

A (Very) Rough Guide to The Republic*

The Greek title *Politeia* is difficult to translate. ‘The Republic’, or *Der Staat* (‘The State’ in German) are perhaps misleading or too narrow. The *polis* is the city-state; and *politeia* concerns the public, civic, or generally the ethical life in the community.

Bk I

- 327 Socrates detained in Piraeus
- 331 Cephalus: justice is returning what one owes
- 332 Polemarchus: justice is giving what is appropriate (owed), good to friends, and bad to enemies
- 336 Thrasymachus: justice is the interest of the stronger
- 341 Socrates: ruling is a skill that aims at what is good for its object; best rulers reluctant to rule; the just are good and wise, the unjust are bad and ignorant; injustice yields disharmony; the just are happier
- 354 the nature of justice/morality is unclear

Bk II

- 357 Glaucon’s speech against justice
- 359 the story of Gyges
- 362 Adeimantus’ speech against justice
- 368 Socrates defends justice for its own sake
- 369 the city–soul analogy; origins of civic life or political organisation’ division of labour, specialisation
- 372 Glaucon: city of pigs
- 373 Socrates imagines indulgent city (Callipolis); guardians, education

Bk III

- 386 the guardians’ education explored: narratives that foster courage,

- truthfulness, moderation
- 392 distinction between simple and imitative narratives/stories
- 400 good art inspires good character
- 403 physical education, diet
- 412 the selection of guardians
- 414 the ‘noble lie’

Bk IV

- 419 guardians make entire city happy
- 427 return to justice: city is just insofar as each class performs its proper function
- 434 the corresponding virtues in the individual; city–soul analogy
- 439 tripartite soul; individual is just or moral if the soul’s parts function properly: justice is a healthy balance of the soul’s components
- 445 return to initial question: is justice more profitable than injustice?

Bk V

- 449 Polemarchus demands details
- 451 female guardians, women in society
- 457 the guardians’ life in a commune, arranged marriages, infanticide
- 462 unity amongst guardians extends to all citizens in this ideal city
- 473 ideal can be realised only if philosophers become kings
- 474 analysis of philosophy and the philosopher, difference between

knowledge and opinion, forms
(or ideas)

Bk VI

- 484 character of the philosopher
- 487 Adeimantus: actual philosophers are useless or bad
- 488 analogy: ship of state
- 493 simile of the beast, sophists
- 498 philosophy benefits the city or state
- 502 Callipolis is ideal but possible; education of philosopher-kings
- 504 the 'longer way', the study of the good
- 507 analogy of the sun
- 509 analogy of the line

Bk VII

- 514 analogy of the cave
- 519 philosophers rule reluctantly and hence best
- 521 the education of philosopher-kings: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, harmonics, dialectics
- 535 selection and training
- 541 how to establish Callipolis

Bk VIII

- 543 resume exploration left at 449: four categories of unjust regime
- 544 further justification of city–soul analogy
- 545 timarchy
- 548 the timarchic individual
- 550 oligarchy
- 553 the oligarchic individual

- 555 democracy
- 558 the democratic individual
- 562 tyranny

Bk IX

- 571 the tyrannical individual
- 576 degrees of happiness associated with these types
- 578 the unhappiest is the tyrant
- 580 the just are happier than the unjust; three fundamental human types
- 583 the philosopher's life is the most pleasant
- 585 true pleasure comes from understanding and knowledge
- 587 the best life is 729 times better more pleasurable than the worst
- 588 vindication of justice; analogy of the composite creature

Bk X

- 595 return to poetry; imitation, illusion, and truth
- 598 poetry as imitation, poetry and knowledge
- 602 imitative poetry appeals to the non-rational part of the soul
- 605 such poetry has bad effects and is banned in Callipolis
- 608 the immortality of the soul
- 612 the rewards of justice
- 614 the myth of Er: the rewards and punishments in the afterlife; reincarnation

* Partly adapted from G. R. F. Ferrari & T Griffith (2000). *Plato: The Republic* (pp. xlii–xlvi, the editor's synopsis). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

