

Republic Bk II 357a–376c¹

Glaucou and Adeimantus follow up what Thrasymachus said. They think he gave up too soon. With two speeches, they press Socrates to say more about justice. They challenge Socrates to explain why morality or justice is good and rewarding, and how it contributes to a happy life.

Questions.

1. Glaucou distinguishes three ways of valuing something. What are they?
2. In that threefold scheme, where is justice/morality located from Glaucou, and where for Socrates?
- 3.* Explain Glaucou's reasons for this threefold classification (358e–362c).
4. What does the Gyges story show? (359d ff.)
- 5.* What does Adeimantus' speech add? (362d)
6. Briefly explain why Socrates suggests to explore justice in the community. (368c–369a)
- 7.* Glaucou remarks that the city developed by Socrates is a 'community for pigs' (372d). Why?

Background. (a) Glaucou and Adeimantus are Plato's brothers. (b) Glaucou wants Socrates to explain what power (δύναμις) justice exerts on the soul (ψυχή) (358b). *Dynamis* can be understood as the capacity, potentiality, or disposition to perform a certain task. In *Laches*, e.g., Plato says the courage is a *dynamis*. Aristotle uses this notion in his account of the soul: the soul is the form of the organic body (or matter, ὕλη or *hyle*) that has the potential, possibility, or capability (i.e. *dynamis*) for life (cf. *De Anima* 412a). (c) At 359c, Glaucou appeals to the distinction between nature (φύσις) and convention or law (νόμος). By implication, the customary is not natural, i.e. part of human nature. The passage suggests that convention trumps nature; so if justice is a social convention, its benefits are limited to whatever that arrangement grants. (d) In the course of Bk I and Bk II so far, Socrates has changed the topic from the conventional approach to justice in terms of actions in a society to an approach that regards justice or morality in terms of a power in the human soul (or mind). Glaucou and Adeimantus accept this move. They ask: does this power in the soul or mind that apparently leads to just and moral action *also* lead to happiness (εὐδαιμόνια)?

¹ Chapters 2 and 3 of the Waterfield translation.