1 as a mere prelude to what is to come is that it – like the earlier parts of the other dialogues just mentioned – is taken less seriously.

1.3 Literary and Dramatic Features

There are scholars who would treat the literary and dramatic features of the dialogue as just so much window-dressing and certainly as something to be distinguished from the *Republic*'s "philosophy." In this regard, see especially N. White (1979: 62), who says that what is important in the *Republic* are "ideas and arguments rather than the characterizations or other dramatic and literary elements."[22] In my view, the dialogue's literary and dramatic features, and, in particular, the character of the various interlocutors, are critical to its "philosophy." Socrates does not argue in a vacuum; philosophy for him is not an activity performed in solitude. Instead, he regards philosophy as a joint activity, a group activity. Moreover, Socrates' arguments are designed for the characters Plato has him confront. For that reason, who the participants are is all-important. In a Platonic dialogue, I would contend, it is not possible to separate the philosophy from the characters who drive the action.

[21] See Weiss 2006: chapter 2.

[22] Burnyeat, for all his attention to "first words," endorses the same higher ranking of a dialogue's more important "substantive philosophical content" (1997: 14) as compared with its less important "dramatic and literary detail." If "you work hard on the philosophy first," Burnyeat assures us, you will be able to recognize in the earlier dramatic material the "images or emblems" of the hard-core philosophy that follows (1997: 17).

By becoming acquainted with the characters, we come to understand why Socrates' philosophy takes the turns it does.

The literary and dramatic features of Platonic dialogues are so rich that it is likely that no one can do them justice. But to bracket them and dismiss them is to misunderstand Socrates' – and so, Plato's – teachings. Since Socrates would not make the same case or the same argument to everyone, Socrates' philosophy can be extracted only by attending to the particular occasion and particular interlocutor.[23] To take just one example, let us consider the *Crito*. Would Socrates, a man who "obeys nothing else of what is mine than that argument that appears best to me upon reasoning" (*Crito* 46b; cf. *Rep*. 3.394d8–9), do whatever the laws of a city command, no questions asked? Does he hold that a city has a right to demand virtually anything of its citizens? If the personified Laws in the *Crito* demand absolute obedience, their message surely targets not the law-abiding Socrates (see *Ap*. 19a: "But I must obey the law and make my defense") but the law-flouting Crito.

Humor proliferates in *Rep*. 1, and to read it humorlessly is to misread it. The same Socrates who brings us the pancratiast Polydamas for whose body beef is most advantageous (338c) gives us as well the just man who is a kind of thief (334a) and the wage-earning art that all craftsmen practice *in addition to* their own (346b–d). One oughtn't confuse funny with silly, or playful with frivolous: No comic episodes in the dialogue are without their serious point. The serious point is often missed, however, if one refuses to see the humor. Socrates' interlocutors invariably fail to see the humor; that says a lot about them.

1.4 The Holistic Nature of *Rep*. 1

Book 1 of the *Republic* is a connected whole. The Polemarchus section is intimately tied to Socrates' exchange with Cephalus: it is both an outgrowth of and a reaction against Cephalus' conception of justice. For Polemarchus, the just man is not, as he is for Cephalus, the man who owes and must repay; on the contrary, he is the man in power who bestows benefits and harms on others "as is fitting." The Thrasymachus section and, in particular, its turn to the "political," though often treated as self-

[23] A case in point is the notion that some pleasures are bad. In the *Protagoras* (351c), Socrates won't allow that some pleasures are bad; for his purposes in that dialogue he requires the complete identification of pleasure with good and of pain with bad. Yet in the *Republic* (at 505c), Socrates says: "And what about those who define pleasure as good? Are they any less full of confusion than the others? Or aren't they too compelled to agree that there are bad pleasures?" See, too, *Gorg*. 499b–c.

contained and as unrelated to *Rep*. 1's earlier sections, will be shown to be a spirited rejection of Polemarchus' casting of justice as something practiced by the man in power. For Thrasymachus, men in power are not themselves just, nor do they "do" justice; only their subjects are, and do. To many scholars, it is the Thrasymachus section that is the important one, yet it is in the Polemarchus section that Socrates makes his most striking claims about justice: Not only does he insist that justice harms no one, but he is about to insist, as will be argued, that justice (*t*-justice) helps everyone – specifically, that it helps all people to become more just (more l-just).[24] Thrasymachus defies Socrates and Polemarchus by placing the *un*just man in the position of power and seeing the just man as his degraded lackey. Moreover, for Thrasymachus, to make someone l-just is just about the worst thing one person could do to another.

1.5 *Rep*. 1's Interlocutors and Their Views

In Book 1 of the *Republic* Socrates attempts to tease out what justice is by probing what others think about it. At the home of Polemarchus, son of the elderly Cephalus, Socrates considers three views in succession: (1) Cephalus' view that justice is a matter of not cheating or lying, and of paying one's debts to the gods and to human beings; (2) Polemarchus' belief that justice is dispensing benefits to friends *and* harms to enemies; and (3) Thrasymachus' conception of justice as "the advantage of the stronger": For Thrasymachus, justice is the law-abidingness imposed by the rulers on the ruled, not for the benefit of the ruled but rather to advance the interests of the rulers, "the stronger."

Let us look at each of these views in relation to the others. On Cephalus' view of justice, the just man mechanically follows the rules: He pays his debts without attending to who is on the receiving end. Yet, Socrates asks, ought one to return a weapon to a person not in his right mind? Ought one to tell the whole truth to a madman? Polemarchus' understanding of justice exhibits a deficiency diametrically opposed to his father's. Having little use for established rules, *all* Polemarchus' just man sees are those on the receiving end of his disbursements of good things and bad: Are they friends or are they enemies? For Polemarchus, then, justice discriminates: It benefits some and harms others. Thrasymachus combines the worst of

[24] Aristotle (*EN* II.i.1103b) as well as Aquinas (*Summa Theologiae* II.i.Question 96) come to share Socrates' conviction as expressed in *Rep*. 1 (and in the *Gorgias* at 517b–c, 521a) that the job of the politician, indeed the very point of politics or law, is to lead citizens to virtue.

both his predecessors' views. Justice for him is once again rule-following – now in the form of obedience to laws – *and* it is discriminatory: It benefits the rulers at the expense of the ruled. Banishing justice from the camp of virtue – to which camp he assigns instead the "noble and mighty" injustice – and refusing even to concede injustice's shamefulness alongside its profitability, Thrasymachus exhibits an arrogant cynicism foreign to Socrates' two previous interlocutors.

Hovering just beneath the surface of *Rep*. 1's conversations is the question of who stands to benefit from justice. It would appear that for Cephalus justice is generally not advantageous to the just man, at least not while he lives; any advantage justice might bring comes, he thinks, only after death, and only if – as he has begun to fear now that he is a moribund old man – the gods do not look kindly upon the unjust. The reason Polemarchus values justice – *technē*-justice – is that he sees it as a way to exercise power, the power to reward and punish. For Thrasymachus, the just man's justice benefits only the unjust man; it actually harms the just man himself. Indeed, the just man, he thinks, is nothing but a pathetic dupe. Only for Socrates is justice beneficial down to its very core: to deny the confluence of justice with all-around advantage, he says, is on a par with denying that $12 = 2 \times 6$ (336a–b).

1.6 Chapter-by-Chapter Outline

Chapter 1, "Appreciating *Republic* 1." To recapitulate what was argued in this chapter: In its earlier sections (Sections 1.1–1.3), this introductory chapter sought to account for the undervaluing of *Rep*. 1 and for the widely held assumption that the later books, 2–10, represent Plato's real views. It noted that some scholars, seeing *Rep*. 1 as lacking gravitas – in both style and content – think it was originally not even part of the *Republic* but was rather its own separate dialogue. I made the case for reading the *Republic* forward – that is, reading what comes later in light of *Rep*. 1, rather than reading *Rep*. 1 in light of what comes later: Reading in this way makes it possible to doubt the sincerity of some of Socrates' later proposals. I advocated taking seriously, philosophically, the dramatic elements of *Rep*. 1, including its humor. Finally, I considered the views about justice held by Socrates and his three interlocutors in *Rep*. 1 as they relate to one another.

The central chapters of this book, Chapters 2 to 6, examine each argument in detail, accord due weight to *Rep*. 1's dramatic features and

show their philosophical relevance, analyze transitional passages, extract the lessons to be learned about justice, and indicate the ways in which *Rep*. 1 anticipates what comes later – either later on in *Rep*. 1 or in later books of the *Republic*.

Chapter 2, "Cephalus: Just – In Time (328b8–331d10)." This chapter begins by exploring the dramatic elements of the dialogue's brief but rich opening scene, which introduces the bully Polemarchus and sets up the dialogue's alliances: Glaucon–Socrates and Polemarchus–Adeimantus. It then examines Cephalus' turn to justice in the nick of time – as death approaches – and his disturbing belief that without wealth a man has no alternative but to be unjust. It analyzes the objections Socrates raises to Cephalus' conception of justice as payment of debts to men and gods, and suggests that the examples Socrates uses in his challenge to Cephalus are not simple exceptions to the rule but rather shift the focus of justice away from mechanical rule-following to the responsibility one incurs – when circumstances place one in a position of responsibility – to protect others from harm. The relationship between Cephalus and Polemarchus, father and son, is described and assessed, as is the relationship between their distinct views of justice.

Chapter 3, "Polemarchus: Friends and Enemies (331e1–336a8)." This chapter analyzes the definition of justice proposed by Polemarchus – that justice is helping friends and harming enemies – and Socrates' responses to them. It is argued that Polemarchus' justice, unlike his father's, is indifferent to moral rules, seeing justice as the meting out of benefits and harms to friends and enemies by someone in a position to do so. Since Polemarchus' bestower is, however, a *just* man, he must distribute good things and bad things appropriately, that is, correctly. His justice will necessarily, then, be a *technē*, "*t*-justice"; Socrates' use of the craft-analogy with respect to it is thus entirely apt and legitimate. (Cephalus' justice, as noted earlier, is not the justice of an expert but that of the everyday man; it is "lay-justice" or "l-justice"; Socrates does not employ the craft-analogy with respect to it.) Is the just man's skill a kind of stealing art? If stealing is the skill that helps friend and harms enemies, why not? Notwithstanding this bizarre outcome, Polemarchus continues to insist that justice *is* the art of helping friends and harming enemies. If so, says Socrates, the just man must be able to identify friends and enemies – lest he help those who are not friends, and, more critically, lest he harm those who are not enemies. Socrates gradually coaxes Polemarchus to think not in the subjective terms of friends and enemies but in the objective terms of good or just men and

bad or unjust ones: Will a just man harm those who do no wrong? In Socrates' final lesson to Polemarchus, even the categories of good/just and bad/unjust are deemed irrelevant; the *t*-just man's expertise is now one that harms no one: It makes no one worse, makes no one more lay-unjust. Moreover, implicit in Socrates' analogy with heat and dryness is that *t*-justice *helps* all people by making them "better," more l-just: Like heat whose job is not to cool but its opposite, like dryness whose job is not to wet but its opposite, so is the job of the good – the just – not to harm but, implicitly, its opposite – to help (335d). The way in which the craft of justice, *t*-justice, "helps" people is by making them better as people – that is, more "lay-just," more just in the ordinary way.

Chapter 3 concludes with a brief excursus on the *Hippias Minor*. The *Hippias Minor*'s alarming conclusion that "he who does wrong intentionally is the just man" is compared with the peculiar result of the second argument with Polemarchus, P2, that justice is a kind of stealing art and the just man a kind of thief.

Chapter 4, "Thrasymachus on 'The Just' (336b1–343a9)." This chapter introduces the beastly Thrasymachus, who thrusts himself into the not-yet-completed conversation between Socrates and Polemarchus. He is shown to be disgusted not only by the polite and deferential way in which the interlocutors have been conducting their exchange but also by the conclusion that Socrates was *about* to reach with Polemarchus, namely, that the *t*-just man helps everyone, friend and foe alike, by making them better – that is, more l-just – human beings. The transition to Thrasymachus' "political" characterization of the just as the "advantage of the stronger," where "the stronger" is the ruler, is shown to be the natural extension of Polemarchus' *t*-justice, transformed at the hand of Thrasymachus into the craft of ruling. (Thrasymachus, unlike Polemarchus, would never assign the name "justice" to what the "stronger" do.) This chapter considers the variety of labels scholars have affixed to Thrasymachus and to his position, seeking to determine which fit best. It asks too, as many scholars have, whether Thrasymachus' view is consistent throughout; it argues that it is. It further locates the crux of the disagreement between Thrasymachus and Socrates in the clash between Thrasymachus' notion that a ruler *in the precise sense* never makes, through error, laws that fail to further the ruler's own advantage, and Socrates' contention that, on the contrary, a ruler *in the precise sense* seeks to advance the welfare of the ruled, promoting the advantage not of the stronger but of the weaker.

Chapter 5, "No One Rules Willingly (343b1–348b7)." This chapter considers Thrasymachus' cynical rant, in which "the stronger" emerge as unjust men who think "night and day" about nothing other than their own advantage: No longer portrayed as unerring craftsmen, rulers now resemble other unjust men; the tyrant emerges as Thrasymachus' ideal. This chapter further probes what Socrates might mean by his odd claim that no one – not even good and decent men – rules willingly: If it is the work of good and just men to benefit others, do the reluctant rulers of Book 1, so similar to *Rep*. 7's philosophers who have to be compelled to rule, qualify as just?

Chapter 6, "The Better Man, the Better Life (348b8–354c3)." This chapter tracks Socrates' placement of the just man among the wise – an idea that is anathema to Thrasymachus for whom the just man is a fool – and extracts the important lesson that underlies Socrates' ironic claim that injustice that is unmixed with justice makes a city, group, or individual less able to accomplish its unjust ends. It also assesses the final argument of *Rep*. 1, in which justice makes its way at last into the human soul. It contends that, although this concluding argument is fallacious, flagrantly equivocating on the expression "living well," it nevertheless leaves the reader with valuable food for thought: Is not a man who is unjust inescapably wretched if his soul lacks its proper excellence?

Chapter 7, "Justice Springs Internal." Although the primary aim of this book is to offer an extensive commentary on Book 1 of Plato's *Republic*, focused on its lessons about justice, questions will inevitably arise concerning the relationship between Book 1 and later books of the *Republic*. I contend that justice as conceived in Book 1 is "external," that is, that it is the virtue concerned with how one entity regards and treats another, and so is at odds with the novel definition of justice in Book 4, according to which it is "internal," that is, a matter of what happens within a single entity, whether a city or a soul. In Book 4 justice is the internal harmony that results when the three classes in the city and the three faculties of the soul do their own part – and only their own part – in the workings of the whole. Although Socrates will indeed contend that the man with a well-ordered soul is unlikely to commit ordinary crimes – in this way he ties internal justice to conventional conceptions of it – he will also startlingly assert (at 443c–d) that personal justice is not a matter of how one treats others but is concerned exclusively with the internal organization of one's own soul. I suggest that in Book 4, Socrates, having been tasked with

persuading Glaucon and Adeimantus that there is profit in being just, identifies a reward for being just, namely, the harmonious internal state of city and soul. Although Socrates briefly calls this healthy and therefore desirable condition "justice," he more frequently identifies it as moderation, the virtue closest to justice.[25] It may well be true that when cities and souls are at one and at peace with themselves, they are efficient and effective. But are they *for that reason* also just? It may also be the case that, when reason rules, cities and souls are unlikely to commit injustice. But is the rule of reason justice? A secondary aim of this book, then, is to argue that it is the account of justice found in Book 1 that more closely reflects Socrates' (or Plato's) understanding of it. Although Plato is, of course, distinct from his character Socrates, the Socrates of the dialogues is Plato's hero. I take it that the views Socrates promotes are views that Plato, too, supports; and the views that Socrates challenges are views with which Plato disagrees. If Plato allows Socrates to employ at times tactics that are less than admirable, it is because he recognizes both how high the stakes are and how little choice Socrates' interlocutors leave him: he can either give up on them or deal with them as he does.

1.7 The *Republic*'s Questions and *Rep.* 1's Answers

If the four pressing questions of the *Republic* are: (1) What makes a ruler a good ruler?, (2) what makes a city a good city?, (3) what makes a man a good man?, and (4) is the just life or the unjust life better?,[26] we have the answers to them in *Rep.* 1. (1) A good ruler is a ruler who cares for the ruled, who seeks to benefit not himself but rather those in his charge – by making them better, more just, men; (2) a good city is one that does not harm or seek to harm other cities by conquering and enslaving their populations and taking what belongs to them; (3) a good man is one who neither harms nor wishes to harm other men – in particular, he does not wish to do the things unjust people do, the things that Thrasymachus most desires and admires, the things that generally involve *pleonektein*, taking more – much more – than one is

[25] One might say that the virtue closest to justice is holiness. Cephalus links these two virtues at 331a; their closeness to one another is prominent in the *Euthyphro*. But holiness does not make the *Republic*'s list of four virtues. For why that might be, see Weiss 2012: chapter 4.

[26] See 344d–e, where Socrates says to Thrasymachus: "Or do you suppose you are trying to determine a small matter and not a course of life on the basis of which each of us would have the most profitable existence?"; and 352d: "For the argument is not about just any question, but about the way one should live."

due; and (4) the just life is the better life because it is the life in which one exercises one's soul's virtue; being just is what makes one's life an excellent human life. If it weren't good for the just man himself to be just it could not be said that rulers who aim to make those they rule more just are seeking to benefit them.