

Contents List and Synopses of the Proposed Chapters

The Introduction, *Why Prospering?* [≈5,000 words], motivates the project of the book and asks two preliminary questions about εὐδαιμονία and its role in Greek discussions about justice. The first question is: Why translate this Greek term ‘prospering’ rather than the more familiar translation, ‘happiness’? After surveying the well-known problems with the English term ‘happiness,’ I introduce another reason to reject this translation in favor of ‘prospering.’ The English term ‘prospering’ does a better job capturing the strong connotation of material wealth present in early understandings of εὐδαιμονία and conveying the fact that Plato and other philosophers knowingly used a term with these pre-theoretical associations. The second question is: Why did the ancients make the individual’s prospering so central to their investigations about justice? I explain that though the Greeks were not unfamiliar with the agent-neutral goods that dominate contemporary discussions of justice, they inherited the assumption that morally good behavior leads to prospering. When this assumption was eventually questioned a natural response was to defend it rather than denying (as many do now) that good behavior is profitable for the self-interested agent. We can thus neatly reconstruct early Greek thinking about justice by dividing it into two camps – those who thought it contributed to prospering and those who rejected this. The introduction ends with a brief summary of the chapters that follow.

Chapter One, *The 5th Century Challenge to Justice* [≈23,800 words], introduces and reconstructs one half of an early sophistic debate about the value of justice. The relevant question is: Is it ultimately beneficial for the individual to behave justly or does it serve the individual’s self-interest to practice injustice instead? I start with a close reading of Hesiod’s *Works and Days* to articulate the five theses of The Traditional View of Justice, according to which being just is profitable and prudent because the gods reward just behavior and punish unjust behavior. I then briefly discuss two historical developments that set the stage for the 5th Century challenge to justice – namely, the growing influence of The Traditional View of Justice on Greek culture and a growing religious skepticism among the intellectual elite. With this groundwork established, the chapter introduces two sophistic texts, the “Sisyphus Fragment” of unknown authorship and fragment B44 from Antiphon’s *On Truth*. The authors of these texts – the ‘Moral Cynics’ – denied Hesiod’s belief that the gods could be counted on to support justice and, as a result, almost systematically objected to the five theses of The Traditional View. I show how their secular and naturalistic assumptions led them to reject the value of justice and instead conclude that an individual concerned to prosper would do better to practice injustice. This is because intelligent injustice can win the External Goods of money and power, which are apparently naturally pleasant and good for human beings. The chapter ends with a brief discussion of two non-sophistic texts that attest to the broad impact the Moral Cynics’ radical challenge had on Greek thought.

Chapter Two, *The 5th Century Defense of Justice* [≈20,200 words], turns to the second half of this sophistic debate. I offer a selective analysis of the “Anonymous Iamblichii,” Prodicus’ “Choice of Heracles,” and the ethical and political fragments of Democritus, which aims to do three things. First, it shows that the authors of these texts – the ‘Friends of Justice’ – were consciously responding to Cynical ideas and thus understood themselves to be contributing to a debate about the value of justice. This explains why, as I next show, they do not rely on the existence of interventionist gods. In contrast to the earliest defenders of justice, the Friends of Justice accept the secular assumptions of the Cynics and argue that justice is more profitable than injustice all the same. Their innovative arguments fall into two broad strategies. The first denies that the goods of money, power, and pleasure purportedly won through unjust behavior make significant contributions to our prospering. Instead, the refined goods of reputation and esteem won through virtuous behavior are posited as truly important for our well-being. The second strategy attempts to show that the proper functioning of society, upon which everyone, including the unjust individual, depends, requires that all citizens be just. These arguments represent a significant development in Greek philosophy, for in them prospering becomes an explicit object of critical analysis for the first time. Finally, I relate these texts back to Hesiod. Because the 5th Century Friends of Justice object to the Cynics and argue that justice is more profitable than injustice, they should be seen as advancing a modernized version of The Traditional View of Justice.

Chapter Three, *The Debate and Plato* [≈15,000 words], pivots the book towards Plato. I begin by summing up the results of the 5th Century debate and highlighting its philosophical significance. Despite offering very impressive responses to the Moral Cynics, the Friends of Justice failed to prove that justice is more profitable and prudent than injustice. None of the arguments made by the author of the “Anonymous Iamblichii,” Prodicus, or Democritus definitively refutes the central claims of the Moral Cynics. Yet the antagonistic character of the debate resulted in significant theoretical advances in our understanding of human prospering, which are briefly surveyed in the chapter. I next argue that Plato was keenly aware of this debate. Not only was he obviously interested in the sophists and what they had to say about moral philosophy quite generally; but two dialogues in particular include arguments very much like those made by the Moral Cynics and Friends of Justice. The *Gorgias* features a pair of interlocutors who believe injustice is more profitable and prudent than justice, one of whom also advocates an extreme sort of hedonism reminiscent of certain Cynics. And the *Protagoras* includes a sophist who offers a defense of justice so close to the one earlier found in the “Anonymous Iamblichii” that they must be two iterations of the same argument. Demonstrating Plato’s awareness of the 5th Century debate sets the stage for the rest of the monograph.

Chapter Four, *A Challenge Old and New* [≈11,500 words], argues that the first two books of the *Republic* draw from the sophistic debate about justice discussed in the earlier chapters. Socrates' principal interlocutors in the dialogue deny that it is rational for the individual to be just and claim that it better serves one's self-interest to be unjust instead. In the first part of the chapter, I analyze the principal arguments used by these interlocutors and show that most of them have substantive and methodological similarities to the arguments made by the Moral Cynics. One argument used by Socrates' opponents is, however, genuinely new and not anticipated by any text from the 5th Century. I nevertheless show that this argument was informed by the debate as well. For Plato uses this argument to identify and highlight a weakness in past defenses made by the Friends of Justice. Whereas they had assumed that only genuine justice and virtue can win the agent a reputation for justice and virtue, Plato has his interlocutors prove that an intelligent unjust agent can win the good reputation earlier highlighted as the unique reward of justice by past moralists. I end the chapter by arguing that Plato's identification of this fatal weakness in past defenses of justice pointed the way toward a better, more satisfying defense of justice. This new defense promised to once and for all respond to the Moral Cynics and finally vindicate the central claims of The Traditional View of Justice.

Chapter Five, *The Project of the Republic and the Division of Goods* [≈13,000 words], shows that the *Republic* is designed to demonstrate the value of justice in a way that avoids the problems faced by the 5th Century Friends of Justice. My focus is on the famous division of goods that begins and structures the central argument of the dialogue. Scholars often claim that Plato's distinction between value 'because of itself' [δι' αὐτό] and value 'because of the things that arise from it' [διὰ τὰ γινόμενα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ] is equivalent to the contemporary distinction between instrumental and intrinsic value. This is incorrect. Through a close textual analysis, I show that the distinction between the value something possesses 'because of itself' and the value it possesses 'because of the things that arise from it' distinguishes between one type of value that depends on something's intrinsic features as well as the inevitable effects it produces by its nature and another type of value, which is realized only when that thing is recognized and responded to by other agents. The significance of this distinction becomes clear against the backdrop of the challenge discussed in Chapter Four. When Plato has Socrates demonstrate that justice is valuable 'because of itself' in the remainder of the *Republic*, he is not having Socrates show that justice is intrinsically valuable. Instead, he is having Socrates argue that justice will contribute to the prospering of the just individual even if it is never recognized. That is to say, he is having Socrates argue that justice will contribute to the prospering of the just individual for reasons other than those problematically adduced by the 5th Century Friends of Justice. By offering an argument of this sort in the remainder of the *Republic* Plato quite consciously advances upon the project of the past sophists and offers a new and better defense of the Traditional View of Justice.

Chapter Six, *Further Sophistic Echoes* [≈13,000 words], highlights two later sections of the *Republic* and argues that they exhibit an especially strong sophistic influence. I first consider Socrates' account of the origin of human societies in Book II. According to this account, humans formed political unions because they were unable to live as individuals and realized that a cooperative venture was needed for their well-being. A similar account was earlier found in the "Anonymous Iamblich," and this, I argue, is no coincidence. Just as the "Anonymous" used its account of human history to defend the value of justice against the Moral Cynics of the 5th Century, so Plato has Socrates develop "the city of pigs" to stress our mutual interdependence, respond to his opponents in the *Republic*, and prepare for his own defense of justice. In so doing he adopts and modifies an earlier sophistic strategy for responding to the Moral Cynics. I next consider Socrates' first 'proof' that the just life is better than the unjust life in Book IX. This proof takes the form of a choice of lives. Glaucon is asked to carefully consider paradigmatic examples of just and unjust lives and choose which is more prosperous. This style of argument – comparing a paradigmatically just and unjust life and then eliciting a judgement about their relative prospering – was quite common among the earlier sophists. Yet it is relatively rare in Plato's other dialogues. The fact that Plato has Socrates appeal to a choice of lives in the *Republic* is further reason to think that this dialogue is meant to engage with the sophistic debate about justice discussed in Chapters One and Two.

The Conclusion, *Beyond the Debate* [≈3,500 words], offers a brief discussion of Plato's other dialogues. I draw attention to the fact that from the *Apology* to the *Laws* Plato elsewhere responds to the threat of injustice by invoking the gods. He frequently assumes that anyone who would act unjustly is ignorant of the supremely good world order and the gods who have established that order. It is for this reason that in his last work, the *Laws*, Plato has the Athenian Stranger respond to unjust criminals by offering extensive proofs that moral, interventionist gods exist. There can be little doubt that Plato's preferred way to address the problem of injustice over his career was to invoke the benevolent gods. The fact that he explicitly sets this sort of response aside in the bulk of the *Republic* and instead offers a largely secular defense of the value of justice serves to underscore that this work is a contribution to an existing debate in which such a move would have been illegitimate. It also explains why the *Republic* feels more modern and familiar than Plato's other dialogues. I end by deeming Plato the greatest Friend of Justice in antiquity. After his work one finds virtually no Greek author advancing principled arguments against justice or claiming that injustice is more valuable than justice.