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# Competition, Imagery, and Pleasure in Plato's *Republic*, 1–9<sup>1</sup>

“The question you are asking,” I said,  
“needs an answer given through an  
image  
... At all events, listen to the image  
so you may see still more how greedy  
I am for images.”

(Socrates in *Republic* 487 E–488 A)

**Matthew Robinson**

## ABSTRACT

This paper interprets the *Republic*'s “parallel” imagery of a contest between the lives of the most just and most unjust men as indicating that book 9's two pleasure arguments are the culmination of the dialogue's refutation of Thrasymachus' sophistry. This strategic function of the pleasure arguments explains why Socrates designates the account of the just man's pleasure the most severe defeat of the unjust man. The article concludes with a brief defense of using the contest imagery as an interpretive aid to the dialogue.

Introduction

- A. Thrasymachus' defeat in book 1
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  - C. Books 7 and 8—The Contest imagery as reference point
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## INTRODUCTION

1. In book 9 of the *Republic*, after he has completed the description of the tyrant's extreme unhappiness, Plato gives an account of pleasure that some scholars including Richard Kraut have taken to be of little importance to the argument of the dialogue as a whole.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, in his recent monograph, Daniel Russell shows that Plato's treatment of pleasure is an important extension of the *Republic*'s argument that the just life is by nature the best life. I support Russell's claim that the pleasure arguments are required to complete the *Republic*'s argument about the soul's nature. I also defend the further claim that when Socrates labels the defeat of the unjust man in terms of pleasure, “the greatest and most sovereign”<sup>3</sup> of the unjust man's defeats, a careful analysis of the imagery that accompanies this argument shows that Book 9's pleasure arguments form a final, decisive stage in the *Republic*'s larger refutation of Thrasymachus' sophistry as restored by Glaucon in Book 2.

2. I begin by analyzing in detail one of the dialogue's central, parallel images, a contest between the lives of the most just and most unjust men, whose significance within the dialogue as a whole has been largely overlooked. This contest is initially depicted

by the image of Glaucon's two statues, which summarizes the logic in Glaucon's challenge by distilling the contrast between the 'most just man' and most unjust man from the standpoint of Thrasymachus' sophistry (360 E 2).<sup>4</sup> In this analysis, I focus on parallel imagery as distinct from other kinds of imagery Plato used in composing the *Republic*. The central images of the sun, line, cave and the myth of Er, for instance, function as a replacement for argumentation, as Socrates says when introducing the first of these images (506 D 8 – E 5).<sup>5</sup> As parallel imagery, the contest imagery does not replace logical argument, but rather develops and complements it.<sup>6</sup>

### A. THRASYMACHUS' DEFEAT IN BOOK 1

3. To prepare for this analysis, it is important to see that Glaucon's restoration of Thrasymachus' argument is given against the backdrop of Thrasymachus' submission to Socrates in book 1. There, Socrates defeated the sophist on sophistic terms, taming the metaphorical 'beast,' silencing his trickery, and thus clearing the pathway for intellectual exchange.<sup>7</sup> Recognizing Plato's suggestion that the real sophist must be silenced is important because it highlights Plato's implied claim that Thrasymachus, who has been characterized as deeply attached to victory and appearance,<sup>8</sup> cannot participate in philosophical dialogue while also prioritizing these goods. In Plato's view, philosophical progress requires receptivity to what lies beyond all exterior goods. Furthermore, in seeing the dramatic interplay of power and domination between Thrasymachus, the eventual loser, and Socrates, the eventual victor, we witness an early contest between their conflicting positions and Plato's early suggestion

that Thrasymachus' position must eventually be answered on its own ground of power, *dynamis*. I will argue that the strategic function of Book 9's pleasure arguments becomes clearer when Socrates' response to Glaucon's challenge is seen as a gradual appropriation of the terms of Sophistry's argument. In this context, the theme of power re-emerges in Book 9 where the pleasure arguments are decisive because they are the final stage of this appropriation of terms. For now, I return to the beginning of book 2 where Glaucon, rather than Thrasymachus, sets forth the logic of sophistry from his own genuine desire for intellectual enlightenment. Again, Glaucon is better suited to restoring Thrasymachus' argument as his attraction to something higher (367 E 6–368 B 2) allows him the critical detachment from Thrasymachus' position required to articulate its logic transparently.<sup>9</sup>

### B. TWO STATUES IN COMPETITION

4. In the third stage of this restoration, Glaucon depicts the furthest extreme of injustice in the description of the most unjust man whose injustice is made complete in his *seeming* to be perfectly just while in fact *being* the opposite (361 A 2–B 1). Conversely, Glaucon's most just man is inwardly just, while appearing to be perfectly unjust (361 B 8–C 3). This ensures that, in Kantian terms, the just man's motive for justice is derived from duty and not inclination, and that he is therefore just in the extreme.<sup>10</sup> Today, Glaucon's most just man might be a living saint, falsely convicted of something like terrorism or pedophilia. In order to test whether justice really is intrinsically good, the *dikaios* receives for his detested appearance the penalties of political and social disenfranchisement and, ultimately, bodily torture (361 B 7– 362 A 3).

It is important to my analysis that here, Glaucon places special emphasis on the persuasiveness of the most just man's pain: "They'll say that the just man who has such a disposition will be whipped; he'll be racked; he'll be bound; he'll have both his eyes burned out; and, at the end, when he has undergone every sort of evil, he'll be crucified and know [γνώσεται] that one shouldn't wish to be, but to seem to be, just" (361 E 3–362 A). The extreme of justice, Glaucon argues, causes extreme pain. It is worth noting that in this image perfect justice is portrayed as an indirect, extrinsic cause, since the pain is inflicted by the torturer rather than being self-inflicted. This passivity is emphasized by Plato's use of the middle voice with passive meaning in the description of the physical punishments. Furthermore, Glaucon portrays the just man's physical pain as sufficient to persuade the just man, against his own original conviction, that justice has no intrinsic value. The pain of his torture is so persuasive that the just man comes to 'know' that the sophist was right after all. Thus, the argument concludes, justice has only utilitarian value and it is better to seem to be just but to be unjust (362 A 2). In this conclusion we see that for "those who praise injustice ahead of justice" (361 E 2), as Glaucon describes Thrasymachus and his followers, extreme pain is sufficient to prevent the life of 'perfect' justice from being judged a good life. As the description of the two figures continues, the *adikos* receives all the external rewards obtained in the *polis* by the appearance of perfect justice – good reputation, social and political dominance, wealth, favor with the gods, and so on (362 A 4–C 8). The success of the most unjust man demonstrates, then, that justice is good, but only as an appearance that brings these superior goods. Justice therefore belongs to the third category of goods outlined at the beginning of book 2, the utilitarian goods (357 C 5–D 2).

5. I would like to stress that in both figures outlined here, the sophist's claim is captured in the perfect contradiction between outward appearance and interior state, which displays justice as a construction and an abstraction, and human happiness as appetite-satisfaction, a "good" without any necessary or determinate content.<sup>11</sup> As expected, this illustration facilitates the judgment that the life of the unjust man is superior (358 C 4–6 and 360 E 1–2), and to emphasize this purpose Socrates adds a finishing touch. After Glaucon has prepared all the material for his image, Socrates says, "my dear Glaucon, how vigorously you polish up each of the two men – just like a statue – for their judgment" (361 D 4–6; ὃ φίλε Γλαύκων, ὡς ἐρρωμένως ἐκάτερον ὥσπερ ἀνδριάντα εἰς τὴν κρίσιν ἐκκαθαίρεις τοῖν ἀνδροῖν). In this depiction, Socrates transforms Glaucon's character into a sculptor, who exerts his energy (*ἐρρωμένως* = vigorously) to manufacture statues with a contest-winning appearance (*ἐκκαθαίρεις* = polish up, or scour clean).<sup>12</sup> Socrates' active participation in establishing the image shows his agreement that Thrasymachus' version of justice is indeed purely a human construct. To see the full import of the image, we need to bear in mind that the just and unjust men exist within the city created by Glaucon's social contract, where justice *originates from* and also *in opposition to* a fundamentally anti-social, appetitive version of human nature.<sup>13</sup> The restrictive convention of law, *nomos* (359 C 5), is artificially imposed to restrict each individual's appetite-satisfying *phusis* into a society. At the same time, this justice is only superficial because it lacks intrinsic value. This is first indicated by Gyges, who casts it aside the moment it is no longer useful to him (360 A–B). The argument is that this kind of justice unifies society, but because the unity it provides is artificial, it is also only superficial. I suggest that the image of the

two polished stone statues, themselves products of human skill, presents in distilled form the logically basic claims of Thrasymachus' position, which are: 1) that the soul's nature is primarily and fundamentally appetitive, 2) that the only real justice is not natural, but manufactured, and thus has value only through its appearance as a means to satisfy the soul's appetites, and 3) that the best life is the one that satisfies the soul's appetites. However, I also suggest that while the image of statues captures this sophistic logic succinctly and elegantly, it also makes a subtle attack: the portrayal of both the most just man and the most unjust man as statues (361 D 5; ὡσπερ ἀνδριάντα), the lifeless products of human skill, is Socrates' early critique of sophistic *phusis* as unreal. As Socrates says before Glaucon reconstructs Thrasymachus' position, justice is neither good exclusively for its effects, nor is it good exclusively in itself. These two claims both miss the mark because they both emerge from a misconception of human nature. The image suggests that Thrasymachus' version of human nature is as disconnected from human nature as a statue is from a living human. In one of the rare scholarly references to this image, Seth Benardete remarks that "the statue Glaucon had made of the unjust man had no soul."<sup>14</sup> We should notice that in Socrates' preliminary attack on sophistic *phusis* there is, furthermore, an early suggestion that Socrates rejects Thrasymachus' concepts of justice as well as his judgment of what constitutes the best life (happiness), both of which logically derive from the same concept of *phusis*. Whether we are thinking in Thrasymachus' sophistic terms or Platonic terms, *phusis*, *dikaioisunē*, and *eudaimonia* are linked intrinsically to one another and to the Good as it is conceived within that position. That is, however any one of these terms is conceived is part and parcel of the way the other terms are conceived.

6. In what follows, I will maintain that the argumentative purpose of the statue image is two-fold. First, the image captures the sophistic logic at the outset of the *Republic's* argument, clarifying this position in itself. The image also provides a shorthand reference point so that the distilled form of Thrasymachus' view can be recalled at later points in the dialogue where its interpretations of the basic terms, 'nature,' 'justice,' 'happiness,' 'pleasure,' 'pain,' and 'power' are analyzed, rejected and replaced, as Socrates systematically appropriates each term. There is evidence that the text supports my claims about the image's purpose, first in Socrates' recalling the image when the argument of the *Republic* re-evaluates the link between justice and happiness in books 7, 8, and 9.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, as I will demonstrate, not only does Socrates return to Glaucon's image at these later points, but in book 9 he presents new contest images in parallel with the developments in the argument about the soul's nature and the character of justice. I will propose then, that the image of a contest between the *dikaiois* and the *adikaiois* is recurring and parallels the *Republic's* larger argument about human nature. The capacity of image to contain the whole discursive argument all at once is one way in which Plato's dialogue-form already takes into account Gadamer's insight that the whole can only be known through the part and the part through the whole. In the *Republic*, the relation of the 'parallel' image to the argument it summarizes is precisely the relation of the whole all at once to the parts that are available through the discursive argument only one step at a time.<sup>16</sup>

7. I now turn my focus to the re-appearance of the statue image in books 7 and 8, with the aim of illustrating how Socrates' response to Glaucon's challenge is present in the structurally similar images that appear in book 9.

My intention is to illustrate how the text uses its contest imagery to verify the content and strategy of Socrates' response to sophistry.

### C. BOOKS 7 AND 8—THE CONTEST IMAGERY AS REFERENCE POINT

8. Between books 2 and 9, Socrates develops his argument as a response to Glaucon's image of the competing statues, whose demand Adeimantus makes more explicit: "don't only show us by the argument that justice is stronger than injustice, but show what each in itself does to the man who has it – whether it is noticed by gods and human beings or not – that makes the one good and the other bad" (367 E 1–5). As I have indicated, the foundation of Socrates' response comes in his own account of 'nature,' which is discovered both in the soul and in the city.<sup>17</sup> This alternative account of nature is first evident in the "city of utmost necessity" (369 D 11), which emerges from the pre-determined dependence of each citizen on the others.<sup>18</sup> When taken alone, each individual cannot meet his own natural requirements for food, shelter, and clothing (369 D 1–4) and so he requires the help of others to meet these bodily needs. Furthermore, 'nature' divides the members of this city into the various different occupations to which each simply discovers himself to be especially well-suited.<sup>19</sup> In Socrates' new city, the good of the group is inseparable from the good of each of its members because the nature of each individual would remain incomplete if he should live alone. Since the nature of each citizen is complete only in partnership with the others, it follows that there is no need for an artificially– and externally–imposed social contract to unify the citizens and to create justice. Nature already unifies them through natural necessity, and by

doing so defines the good of each one as the good of the whole, rather than as the good of the discrete individual. I would suggest, then, that in this early city and its very different version of 'nature,' Socrates begins to appropriate this term, which is the most logically fundamental in his account and also in the account Glaucon reproduced.

\* \* \*

9. At the end of book 7, having completed his description of the aristocracy (the best of all five states) and of its corresponding citizen (the reconceived *dikaïos*) to the satisfaction even of Adeimantus and Glaucon, Socrates recalls the statue-making image, again as a way of measuring the argument's progress. It is significant that at this point it is not Adeimantus, but rather Glaucon, who frames Socrates' description of the aristocratic man in the terms of the original image from book 2: "Just like a sculptor, Socrates . . . you have produced ruling men who are wholly fair" (540 C 3–4; *Παγκάλους, ἔφη, τοὺς ἄρχοντας, ὃ Σώκρατες, ὡσπερ ἀνδριαντοποιὸς ἀπείργασαι*). Book 7's *ἀνδριαντοποιὸς*, a statue maker or sculptor, is a cognate of the *ἀνδριάντα* (361 D 5) that characterized book 2's image as a contest between statues, and its use provides one way to link the two images. The conjunction of the similar etymology and image, the fact that Glaucon is again interlocutor, taken together with the dialogue's return to the criterion of happiness, provides sufficient textual ground to interpret the *ἀνδριαντοποιὸς* in book 7 as a direct reference to book 2's image and concept. One important difference, however, is that Glaucon now characterizes Socrates as the sculptor instead of the reverse. Glaucon's framing Socrates' position on 'nature' and 'justice' in a way that specifically parallels

the way Socrates originally framed Glaucon's reconstruction in book 2 indicates, among other things, that Socrates' argument is now sufficiently developed to allow his direct response to Glaucon's challenge.

10. Book 8, which resumes the description of the aristocracy's corruption into four worse states, begins by stating its goal of determining whether the *dikaïos* or the *adikos* is happiest:

Must we next go through the worse men . . . and then, in turn, an oligarchic and a democratic man, and the tyrannic man, so that seeing the most unjust man, we can set him in opposition to the most just man? If so, we can have a complete consideration of how pure justice is related to pure injustice with respect to the happiness and wretchedness of the men possessing them. In this way we may be persuaded either by Thrasymachus and pursue injustice, or by the argument that is now coming to light and pursue justice (545 A 2–B 1).

It is notable that this reappraisal of the best life will hinge on the same link between justice and happiness that Glaucon established in book 2, except of course that 'justice' means the tripartite soul's harmonious order, something very different than it meant in Glaucon's description. It is also significant that Socrates accepts Glaucon's suggestion (540 C 3–4 as quoted above) to take up book 2's original image by offering his refutation of sophistry in terms of a judgment between the two extremes of the *dikaïos* and the *adikos*, now interpreted as the philosopher king and the tyrant.

#### D. BOOK 9—A SEQUENCE OF CONTEST IMAGES

11. As I analyze how this reappraisal takes shape in book 9, I will argue that the logical

progression through the three distinct stages of book 9's argument is paralleled by two more closely related contest images.<sup>20</sup> My analysis focuses on tracing the progress in the argument as captured by the particular contest image that accompanies each stage. By comparing the progress in the argument to the progress in the sequence of images, I argue that the development in the imagery supports the claim that Socrates' concept of *phusis* gives ultimate victory to the most just man in book 9 ultimately by the criterion of pleasure. However, I also emphasize the radical difference between this stance and a life devoted primarily to satisfying the appetites. As I will argue, I see the three images related in the following ways. First, the 'distinct' images all represent a contest in terms of who leads the happier life between the opposite poles of most unjust and most just men — and this contest has one unequivocal victor. Secondly, although the images share this common structure, their difference is marked by a progressive increase in the degree of life and independence possessed by the figures in each image. Third, since each subsequent image represents greater life and independence than its antecedent image, it makes that antecedent image obsolete in this role. Although I defend these three points in what follows, the third point is further supported by its use of the plural genitive, *τῶν πτωμάτων* (583 B 1–7), which integrates the earlier defeats of the unjust man into the final image of the wrestling contest. This inclusion of the previous defeats in the new image suggests that it replaces them in representing the most complete, accurate version of human nature.

12. Book 9's description of the tyrant's soul derives from the 'true' model of the soul's nature in that the perfect injustice of the tyrant is the perfect contradiction of the natural rule that reason should lead the whole

soul.<sup>21</sup> With specific reference to book 2's sophistic assertion that law, *nomos*, stands in opposition to the soul's 'nature' (359 C 5–6), Socrates now depicts the appetitive unjust man of book 2 as “[the tyrant, who] is drawn to complete hostility to the law” (572 D 9–E 1).<sup>22</sup> The tyrant's appetite for luxury (573 A 4; *αἱ ἄλλαι ἐπιθυμῖαι*) unrestrained, quickly takes over his whole soul. But when it has isolated itself in the role of leader, *prostatēs*, his appetite has no capacity to limit itself. After it has become his soul's leader, his appetite inevitably destroys every limit it encounters, every vestige in the democratic soul of guidance by spirit and reason. At the end of this account of the tyrant's genesis, Socrates summarizes the result of a total divorce from nature and its necessity as the insanity of disdaining all objective order: “. . . the man who is *mad and deranged* undertakes and expects to be able to rule not only over human beings but gods, too” (573 C 3–5; emphasis added). The tyrant's extreme deviation from the justice of his soul erodes all limits, stemming either from the *oikos* (574 B 12–C 3) or from the *polis* (574 D 3–5).<sup>23</sup> His limitless 'freedom' to fulfill his limitless appetites (572 E 1–2) leads the tyrant into an absolute slavery;<sup>24</sup> as his appetite becomes his ruler (573 B 1) it also becomes his infinite and all-demanding master, consuming or destroying everything.<sup>25</sup> On my reading, this is a reinterpretation of Thrasymachus' view, reconstituted by Glaucon in book 2, that the best life or the happy life is the unlimited satisfaction of the appetites for anything from political power to possessing the woman of your dreams to placating the gods before you die (362 B – C). Socrates' critique of the pursuit of such appetite-satisfaction is that it inevitably turns into a life of slavery and pain, as explained in greater depth in the remaining two stages of book 9's argument.

13. As Socrates' analysis of the tyrannical soul continues, the *adikos* is presented as unhappy in the extreme, a conclusion now understood in relation to the model of the soul's tripartite 'nature.' Socrates asks Glaucon, who has suddenly taken over the argument from Adeimantus,<sup>26</sup> “. . . the man who turns out to be worst . . . will he also turn out to be most wretched?” (576 B 11– C 1). In satisfying his unfettered appetites, the tyrant has violated his soul's natural structure in the extreme and is utterly miserable. The unavoidable conclusion is that the old criterion of external reward does not produce real happiness. Instead, there will be a new standard for judging happiness: the harmony of the soul's three parts. Having redefined 'nature' and 'justice,' 'happiness' can now be judged “in the light of the truth” (576 C 3).

14. At this point, Socrates begins to illustrate a new contest image that corresponds with the developments in his account of the soul's *phusis*. It is certainly noteworthy, if not a direct cue to recall book 2's image, that Glaucon returns to the floor suddenly, and at the same moment this new image emerges with its several thematic similarities to the old image of Glaucon as sculptor. To judge the individual tyrant's life accurately, it is less important to see the exteriority of his public guise than it is to see him in the more authentic private life of his family and friends. Exposing the tyrant's personal life, Socrates says, is like stripping off the costume of an actor from the tragic stage to see the unmasked man underneath:

Would I also be right in suggesting that that man should be deemed fit to judge . . . who is not like a child looking from outside and overwhelmed by the tyrannic pomp set up as a façade for those outside, but who rather sees through it adequately? And what if I were to suppose that all of us must hear that man who . . . saw how [the tyrant] is with each of his own,

among whom he could most be seen stripped of the tragic gear [ἐν οἷς μάλιστα γυμνὸς ἂν ὀφθείη τῆς τραγικῆς σκευῆς] . . . and . . . we were to bid him to report how the tyrant stands in relation to the others in happiness and wretchedness? (577 A 1 – B 4).

In contrast to the statue image, this new image has two layers, which are used to emphasize the priority of the soul's interior condition against a deceptive exterior. Having seen that the soul has naturally distinct parts, and that all parts must be governed by reason as the soul's leader, Glaucon now understands why the sophist is wrong to prioritize the mere appearance of justice as sufficient for happiness:<sup>27</sup> “the real tyrant is . . . in truth [τῆ ἀληθείᾳ] a real slave and . . . most in need of things . . . if one knows how to look at a soul as a whole [ἐάν τις ὅλην ψυχὴν ἐπίσθηται θεάσασθαι]” (579 D 9–E 4).<sup>28</sup> Seeing all three parts of the soul's nature at once is required to judge the best life accurately. Continuing, Socrates then asks Glaucon, who is now recast as the arbiter of what is now even more clearly a dramatic competition, to judge the outcome of the argument so far.<sup>29</sup> The new contest image is elaborated with the presentation of five figures, standing in front of Glaucon like *chori* (580 B 6) on a stage in the final round of the new competition:<sup>30</sup>

Come, then . . . just as the man who has the final decision in the whole contest declares his choice, you, too, choose now for me who in your opinion is first in happiness, and who second, and the others in order, five in all – kingly, timocratic, oligarchic, democratic, tyrannic (580 A 9–B 4).

As the living, moving actors line up to receive their evaluations, Glaucon, as dramatic judge, pronounces them to be happy “in the very order in which they came on stage” (580 B 5–7)<sup>31</sup>—that is, according to how closely they resemble the ‘aristocracy’. The real constitution

of living humans can be represented by the moving, breathing actors in the new contest image because the logic embodied by this new image is grounded in the reality (579 D 9–10) of the soul's tri-partite *phusis*. As if to correspond with this new logic, the actors are not the dead, stone likenesses of humans produced exclusively by human *techne*. As naturally human, they belong to the world of ‘true’ natural necessity, indicated by their having life and motion.<sup>32</sup> This represents a *phusis* with a positive determination that causes ‘real’ happiness. By replacing the contest image of two statues with this image of a contest between actors, Plato illustrates that the logic Socrates has been articulating—teleological because grounded ultimately in the Good—surpasses the arbitrary and indeterminate sophistic logic that has no ultimate ground or *telos*.<sup>33</sup> As we move into the pleasure arguments, which constitute the second and third stages of book 9, we should notice that Thrasymachus' position destroys itself precisely because it lacks this kind of ultimate ground or *telos*.

15. As soon as Glaucon has made his pronouncement, the three middle figures (timocratic, oligarchic, and democratic) drop out,<sup>34</sup> leaving only the two poles of *dikaionaton* and *adikōtaton* (580 A 9–C 8). With only these two extremes of philosopher king and tyrant remaining, the new image bears a closer resemblance to book 2's contest between opposite statues. Completing the reference to a dramatic contest, Plato recasts Socrates as the herald, *kērūka* (580 B 8), whose job it was to announce throughout historical Athens the outcome of tragic festivals, and who now asks Glaucon, “shall I add this to the proclamation. . . [the aristocratic man is happiest and the tyrant most miserable] whether or not in being [happy and miserable] they escape the notice

of all human beings and gods?” (580 C 6–7).<sup>35</sup> Glaucon’s affirmative answer (580 C 8) shows his new recognition that since justice is the fulfillment of the soul’s tri-partite nature, the most important benefits justice confers are not exterior.<sup>36</sup> It would seem that Glaucon’s challenge, whose question was “which of the two is happier?” (361 D 3) has at last been answered, and in response to Thrasymachus’ original claim, Glaucon seems satisfied that justice is the only way to true happiness.

### E. PLEASURE, THE ‘NATURE’ CONCEPT, AND REFUTING SOPHISTRY

16. Despite Glaucon’s seeming contentment, however, Socrates has not yet finished his refutation of Thrasymachus’ reconstructed position.<sup>37</sup> In two arguments about pleasure, Socrates completes his thesis that justice produces the best life by demonstrating that as he originally said, justice is good both for itself and for its effects (358 A 1–3). Furthermore, in tandem with this account of pleasure, Plato develops the contest imagery yet further, this time replacing the image of a tragic competition with the image of an Olympic wrestling match.

As I mentioned at the outset, some scholars like Richard Kraut view book 9’s two pleasure arguments as a relatively unimportant addendum to Plato’s main argument. For Kraut, Plato’s main argument has already been made by this point in the dialogue, and the pleasure arguments contribute little that is important:

... the fundamental case for justice has been made before the discussion of pleasure has begun ... What then should we make of [Socrates’] statement that the

“greatest and supreme fall” for injustice occurs in the battle over pleasure? A simple and plausible explanation of this phrase is provided by the fact that at the end of his last argument Plato claims that the philosopher’s pleasure is 729 times greater than the tyrant’s (587 E). Whether Plato is serious about this precise figure or not – and I am inclined to think he is not – it provides an explanation of why he says that this last argument gives injustice its greatest defeat. In no other argument had he tried to portray the gap between justice and injustice as so great in magnitude. Once we realize that Plato’s remark admits of this interpretation, we can rest content with our earlier conclusion that pleasure has a modest role to play in the overall scheme of the *Republic*.<sup>38</sup>

Nikolas Pappas also sees book 9’s pleasure arguments as somewhat loosely connected to the principal import of the *Republic*’s larger argument: “Glaucon had asked Socrates to show the superiority of justice over injustice with respect to its natural effects on the soul. . . . If Socrates chooses to identify pleasure as one, he has not strayed from his mandate.”<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, Daniel Russell sees book 9’s pleasure arguments as completing the account of the just soul’s harmony, which Russell argues was left incomplete in book 4. Russell sees an important, even an indispensable reason for book 9’s account of pleasure in this link to book 4:

In fact, both of the pleasure arguments are meant to articulate the goodness of the virtuous person, understood as the health of the soul—and it was the health of the soul that Socrates had not explained to his own satisfaction earlier in book IV. For now Socrates has shown

just what this goodness or health consists in: it consists in each part of the soul finding completion and fulfillment in the things appropriate to it, and in the whole soul endorsing and engaging in the sort of life that really is best for it. When reason leads the way, every part of the soul becomes fulfilled in its nature.<sup>40</sup>

In short, Russell takes book 9's two pleasure arguments to supplement the proposition, established in book 4, "if the hierarchy of parts is out of order, then some part is not in its good condition" with the proposition, "if the hierarchy of parts is in order, then each part is in its good condition."<sup>41</sup> The resulting bi-conditional is, "the hierarchy of parts is right in the virtuous soul *if and only if* each part is in its good condition."<sup>42</sup> Russell goes on to argue that an essential aspect of the just soul's pleasure is its self-reflexive recognition that it is achieving a harmonious natural state. This is a useful way of articulating the contribution of Book 9's pleasure arguments to the *Republic's* argument about the soul's nature and is, I think, correct. However, while I agree with Russell that book 9's account of pleasure completes Socrates' notion of the just soul, I think we miss the force of this argument's strategic value in the scheme of the *Republic* if we see it primarily as completing the arguments begun in book 4. Socrates' proposal that book 9's pleasure arguments are "the greatest and most sovereign" (583 B 6) of the unjust man's defeats makes more complete sense when we attend to the contest imagery, which links book 9's argument about pleasure to Glaucon's reconstruction in book 2. In what follows, I suggest that this indicates the pleasure arguments should be read indeed as the completion of the argument about the soul's nature, but more than this,

as the high point of Socrates' complete and total philosophical victory over that initial position.

17. The first of the pleasure arguments, which is at the same time the second of book 9's three contests between the most just and most unjust men, concludes that the pleasure experienced by the just man is superior to the pleasures experienced by either the honor lover or the appetitive man. The philosopher is the only one of these three to have experienced all three kinds of pleasure. He experiences them with a more mature practical wisdom, and he judges his pleasure with a special expertise in argument, giving him superior access to all three criteria by which the relations between the pleasures are judged: experience, practical wisdom, and argument (582 A 4–582 E 9). However, while the philosopher's conclusion that the rational pleasures are superior turns out to be correct, and therefore constitutes the second victory for the most just man,<sup>43</sup> the argument is somewhat incomplete on its own.<sup>44</sup> Above all, this first of the pleasure arguments does not explain *how* the philosopher arrives at his judgment that the pleasures of the highest part of the soul (583 A 1–2) are most truly (582 E 9) pleasurable. Even though the just man concludes that his own pleasure is superior according to the necessity of *logos*, the specific criteria of his judgment "according to *logos*" (582 E 7) remain hidden.<sup>45</sup> They will become visible in the second and final pleasure argument, which establishes an ontological ground for the philosopher's judgment that the pleasure of *logos* is the greatest pleasure.

18. After the first argument has been presented, but before the second pleasure argument is articulated, a third image of

the contest between just and unjust men is developed. Now, Plato replaces the image of a drama competition with the image of an Olympic wrestling match in which the *dikaios* has become an Olympic wrestler who throws down the *adikos* for the third time, earning a final and decisive victory:

Well then, that makes two in a row, and twice the just man has been victorious over the unjust one. Now the third, in Olympic fashion, to the savior and the Olympian Zeus. Observe that the other men's pleasure, except for that of the prudent man, is neither entirely true nor pure but is a sort of shadow painting, as I seem to have heard from some one of the wise. *And yet this would be the greatest and most sovereign of the falls* [καίτοι τοῦτ' ἄν εἴη μέγιστόν τε καὶ κυριώτατον τῶν πτωμάτων].<sup>46</sup>

Since the just man has now won two victories over the unjust man, the first by Glaucon the drama judge, the second by the just man's private decision, I take the "μέγιστόν τε καὶ κυριώτατον" (583 B 6) to indicate that in the following segment of argument, the *dikaios* wins his third and ultimate victory.

19. An analysis of the structure of the wrestling image and the structures of the previous two contest images can be seen to support the claim that the pleasure arguments extend Socrates' account of human nature, and thus support Russell. In the first place, the pattern of the same two extremes (justice and injustice) competing over the same prize (victory in terms of who leads the happy life) is common, and thus provides one aspect of continuity between the images. Secondly, Glaucon the sensualist has the floor when all three images are created. Further, all three images are found in the context of arguments about the relative happiness of justice and injustice as this happiness is derived from a logically

foundational concept of human nature. Without this parallel between conceptual contexts, the above parallels might not be enough to link the images. However, the structural likenesses of the images taken with the conceptual similarity between their contexts provides sufficient evidence to verify an important and, I suggest, an intended relation between Book 2's image of the statues Book 9's images of the tragic actors, and Book 9's image of the two wrestlers. When it is compared to the earlier two contest images, the image of two wrestlers indicates first, that the arguments about pleasure are an expansion of the underlying concept of *phusis*, and thus support Russell's thesis. As if to confirm this emphasis on human nature, the tragic gear from the dramatic competition has been stripped off to expose the naked wrestlers, leaving no means for the *adikos* to hide his true nature behind a mask or a costume. I take the presence of exposed athletes in this image to indicate that what is tested in this contest is a justice that is more accurate because it is grounded in an even more real or true account of human nature than was given alongside the dramatic contest. Furthermore, the independence of the competitors, who now rely exclusively on their own skill and strength, portrays a more complete unification of justice with the soul's 'nature.' In the statue contest, the winning appearance was exclusively a product of the sculptor's energy and skill; there was no necessary relation to the naturally determined human being. In the drama competition, the statues were replaced by living tragic actors, who could walk and speak on their own, although from behind masks. These representations of justice and injustice as actors were moving and breathing, but before the introduction of the pleasure arguments, the reality of their living natures was covered over by the artifice of their costumes, masks, and presumably their actions dictated by a

script. Now that the just and unjust men have become Olympic wrestlers, the *dikaios*'s justice and his superiority come purely from his own independent nature since he does not rely upon an external judge, the technical skill of other people like a costume maker or a playwright, or from manufactured products like a mask or a costume. Victory in this third match comes spontaneously from the naked, most just man all by himself. That is, victory comes from his psychological nature as it 'truly' is.<sup>47</sup> Conversely, when the *adikos* loses, this defeat will also be determined by *phusis* in its 'truest' form. It is also significant that none of the characters from the *Republic*'s own *dramatis personae* is recast to partake directly in this image, as Glaucon into the sculptor (361 D 4–6) or the judge (580 A – B), Socrates into the herald (580 B 8), and so on. Plato has distanced his authorial voice from a direct creation of this image, having his characters only describe this contest as if they, too, were spectators. Such passivity in the dialogue's characters indicates that the truth captured by the wrestling image, which they only observe, is independent from Plato's creativity as author of the dialogue.

20. I would like to focus now strictly on the link between the wrestling image and the image of the statue contest, a link which prompts us to recall the specific role of pain in the argument summarized by the contest image in book 2. As I noted above in analyzing Glaucon's image, the most just man is portrayed there as experiencing extreme pain, inflicted because he appears entirely unjust. Since this pain was persuasive enough to cause the just man to abandon his position that justice is good in itself, it played a decisive role in the sophistic argument against perfect justice. By the time Plato presents the image of the wrestling contest, the tyrant has already been

depicted as most miserable, a reversal of book 2's portrayal of the unjust man as most happy. I suggest that book 9's pleasure arguments demonstrate that the most just man actually experiences the most and greatest pleasures rather than the worst pain, thereby completing this reversal.<sup>48</sup> The social appearance and the torturer, both exterior causes of the just man's pain in Glaucon's reconstruction, are replaced in Book 9's account, with 'real' fulfillment as the true and intrinsic cause of true justice's pleasures. This shift in imagery parallels the argument's shift to the claim that Socrates made at the outset of Book 2 that Justice is good both in itself and for its effects. In this respect it is, just like thinking, seeing and being healthy (357 C 1–3 and 358 A 1–3), rather than being merely utilitarian. Russell puts the point as follows:

Pleasure, on Plato's view, is a crucial element of the good life, not because wisdom is inadequate for happiness without it, but because pleasure is a part of our nature that wisdom transforms and causes to flourish. Transformed, rationally incorporated pleasure is not the 'payoff' of the life of wisdom, but one of the forms that wisdom takes in one's life.<sup>49</sup>

This is Russell's notion that the just life is a naturally complete state of the just soul that experiences pleasure in reflexively seeing its own attainment of justice. However, given that Plato is not advocating hedonism in any commonly recognized form,<sup>50</sup> the dialogue's reader can still reasonably ask why the unjust man's defeat in terms of pleasure is the *greatest and most sovereign* (*μέγιστόν τε και κυριώτατον*) of the unjust man's defeats and not a straightforward resolution of the loose ends in the *Republic*'s argument. In what follows, I

argue that the imagery indicates that the defeat in terms of pleasure is the most serious defeat because it is a cumulative summary of Socrates' gradual appropriation of the terms of Glaucon's reconstruction.

21. 'Nature,' is the first and also the most important of the terms Socrates appropriates because his appropriations of 'justice,' 'happiness,' 'pleasure,' 'pain,' and 'power,' the remaining constitutive terms of Book 2's position, follow from this one. As I have argued, the tyrant's misery, above, illustrates Socrates' appropriations of 'justice,' and 'happiness,' the second and third terms. After Glaucon, as judge of the drama contest has been convinced that appetite-satisfaction by itself does not lead to happiness, but to a self-imposed and total misery, Socrates then focuses on appropriating the remaining terms, 'pleasure' and 'pain.' In the second of the pleasure arguments, Socrates describes false pleasure as a transition from a state of 'emptiness' to a neutral state of repose (584 D–586 B). Since it is only one phase of the appetite's endlessly repeating cycle, the transition from emptiness to repose is necessarily linked to recurring pain, which is experienced throughout every emptying phase (586 A–C). One of the most frequently experienced examples of this is the experience of hunger only hours after having eaten. When it is conceived in terms of the soul's true nature (the decisive condition), pain is caused by the inevitable return from repose to emptiness (585 A 1–2) rather than by the appearance of injustice.<sup>51</sup> The soul's tripartite nature is the intrinsic, and thus the necessary cause of this pleasure–pain cycle. Conversely, when Socrates re-interprets 'pleasure' as the just man's most real pleasure (583 C –587 A)<sup>52</sup> because it is the most real filling of the most real part of the soul (585 A–E), he distinguishes 'true pleasure,' which is not tied to pain, as the superior

pleasure, available only to the just man. Again, the soul's nature is the interior and direct cause of this pleasure.

22. The appropriation of terms emerges from the claim that the pleasures and pain of justice and injustice are not extrinsic but intrinsic. If this is given and the appetites necessarily cause pain on the emptying phase, and only injustice allows the appetites to grow infinitely large, it follows that the degree of pain experienced is directly proportional to the degree of the soul's injustice. The soul's injustice is the cause of pain when the soul's nature is seen as tri-partite. Notice that this reinterpretation of 'pain' does not directly pit the severity of the pain of book 2's tortured just man against the severity of the pain of book 9's tyrant, ruled entirely by his appetites. After all, the most just man is not in reality the one in book 2 who appears most unjust. That unhappy statue figure is no longer a contestant because his torture, a violent (i.e. anti-natural) removal of health or comfort, is outside the scope of natural, intrinsic causes. Furthermore, within Socrates' schema, pain belongs to the appetitive part of the soul, the part that is most changing, or least real. Thus, even if the pain of torture should be construed as caused by the artificial emptying of the appetite for sensible goods, it would thus belong in the class of transitory, appetitive goods. Thus, it would necessarily lack the same kind of existence as any truly real thing like the highest and rational part of the soul.

23. In terms of his argumentative strategy it is important to see that, beginning with 'nature,' Socrates appropriates sophistry's terms not by dismissing its interpretations entirely, but by integrating these interpretations into a conceptual schema larger and more complete

than the one Sophistry recognizes. Thus, Socrates does not reject the sophistic claim that there are appetites in the soul that most people wish to fulfill, but rather the proposal that these appetites are what most basically define human 'nature.' The appetites do belong within the soul, Socrates has argued, but at the lowest rung of the soul's natural rank-order. Similarly, in the present treatment of 'pleasure,' Socrates does not reject the sophistic claim that the transition from emptiness to repose, which is actually the relief of pain, is experienced as one kind of pleasure—even the kind that the majority pursues. This sort of pleasure, though, is an inferior "shadow painting" of true pleasure (586 B 8). However, so long as appetitive pleasure is governed by reason, Socrates includes this "shadow" pleasure in his account of the just soul's pleasures. In doing so, he employs the same strategy of appropriation he used in taking over the term 'nature.' That is, he reinterprets the sophist's interpretation of 'pleasure' by integrating that interpretation into his own broader, more conceptually complete account:

Of the desires concerned with the love of gain and the love of victory, some—followers of knowledge and argument—pursue *in company with them* the pleasures to which the prudential part leads and take only these; such desires will take the truest pleasures, so far as they can take true ones—because they follow truth—and those that are most their own—if indeed what is best for each thing is also most properly its own . . . ***Therefore, when all the soul follows the philosophic and is not factious, the result is that each part may, so far as other things are concerned, mind its own business and be just and, in particular, enjoy its own pleasures, the best pleasures, and, to the greatest possible extent, the truest pleasures.*** . . . And, therefore, when one of the other parts gets control, the result is that

it can't discover its own pleasure and compels the others to pursue an alien and untrue pleasure.<sup>53</sup>

In this description of the just soul's experiencing the pleasures that naturally belong to all three of the soul's levels, Socrates is taking over and reinterpreting the term 'pleasure' as the next stage of his appropriation of the term 'nature.'

24. I have suggested that the wrestling image links Book 9's pleasure arguments to Glaucon's account of sophistry in book 2 in a way that shows the contest in terms of pleasure is also the final and decisive contest in terms of nature. That is, the related imagery indicates the account of pleasure *should* be read as the final, cumulative stage of Socrates' response to Glaucon's reconstruction of sophistry. I would like to argue, furthermore, that when the pleasure arguments are read this way, the unjust man's defeat through the pleasure arguments appears the "greatest and most sovereign" (583 B 6) of the unjust man's three defeats in book 9 for three reasons: 1) they address directly Glaucon's image of the just man's extreme pain, 2) they summarize Plato's whole concept of individual human nature, and 3) critically, they summarize it *as* an appropriation that reverses every last term of sophistry's argument. This leaves the sophist no remaining way to argue that injustice pays. The final and decisive fall of the unjust man is at once the final and decisive fall of Book 2's reconstructed sophistry. This is to say that the pleasure arguments are not added on in book 9 in order simply to answer Glaucon's lingering portrayal of the just man's pain, or to provide an account of justice particularly suited to Glaucon, the sybarite.<sup>54</sup> The pleasure arguments do indeed contradict book 2's lingering portrayal of pleasure and pain, and

they also address the sensualism of Glaucon's character. However, the pleasure arguments are the most decisive of the unjust man's defeats because they do these things in a way that completes and also summarizes Socrates' appropriation of all the terms Glaucon used in his reconstruction of Sophistry. The *adikos*, along with the sophist, who supports his position intellectually, are both defeated in this final defeat, which is therefore the "greatest and most sovereign" (583 B 6).

25. At this point, I would like to return to my early claim that Glaucon's challenge and Socrates' response to it both occur against the backdrop of the theme of power, *dynamis*, in order to show that Socrates' pleasure arguments also operate on the grounds of power, a critical element of the contest that has taken place throughout the dialogue between Socrates and Thrasymachus position. With this in mind, it is worth noting that the wrestling contest, unlike the earlier contests, is a direct, unmediated struggle for physical domination. I suggest that this indicates the defeat of the sophist through the exhaustive appropriation of his original terms is a defeat by the power of Socrates' argument.

26. On the one hand, it might be objected that force and argument belong to incommensurable kinds of contest. In fact, at the outset of the *Republic* Socrates presents force and persuasion as alternatives (327 C). Furthermore, as Polemarchus points out there (327 C 12), the requirement for persuading the listener is that he or she is actively listening, which implies that for someone to be defeated through an argument, they must follow its stages and reject what they see is false, but assent to what they see is true. However, this rational rejection or assent by definition cannot be compelled,

which distinguishes persuasion from force. The requirement that there be a willing participation on the part of the person persuaded through argument could, furthermore, be used to support Annas' point that there is no exterior necessity compelling Thrasymachus to assent to Socrates' argument even in book 9:

[T]he happiness which the tyrant can never have flows from a well-ordered soul; but Thrasymachus would not associate happiness with a well-ordered soul. He would think of it as being in a position to do what one likes and satisfy any desire one happens to have. If he is stubborn enough, he can say at the end of Book 9 that his claim was that the tyrant was happy in this common—or—garden sense, and that the results of psychic harmony are not relevant to that.<sup>55</sup>

With these observations in mind, I suggest that the way power operates in Socrates' refutation is as mediated through rational necessity. It is important therefore to stress that Socrates' power derives from what is most true, *ἀληθέστατα εἶναι* (582 E 9). I take this to require that defeating an interlocutor through the power of an argument is tantamount to defeating his argument on its own terms, a method that Socrates demonstrated in book 1 in his "taming" Thrasymachus. Here in book 9, I suggest, to defeat the sophist in the terms of his original argument is at once to defeat him on the grounds of power, at least as far as it is possible to defeat an interlocutor by power through argumentation. Given this critical qualification, which redefines 'power' teleologically, I suggest that the wrestling image reflects another important dimension of Socrates' response to Thrasymachus sophistry, and is one reason why Socrates does not stop responding to Glaucon's

challenge even once Glaucon says that he has been satisfied. As a final, summary defeat, the unjust man's defeat in terms of pleasure is at once a defeat of sophistry's reconstruction in terms of the power of argument.

## F. INTERPRETIVE METHOD

27. I have emphasized the contest imagery as a sequence of parallel images, used to highlight the significance of Socrates' total defeat of the sophistic stance that Glaucon summarizes in book 2. Before I conclude, I will turn briefly to consider what hermeneutical problems and benefits there might be in interpreting the imagery as I have done. To begin with, there is the question why Plato would complement the development of the *Republic's* central argument about *phusis* with such a carefully crafted set of related images? To examine this question, I will draw upon two problems confronting the author of a philosophical text, problems that Charles Kahn takes from Plato's *Phaedrus*, 1) the failure of clarification, and 2) the failure of adaptability.<sup>56</sup>

[a written work] is like a painting that seems to be alive, but remains silent if one asks it a question. A set speech or written work is [like a painting,] equally unable to respond to questions; it simply repeats the same message each time it is interrogated (275 D). Let us call this the failure of clarification. The second defect of a book is that it cannot adapt itself to the level of the audience . . . [c]all this the failure of adaptability.<sup>57</sup>

In my reading, Plato's technical use of the contest images responds to both problems.<sup>58</sup> In explaining this, I assume first, that there is some determinate concept present in the text, and second that Plato wanted his readership to engage with this concept.<sup>59</sup> From the *Phae-*

*drus*, it is clear that Plato was aware of some of the most difficult problems encountered when communicating an idea through text. I suggest that by using the contest imagery in the way outlined above, Plato also at least attempted to avoid these problems.<sup>60</sup> Working under these assumptions, I understand the relation itself between the transforming imagery of the contest, and the developing argumentation of the text as a replacement for the living author, who would, in a spoken dialogue, steer the interlocutor toward an understanding of his meaning.<sup>61</sup>

28. The reader's progressive discovery of the relations between the contest image and the argument it parallels in the text prevents Kahn's problem 1) the failure of clarification, at least in part. Insofar as the reader pays close attention to the parallel imagery and then asks how the imagery is related to the argument's development, the text does indeed answer the reader's philosophical questions—questions like, 'what really does and does not constitute human *φύσις*?' 'how is pleasure linked to the human soul's justice?' and 'why are book 9's pleasure arguments part of Plato's argument about justice at all?'<sup>62</sup> While the parallel imagery may indeed help to clarify the concepts articulated in the text and the relations between these concepts, it is important to specify that they can do so only because Plato presents them carefully within the context of his arguments. In other words, there is a legitimate question as to whether the images themselves are inherently ambiguous. For instance, how can we be sure that Plato intends the nakedness of the wrestlers in the third contest image to represent the most robust and complete articulation of human 'nature'? It is true that in general any image, taken in isolation from other images and from the argument of the text is ambiguous and open

to widely varying interpretations because the imagery alone does not tell us how to interpret the imagery. However, I am not proposing to interpret the imagery in isolation, but in the context of the dialogue, which concentrates primarily on an accurate understanding of 'nature'. Once Socrates' version of this concept has been developed enough to show how and why the unjust man is actually unhappy, the same concept then provides the context in which, for instance, the nakedness of the wrestlers can legitimately be interpreted as indicating that the argument about pleasure is the most complete articulation of human 'nature'. Furthermore, the 'parallel' images I have highlighted are found at strategically important locations in the text, adjacent to the arguments which they summarize and clarify. For instance, the wrestling image, which describes a final, culminating moment, has been placed exactly between the two pleasure arguments. This placement provides the justification for interpreting the arguments on pleasure, and not some other argument(s) as the most complete articulation of human 'nature'. Finally, what I intend by 'context' also includes references between the images through the close similarities in structure and theme that I have outlined above. In summary, the different aspects of the parallel images can be interpreted in determinate ways only because of their context, which consists of the dialogue's central concepts, each image's relation to the text that immediately surrounds it, and each image's relation to any other structurally related images. The imagery indeed clarifies and addresses Kahn's problem 1) the failure of clarification, but the imagery does so only when taken in context.

29. The role of the imagery as an intra-textual standard for distinguishing between

'right' and 'wrong', or at least more and less complete readings also provides a way of responding to Kahn's problem 2) the failure of adaptability.<sup>63</sup> The text of Plato's *Republic* does indeed adapt to different readers. It shows itself more completely to those who attend to the possibility of important relations between its imagery and its argumentation than it does to those who do not attend to this possibility.<sup>64</sup> I am not claiming that without attending to the imagery, nothing at all can be understood of the text, but that less can be understood from reading the text without attending to the possibility of the imagery's role. Since we know, courtesy of the *Phaedrus*, that Plato was aware of the kinds of fundamental interpretive challenges facing the reader of any text, and since the set of intra-textual relations which emerge from reading the images in relation to the argumentation are economical, sophisticated and subtle, I suggest it is reasonable to think that Plato included the imagery in the text as an interpretive aid to its concepts and argumentation.

30. I would like to acknowledge one particular limit of this hermeneutical relationship between image and its context. For some readers, it would seem circular, and therefore fatally flawed to say I can gain access to any given hermeneutic through the use of that very same hermeneutic. If the text does not explicitly tell me how to read it, the objection would go, how can I know that the guidelines I am using actually come from the text, and not from myself? To this charge, first I reaffirm that the proof or evidence justifying this approach to the text must come from within the text. I also emphasize that the context I use for interpreting the imagery is provided by the most important concepts in the same text where the imagery is found, not by some arbitrary context of my own choosing. However, since the method

of using imagery as an interpretive guideline is not itself made explicit, the approach can only be seen or defended by analyzing the relation itself between the specific images and arguments found gradually through a discursive analysis of the text.<sup>65</sup> This is to say that the hermeneutic I am using and claiming is present in the text is indeed circular. However, this circle does not have to be vicious, or logically flawed. As readers of the dialogue, we can gain access to the hermeneutic, but only by discovering and illuminating sufficiently persuasive relations between the particular images and particular arguments.

## CONCLUSION

31. There are two principal advantages I have emphasized that come from reading the *Republic* with attention to its “parallel” contest imagery. First, the imagery confirms the point that through book 9’s pleasure arguments Socrates continues his articulation of the soul’s ‘nature’ as the tri-partite hierarchy that determines ‘justice’ and ‘happiness.’ From this perspective, ‘pleasure’ is seen as a necessary experience accompanying the just life. This shows how Plato’s position is distinguished from the hedonistic view that appetitive pleasure is to be sought in and for itself. In this I have shown my agreement with Russell. Secondly the contest imagery also links the pleasure arguments directly to Glaucon’s representation of sophistry in book 2. In doing so, it indicates that the reasons for Socrates to characterize the pleasure arguments as the “greatest and most sovereign” (583 B 6) defeat for the unjust man become clearest through analyzing the pleasure arguments as part of Socrates’ strategy of responding to Glaucon’s reconstruction. The investigation of

the arguments as part of this response reveals, in turn, 1) that book 2’s original depiction of the most just man as suffering the greatest pain has only partially been overturned in book 9’s depiction of the tyrant, and furthermore, 2) that the pleasure arguments not only contradict this early depiction of the just man’s pain, but also summarize and complete a larger program of appropriating every term Glaucon originally used to depict sophistry’s position. The contest imagery indicates that throughout the *Republic*, Socrates has been setting up a response to Glaucon’s challenge that culminates in the pleasure arguments of Book 9. His strategy has been to leave no remaining way to argue that injustice pays, and thus to defeat Glaucon’s reconstruction with finality.

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## END NOTES

1 I would like to thank Nicholas Thorne, Brian Gregor, Jason Taylor, Arthur Madigan, Marina McCoy, and Ronald Tacelli for their suggestions in editing this paper. Any remaining faults are, of course, my own.

2 See Richard Kraut, “The Defense of Justice in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, ed. Richard Kraut (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 311–37, and Nickolas Pappas, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Plato and the Republic*, 2nd ed. Routledge Philosophy Guidebooks (New York: Routledge, 2003), 173.

3 Plato and Allan Bloom, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. Allan Bloom, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 583 B 6. All subsequent references to the English translation will be to the Bloom translation unless otherwise specified. All Ancient Greek quotations are taken from *Res publica*, ed. Ionnes Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

4 Following Plato’s lead, I will refer to these extremes as *dikaioi* and *adikoi*.

5 For arguments that take Socrates at his word when he describes poetic image as a ‘second best’ method, see Harvey Yunis, “The Protreptic Rhetoric of the *Republic*,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato’s Republic*, ed. G. R. F. Ferrari (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 21, and Jonathan Lear, “Allegory and Myth in Plato’s *Republic*,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Plato’s Republic*, ed. Gerasimos Xenophon Santas (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006), 25–43.

6 Other images that belong in this category, but that do not have so extensive a philosophical role in the *Republic* as the contest imagery are: 1) The famous myth of metals (414 D 1–415 C 10), which captures the sense of the city’s naturally determined divisions into strata of natural talent. 2) The analogy of Socrates’ unified city to the unity of a human body, which feels pain as a whole when any part (here the finger) is harmed (462 C 10–E 6). This image captures Socrates’ notion that in *Kallipolis*, individual self-interest is inseparable from corporate, political interest. 3) Socrates’ ‘ship of state’ analogy (487 E 7–489 D 5), which explains Adeimantus’ observation that philosophers appear to be the most politically useless of all people only because what is most important in guiding the state is usually ignored in determining who should be its leader. 4) The analogy of the sophist as a wild beast tamer (493 A 6–C 8), which captures the sophistic notion that since unbridled animality is identical with human nature, education is equivalent merely to understanding how to manipulate the pre-existing and violently dangerous appetites.

7 In book 1, Thrasymachus enters the dialogue as a ferocious wild beast: “But when we paused . . . he could no longer keep quiet; hunched up like a wild beast, he flung himself at us as if to tear us to pieces [ἀλλὰ συστρέψας ἑαυτὸν ὥσπερ θηρίον ἤκεν ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς ὡς διαρπασόμενος]. Then both Polemarchus and I got all in a flutter from

fright . . .” (336 B 5–7). Compare Thrasymachus’ temperament at the end of book 1, where this beast has been tamed: “I owe it to you, Thrasymachus,” I said, “since you have grown gentle and have left off being hard on me [ἐπειδὴ μοι πρᾶος ἐγένονο καὶ χαλεπαίνων ἐπάύσω]” (354 A 12–13). Never, after having been subdued, does Thrasymachus impede the progress of the interlocutor’s dialogue again. Commenting on the purpose of Socrates’ rhetoric in this section of the *Republic*, Marina McCoy writes, “Socrates seems as interested in making Thrasymachus feel flustered and ashamed as in disproving his claims about the nature of justice” (Marina McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008], 4). Luc Brisson pushes this a step further, when commenting on Socrates’ general method: “Socrates does not practice refutation for the pleasure of refuting and therefore shaming the respondent, but to render his interlocutor better by means of this feeling of shame” (Brisson, “Plato, Socrates and the Literary Form of the Dialogue” [paper in plenary session, U. of South Carolina Comparative Literature Conference, Plato and Platonisms: The Constitution of a Tradition, Columbia, SC, March, 2008]).

8 Thrasymachus makes it clear that his participation in book 1’s conversation is driven by the external rewards of money (337 D 6–7) and of praise for answering Socrates well (338 C 2–3). This attachment to exterior rewards is further revealed in Thrasymachus’ poignant embarrassment when Socrates shows him to be in error (350 C 10–D 8). Thrasymachus’ uncontrollable distress, caused by his awareness that he appears the loser of the argument, indicates dramatically that Thrasymachus desires reputation above knowledge. Even if the philosophical legitimacy of Thrasymachus’ position is acknowledged, as in McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists*, 112–117, there is still the problem how to reconcile the legitimate force of Thrasymachus’ argument with his intellectually disruptive, non-philosophical desire to win above all else. I argue below that Plato resolves this tension using Glaucon’s character.

9 Socrates here validates Glaucon’s earlier profession, at 358 C 6–7, of only acting as Sophistry’s mouthpiece, and not being its true proponent when he characterizes both Adeimantus and Glaucon as divinely affected (πάνν γὰρ θεῖον πεπόνθατε) (368 A 5–6). This divine quality is a reference to the two brothers’ philosophical desire for the Good, which qualifies them to be Socrates’ principle interlocutors throughout the dialogue.

10 This is the sophist’s refutation of a Kantian or, in contemporary terms, a deontological ethics. As I will argue below, Plato explicitly rejects the opposition between pleasure and virtue implied in deontological ethics.

11 In his presentation of the sophistic view, Glaucon

portrays only the two kinds of good articulated at the beginning of book 2 that lie at the furthest extremes; what is good exclusively for itself (357 B 4–9), and what is good exclusively for its results (357 C5–D3), showing that for Thrasymachus, justice belongs only in the latter category. Glaucon's synopsis avoids the third middle category (357 C 1–4), which is a union of interior state and exterior effect. Socrates' claim, at the beginning of book 2, that justice belongs "in the finest kind [of good], which the man who is going to be blessed should like *both for itself and for what comes out of it*" (358 A 1–3; emphasis added) shows his rejection of any logic that would divide these two 'kinds' of good. On this point, see Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 60, and Christopher Shields, "Plato's Challenge: The Case against Justice in Republic II," in *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, ed. Gerasimos Xenophon Santas (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006), 67–70. Reeve, who reads this section differently, prioritizes the *dikaiois*' bad reputation rather than its origin in the inherently flawed sophistic logic as the principal problem to which Socrates responds in the *Republic* (C.D.C. Reeve, "Glaucon's Challenge and Thrasymacheanism," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* XXXIV [Summer 2008]: 71 n. 4, and 74–8). James Butler articulates an important caution to any scholar interpreting these categories of 'good': "The nature of the question put to Socrates, especially the distinction between 'welcomed for its own sake' and 'welcomed for its consequences' is not immediately clear. And for good reason: one is unsure to what the expressions 'welcomed for its own sake' and 'welcomed for its consequences' refer. One thing is certain, however: We must take care to interpret this distinction as Plato intends it, and not simply to read it in accordance with our modern views" (James Butler, "Justice and the Fundamental Question of Plato's Republic," *Apeiron* XXXV [2002]: 3). I argue below that Socrates' account of pleasure in book 9 develops his explanation that justice is in the middle category of goods.

12 I take it to be significant that the image includes a transformation of the dialogue's characters, and is not merely spoken to us by Socrates. Transforming the characters themselves has the rhetorical effect of bringing Plato's authorial voice closer to the reader, emphasizing his authorship. I will consider the significance of authorial distance from the reader below, in analyzing the contest imagery's evolution in book 9.

13 For an extended discussion of this sophistic version of human nature see Reeve, "Glaucon's Challenge and Thrasymacheanism," 79–83.

14 Seth Benardete, *Socrates' Second Sailing: On Plato's Republic*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 213.

15 The statue imagery is also recalled at 420 C–D, where Socrates ridicules Thrasymachus' stance through an image of painted statues. This additional statue image with its tactic of comic ridicule is an important element of Socrates' critique of the political (rather than the

psychological) implications of equating happiness simply to appetite satisfaction. However, to limit the length of this paper, I omit a treatment of this statue-painting image.

16 See Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 258 ff., and 367.

17 As Reeve says, "Socrates' response will need to persuade us that our (and the gods') nature has been misrepresented, and with it our (and their) natural good" (Reeve, "Glaucon's Challenge and Thrasymacheanism," 83). For a discussion of the limitations of Plato's concept of nature, see Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, 328–334.

18 Socrates says, "[L]et's make a city in speech from the beginning. Our need [*χρεία*], as it seems, will make it" (369 C 9–10).

19 Socrates says, "I myself also had the thought when you spoke that, in the first place, each of us is naturally not quite like anyone else, but rather differs in his nature [*διαφέρων τὴν φύσιν*]; different men are apt for the accomplishment of different jobs. Isn't that your opinion?" (370 A 7–B 2). For further commentary on the concept of nature here, see Adam's note on *φύεται*: Plato and James Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, ed. James Adam, 2 vols. 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 1:95.

20 On the question of the continuity of the three stages of book 9's argument, see Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, 2:347–8. For persuasive arguments defending the continuity of book 9's three stages, see Daniel Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), ch. 4.

21 For a critique of Socrates' presentation of the tyrant as unrealistic and irrelevant to answering Glaucon's challenge, see Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, 304–5. For a clear, systematic account of how Plato develops his theory of the soul's tri-partite hierarchy in book 9 relative to book 4, see Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, esp. 120–121 and 136–7.

22 Cf. Glaucon's proposal in Book 2 to allow each position to reach its logical end: "Give each, the just man and the unjust, license to do whatever he wants, while we follow and watch where his desire will lead each [*ποιή ἢ ἐπιθυμία ἐκάτερον ἄξει*]" (359 C 1–3). In book 9, Socrates is taking Glaucon at his word.

23 I read the repeated use of, "*οὐκ ἀναγκαῖος*" in the passage at 574 B 12–C 5 as linking the notion of necessity together with the notion of nature insofar as the tyrant's parents, his most immediate natural relations, are described as necessary, while those companions he chooses are instead unnecessary. Doing violence to his original *oikos* is only one sense in which the *adikos* does violence to his own nature: "Ἄλλ', ὦ Ἀδείμαντε, πρὸς Διός, ἔνεκα νεωστὶ φίλης καὶ οὐκ ἀναγκαίας ἐταίρας γεγοννίας τὴν πάλοι φίλην καὶ ἀναγκαίαν μητέρα, ἢ ἔνεκα ὠραίου νεωστὶ φίλου γεγονότος οὐκ ἀναγκαίου τὸν ἄωρόν τε καὶ ἀναγκαῖον πρεσβύτην πατέρα καὶ τῶν φίλων ἀρχαιότατον δοκεῖ ἄν σοι ὁ τοιοῦτος πληγαῖς τε δοῦναι καὶ

καταδουλώσασθαι ἂν αὐτοὺς ὅπ' ἐκείνοις, εἰ εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν οἰκίαν ἀγάγοιτο;" (574 B 12–C 5; emphases added).

24 Cognates of ὁ δοῦλος are used to characterize the tyrant at 576 A 5, 577 D 2, and most directly at 579 D 10.

25 See 574 E 4: "He will stick at no terrible murder, or food, or deed." It is noteworthy that this discussion echoes thematically the first part of Cephalus' speech in book 1, which warned the interlocutors of immoderate desire's despotism (329 C 1–4). On the link between book 1 with the rest of the *Republic*, see Christopher Rowe, "The Literary and Philosophical Style of the *Republic*," in *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, ed. Gerasimos Xenophon Santas (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006), 17–21, Angus Johnston, "The Origin of Constitutions in the *Republic*," in *Philosophy and Freedom: The Legacy of James Doull*, ed. David Peddle and Neil G. Robertson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 73–82, and Rachel Barney, "Socrates' Refutation of Thrasymachus," in *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, ed. Gerasimos Xenophon Santas (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006), 56–59.

26 See 576 B 10: "... Necessarily," Glaucon said, as he took over the argument."

27 Socrates emphasizes this connection to ultimate Being in the following description of the 'real' tyrant, quoted in my text below. The most relevant part of the Greek reads, "[ἐ]στιν ἄρα τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, κἂν εἰ μὴ τῷ δοκεῖ, ὁ τῷ ὄντι τύραννος τῷ ὄντι δοῦλος τὰς μεγίστας θωπείας καὶ δουλείας..." (579 D 9–10). On this point, Reeve writes, "The good judge of how happy justice makes us, we might reasonably think, had better proceed in the same way—looking to our true state and not simply to how happy we look or feel" (Reeve, "Glaucon's Challenge and Thrasymacheanism," 76).

28 For a helpful account of the way the soul functions as a whole while reason is in control, see G. R. F. Ferrari, "The Three-Part Soul," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*, ed. G. R. F. Ferrari (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 198–200.

29 See n. 31 below.

30 See n. 31 below.

31 According to Adam, the ancient method of judging dramatic contests had a sequence of two steps. The first was preliminary; the second, final and decisive. Adam holds that Glaucon's judgment is within the second and decisive stage: "On the day of the [dramatic] contest, one name was drawn from each urn, and the ten judges thereby constituted, after witnessing the performance, each wrote down in his γραμματεῖον the order in which he arranged the several competitors. Of these ten judges five were next selected by lot, and the final verdict was given in accordance with the votes already registered by these five. . . . the upshot of the whole matter will be that Socrates appeals to Glaucon, as the Archon might to one of the five judges in what we may be forgiven for calling the 'grand finale,' calling on him to pronounce τίς πρῶτος" (Plato and Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, 2:340–1). My analysis is also indebted to Adam's second Index to Chapter 9 (Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, 2:373–376), which explores the line, "ὁ

διὰ πάντων κριτής" (580 A 9–B 1), rejecting most attempts at attributing to the phrase a technical use. Adam finds no relevant precedent in Greek from which Plato draws his idiosyncratic use here. Despite the lack of scholarly consensus and the lack of a precedent in Greek for the technical use of "ὁ διὰ πάντων κριτής," Adam sees no reason for this passage to be considered corrupt, and maintains that "the general meaning of this passage is clear."

32 I distinguish the interior necessity of what I call here "natural necessity" from the necessity of external force that compels the unjust man in Glaucon's re-construction to have the appearance of justice. As one of my reviewers indicates, Socrates separates exterior necessity from the good in book 6's parallel image of the sophist as the lion-tamer of the beast-like citizenry: "Knowing nothing in truth about which of these convictions and desires [of the citizenry conceived as beast] is noble, or base, or good, or evil, or just, or unjust, [the sophist] applies all these names following the great animal's opinions — calling what delights it good and what vexes it bad. He has no other argument about them but calls the necessary just and noble, neither having seen nor being able to show someone else how much the nature of necessary and the good really differ [ἄλλον δὲ μηδένα ἔχει λόγον περὶ αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ τὰναγκαῖα δίκαια καλοῖ καὶ καλὰ, τὴν δὲ τοῦ ἀναγκαίου καὶ ἀγαθοῦ φύσιν, ὅσον διαφέρει τῷ ὄντι, μήτε ἑωρακῶς εἴη μήτε ἄλλω δυνατὸς δεῖξαι]" (493 C 3–6).

In this passage ἀνάγκη is the exterior necessity of the ignorant citizenry's overwhelming force that compels justice to be merely the appearance of justice, and thus distinct from the good. Such superficial necessity is qualitatively different from the interior necessity of *logos* that derives from the good and leads back to the good, a necessity that causes all things to be what they are and also causes true knowledge of them (508 D–509 B). This interior necessity is the kind I refer to as "natural necessity", in the sense that it causes human nature to be what it is (tri-partite), and to be known as what it is, i.e. known truly. For my analysis of the necessity of *logos* relative to the second of the two pleasure arguments in book 9, see n. 45 below.

33 Analyzing the argument about pleasure, which I treat below, Angus Johnston also emphasizes this argument's underlying teleology as a teleology toward the Good, writing, "just pleasures are those which involve no opposite. They are ends themselves, and thus what justice is for becomes a limited question . . ." (Johnston, "The Origin of Constitutions in the *Republic*," 80).

34 The oligarchic man and democratic man do however, briefly re-emerge for the calculation of the quantitative difference in pleasure between king and tyrant at 587 C 6–7, 12.

35 For my assertion on κήρυκα I rely on Adam, who, in agreement with Müller, holds that "in dramatic and musical contests the victor's name was publicly proclaimed by a herald" (Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, 2:341).

36 Johnston puts this moment of the argument most succinctly: "In relation to happiness, and to the being of the soul and the state, what is, is one in justice—its

very nature is that all parts must be each in its own way” (Johnston, “The Origin of Constitutions in the Republic,” 81).

37 Cf. 357 B 1. Evidently, Socrates’ goal lies beyond only ‘to persuade’ Glaucon and Adeimantus.

38 Kraut, “The Defense of Justice in Plato’s Republic,”

314. McCoy anticipates the alternative analysis I give of the centrality of pleasure to the *Republic*’s larger argument about justice and happiness: “The main source of contention between the philosopher and sophist . . . becomes a dispute about the nature of desire itself” (McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists*, 128).

39 Pappas, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Plato and the Republic*, 173.

40 Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 135.

41 Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 121.

42 Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 136. For Russell, Plato presents pleasure as a consequence not only of fulfilling the soul’s true nature, but furthermore of the soul’s self-reflexive judgment that the kind of life it leads, taken as a whole, is the best life: “Plato seems to be arguing that the life of virtue is most worth living on the grounds that from the authoritative perspective one sees that that life is most worth living. The pleasure of this life is not what makes it worth living. The pleasure is not what gives this life its point. Rather, the pleasure of this life is part and parcel of *seeing* its point. The virtuous person’s life is not most worth living because it is most pleasant. It is most pleasant because it is most worth living” (Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 126). I am most interested here in examining the role of the pleasure arguments within the larger argument of the *Republic*, and thus do not analyze in depth Russell’s pronounced focus on self-reflexivity as “part and parcel” of the soul’s pleasures. For Russell’s argument, see *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 106–138.

43 As quoted below, Socrates says, “Well then, that makes two in a row, and twice the just man has been victorious over the unjust one” (583 B 1–2).

44 Although it is beyond the scope of my particular focus on Plato’s use of image, I read the incompleteness of the first pleasure argument as intentional and necessary, and as complemented by the second argument on pleasure that follows. For an alternative view of this first argument’s limitation, see Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic*, 311.

45 If the philosopher’s judgment should lack rational necessity, Socrates acknowledges he would be stuck in the following *aporia*: “since . . . the pleasures of each form, and the life itself, dispute with one another, not about living more nobly or shamefully or worse or better but about living more pleasantly and painlessly, how would we know which of them speaks most truly?” (581 E 6–582 A 2). It is important to see that the *ἀνάγκη*, which characterizes *λόγος*, responds to this problem: “What the lover of wisdom and the lover of argument praise would necessarily be most true [*ἀνάγκη, ἔφη, ἃ ὁ φιλόσοφος τε καὶ ὁ φιλόλογος ἐπαινεί, ἀληθέστατα εἶναι* . . . Therefore,

of the three pleasures, the most pleasant would belong to that part of the soul with which we learn; and the man among us in whom this part rules has the most pleasant life” (582 E 8–583 A 3). For an alternative response to the criticism that the conclusion of the first pleasure argument depends on a merely subjective judgment, see Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic*, 307–10. For a critique of Socrates’ claim that experience itself can act as a standard for measuring pleasure, see C.C.W. Taylor, “Plato and Aristotle on the Criterion of Real Pleasures,” In *Pleasure, Mind, and Soul: Selected Papers in Ancient Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 95–8. For a defense of the Socratic position against this critique, which stresses the pleasure of each kind of life as a whole activity, see Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 122–7.

46 583 B 1–7; emphasis added. The entire Greek passage reads: “Ταῦτα μὲν τοίνυν οὕτω δὴ ἐφελξῆς ἂν εἴη καὶ δις νενικηκώς ὁ δίκαιος τὸν ἄδικον· τὸ δὲ τρίτον ὀλυμπικῶς τῷ σωτήρῳ τε καὶ τῷ Ὀλυμπίῳ Διι, ἄθρει ὅτι οὐδὲ παναληθῆς ἔστιν ἢ τῶν ἄλλων ἡδονῇ πλήν τῆς τοῦ φρονίμου οὐδὲ καθαρὰ, ἀλλ’ ἐσκιαγραφημένη τις, ὡς ἐγὼ δοκῶ μοι τῶν σοφῶν τινος ἀκηκοέναι. καίτοι τοῦτ’ ἂν εἴη μέγιστόν τε καὶ κυριώτατον τῶν πτωμάτων.” After summarizing Stallbaum’s view that this is a reference to a tradition of libations by the competitors at the Olympic games, and Schneider’s view that this is a reference to the pentathlon, Adam concludes that these two stances are untenable. He writes, “the words τῶν πτωμάτων below make it clear that the reference is only to wrestling. The point manifestly is, that as in wrestling the third throw decided the contest between two athletes (Schol. on Aesch. *Eum.* 592 et al.), so here the δίκαιος wins after he has thrice defeated the ἄδικος (cf. also *Euthyd.* 277 C)” (Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, 2:348). Bloom sides with Adam, concluding that this is a reference to Olympic wrestling competitions, although he is also sympathetic with a position similar to Stallbaum’s, insisting that the dedication to Zeus is nevertheless a reference to the libations to the Olympian gods traditionally given at banquets (Bloom, *The Republic of Plato*, 470 n. 7).

47 The self-movement of the wrestler, furthermore, anticipates the notion that justice is a power, *δύναμις*, as Socrates says at 588 B 8: “Now then . . . let’s discuss with him, since we have agreed about the respective powers [*δύναμιν*] of doing injustice and doing just things” (588 B 6–8). For an analysis of the dialogue’s focus on *δύναμις* after the third competition has been won, see Butler, “Justice and the Fundamental Question of Plato’s Republic,” 15.

48 See n. 53 below.

49 Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 108.

50 Plato’s stress on the importance of the pleasure arguments makes it tempting to see his argument either as purely hedonistic in the sense of seeing pleasure in and by itself as the ultimate good, or else to somehow mitigate Socrates’ statement that the unjust man’s defeats through the pleasure arguments is most severe, as Kraut does in, “The Defense of Justice in Plato’s Republic,” cited above.

My reading views both these interpretations as erroneous, and attempts to explain how the pleasure arguments are the most severe of the unjust man's defeats, while siding with Russell in rejecting the claim that, for Plato, pleasure is in and by itself the ultimate cause of happiness. For Russell's rejection of the hedonist interpretation, see Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 127. Plato is very much aware of the hedonistic position that takes pleasure in and by itself to be the ultimate Good (i.e. the necessary and sufficient cause of happiness). See, for instance, 505 B 5–6.

51 In the second of the pleasure arguments, Socrates argues that while olfactory pleasure is an instance of a 'pure pleasure' discovered in sensation (584 B 6–8), we learn that the pleasure of smell is unusual. Most sense-pleasures are in reality just relief from pain, and not pure, or true pleasures: "of the so-called pleasures stretched through the body to the soul, just about most, and the greatest ones, belong to this form; they are kinds of relief from pains" (584 C 4–7). Socrates provides the example of nutrition to represent these more typical bodily 'pleasures' (585 A 8–B 1), which emerge from the appetite. The pleasures of eating and drinking are, in his view, only experiences of relief from the pains of hunger and thirst. This becomes clearer in considering that only some number of hours after relieving our hunger and thirst the 'counterfeit' pleasures of first their relief and then their absence are replaced once again by more hunger and more thirst. After some number of hours we must eat yet again to alleviate these constantly recurring kinds of pain. In other words, when the pleasures of becoming full and of being full are gone, we return straightway to the pains intrinsic to nutrition, not to a lasting neutral state. Nutrition fails the litmus test for 'pure' pleasure since the absence of nutrition's pleasure is the presence of its particular pain. This logic applies equally to every instance of satisfying the appetite. C.C.W. Taylor makes the point that the intellect never gains a perfectly stable hold on its object, which is evident in our sometimes forgetting what we have learned (Taylor, "Plato on Rationality and Happiness," 231). However, Taylor's point does not repudiate Plato since there is nothing intrinsically necessary about the kind of emptying that is forgetting. On the other hand, it is necessary that we lose the things we have acquired through the appetite since they are all impermanent (see 586 A–B, esp. 586 B 7–8). For another response to Taylor's objection, see Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, 128 n. 45, and 129 ff.

52 Just as 'Glaucón's' sophistry does not describe pain as the *primary* evil to be avoided, but rather the lack of social influence that causes the pain, so his account does not describe pleasure as sophistry's ultimate good. At 362 B–C, Glaucón describes the reward of sophistry as limitless freedom or power. Glaucón does define a category of goods desired for their own sake at 357 B, and includes in this category "all the pleasures which are harmless and leave no after effects other than the enjoyment in having them." However, he uses this category of good, not as a way of contextualizing the goal

of sophistry, but rather to illustrate how the most just (and naïve) man understands justice (357 D 3).

53 586 D 4–587 A 5; emphases added. On the relation of this description to the Good, also see Adam's note on 586 E: "... τὸ βέλτιστον ἐκάστω, τοῦτο καὶ οἰκειότατον — a saying which reaches to the very foundations of Plato's philosophy: for if that which is best for each thing, is also most its own—most truly akin to it, part of its very being,—it follows that each thing truly is just in proportion as it is good. In other words the cause of all existence is the Good" (Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, 2:358).

54 It should be acknowledged that in treating the topic of pleasure at this point in the dialogue Socrates is responding to Glaucón's sybaritic tendencies. For Plato's characterization of Glaucón as sybaritic, see for instance Socrates' reference to Glaucón's lover at 366 A 3 and Glaucón's demand for relishes at 372 C 2–3 that leads to the unhealthy city of excess. However, just as the pleasure arguments are not themselves 'purely' hedonistic, so the aim of Socrates' account of pleasure is not primarily to respond to the aspect of Glaucón's character that is drawn to pleasure, but to respond to sophistry's account of justice as Glaucón presents it (367 E–368 C). Therefore, while Socrates' treatment of pleasure does indeed respond to Glaucón's sensualism, this alone does not explain why Plato characterizes the pleasure arguments as the most severe defeat of the unjust man. Rather, Socrates responds to the sophistic argument that would promote and uphold Glaucón's sensualism.

55 Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, 315.

56 On the literary, thematic and philosophical relations between the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus*, see Charles Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue: The Philosophical Use of a Literary Form*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), esp. 372–375. While Kahn is careful to link these two dialogues in various ways, I do not depend here on any intrinsic relation between the *Phaedrus* and the *Republic*, but only on the general claim that, when writing the *Republic*, Plato was aware of the problems of a text's capacity to convey philosophical concepts, as written down at some other time in the *Phaedrus*.

57 Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 377. Cf. Jacob Klein's analysis of this passage and of the question of how to read the Platonic dialogues in general (Jacob Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965], 10–13). The more recent and widespread project of analyzing the interpretation itself of Plato can be seen as a response to a methodological problem of hermeneutical naïveté in Plato scholarship clarified in Roochnik, "Terence Irwin's Reading of Plato," in *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings*, ed. Charles L. Griswold (New York: Routledge, 1988), 183–93, and Terence Irwin, "Reply to David L. Roochnik," in *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings*, ed. Charles L. Griswold (New York: Routledge, 1988), 194–99.

58 I limit my analysis to one aspect of Plato's authorial attempt to answer this difficulty. For a broader analysis of the problems Plato finds with text, and the way in which Proclus and Boethius adapt their texts to some of these

concerns, see Solère, “Why Did Plato Write?,” in *Orality, Literacy, and Colonialism in Antiquity*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Boston: Brill, 2004), 83–91, and Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*. For a concise articulation of the general impediments to accessing any text on its own terms see Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, esp. 235 ff.

59 On the question of whether Plato’s authorial voice is present through the dialogue form, see, for instance Ruby Blondell, *The Play of Character in Plato’s Dialogues*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 14–21 and 43–6. For a defense of the view that the character Socrates mostly articulates Plato’s ideas (the ‘Socrates as mouthpiece’ view), see Christopher Rowe, *Plato and the Art of Philosophical Writing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

60 As Blondell affirms, “it is true that dialogue form may plausibly be seen as an attempt by Plato to circumvent some of the difficulties of writing per se as aired in *Phaedrus*” (Blondell, *The Play of Character in Plato’s Dialogues*, 44). Also see my n. 61 below.

61 On the inadequacies of the author’s merely steering a reader away from misunderstanding his ideas, see Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 377–8.

62 Heidegger, analyzing an interpretive problem that is broader than, but still deeply relevant to textual analysis, advocates an hermeneutical method whose goal is described as follows: “to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself” (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson [New York: Harper, 1962], 58). I take Plato’s authorial use of image to anticipate and respond to the challenge every reader faces to follow and understand the author’s argument when he has only the author’s text in front of him, the author himself being absent; the parallel imagery, which corresponds with ‘right’ textual readings help prevent against misinterpretation, and permit the text’s argument to “show itself,” at least imperfectly.

63 Discussing this point, Jean-Luc Solère suggests that Plato’s “esoteric” teaching can be explained without recourse to a secret, oral doctrine, but by accessing the deeper, latent meaning of the text through an attentive reading: “The deep meaning remains hidden to those who do not know how to read with understanding, but all that is necessary is nevertheless said in the text” (Solère, “Why Did Plato Write?,” 87). For a direct rejection of the “esoteric” reading of Plato, see Brisson, “Plato, Socrates and the Literary Form of the Dialogue,” Section 2.1.

64 The text of the *Republic* presumably adapts to different readers in more ways than I state here, but the consideration of these further ways lies beyond the scope of my present treatment.

65 Marina McCoy puts the point as follows: “The proof as to whether the drama of the dialogue really helps us make better sense of Plato’s philosophy is best found in the practice of explaining dramatic and poetic devices in relation to the spoken words of the dialogue rather than in an abstract defense” (McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists*, 16).