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## IX – Criticism and Literary Theories

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1. Plato’s The Republic

Plato

Life:

- Plato was born in Circa 428 B.C.E.
- Plato’s father, Ariston, descended from the kings of Athens and Messenia.
- His mother, Perictione, is said to be related to the 6th century B.C.E. Greek statesman Solon.
- Plato was an ancient Greek philosopher.
- He was a student of Socrates and a teacher of Aristotle.
- His writings explored justice, beauty and equality, and also contained discussions in aesthetics, political philosophy, theology, cosmology, epistemology and the philosophy of language.
- Plato founded the Academy in Athens, one of the first institutions of higher learning in the Western world.
- Plato was the innovator of the written dialogue and dialectic forms in philosophy.
- He died in Athens Circa 348 B.C.E.

Career:

- As with many young boys of his social class, Plato was probably taught by some of Athens’ finest educators.
- The curriculum would have featured the doctrines of Cratylus and Pythagoras as well as Parmenides.
- These probably helped develop the foundation for Plato’s study of metaphysics (the study of nature) and epistemology (the study of knowledge).
- As a young man, Plato experienced two major events that set his course in life.
- One was meeting the great Greek philosopher Socrates.
- Socrates's methods of dialogue and debate impressed Plato so much that he soon he became a close associate and dedicated his life to the question of virtue and the formation of a noble character.
The other significant event was the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta, in which Plato served for a brief time between 409 and 404 B.C.E.

After Socrates's death, Plato traveled for 12 years throughout the Mediterranean region, studying mathematics with the Pythagoreans in Italy, and geometry, geology, astronomy and religion in Egypt.

Sometime around 385 B.C.E., Plato founded a school of learning, known as the Academy, which he presided over until his death.

The Academy operated until 529 C.E., when it was closed by Roman Emperor Justinian I.

Works:
- Apology
- Phaedo
- Symposium
- Republic
- Protagoras
- Euthyphro
- Phaedrus
- Hippias Major and Minor
- Ion

Quotes:
- “Love is a serious mental disease.” - Plato, Phaedrus.
- “I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing, and that is that I know nothing.” - Plato, The Republic.
- “Education is teaching our children to desire the right things.” – Plato.
- “The beginning is the most important part of the work.” - Plato, The Republic.
- “Everything that deceives may be said to enchant.” - Plato.
The Republic

- *The Republic* is a Socratic dialogue, written by Plato around 380 BC, concerning justice, the order and character of the just city-state and the just man.
- It is Plato's best-known work, and has proven to be one of the world's most influential works of philosophy and political theory, both intellectually and historically.
- In the book's dialogue, Socrates discusses the meaning of justice and whether or not the just man is happier than the unjust man with various Athenians and foreigners.
- They consider the natures of existing regimes and then propose a series of different, hypothetical cities in comparison.
- This culminates in the discussion of Kallipolis, a hypothetical city-state ruled by a philosopher king.
- They also discuss the theory of forms, the immortality of the soul, and the role of the philosopher and that of poetry in society.
- The dialogues may have taken place during the Peloponnesian War.

Summary:

Book I:

Socrates and Glaucon visit the Piraeus to attend a festival in honor of the Thracian goddess Bendis. They are led to Polemarchus’ house. Socrates speaks to Cephalus about old age, the benefits of being wealthy, and justice. One would not claim that it is just to return weapons one owes to a mad friend, thus justice is not being truthful and returning what one owes as Cephalus claims. The discussion between Socrates and Polemarchus follows.

Polemarchus claims that justice is helping one’s friends and harming one’s enemies and that this is what one owes people. Socrates’ objections to Polemarchus’ definition are as follows: (i) Is this appropriate in medicine or cooking? So in what context is this the case? (ii) The just person will also be good at useless things and at being unjust. (iii) We often do not know who our friends and enemies are. Thus, we may treat those whom we only think are our friends or enemies well or badly. Would this be justice? (iv) It does not seem to be just to treat anyone badly, not even an enemy.
Thrasymachus defines justice as the advantage or what is beneficial to the stronger. Justice is different under different political regimes according to the laws, which are made to serve the interests of the strong. Socrates requires clarification of the definition: does it mean that justice is what the stronger think is beneficial to them or what is actually beneficial to them. And don’t the strong rulers make mistakes and sometimes create laws that do not serve their advantage. Thrasymachus points out that the stronger are really only those who do not make mistakes as to what is to their advantage. Socrates responds with a discussion of art or craft and points out that its aim is to do what is good for its subjects, not what is good for the practitioner. Thrasymachus suggests that some arts, such as that of shepherds, do not do this but rather aim at the advantage of the practitioner. He also adds the claim that injustice is in every way better than justice and that the unjust person who commits injustice undetected is always happier than the just person. The paradigm of the happy unjust person is the tyrant who is able to satisfy all his desires. Socrates points out that the shepherd’s concern for his sheep is different from his concern to make money, which is extraneous to the art and that no power or art provides what is beneficial to itself. Socrates claims that the best rulers are reluctant to rule but do so out of necessity; they do not wish to be ruled by someone inferior.

Socrates offers three argument in favor of the just life over the unjust life: (i) the just man is wise and good, and the unjust man is ignorant and bad; (ii) injustice produces internal disharmony which prevents effective actions; (iii) virtue is excellence at a thing’s function and the just person lives a happier life than the unjust person, since he performs the various functions of the human soul well. Socrates is dissatisfied with the discussion since an adequate account of justice is necessary before they can address whether the just life is better than the unjust life.

Book II:
Glaucon is not persuaded by the arguments in the previous discussion. He divides good things into three classes: things good in themselves, things good both in themselves and for their consequences, and things good only for their consequences. Socrates places justice in the class of things good in themselves and for their consequences.
Glauc on renews Thrasymachus’ argument to challenge Socrates to defend justice by itself without any consideration of what comes from it (358b ff.) Glauc on gives a speech defending injustice: (i) justice originates as a compromise between weak people who are afraid that suffering injustice is worse than doing it; (ii) people act justly because this is necessary and unavoidable, so justice is good only for its consequences (story of the ring of Gyges’ ancestor; (iii) the unjust person with the reputation for justice is happier than the just person with the reputation for injustice.

Adeimantus expands Glauc on’s defense of injustice and attack on justice by asserting: the reputation of justice is better than justice itself, so the unjust person who is able to keep the reputation of being just will be happier than the just person; discussion of various ways that the unjust can acquire the reputation for justice.

Socrates is asked to defend justice for itself, not for the reputation it allows for. He proposes to look for justice in the city first and then to proceed by analogy to find justice in the individual. This approach will allow for a clearer judgment on the question of whether the just person is happier than the unjust person. Socrates begins by discussing the origins of political life and constructs a just city in speech that satisfies only basic human necessities. Socrates argues that humans enter political life since each is not self-sufficient by nature. Each human has certain natural abilities and doing only the single job one is naturally suited for, is the most efficient way to satisfy the needs of all the citizens. Glauc on objects that Socrates’ city is too simple and calls it “a city of pigs”. Socrates describes a city that allows for luxuries (“a feverish city,”. Socrates points out that the luxurious city will require an army to guard the city. The army will be composed of professional soldiers, the guardians, who, like dogs, must be gentle to fellow citizens and harsh to enemies. The guardians need to be educated very carefully to be able to do their job of protecting the city’s citizens, laws, and customs well. Poetry and stories need to be censored to guarantee such an education. Poetry should: (i) present the gods as good and only as causes of good; (ii) as unchanging in form; (iii) as beings who refrain from lies and deception.
Book III:

Socrates continues the political measures of the censorship of poetry: (iv) the underworld should not be portrayed as a bad place so that the guardians will not be too afraid of death; (v) the heroes and gods should not be presented lamenting so that the guardians can develop courage; (vi) poetry should prevent people from laughing violently; (vii) poetry should promote the guardian’s sense of truth-telling but with the willingness to lie when this is conducive to the good of the city; (viii) it should promote self-discipline and obedience; (ix) it should not include stories that contribute to avarice; (x) it should not include stories that contribute to hubris or impiety.

Socrates moves on to discuss the manner in which stories should be told (392d). He divides such manners into simple narration (in third person) and imitative narration (in first person). To keep the guardians doing only their job, Socrates argues that the guardians may imitate only what is appropriate for this. The just city should allow only modes and rhythms that fit the content of poetry allowed in the just city. Socrates explains how good art can lead to the formation of good character and make people more likely to follow their reason. Socrates turns to the physical education of the guardians and says that it should include physical training that prepares them for war, a careful diet, and habits that contribute to the avoidance of doctors. Physical education should be geared to benefit the soul rather than the body, since the body necessarily benefits when the soul is in a good condition, whereas the soul does not necessarily benefit when the body is in a good condition.

Socrates begins to describe how the rulers of the just city are to be selected from the class of the guardians: they need to be older, strong, wise, and wholly unwilling to do anything other than what is advantageous to the city. Socrates suggests that they need to tell the citizens a myth that should be believed by subsequent generations in order for everyone to accept his position in the city. The myth of metals portrays each human as having a precious metal in them: those naturally suited to be rulers have gold, those suited to be guardians have silver, and those suited for farming and the other crafts have bronze.

Socrates proceeds to discuss the living and housing conditions of the guardians: they will not have private property, they will have little privacy, they will receive what they need from the city via taxation of the other classes, and they will live communally and have common messes.
Book IV:

Adeimantus complains that the guardians in the just city will not be very happy. Socrates points out that the aim is to make the whole city, and not any particular class, as happy as possible. Socrates discusses several other measures for the city as a whole in order to accomplish this. There should be neither too much wealth nor too much poverty in the city since these cause social strife. The just city should be only as large in size as would permit it to be unified and stable. Socrates reemphasizes the importance of the guardian’s education and suggests that the guardians will possess wives and children in common. He suggests that they should only allow very limited ways by which innovations may be introduced to education or change in the laws. The just city will follow traditional Greek religious customs.

With the founding of the just city completed, Socrates proceeds to discuss justice. He claims that the city they have founded is completely good and virtuous and thus it is wise, courageous, moderate, and just. Justice will be what remains once they find the other three virtues in it, namely wisdom, courage, and moderation. The wisdom of the just city is found in its rulers and it is the type of knowledge that allows them to rule the city well. The courage of the just city is found in its military and it is correct and lawful belief about what to fear and what not to fear. The city’s moderation or self-discipline is its unanimity in following the just city’s structure in terms of who should rule and who should be ruled. The city’s justice consists in each class performing its proper function.

Socrates then proceeds to find the corresponding four virtues in the individual. Socrates defends the analogy of the city and the individual and proceeds to distinguish three analogous parts in the soul with their natural functions. By using instances of psychological conflict, he distinguishes the function of the rational part from that of the appetitive part of the soul. Then he distinguishes the function of the spirited part from the functions of the two other parts. The function of the rational part is thinking, that of the spirited part the experience of emotions, and that of the appetitive part the pursuit of bodily desires. Socrates explains the virtues of the individual’s soul and how they correspond to the virtues of the city. Socrates points out that one is just when each of the three parts of the soul performs its function. Justice is a natural balance of the soul’s parts and injustice is an imbalance of the parts of the soul. Socrates is now ready to
answer the question of whether justice is more profitable than injustice that goes unpunished. To do so he will need to examine the various unjust political regimes and the corresponding unjust individuals in each.

Book V:

Socrates is about to embark on a discussion of the unjust political regimes and the corresponding unjust individuals when he is interrupted by Adeimantus and Polemarchus. They insist that he needs to address the comment he made earlier that the guardians will possess the women and the children of the city in common. Socrates reluctantly agrees and begins with the suggestion that the guardian women should perform the same job as the male guardians. Some may follow convention and object that women should be given different jobs because they differ from men by nature. Socrates responds by indicating that the natural differences between men and women are not relevant when it comes to the jobs of protecting and ruling the city. Both sexes are naturally suited for these tasks. Socrates goes on to argue that the measure of allowing the women to perform the same tasks as the men in this way is not only feasible but also best. This is the case since the most suited people for the job will be performing.

Socrates also proposes that there should be no separate families among the members of the guardian class: the guardians will possess all the women and children in common. Socrates proceeds to discuss how this measure is for the best and Glaucon allows him to skip discussing its feasibility. The best guardian men are to have sex with the best guardian women to produce offspring of a similar nature. Socrates describes the system of eugenics in more detail. In order to guarantee that the best guardian men have sex with the best guardian women, the city will have marriage festivals supported by a rigged lottery system. The best guardian men will also be allowed to have sex with as many women as they desire in order to increase the likelihood of giving birth to children with similar natures. Once born, the children will be taken away to a rearing pen to be taken care of by nurses and the parents will not be allowed to know who their own children are. This is so that the parents think of all the children as their own. Socrates recognizes that this system will result in members of the same family having intercourse with each other.
Socrates proceeds to argue that these arrangements will ensure that unity spreads throughout the city. Responding to Adeimantus’ earlier complaint that the guardians would not be happy, Socrates indicates that the guardians will be happy with their way of life; they will have their needs satisfied and will receive sufficient honor from the city. Thereafter, Socrates discusses how the guardians will conduct war.

Glauccon interrupts him and demands an account explaining how such a just city can come into being. Socrates admits that this is the most difficult criticism to address. Then he explains that the theoretical model of the just city they constructed remains valid for discussing justice and injustice even if they cannot prove that such a city can come to exist. Socrates claims that the model of the just city cannot come into being until philosophers rule as kings or kings become philosophers. He also points out that this is the only possible route by which to reach complete happiness in both public and private life. Socrates indicates that they too, discuss philosophy and philosophers to justify these claims. Philosophers love and pursue all of wisdom and especially love the sight of truth. Philosophers are the only ones who recognize and find pleasure in what is behind the multiplicity of appearances, namely the single Form. Socrates distinguishes between those who know the single Forms that are and those who have opinions. Those who have opinions do not know, since opinions have becoming and changing appearances as their object, whereas knowledge implies that the objects thereof are stable).

Book VI:

Socrates goes on to explain why philosophers should rule the city. They should do so since they are better able to know the truth and since they have the relevant practical knowledge by which to rule. The philosopher’s natural abilities and virtues prove that they have wisdom, they are moderate, they are courageous, they are quick learners, they have a good memory, they like proportion since the truth is like it, and they have a pleasant nature.

Adeimantus objects that actual philosophers are either useless or bad people. Socrates responds with the analogy of the ship of state to show that philosophers are falsely blamed for their uselessness. Like a doctor who does not beg patients to heal them, the philosopher should not plead with people to rule them. To the accusation that philosophers are bad, Socrates

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responds that those with the philosopher’s natural abilities and with outstanding natures often get corrupted by a bad education and become outstandingly bad. Thus, someone can only be a philosopher in the true sense if he receives the proper kind of education. After a discussion of the sophists as bad teachers, Socrates warns against various people who falsely claim to be philosophers. Since current political regimes lead to either the corruption or the destruction of the philosopher, he should avoid politics and lead a quiet private life.

Socrates then addresses the question of how philosophy can come to play an important role in existing cities. Those with philosophical natures need to practice philosophy all their lives, especially when they are older. The only way to make sure that philosophy is properly appreciated and does not meet hostility is to wipe an existing city clean and begin it anew. Socrates concludes that the just city and the measures proposed are both for the best and not impossible to bring about.

Socrates proceeds to discuss the education of philosopher kings. The most important thing philosophers should study is the Form of the Good, Socrates considers several candidates for what the Good is, such as pleasure and knowledge and he rejects them. He points out that we choose everything with a view to the good. Socrates attempts to explain what the Form of the Good is through the analogy of the sun. As the sun illuminates objects so the eye can see them, the Form of the Good renders the objects of knowledge knowable to the human soul. As the sun provides things with their ability to be, to grow, and with nourishment, the Form of the Good provides the objects of knowledge with their being even though it itself is higher than being.

Socrates offers the analogy of the divided line to explain the Form of the Good even further. He divides a line into two unequal sections once and then into two unequal sections again. The lowest two parts represent the visible realm and the top two parts the intelligible realm. In the first of the four sections of the line, Socrates places images/shadows, in the second section visible objects, in the third section truths arrived at via hypotheses as mathematicians do, and in the last section the Forms themselves. Corresponding to each of these, there is a capacity of the human soul: imagination, belief, thought, and understanding. The line also represents degrees of clarity and opacity as the lowest sections are more opaque and the higher sections clearer.
Book VII:

Socrates continues his discussion of the philosopher and the Forms with a third analogy, the analogy of the cave. This represents the philosopher’s education from ignorance to knowledge of the Forms. True education is the turning around of the soul from shadows and visible objects to true understanding of the Forms. Philosophers who accomplish this understanding will be reluctant to do anything other than contemplate the Forms but they must be forced to return to the cave (the city) and rule it.

Socrates proceeds to outline the structure of the philosopher king’s education so that they can reach an understanding of the Forms. Those who eventually become philosopher kings will initially be educated like the other guardians in poetry, music, and physical education. Then they will receive education in mathematics: arithmetic and number, plane geometry, and solid geometry. Following these, they will study astronomy, and harmonics. Then they will study dialectic which will lead them to understand the Forms and the Form of the Good. Socrates gives a partial explanation of the nature of dialectic and leaves Glaucon with no clear explanation of its nature or how it may lead to understanding. Then they discuss who will receive this course of education and how long they are to study these subjects. The ones receiving this type of education need to exhibit the natural abilities suited to a philosopher discussed earlier. After the training in dialectic the education system will include fifteen years of practical political training to prepare philosopher kings for ruling the city. Socrates concludes by suggesting that the easiest way to bring the just city into being would be to expel everyone over the age of ten out of an existing city.

Book VIII:

Socrates picks up the argument that was interrupted in Book V. Glaucon remembers that Socrates was about to describe the four types of unjust regime along with their corresponding unjust individuals. Socrates announces that he will begin discussing the regimes and individual that deviate the least from the just city and individual and proceed to discuss the ones that deviate the most. The cause of change in regime is lack of unity in the rulers. Assuming that the just city could come into being, Socrates indicates that it would eventually change since everything which comes into being must decay. The rulers are bound to make mistakes in
assigning people jobs suited to their natural capacities and each of the classes will begin to be mixed with people who are not naturally suited for the tasks relevant to each class. This will lead to class conflicts.

The first deviant regime from just kingship or aristocracy will be timocracy, that emphasizes the pursuit of honor rather than wisdom and justice. The timocratic individual will have a strong spirited part in his soul and will pursue honor, power, and success. This city will be militaristic. Socrates explains the process by which an individual becomes timocratic: he listens to his mother complain about his father’s lack of interest in honor and success. The timocratic individual’s soul is at a middle point between reason and spirit.

Oligarchy arises out of timocracy and it emphasizes wealth rather than honor. Socrates discusses how it arises out of timocracy and its characteristics: people will pursue wealth; it will essentially be two cities, a city of wealthy citizens and a city of poor people; the few wealthy will fear the many poor; people will do various jobs simultaneously; the city will allow for poor people without means; it will have a high crime rate. The oligarchic individual comes by seeing his father lose his possessions and feeling insecure he begins to greedily pursue wealth. Thus he allows his appetitive part to become a more dominant part of his soul. The oligarchic individual’s soul is at middle point between the spirited and the appetitive part.

Socrates proceeds penultimately, to discuss democracy. It comes about when the rich become too rich and the poor too poor. Too much luxury makes the oligarchs soft and the poor revolt against them. In democracy most of the political offices are distributed by lot. The primary goal of the democratic regime is freedom or license. People will come to hold offices without having the necessary knowledge and everyone is treated as an equal in ability (equals and unequals alike). The democratic individual comes to pursue all sorts of bodily desires excessively and allows his appetitive part to rule his soul. He comes about when his bad education allows him to transition from desiring money to desiring bodily and material goods. The democratic individual has no shame and no self-discipline.
Tyranny arises out of democracy when the desire for freedom to do what one wants becomes extreme. The freedom or license aimed at in the democracy becomes so extreme that any limitations on anyone’s freedom seem unfair. Socrates points out that when freedom is taken to such an extreme it produces its opposite, slavery. The tyrant comes about by presenting himself as a champion of the people against the class of the few people who are wealthy. The tyrant is forced to commit a number of acts to gain and retain power: accuse people falsely, attack his kinsmen, bring people to trial under false pretenses, kill many people, exile many people, and purport to cancel the debts of the poor to gain their support. The tyrant eliminates the rich, brave, and wise people in the city since he perceives them as threats to his power. Socrates indicates that the tyrant faces the dilemma to either live with worthless people or with good people who may eventually depose him and chooses to live with worthless people. The tyrant ends up using mercenaries as his guards since he cannot trust any of the citizens. The tyrant also needs a very large army and will spend the city’s money, and will not hesitate to kill members of his own family if they resist his ways.

**Book IX:**

Socrates is now ready to discuss the tyrannical individual. He begins by discussing necessary and unnecessary pleasures and desires. Those with balanced souls ruled by reason are able to keep their unnecessary desires from becoming lawless and extreme. The tyrannical individual comes out of the democratic individual when the latter’s unnecessary desires and pleasures become extreme; when he becomes full of Eros or lust. The tyrannical person is mad with lust and this leads him to seek any means by which to satisfy his desires and to resist anyone who gets in his way. Some tyrannical individuals eventually become actual tyrants. Tyrants associate themselves with flatterers and are incapable of friendship. Applying the analogy of the city and the soul, Socrates proceeds to argue that the tyrannical individual is the most unhappy individual. Like the tyrannical city, the tyrannical individual is enslaved, least likely to do what he wants, poor and unsatisfiable, fearful and full of wailing and lamenting. The individual who becomes an actual tyrant of a city is the unhappiest of all. Socrates concludes this first argument with a ranking of the individuals in terms of happiness: the more just one is the happier.
He proceeds to a second proof that the just are happier than the unjust. Socrates distinguishes three types of persons: one who pursues wisdom, another who pursues honor, and another who pursues profit. He argues that we should trust the wisdom lover’s judgment in his way of life as the most pleasant, since he is able to consider all three types of life clearly.

Socrates proceeds to offer a third proof that the just are happier than the unjust. He begins with an analysis of pleasure: relief from pain may seem pleasant and bodily pleasures are merely a relief from pain but not true pleasure. The only truly fulfilling pleasure is that which comes from understanding since the objects it pursues are permanent. Socrates adds that only if the rational part rules the soul, will each part of the soul find its proper pleasure. He concludes the argument with a calculation of how many times the best life is more pleasant than the worst: seven-hundred and twenty nine. Socrates discusses an imaginary multi-headed beast to illustrate the consequences of justice and injustice in the soul and to support justice.

**Book X:**

Thereafter, Socrates returns to the subject of poetry and claims that the measures introduced to exclude imitative poetry from the just city seem clearly justified now. Poetry is to be censored since the poets may not know which is; thus may lead the soul astray. Socrates proceeds to discuss imitation. He explains what it is by distinguishing several levels of imitation through the example of a couch: there is the Form of the couch, the particular couch, and a painting of a couch. The products of imitation are far removed from the truth. Poets, like painters are imitators who produce imitations without knowledge of the truth. Socrates argues that if poets had knowledge of the truth they would want to be people who do great things rather than remain poets. Socrates doubts the poet’s capacity to teach virtue since he only imitates images of it. The poet’s knowledge is inferior to that of the maker of other products and the maker’s knowledge is inferior to that of the user’s.

Now Socrates considers how imitators affect their audience. He uses a comparison with optical illusions to argue that imitative poetry causes the parts of the soul to be at war with each other and this leads to injustice. The most serious charge against imitative poetry is that it even corrupts decent people. He concludes that the just city should not allow such poetry in it but
only poetry that praises the gods and good humans. Imitative poetry prevents the immortal soul from attaining its greatest reward.

Glaucōn wonders if the soul is immortal and Socrates launches into an argument proving its immortality: things that are destroyed are destroyed by their own evil; the body’s evil is disease and this can destroy it; the soul’s evils are ignorance, injustice and the other vices but these do not destroy the soul; thus, the soul is immortal. Socrates points out that we cannot understand the nature of the soul if we only consider its relation to the body as the present discussion has.

Socrates finally describes the rewards of justice by first having Glaucōn allow that he can discuss the rewards of reputation for justice. Glaucōn allows this since Socrates has already defended justice by itself in the soul. Socrates indicates justice and injustice do not escape the notice of the gods, that the gods love the just and hate the unjust, and that good things come to those whom the gods love. Socrates lists various rewards for the just and punishments for the unjust in this life. He proceeds to tell the Myth of Er that is supposed to illustrate reward and punishment in the afterlife. The souls of the dead go up through an opening on the right if they were just, or below through an opening on the left if they were unjust. The various souls discuss their rewards and punishments. Socrates explains the multiples by which people are punished and rewarded. The souls of the dead are able to choose their next lives and then they are reincarnated. Socrates ends the discussion by prompting Glaucōn and the others to do well both in this life and in the afterlife.

**Important Terms:**

**Aporia** - Aporia is the Greek term for the state of helplessness—the inability to proceed—that ends all of Plato’s early dialogues. Through his pointed questioning, Socrates succeeds in showing that his interlocutors have no appropriate definition for the topic under consideration (be that topic piety, love, courage, justice, or whatever else), but nor is he able to supply one himself. In Book I of The Republic Socrates brings his friends to a state of aporia on the topic of justice, but then in the next nine books he manages to move beyond the aporia and give an actual answer to the question at hand.
Appetite - Appetite is the largest aspect of our tripartite soul. It is the seat of all our various desires for food, drink, sexual gratification, and other such pleasures. It contains both necessary desires, which should be indulged (such as the desire to eat enough to stay alive), unnecessary desires, which should be limited (such as the desire to eat a ten pound sirloin steak at every meal), and unlawful desires, which should be suppressed at all costs (such as the desire to eat one’s children). Though the appetite lusts after many things, Plato dubs it “money-loving,” since money is required for satisfying most of these desires. In a just man, the appetite is strictly controlled by reason and reason’s henchman, spirit.

Auxiliary - Plato divides his just society into three classes: the producers, the auxiliaries, and the guardians. The auxiliaries are the warriors, responsible for defending the city from invaders, and for keeping the peace at home. They must enforce the convictions of the guardians, and ensure that the producers obey.

Belief - Belief is the second lowest grade of cognitive activity. The object of belief is the visible realm rather than the intelligible realm. A man in a state of belief does not have any access to the Forms, but instead takes sensible particulars as the most real things.

Elenchus - Elenchus is the Greek term for Socrates’s method of questioning his interlocutors. In an elenchus he attempts to show that their own beliefs are contradictory, and thus to prove that they do not have knowledge about some topic about which they thought they had knowledge.

Empirical - When something is an empirical question, that means that the question can only be settled by going out into the world and investigating. The question, “What percentage of the population of the United States likes ice cream” is an example of an empirical question, which can only be answered through empirical investigation. The question “What is the square root of two,” on the other hand, is not an empirical question. In order to answer this question all you have to do is think about the mathematics involved; you do not have investigate evidence in the world.
Epistemology - The branch of philosophy concerned with knowledge, belief, and thought. Epistemological questions include: What is knowledge? How do we form beliefs based on evidence? Can we know anything?

Form - According to Plato’s metaphysical theory, there is an aspect of reality beyond the one which we can see, an aspect of reality even more real than the one we see. This aspect of reality, the intelligible realm, is comprised of unchanging, eternal, absolute entities, which are called “Forms.” These absolute entities—such as Goodness, Beauty, Redness, Sourness, and so on—are the cause of all the objects we experience around us in the visible realm. An apple is red and sweet, for instance, because it participates in the Form of Redness and the Form of Sweetness. A woman is beautiful because she participates in the Form of Beauty. Only the Forms can be objects of knowledge (that is, Forms are the only things we can know about).

Form of the Good - Among the Forms, one stands out as most important. This is the Form of the Good. Plato is unable to tell us exactly what the Form of The Good is, but he does tell us that it is the source of intelligibility and of our capacity to know, and also that it is responsible for bringing all of the other Forms into existence. He compares its role in the intelligible realm to the role of the sun in the visible realm. The Form of the Good is the ultimate object of knowledge; it is only once one grasps the Form of the Good that one reaches the highest grade of cognitive activity, understanding. Therefore, it is only after he grasps the Form of the Good that a philosopher-in-training becomes a philosopher-king.

Guardian - Plato divides his just society into three classes: the producers, the auxiliaries, and the guardians. The guardians are responsible for ruling the city. They are chosen from among the ranks of the auxiliaries, and are also known as philosopher-kings.

Hesiod - Hesiod was a famous Greek poet. His long poem Works and Days outlines the traditional Greek conception of virtue and justice.

Imagination - Imagination is the lowest grade of cognitive activity. Someone in the state of imagination takes mere images and shadows as the most real things. Probably, this means that
such a person derives his ideas about himself and the world from products of art, such as poetry in Plato’s day and movies and television in our own. See also Belief, Thought, Understanding.

**Instrumental reason** - Instrumental reason is reason used to attain some end, by engaging in means-end analyses. These ends are dictated by a part of the soul such as appetite or spirit, or even reason itself.

**Intelligible realm** - Plato divides all of existence up into two parts: the visible realm and the intelligible realm. The intelligible realm cannot be sensed, but only grasped with the intellect. It consists of the Forms. Only the intelligible realm can be the object of knowledge.

**Kallipolis** - Kallipolis is the Greek term for Plato’s just city.

**Knowledge** - According to Plato, knowledge can only pertain to eternal, unchanging truths. I can know, for instance that two plus two equals four, because this will also be the case. I cannot know, however, that Meno is beautiful. For this reason, only the intelligible realm, the realm of the Forms can be the object of knowledge. See also Opinion.

**Lover of sights and sounds** - “Lovers of sights and sounds” is Socrates’s term for the pseudo-intellectuals who claim to have expertise regarding all that is beautiful, but who fail to recognize that there is such a thing as the Form of the Beautiful, which causes all beauty in the visible realm. Socrates is adamant that lovers of sights and sounds be distinguished from philosophers, who grasp the Forms, and thus have knowledge. Lovers of sights and sounds have no knowledge, only opinion.

**Metaphysics** - The branch of philosophy concerned with asking what there is in the world. The theory of Forms is a metaphysical theory, as is the theory of the tripartite soul.

**Opinion** - Since only eternal, unchanging truths can be the objects of knowledge, all other truths are relegated to opinion. Opinion is the highest form of certainty that we can hope for when it comes to the visible realm, the realm of sensible particulars.
Philosopher-king - The philosopher-king is the ruler of the kallipolis. Also called guardians, philosopher-kings are the only people who can grasp the Forms, and thus the only people who can claim actual knowledge. Since the philosopher-king yearns after truth above all else, he is also the most just man.

Pleonexia - A Greek term meaning “the desire to have more,” pleonexia refers to the yearning after money and power. In Book I, Thrasymachus presents the popular view that justice is nothing more than an unnatural restraint on our natural pleonexia.

Producers - Plato divides his just society into three classes: the producers, the auxiliaries, and the guardians. The producing class is the largest class of society; it is a catch-all group that includes all professions other than warrior and ruler. Framers and craftsmen are producers, as are merchants, doctors, artists, actors, lawyers, judges, and so forth. In a just society, the producers have no share in ruling, but merely obey what the rulers decree. They focus exclusively on producing whatever it is that they are best suited to produce (whether that be metal work, agriculture, shoes, or furniture).

Reason - Reason is one aspect of our tripartite soul. It lusts after truth and is the source of all of our philosophic desires. In the just man, the entire soul is ruled by reason, and strives to fulfill reason’s desires. See also Appetite, Spirit.

Sensible particular - Sensible particulars are the objects that we experience all around us—trees, flowers, chairs—any physical objects. They are “sensible” because we can sense them with our sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch; they are “particular,” because they are particular items that undergo change over time, rather than universal, unchanging ideas. According to Plato’s metaphysical picture, the visible realm is made up of sensible particulars. According to his epistemological picture, sensible particulars cannot be objects of knowledge but only of opinion.

Sophist - The Sophists were teachers-for-hire who educated the wealthy men of Athens in the fifth century B.C. Though they were a diverse group with diverse opinions, they tended to share a disregard for the notion of objective truth and knowledge. This disregard extended to the notion
of objective moral truth, which means that they did not believe in such a things as “right” and “wrong.” One of the guiding motivations in all of Plato’s work was to prove the Sophists wrong: to show that there is such a thing as objective truth, and that we can have knowledge of this objective truth.

**Specialization** - The principle of specialization states that every man must fulfill the societal role to which nature best suits him, and should refrain from engaging in any other business. Those naturally suited to farm should farm, those naturally suited to heal should be doctors, those naturally suited to fight should be warriors, those naturally suited to be philosophers should rule, and so on. Plato believes that this simple rule is the guiding principle of society, and the source of political justice.

**Spirit** - Spirit is one aspect of our tripartite soul. It is the source of our honor-loving and victory-loving desires. Spirit is responsible for our feelings of anger and indignation. In a just soul, spirit acts as henchman to reason, ensuring that appetite adheres to reason’s commands.

**Thought** - Thought is the second highest grade of cognitive activity. As with understanding, the objects of thought are the Forms of the intelligible realm. Unlike understanding, though, thought can only proceed with the crutches of images and hypotheses (i.e. unproven assumptions). See also Belief, Imagination, Understanding.

**Tripartite soul** - According to Plato, the human soul has three parts corresponding to the three classes of society in a just city. Individual justice consists in maintaining these three parts in the correct power relationships, with reason ruling, spirit aiding reason, and appetite obeying.

**Understanding** - Understanding is the highest grade of cognitive activity. Understanding involves the use of pure, abstract reason, and does not rely on the crutches of images and unproven assumptions. Understanding is only achieved once the Form of the Good is grasped. See also Belief, Imagination, Thought.
Visible realm - Plato divides existence up into two realms, the visible realm and the intelligible realm. The visible realm can be grasped with our senses. It is comprised of the world see around us—the world of sensible particulars. The objects which comprise the visible realm are not as real as those which comprise the intelligible realm; in addition, they are not the proper objects of knowledge (i.e., we cannot “know” anything about them), but of opinion.
1. Plato’s The Republic

1) The amiable old father of Polermarchus is named ______?
   A) Cephalus
   B) Cleitophon
   C) Charmenides
   D) Euripides

2) What is "justice" as submitted by Polermarchus?
   A) Give good to friends and evil to enemies
   B) Everything is permitted
   C) The interest of the stronger
   D) Do unto others as you would have done unto you

3) Socrates enjoys but eliminates most of the verses of which poet?
   A) Sophocles
   B) Pindar
   C) Catullus
   D) Homer

4) Agamemnon chose to be a _______ in the tale of the afterlife.
   A) eagle
   B) king
   C) private man
   D) lion

5) Thrasymachus enters the dialogue demanding ______.
   A) money
   B) admiration
   C) recognition
   D) fanfare
6) Thrasy damachus' "justice" is a form of ______.
A) timocracy
B) oligarchy
C) democracy
D) tyranny

7) Which is not one of the three basic "necessities" of man as given by Socrates?
A) clothing
B) food
C) shelter
D) pleasure

8) Which is not one of the three basic "classes" of citizens as given by Socrates?
A) producers
B) guardians
C) auxiliaries
D) senators

9) _____ and _____ are the two primary headings of education.
A) philosophy and mathematics
B) soul and spirit
C) science and literature
D) gymnasium and music

10) Socrates divides narration into ______ and ______.
A) dialogue and description
B) straight and slant
C) narrative and imitative
D) discursive and digressive
11) Socrates refers to his inquiry into poetry and music as a______.  
   A) purgation  
   B) survey  
   C) bowdlerization  
   D) examination

12) Of which metal are the auxiliaries allegorically composed?  
   A) silver  
   B) gold  
   C) iron  
   D) brass

13) Guardians must be made of______.  
   A) iron  
   B) gold  
   C) silver  
   D) brass

14) The fundamental aim of the State is toward whose happiness?  
   A) the craftsmen  
   B) the ruling class  
   C) the guardians  
   D) the whole

15) There are how many principal virtues?  
   A) two  
   B) three  
   C) four  
   D) seven
16) _____ is not a virtue as given by Socrates.
   A) temperance
   B) eloquence
   C) courage
   D) wisdom

17) Socrates' method of inquiry is called ______.
   A) dialectic
   B) discussion
   C) dialogue
   D) lecture

18) Which is not one of the three principles of the human soul?
   A) compassion
   B) reason
   C) passion
   D) appetite

19) Which is considered the "highest" principle of the soul?
   A) will
   B) reason
   C) valor
   D) strength

20) _____ the great evil of the State.
   A) greed
   B) expansion
   C) harmony
   D) discord
21) ______ is the baser form of knowledge.
   A) hypothesis
   B) speculation
   C) opinion
   D) insight

22) The "highest" occupation for man as given by Socrates is ______.
   A) artistic creation
   B) philosophy
   C) war
   D) production

23) ______ are permitted to lie for the benefit of all.
   A) republicans
   B) auxiliaries
   C) senators
   D) guardians

24) The "wings" Socrates refers to when speaking of a youth's initiation into war are _____.
   A) stilts
   B) wings
   C) chariots
   D) horses

25) What, says Socrates, should kings study in order to make the State a possibility?
   A) the art of war
   B) philosophy
   C) politics
   D) poetry
26) What is Plato’s aim in The Republic?
   A) To define justice
   B) To prove that justice is worthwhile to pursue for its own sake
   C) To prove that justice is the advantage of the stronger?
   D) To define justice and to prove that it is worthwhile to pursue for its own sake

27) Which of Socrates’s interlocutors asserts that justice is nothing but the advantage of the stronger?
   A) Adeimantus
   B) Thrasymachus
   C) Glaucon
   D) Polemarchus

28) Which of the following terms best describes Thrasymachus?
   A) Platonist
   B) Pre-Socratic
   C) Sophist
   D) Politician

29) What advantage does the Ring of Gyges confer on its wearers?
   A) It makes them invisible
   B) It makes them invincible
   C) It makes them maximally just
   D) It makes everything they touch turn to gold

30) According to Glaucon, to which of the following classes do the majority of people relegate justice?
   A) Goods that are only desired for their own sake
   B) Goods that are only desired for their consequences
   C) Goods that are desired both for their own sake and for their consequences
   D) Goods that are not desired at all
31) According to Socrates what is the fundamental principle on which all human society should be based?
   A) The principle of specialization
   B) From each according to his ability, to each according to his need
   C) Moderation
   D) Love of honor

32) Which of the following is not a term applied to the first city Socrates describes?
   A) Healthy city
   B) Luxurious city
   C) City of pigs
   D) City of necessary desires

33) Which of the following classes of society populates the first city?
   A) Producers
   B) Auxiliaries
   C) Philosopher-kings
   D) All of the above

34) Which of the following is not considered an important aspect of the warriors’ education?
   A) Poetry
   B) Music
   C) Physical training
   D) Dialectic

35) What is the aim of the warriors’ education?
   A) To make them maximally fierce
   B) To make them maximally philosophical
   C) To make them maximally honor-loving
   D) To strike the delicate balance between brutishness and gentle qualities
36) Which of the following is not considered an aspect of the soul by Plato?
A) The appetitive part
B) The spirited part
C) The rational part
D) The emotive part

37) What is the role of women in the city?
A) They are limited to the producing class
B) They belong to their own class of society
C) The role of women is never mentioned in The Republic
D) Women occupy all of the same roles that men occupy

38) According to Socrates, what is the ultimate subject of study for the philosopher-kings?
A) Mathematics
B) Dialectic
C) The Form of the Good
D) The Form of the Beautiful

39) To which of the following does Socrates compare the Form of the Good?
A) A line
B) The sun
C) A cave
D) A fire

40) According to Socrates, what is the lowest grade of cognitive activity?
A) Imagination
B) Belief
C) Thought
D) Confusion
41) What does Socrates mean to illustrate with the allegory of the cave?
A) The effects of education on the soul
B) The effects of the intelligible realm on the soul
C) The effects of the visible realm on the soul
D) The stages of moral development through which a philosopher king must pass

42) At what age does a guardian finally become a philosopher-king, provided that he passes through all of the various tests?
A) 30
B) 40
C) 50
D) 60

43) According to Socrates, who would be the best ruler of the ideal state?
A) A philosopher
B) A polytheist
C) A tyrant
D) An autocrat

44) Of whom has it been said that Plato rationalized into existence three hundred years before his birth?
A) Copernicus
B) Jesus Christ
C) Julius Caesar
D) Karl Marx

45) The main focus of argument in the Republic seeks to determine __________
A) the nature of the just life
B) the origin of man
C) who should be king of Athens
D) who started the Peloponnesian War
46) What does the Allegory of the Cave demonstrate?
A) How ignorance may be brought to knowledge
B) How justice can be exacted
C) How to build prisons
D) How to house the homeless

47) Polytheism is __________
A) a type of clothing worn by the Greeks
B) an illogical argument
C) the belief in many gods
D) the state of overabundance

48) The Greek word ‘hubris’ means __________
A) arrogance
B) fairness
C) greed
D) love

49) The highest level of intellect is called __________
A) Dialectic
B) Eclectic
C) Omiscience
D) Unattainable

50) What does The Analogy of the Divided Line demonstrate?
A) Divisions of family allegiances
B) Levels of intellect
C) Levels of social class
D) The dimensions of the equator