

I. Main arg of *Rep*

- A. Designed to refute conventionalism: view that J is only the laws & institutions we have; J is a name for a certain behavior that varies from culture to culture. There is nothing over & above conformity to law- nothing independent.
- B. Also designed to refute naturalism: specifically, the view that by nature it's just for the strong to rule & exploit the weak. Strength & intelligence entitle possessor to whatever s/he can get.
- C. Two questions to be answered in *Rep* are:
  1. What is justice?
  2. Does J benefit its possessor (give one a good life)?

II. *Republic* I

- A. Sets up the problem of justice in a concrete situation. It's not a question in a vacuum.
- B. Plato wants to argue through the entire work that justice is not a set of actions but a state of a person or a government. Further, it also is what makes one happy.

## III. First view is that of ordinary person:

- A. We start the elenchus with a position for S to consider, just as he considers Eu's in that dialogue. After all, the question of justice has to be established from some agreed-upon grounds.
- B. So: Cephalus and son Polemarchus say J is telling the truth and not keeping what is not one's own. It's observing certain rules, obeying prohibitions like our 10 comm. 331d, 332a-c
- C. Right and wrong are the performance of certain actions, not the kind of person you are.
- D. C is lucky and is just, being rich, because he has enough money to prevent him from acting unjustly: he has paid all his debts and made all sacrifices to gods. The poor have harder time being just, as they may not have \$ to pay off debts.
- E. So C is superior to some people, who are just out of fear, in that he really desires to do right. But he's only more rational and better prepared than some, having \$. He's not interested in morality.
- F. Objections to ordinary view:
  1. Leads to complacency- justice isn't hard to achieve.
  2. There's no need to think about J, no intellectual backing to beliefs. Hence, when challenged, easily shattered.
  3. Void left filled by skepticism: J is a racket.

## IV. Socrates' definition

- A. 332d: justice is a craft.
- B. But if so, it's only useful for useless things; it keeps things safe when they are not in use.
- C. Justice also can't be what one uses to help one's friends and harm one's enemies, for it can't make someone unjust.
- D. Note that the CA fails here: J can't be explained as a craft. Yet this is the analogy S has used in *Ap*, and he's said he lacks K, must have no more than T opinion. Just as craftsmen in *Ap* do know how to practice a craft, but don't extend K to other areas successfully, so CA can't be suff to explain J. End of Socratic elenchus as way to understand some thing, some F.

V. Thrasymachus: the challenge S can't really meet - maybe

- A. Intro: 336b, he takes his advantage as the strongest there. Rude, overbearing, demands \$. Enacts the rule of stronger.
- B. 338c: justice is the advantage of stronger, who are the rulers. Does he really mean this? Not quite: a bad ruler is strong temporarily, but can't be sure of own true advantage.
- C. Revise defn: justice is the advantage of the stronger in fact, whether it's the legal ruler or the laws. Rejects conventionalism.
- D. Justice is the advantage of the ruler in the most precise sense (341b).  
But the one who actually rules rules not for his own advantage but for that of who he rules- as a ship's captain rules the sailors for their good not his own. Crafts seek advantage of that over which they rule, which is the things of which they are crafts (as medicine is a craft of care of the body, horse-training of care of horses).
- E. So S has answer to T at 342e (p. 19): is this a good refutation of T?  
Why or why not?
- F. Consider T's main speech, the one in which he comes out with his true view: 343b-344d.
  - 1. The craft of shepherding is not for the good of sheep, but for good of master- the sheep get eaten or sacrificed. Is this the better picture of the craft of ruling?
  - 2. Then, too, the just person suffers from being just, while the unjust person flourishes. Think of today's society, as well as Athens. Is this true? Then why be just, why care about justice?
- G. Socrates tries to refute this: craftsmen need wages for their work, since it benefits others, not themselves. Thus a true ruler knows his rule benefits others, not himself, and he won't want to rule. Be suspicious of one who wants to rule- we normally don't want to take the trouble to benefit others and not be benefitted ourselves.

VI. How T actually defeats Socrates

- A. S elenchus depends on his interlocutor accepting the basic premise of the argument. Here, S can force T into contradictions as he has, by showing that T is wrong about the lack of benefit of J.
- B. But T rejects the very premise he must accept to argue at all: 348b. Justice is NOT A VIRTUE.
- C. S tries in his last arg of Bk. I to say that they've agreed that justice is the virtue of the soul (=person; p.31, 353e). If so, the just person will be happy and live well, but the unjust one badly. However, if T says that justice is a vice, the arg falls and he wins.
- D. The rest of *Rep* gives the arg that J is the virtue of the soul, and that the just person is happy. Answers to 2 questions of book.
- E. Next time: Bks. II, III, esp Gyges' ring.