

Plato's Division of Goods in the Republic

ROBERT HEINAMAN

ABSTRACT

In the *Republic* Plato draws a distinction among goods between (1) those that are good in themselves but not good for their consequences, (2) those that are good both in themselves and for their consequences, and (3) those that are not good in themselves but are good for their consequences. This paper presents an interpretation of this classification, in particular its application to the case of justice. It is argued that certain causal consequences of justice as well as factors that are not causal consequences of justice are relevant in explaining why justice is good in itself; and that it is only the reputation for justice and the causal consequences that follow from that reputation that are relevant in explaining why it is good for its consequences.

In the *Republic*, Glaucon and Adeimantus ask Socrates to prove that a person is better off by being just rather than by being unjust.¹ When they explain how they want Socrates to prove this, they say the following:

1. Socrates should show what effect justice and injustice have on the soul irrespective of reputation (358b, 366e).
2. Socrates should praise justice itself (358d, 366e).
3. Socrates should show how justice in and by itself affects a man for good, and how injustice in and by itself affects a man for evil (367b, d).

Therefore, to prove that justice is superior to injustice Plato must prove that justice is an intrinsic good and injustice is an intrinsic evil. There is nothing else (prior to *Rep.* 612b) that Plato attempts to argue over and above this in trying to establish that the just life is better than the unjust life.

Hence, to understand Plato's argument it is crucial to understand what, in Plato's view, makes it the case that justice is an intrinsic good. And to understand this we must understand the division of goods set out at the start of Book II. There Plato divides goods into those that are good in themselves but not for their consequences, those that are good both in themselves and for their consequences, and those that are not good in themselves but are good for their consequences.

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¹ *Republic* 348b, 358c-d, 366e-367a, 367b, d, e; cf. 347e, 352d.

There is disagreement on how this classification is to be understood. Two interpretations have been proposed:

1. Plato divides goods into
 - i. things which are good independently of any consequences they may have,
 - ii. things which are good both independently of any consequences they may have and because of certain consequences they have, and
 - iii. things which are good only because of certain consequences they have.²
2. Plato divides goods into
 - i. things which are good because they have one kind of consequence,
 - ii. things which are good both because they have a consequence of the sort specified in (i) and because they have a second kind of consequence, and
 - iii. things which are good solely because they have the second kind of consequence.³

I believe that both interpretations are wrong, and will argue for the following view:

3. Plato divides goods into
 - i. things which are good (a) independently of any consequences they may have, and/or are good (b) because they have one kind of consequence,
 - ii. things which are good both because of (i) *and* because they have a second kind of consequence other than that referred to in (i)(b), and
 - iii. things which are good solely because they have the second kind of consequence – that specified in (i)(b).

Or, at least, this is what is required in order to understand what Plato says about the cases of justice and injustice and the *Republic's* argument that justice pays. It may well be that a coherent general interpretation of Plato's division of goods is not possible.

² C. Kirwan, "Glaucou's Challenge", *Phronesis* 10 (1965), 162-73; T. Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 184 (hereafter *PMT*); J.D. Mabbott, "Is Plato's Republic Utilitarian?" in G. Vlastos (ed.), *Plato II* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), 57-65; C.D. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 282 n. 19.

³ M.B. Foster, "A Mistake of Plato's in the *Republic*," *Mind* 46 (1937), 386-93; David Sachs, "A Fallacy in Plato's Republic," in N. Smith (ed.), *Plato: Critical Assessments* (London: Routledge, 1998), 208-10; N. White, *A Companion to Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979), 78; "The Classification of Goods in Plato's Republic," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 22 (1984), 393-421; J. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 348-9; N. Pappas, *Plato and the Republic* (London: Routledge, 1995), 54, 156.

To avoid confusion it is necessary to distinguish between Plato's use of the word "consequence" and the contemporary notion of a causal consequence. For, as I will argue, while Plato calls (e.g.) justice an intrinsic good,⁴ and hence something that is good independently of what he calls "consequences," its intrinsic goodness is not independent of what we would call its causal consequences. So I will distinguish between "consequences" – consequences irrelevant to a thing's intrinsic goodness – and causal consequences. "Consequence" on its own will always refer to the type of consequence which Plato has in mind. On my interpretation, some causal consequences of a thing may be excluded from the "consequences" of that thing and, hence, may determine it to be something which, for that reason, is intrinsically good or evil.⁵

I

I begin by arguing for two claims. First, the descriptions of class (iii) in the above interpretations fail to make clear a crucial point: anything belonging to this class must be an intrinsic evil. Secondly, the fact that something has good causal consequences may be part of what makes it "good in itself."

Members of the Third Class of Goods are Intrinsic Evils

Here is what Plato has to say about the different kinds of good when he introduces them at 357b-358a:

First class of goods:

1. We do not welcome them for their consequences.
2. We do welcome them for the sake of themselves.
3. Examples: 1. enjoyment (τὸ χαίρειν)
 2. pleasures (αἱ ἡδοναί) which have two features:
 - a. they are harmless
 - b. nothing comes to be from them except enjoyment (τὸ χαίρειν).

⁴ I use "intrinsic good" and "instrumental good" to mean what Plato means by "something that we welcome for itself" and "something that we welcome for its consequences."

⁵ I assume that Plato divides evils (κακά) in a way that matches his division of goods, and in particular that the manner in which Plato applies it to justice also applies to the case of injustice.

Second class of goods:

1. We welcome them for the sake of themselves.
2. We welcome them for the sake of their consequences.
3. Examples: thought, sight, health.

Third class of goods:

1. They are painful or laborious (ἐπίπονα).
2. They benefit us because of their consequences.
3. We would not choose them for themselves.
4. We would choose them for the sake of their consequences.
5. The consequences for the sake of which we would choose them include rewards and other benefits that they produce.
6. Examples: exercise, receiving medical treatment when ill, the practice of medicine and other ways of making money.

Plato draws up similar classifications in other dialogues. The *Gorgias* (467c-468a) presents a tripartite division between goods, evils and intermediates, where intermediates can be good, evil or indifferent, depending on the particular circumstances. The *Republic's* third class of goods does not include anything that could be regarded as something that is in itself indifferent or intermediate. That class is not adequately specified by noting that its members have consequences that are intrinsic goods.⁶ It is also essential to this class that its members are intrinsic evils. As Cross and Woosley say, they are things we choose "in spite of what they are in themselves."⁷

Several things make this point clear. First, members of this class are characterized as painful or laborious (ἐπίπονον: 357c, 358a, 364a; cf. 365b). Secondly, they are difficult or irksome (χαλεπόν: 358a, 364a; cf. 364d).⁸

Thirdly, in themselves they are to be avoided (αὐτὸ δι' αὐτὸ φευκτέον)

⁶ This applies to Terry Irwin's characterization of the third class in his books on Plato's ethics, *Plato's Moral Theory*, and *Plato's Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) (hereafter *PE*). *PMT* (184) says the third class of goods contains those "chosen only for their consequences." *PE* (181) says the third class includes those goods "we value for their consequences but not for their own sake." Both characterizations fail to exclude from the third class such things as walking and running that are in themselves indifferent. This misunderstanding is important since, as we will see later, it undermines Irwin's main objection to the view that the fact that *x* has causal consequences which are goods may be relevant to determining that *x* is good in itself. *PE* (185) may no longer maintain the same view as *PMT*. But even there, doing what is just, in the view set out by Glaucon, is described as something we are averse to because we are "giving up something attractive." That is, Irwin sees it as involving the absence of a good, not the presence of an evil.

⁷ R.C. Cross and A.D. Woosley, *Plato's Republic* (London: Macmillan, 1971), 66.

⁸ The references to 364, which is part of Adeimantus' speech, shows that no distinction can be drawn here between what Glaucon and Adeimantus say.

(358a). “To be avoided” (φευκτέον) is the opposite of “worthy of choice” (αίρετόν), and as it is what is good in itself that is worth choosing for itself, so it is what is evil in itself that is to be avoided for its own sake.⁹ There is no other explanation of why this third class should be described as “to be avoided.” Since members of this class are *good* for their consequences, it could not be because of their consequences that they are “to be avoided.” In any case, the claim is that they are to be avoided “for themselves,” so their consequences are irrelevant to the question of why they are to be avoided. The only remaining alternative would be that this third class is – in itself – neutral, but then again there would be no basis for describing its members as in themselves to be avoided: why should walking and sitting – the *Gorgias*’ (468a) intermediates – be described as *in themselves* to be avoided?

Nor would the first two descriptions of members of this class make sense if they were things which are in themselves indifferent. For example, walking is not in itself painful or laborious, or difficult or irksome.

Fourthly, when Glaucon says that most people put justice into the third class of goods (358a), he says that they regard it as something that is not good but rather as something that is necessary (ἀναγκαῖον) and they do it unwillingly (ἄκοντες: 358c, 359b; cf. 360c, 366d). Walking or sitting, which belong to the *Gorgias*’ intermediates, are not things that could be said to be, in themselves, things that we do unwillingly. “Unwillingly” means not merely that we have no positive desire to do the thing in question but that we have a positive desire not to do it. It is what we regard as evil that we do unwillingly. People consider items in the third category as “not good” because, although they belong to the third class of *goods*, this means only that they are instrumental goods. They are intrinsic evils.¹⁰

Take the example of treatment when ill, which Glaucon gives (357c)

⁹ Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1104b30-32, 1153b1-2, 1172b18-20, 1175b24-25, *Topics* III, *De Anima* 431a15-16.

¹⁰ The fact that the many can say that justice is “fine” (καλόν: 364a) does not mean that they do not regard it as an evil (κακός). Polus in the *Gorgias* is committed to the same sort of position, which allows the same thing to be both fine and evil, or both disgraceful and good (cf. *Rep.* 348e). He holds (474c-d; cf. 482d-e) that doing what is unjust is a good (ἀγαθόν) but disgraceful, and hence not fine (καλός), since *disgraceful* is the opposite of *fine*. Polus thinks that the fine must be distinguished from the good and the evil must be distinguished from the disgraceful, as he holds that to do injustice is good but disgraceful and to suffer injustice is evil but not disgraceful. Cf. *Gorgias* 482d-e, 488e-489a.

to illustrate the kind of thing he wants to put into the third class. A similar example is given in the *Gorgias* (467c), where Socrates mentions taking a drug and suffering for the sake of health. This is not something we regard with indifference, as we regard walking or sitting (*Gorg.* 468a). Taking a painful drug is given as an example of a positive evil and we do it because its good consequences outweigh its intrinsic evil.¹¹

When Glaucon says that the many put justice between the best and the worst (359a-b), he does not mean that it belongs to the class of things that are indifferent. What he says is slightly misleading since he is using “justice” to refer not simply to acting justly but to the combination of doing what is just and not being treated unjustly (359a2). The situations being compared are

1. acting unjustly and not paying any penalty
2. acting justly and not being treated unjustly
3. being treated unjustly without the power of revenge.

Glaucon’s statement that the many put justice between the best and the worst means that 2 is intermediate in order of preference between the best – 1 – and the worst – 3 (cf. 344c). There is no warrant for taking the view attributed to the many in this passage to contradict their view, reported on the previous page (358a), that justice belongs to the third class of goods.

Plato’s division between three classes of goods picks out three of a possible six classes of goods and evils:

1. Things that are good in themselves and good for their consequences.
2. Things that are good in themselves and have evil consequences.
3. Things that are good in themselves and have no good or evil consequences.
4. Things that are evil in themselves and evil for their consequences.
5. Things that are evil in themselves and have good consequences.
6. Things that are evil in themselves and have no good or evil consequences.

(1) is Plato’s second class, (3) his first class, and (5) his third class of “goods.” Glaucon and Adeimantus will present the view that justice belongs to (5) and injustice belongs to (2),¹² while Socrates will argue that

¹¹ Cf. *Protagoras* 354a-c.

¹² And in the best circumstances where perfect injustice is attainable the evil consequences can be avoided.

justice belongs to (1) and injustice belongs to (4). Things that are neutral but have good or evil consequences play no role in the argument of the *Republic*, and they are passed over in silence.¹³

Intrinsic Goodness and Causal Consequences

Does Plato believe that all causal consequences of an item x are consequences of x , and hence irrelevant to the issue of x 's intrinsic goodness or evil? Or do some causal consequences fall outside of the class of consequences (as that term is used by Plato)¹⁴ so that they may be relevant to determining whether something is good in itself? I think it is clear that Plato allows that certain kinds of causal consequences can establish that something is good in itself.

First argument that the causal consequences of x may be relevant to its intrinsic goodness

My first argument that the causal consequences of something may be relevant to establishing its intrinsic goodness or evil is based on two claims:

- (1) The arguments of Glaucon and Adeimantus in defense of injustice are meant to prove that it is good in itself, and hence they show what sort of consideration may be relevant in establishing that something is good in itself.
- (2) The arguments offered by Glaucon and Adeimantus to show that injustice is good in itself appeal to the causal consequences of injustice.

I offer two arguments in support of (1). To begin with, all parties to the discussion in the *Republic* agree that the consequences of justice are goods and the consequences of injustice are evils.¹⁵ Several points show this.

(i) Socrates obviously believes that the normal consequences of justice are good (612a-614a), and the many are said (358a) to put justice into the third class of goods, viz. the class of things which are evil in themselves

¹³ There is a passing reference to things that are neither good nor evil in Book X's argument for the immortality of the soul (609b).

¹⁴ Plato uses "τὰ ἀποβαίνοντα" and "τὰ γιγνόμενα ἀπὸ x " as synonyms (357b6, 8, c1-2, d1-2, 358a2).

¹⁵ Cf. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings*, 25. Foster ("A Mistake of Plato's in the *Republic*," 387) claims that Glaucon and Thrasymachus regard justice as good neither in itself nor for its consequences. But his view is based on the claim that Plato regards the reputation for justice as a third class good whose consequences are distinct from the consequences of justice. I'll argue below that Plato identifies the consequences of justice with the consequences of the reputation for justice.

but which have good consequences. So both Socrates and the many agree that the consequences of justice are goods.

(ii) Agreement about the consequences of justice and injustice comes out in Glaucon's setting up of the question which the *Republic* is supposed to answer. For in order to focus on the worth of justice and injustice themselves he considers a case where the consequences of justice are given to the unjust man and the consequences of injustice are given to the just man (361a-d). And the consequences of justice are all good (362b-c; cf. 363a-d) and the consequences of injustice are all evil (361e-362a; cf. 363d-e). Glaucon is setting out the view of the many, so the many as well as Plato accept the point that the consequences of justice are good and the consequences of injustice are evil. Thus, when in Book X we finally come to the end of the argument that justice is an intrinsic good and injustice an intrinsic evil (612c), Socrates refers to Book II's detachment of justice and injustice from their usual consequences (360e-362c) and says (612c-d):

I granted your request that the just man should be reputed unjust, and the unjust man just, even though it would be impossible that the falseness of their reputations should escape both gods and men. I yielded in this for the sake of argument, *so that justice itself could be judged with respect to injustice itself*. . . since that judgement has now been made, I ask on behalf of justice the return of the reputation it has in fact among gods and men . . .

(iii) Agreement between Socrates and the many on the point that the consequences of justice are good and the consequences of injustice are evil is also shown by Adeimantus' speech. Reversing Glaucon's argument which explained how the many praise injustice and condemn justice, he considers how the many praise justice and condemn injustice (362e). When people praise justice they do not praise justice for itself but only because of its good consequences (362e-363e, 366d-e). So the many agree that justice has these beneficial consequences. With respect to the condemnation of injustice, Adeimantus points out that it is only condemned for its consequences: people attribute to the unjust "all the punishments which Glaucon enumerated in the case of the just with a reputation for injustice, but they have nothing else to say" (363d; cf. 366e, 367b-c), i.e. in blaming injustice they say nothing about its being evil in itself.

(iv) This agreement on the value of the consequences of justice and injustice is also shown by the fact that the beneficial consequences of justice which Glaucon and Adeimantus mention in Book II are the same as those mentioned by Socrates in Book X (612a-614a) when he points out

the consequences of justice and injustice. With regard to the rewards which men grant to the just, Socrates says:

Will you allow me to say about them [the just] what you yourself said about the unjust?¹⁶ I shall say that, when they get older, just men fill the public offices of their own city if they wish [cf. 362b2, 363a3], marry into any family they want to [cf. 362b3, 363a3], give their children in marriage to anyone they wish [cf. 362b3], and *all you said about the unjust I now say about the just*.

Socrates explicitly states that he agrees with the view of the many, as described by Glaucon and Adeimantus, about the beneficial consequences of justice.¹⁷ It is true that the consequences of injustice listed by Glaucon and Adeimantus (361e-362a) are not identical with the consequences of injustice mentioned by Socrates in Book X (612e, 613b-e). But the punishments mentioned are identical (361e4-5, 613e1-2), and, in any case, it is clear that all regard the consequences of injustice as evils.

Since both sides to the argument agree on the value of the consequences

¹⁶ Because, for the sake of argument, the perfectly unjust man was given the reputation for justice and this reputation and its consequences are now being returned to the just man (612c-e).

¹⁷ There are differences between Books II and X with regard to the response of the gods to justice and injustice. In the earlier passage Glaucon is setting out the view of the many that the gods will treat well those who are really unjust because the gods are immoral enough to be bribed by the unjust (362c; cf. 364b-365a, 365e-366b). This is part of Glaucon's argument on behalf of the many that injustice is good in itself. In Book X (612d-613b), with the virtue of the gods restored, their response to justice and injustice is based on their knowledge of the characters of the just and the unjust, and is part of the reason why justice is good for its consequences while injustice is bad for its consequences. The response of the gods is also used by Adeimantus in Book II to argue that justice is good not for itself but for its consequences (363a-e). He reverses Glaucon's procedure to examine in what way the many praise justice, and argues that they praise it only for its consequences.

The quoted passage's list of beneficial consequences of justice proves that the *Republic* is not arguing merely that the just man is better off in the ideal city (cf. R.W. Hall, "Justice and the Individual in the Republic," *Phronesis* 4 (1959), 151, 158). The beneficial consequences regarding marriage and going into politics "*if they wish*" are not available to Plato's prime examples of just men in the ideal city, the guardians. Likewise, 591d-e's remarks on how the just man will acquire wealth could not apply to the guardians. And Plato goes on to say that the just man he is talking about will only go into politics if by divine luck he lives in the ideal city (592a). The argument of the *Republic* aims to show that justice pays "*anyone*" (589d), including the man with the ring of Gyges (612b), so it is also wrong to say that the argument claims merely that justice pays the philosopher.

of justice and injustice,¹⁸ their disagreement about the value of justice and injustice can only concern the intrinsic value of justice and injustice. In which case it is clear that the arguments which Glaucon and Adeimantus bring forward to demonstrate that injustice is a good thing are meant to show how it is good *in itself*.¹⁹

A second argument for (1): That the praise of injustice contained in the speeches of Glaucon and Adeimantus is meant to indicate its intrinsic goodness is also proved by Glaucon's statement (358d4-6) that he wants to hear Socrates defend justice in the same way as he himself will praise injustice. The "way" in question, the manner in which Glaucon wants to hear justice praised, is clearly specified by his immediately preceding statement that "I want to hear it [justice] praised for itself" (358d1-2); and by his previous assertion (358b) that he wants to hear the nature of justice and injustice, and their effects on the soul, not an account their rewards and consequences.²⁰

So: Glaucon says that he wants to hear Socrates praise justice in the same way he is about to praise injustice. He wants Socrates to praise justice by showing that it is good in itself. Therefore, the reasons Glaucon

¹⁸ This is part of the explanation of why, when Glaucon's initial speech compares the lives of the just and the unjust in order to assess their relative happiness and unhappiness, he contrasts the *extreme* case of injustice with the just man who is thought to be unjust (360e1-6). For Glaucon is arguing for the claim that the unjust is better off than the just, and it is in the extreme case of injustice where the unjust man can keep his injustice hidden (361a4-5; cf. 365c-d) that the evil consequences of injustice (described in 361e4-362a3; cf. 363d-e) are avoided (360e6-361b5; cf. 366b3-4). So it is only in the extreme case of injustice where these evil consequences of injustice are avoided that there is any plausibility in saying that the unjust life is better than the just life.

The claim that, ordinarily, the unjust life is overall worse than the just life is a presupposition of Glaucon's explanation of the origin and nature of justice at the start of his speech. It is only because ordinary people are unable to avoid the consequences of injustice that they prefer to make an agreement to be just and thus avoid injustice themselves (359a6-b4), and Glaucon's argument takes this to be a rational decision. In theory they rank higher than this compromise the situation where they are unjust and avoid punishment for their unjust behavior (359a6). But as things actually are, given the world and their own powers as they exist, ordinary people are unable to avoid the consequences of injustice (359b1, b6). Though they regard injustice as an intrinsic good and justice as an intrinsic evil, they rank {injustice + the consequences of injustice} as worse than {justice + the consequences of justice}, and these are their only options in the real world. But that means that they rank the consequences of injustice as so bad that their evil outweighs any benefits from injustice.

¹⁹ As noted by Cross and Woosley, *Plato's Republic*, 69.

²⁰ A point repeated by Adeimantus (366d-367e).

goes on to give for preferring injustice to justice are reasons why injustice is supposed to be good 'in itself,' in the sense of the phrase that Plato has in mind.

So we can affirm:

- (1) The arguments of Glaucon and Adeimantus in defense of injustice are meant to prove that it is good in itself, and hence they show what sort of consideration may be relevant in establishing that something is good in itself.

But we can also affirm

- (2) The arguments offered by Glaucon and Adeimantus to show that injustice is good in itself appeal to the causal consequences of injustice.

To begin with, at 359c-d, while explaining why "injustice is much more profitable to [the unjust agent] than justice," i.e. why injustice is supposed to be an intrinsic good, the desire for undue gain (*πλεονεξία*) is said to be the motive for unjust action (cf. 366a1-3). But clearly enough, in the standard cases which Plato mentions such as the desire for more wealth than is one's due, the gain one gets from unjust action is a causal consequence of the action, not the action itself. It is because people want the money that will result from unjust action that people do what is unjust.²¹ Hence, Glaucon is saying that it is because unjust action produces undue gain that unjust action is seen by people as intrinsically good.

Undue gain, i.e. the *possession* of more than one's due, is not a part of the action of acting unjustly. A can steal from B and hand over the goods to C. Then C, not A, will (let us suppose) have more than his due.²²

It might be said that in this case unjust action is not an intrinsic good to A, but I use this example merely to show that the undue *possession* of a good is not a part of an unjust action but a causal consequence of unjust action. And when, as in the normal case envisioned by Glaucon, A unjustly takes B's goods and *as a causal consequence* has more than his due, Glaucon takes this to show that injustice is an intrinsic good, i.e. the unjust action is taken to be an intrinsic good because of a causal consequence of the action.

Other passages in the speeches of Glaucon and Adeimantus reinforce the point that the causal consequences of unjust action play a role in arguing for its intrinsic goodness. At 360b-c, in the case of the man with

²¹ I, like Plato, will ignore cases of people who steal simply for the joy of stealing.

²² This is evidently Plato's view of the matter too. For example, at 591a the possession of goods is a result of (ἐκ) an unjust action. Cf. *Laws* 862c.

Gyges' ring, we get some examples of unjust actions, including taking the property of another. Taking the property of another would clearly not be "welcomed" if it did not result in one's being free to possess and use the stolen property. Again, if I stole the goods and handed them over to somebody else, I would have committed an unjust act but to me the act would (at least in this regard) have no value. Glaucon is explaining why people regard unjust action as an intrinsic good,²³ and he construes the example given with Gyges' ring as providing the reason why people regard it as an intrinsic good (360c-d). So unjust action is regarded as an intrinsic good because of a causal consequence of the action.

²³ Irwin (*PE*, 184) describes the case of Gyges' ring as one where Glaucon "points out that if we value justice for its consequences, we must admit it is no longer valuable if the good consequences are removed." This may be misleading because there is no question of removing the good consequences of justice in the case of Gyges' ring. It is a case where the consequences of injustice are removed, i.e. the evil consequences that usually ensue on unjust action, in order to show that people do not value justice for itself. For, Glaucon says, whenever the evil consequences of injustice are eliminated people will choose injustice over justice. To have a case where the good consequences of justice are removed we would need an example in which someone does what is just but does not receive the usual rewards of justice. No such case is considered in the passage with Gyges' ring.

Later Irwin says the following when discussing the case of Gyges' ring (*PE*, 187): "Glaucon's counterfactual suppositions . . . make clearer . . . a consideration that is relevant to our decision in actual circumstances. If the only things that matter are the consequences of justice and injustice, then we must prefer injustice when it has better consequences." But the idea that "the only things that matter are the consequences of justice and injustice" is irrelevant to the case of Gyges' ring. The aim of this argument is to establish that injustice is good *in itself* so it can hardly assume that the only things that matter are the consequences of justice and injustice. The only counterfactual feature of the situation is that the usual consequences of injustice are removed. But it is precisely because injustice is considered an intrinsic good and justice is considered an intrinsic evil that all, according to the argument, would choose injustice if the usual bad consequences of injustice could be avoided. It is not a situation where we are supposed to imagine that "the only things that matter are the consequences of justice and injustice."

I also disagree with Irwin's description of the overall purpose of the speeches of Glaucon and Adeimantus. He says (*PE*, 188) that "the four-stage argument is carefully constructed to show that I cannot both advocate being just purely for its consequences and give a good reason for being just; if I am concerned only for the consequences of justice, I must admit that I can secure these by appearing to be just rather than by being just." But if the normal situation is that I cannot hide my acts, then the normal situation is that I can appear to do what is just only if I do what is just. So, as in the social contract theory, I can both advocate doing what is just purely for its consequences and give a good reason for doing what is just.

At 362b, after listing the benefits arising from the reputation for justice (cf. 613d), i.e. after listing the goods that are consequences of justice,²⁴ Glaucon refers to the intrinsic good of doing what is unjust by saying that “besides all these advantages [i.e. the advantages that follow from the reputation for justice, i.e. the advantages which are normally *consequences* of justice], he [the unjust man] benefits in the pursuit of gain (κερδαίνοντα) because he does not scruple to practice injustice.” The gain that results from practicing injustice is not the same as the practice itself.

Even more clearly, the benefits of injustice listed after this are both causal consequences of injustice and do not depend on the reputation for justice, and hence²⁵ are not regarded by Plato as consequences of justice:

Besides all these advantages [that follow from the reputation for justice – 362b2], he benefits in the pursuit of gain because he does not scruple to practice injustice. In any contest, public or private, he is the winner, getting the better of his enemies and accumulating wealth; he benefits his friends and does harm to his enemies. To the gods he offers grand sacrifices and gifts which will satisfy them, he can serve the gods much better than the just man, and also such men as he wants to, with the result that he is likely to be dearer to the gods.²⁶

All of these benefits are unrelated to the reputation for justice. For example, there is no reason why a wealthy man's aiding his friends should depend on other people thinking him just. The benefits derive from the accumulation of wealth that follows on unjust action by the unjust man and are part of why unjust action is supposed to be good in itself. But

²⁴ To repeat, Socrates has reversed the connections between justice and injustice on the one hand and their normal consequences on the other, so that the consequences of justice are given to the unjust man (and the consequences of injustice to the just man). There is a clear division between (i) the benefits for the perfectly unjust man that are consequences of justice, i.e. those that follow from his misleading reputation for justice (362b2-4), and (ii) the benefits of injustice itself (362b4-c6). In the case of the just man with the reputation for injustice, only the evils that are consequences of injustice are mentioned (361c-362a).

²⁵ As we'll see later, the consequences of justice which Plato is concerned to rule out in the assessment of the intrinsic goodness of justice are those that follow from the reputation for justice.

²⁶ Note that whereas a few lines later (363a-b) Adeimantus says that the reputation for justice leads to popularity among the gods, here in 362c the basis for the unjust man's being dear to the gods is not his reputation for justice but the fact that, being rich as a result of his injustice, he is able to offer the gods “grand sacrifices and gifts which will satisfy them.” In 363a the just man is under discussion and justice is praised for its consequences, while in 362c the unjust man is at issue and it is argued that injustice is good in itself. Cf. n. 17.

these are obviously causal consequences of unjust action and not identical with it.²⁷

Again, at 364a Adeimantus continues Glaucon's argument by pointing out that people regard unjust action as more profitable than just action since the unjust will have wealth. As we have seen (he is arguing that injustice is good in itself and assumes that its consequences are evils), in saying that people regard injustice as profitable, Adeimantus means that they regard it as good in itself. And it is the fact that unjust action leads to the possession of wealth which is said to explain why injustice is regarded as profitable. The possession of wealth is a causal consequence of unjust action, and the fact that unjust action has this as a causal consequence is taken to show that unjust action is good in itself.

Glaucon and Adeimantus are defending the view put forward by Thrasymachus in Book I (357a, 358b-c, 367a). Since they defend the view that justice is evil in itself and injustice is good in itself, Thrasymachus' position is that justice is evil in itself and injustice is good in itself. Thus, Thrasymachus is said to hold the view that justice belongs to the third class of goods (358a; cf. 358b7-c7),²⁸ so he regards it as evil in itself.

²⁷ These examples of causal consequences of injustice which are supposed to make it good in itself rule out White's suggestion that when *x* is an intrinsic good because it is the *aitia* of some effect, the connection between cause and effect is a kind of non-empirical synthetic necessity ("The Classification of Goods in Plato's *Republic*," 408). The connection between injustice and aiding one's friends is not the same as that between *three* and *odd*.

Also, White's view ("The Classification of Goods in Plato's *Republic*," 395) that "*x* is good for itself" means that *x* "by itself" leads to happiness cannot be right. Plato asserts that health is good for itself but he obviously does not believe that health by itself leads to happiness. Nor do I see any reason to believe that Plato thinks that the tortured just man is happy, contrary to White's position that, since justice is good in itself, justice necessitates happiness. Likewise, although the many think that injustice is good in itself, they think that the normal consequences of injustice are evils – being whipped, stretched on the rack, imprisoned, having one's eyes burned out, and being impaled (361e; cf. 613d-e). It is unlikely that they regard such a man as happy.

²⁸ Irwin is surprised by the fact that when justice is put into the third class of goods, Socrates says that justice "has previously been condemned by Thrasymachus for having this character" (358a). For, Irwin says, "Thrasymachus did not say that justice was any sort of good at all" (*PE*, 181). But what Thrasymachus says about ordinary injustice suggests that he could agree that, normally, justice has valuable consequences. For he did point out the evil consequences of ordinary injustice (344b), i.e. injustice that is not able to avoid punishment and the opprobrium of others. Only injustice done in secret (as in the extreme case of Gyges' ring) or on a large scale (as in the case of a tyrant) can avoid these consequences (344a-c, 345a; cf. 360e-361b, 365c-d, 367b-c).

And, clearly enough, he holds that injustice is good in itself (cf. 358e3). Hence, the reasons which Thrasymachus brings forward for praising injustice and for condemning justice can also be taken to indicate what, for Plato, makes something good or evil in itself.

At 343d-344a Thrasymachus points out evil causal consequences of justice. They are all independent of the reputation for justice, and therefore they provide reasons for saying that justice is evil in itself. The causal consequences of justice are listed as follows:

1. In contracts with other people, "when the partnership ends" the just have less than the unjust.
2. In payment of tax, the just man acts justly and as a result pays more than others. A result of the action is that the just man has less money.
3. In the distribution of benefits the just man gets less.
4. When holding public office, the affairs of the just man deteriorate through neglect and he receives nothing from holding his office since he is honest.
5. The just man is disliked by his household and acquaintances because he refuses to do them unjust favors.

Clearly, at least (1), (2), (4) and (5) describe causal consequences of justice. Injustice is said to be good because then the opposite of (1)-(5) holds (343e), so the corresponding points describe good causal consequences of injustice which are independent of the reputation for injustice. Hence (see below)²⁹ they are arguments that injustice is good in itself. This fits the

So although Thrasymachus says that injustice is profitable and justice is not profitable (348c), his position is that it is only large scale or secret injustice that is profitable (344c, 348b, d; cf. 345a). Likewise, it is reasonable to suppose, Thrasymachus may think that, ordinarily, justice has good consequences, while it is a worse option for one who is in a position to be unjust in secret or to practice large scale injustice which involves the ability to avoid punishment.

It is possible that the statement at 358a that "Justice has now for some time been objected to by Thrasymachus *on this score*" only picks out the point that justice "is to be avoided in itself for being difficult," rather than that fact plus the claim that it has good consequences. But the point remains that Thrasymachus agrees that injustice normally has evil consequences. The fact that he thinks there may be exceptions to this rule does not affect the point since, as we'll see (and as should be clear already), Plato does not think that what he calls the consequences of x must always or necessarily follow from x.

²⁹ Where I argue that, for Plato, it is only the good or bad causal consequences of justice and injustice that follow from the reputation for one or the other that provide reasons for saying that they are good or evil for their consequences.

previously noted point that all parties to the discussion, including Thrasymachus, agree that injustice has evil consequences and justice has good consequences. So Thrasymachus' arguments against justice must be designed to show that it is evil in itself.

Second argument that the casual consequences of x may be relevant to its intrinsic goodness

Strong evidence that the causal consequences of *x* may be relevant in establishing its intrinsic value is provided by Plato's comment on the course of the argument of the *Republic* at 612a-d.³⁰ There, he points out that he has hitherto been arguing for the superior value of justice over injustice by considering justice and injustice themselves apart from their consequences, and that he will now, for the first time, turn to their consequences. This proves that all that has gone before is understood by Plato to have presented reasons why justice is good in itself and injustice is evil in itself.

If so, it follows that the causal consequences of justice and injustice matter for establishing that the first is good in itself and the latter is evil in itself. For earlier (588b-590a) Plato argued that just action is good because it promotes psychic justice, while unjust action is evil because it promotes psychic injustice. It is clear that psychic justice is a causal consequence of just action and that psychic injustice is a causal consequence of unjust action. And according to 612a-d, the fact that just and unjust actions have these effects establishes that one is good in itself and the other is evil in itself. Hence, the causal consequences of something may determine it to be good or evil in itself.³¹

³⁰ As others have recognized. See Kirwan, "Glaucon's Challenge," 170-71; White, "The Classification of Goods in Plato's *Republic*," 401; Cross and Wooldley, *Plato's Republic*, 62. Cf. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings*, 25. White correctly points out that 612 suffices to refute the view that Book IX's argument that the just life is more pleasant than the unjust life is not an argument that justice is good in itself.

³¹ Note too 613e-614a's contrast between the good consequences of justice with the "goods" provided by justice itself which make it good in itself. If a plurality of goods provided by justice itself makes it good in itself, then the presence of the single good justice itself cannot be the sole thing that makes it good in itself.

Irwin (*PMT*, 210-11) describes the argument of 588b-590a as though it were an argument that just action is good because of its consequences. He does not mention 612's clear implication that 588-90, together with everything else up to 612 said in defense of justice, is meant to establish that justice is good in itself. *PE* too does not discuss the clear implication of the passage on this point.

Further, for the same reason that the speeches of Glaucon and Adeimantus indicate what, for Plato, makes something good in itself, the discussion of the degenerate constitutions and men in Book VIII indicate what can make something evil in itself. For Glaucon and Adeimantus want Socrates to show not only that justice is good in itself but that injustice is evil in itself (366e, 367b, d). As 612 shows, all that has preceded is relevant to this proof. Hence, the discussion of unjust men in the discussion of different types of men and constitutions is part of the argument that injustice is evil in itself.

Take, for example, the extreme case of the tyrannical man. The following evils will apply to him as causal consequences of his injustice: the satisfaction of his old desires no longer affords any pleasure (574a, 577e-578a, 579e), he is full of fear, convulsions and pain (578a, 579b, e), he is friendless (576a, 580a). For Plato, these causal consequences of injustice show how it is evil in itself.³²

³² The fact that *x* may be considered an intrinsic good because of its causal consequences may even be built into Plato's initial description of the first class of goods, which are welcomed for themselves but not for their consequences. At 357b5-8 Plato says that they are things which we do not welcome for their consequences

but welcome for their own sake, such as enjoyment (*χαίρειν*) and the harmless pleasures (*ἡδοναί*) from which nothing comes to be at a later time other than enjoyment (*χαίρειν*). (*ἀλλ' αὐτὸ αὐτοῦ ἕνεκα ἀσπαζόμενοι, οἷον τὸ χαίρειν καὶ αἱ ἡδοναί ὅσαι ἀβλαβεῖς καὶ μηδὲν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον διὰ ταύτας γίγνεται ἄλλο ἢ χαίρειν ἔχοντα.*)

It is at least plausible to suppose that *χαίρειν* and *ἡδονή* are distinct since the first is said to come to be from the second. If they are distinct, then it is very plausible to say that *ἡδονή* is a kind of activity and *χαίρειν* is the sensation of pleasure that it produces (cf. Sachs, "A Fallacy in Plato's *Republic*," 209). In which case Plato will be saying that a kind of activity (*ἡδονή*) can be counted as an intrinsic good because of the pleasure (*χαίρειν*) it causes.

Irwin (*PMT*, 325, n. 8) claims that "from which nothing comes to be at a later time other than pleasure (*χαίρειν*)" in the quoted sentence applies to the previous *χαίρειν* (in τὸ *χαίρειν καὶ αἱ ἡδοναί* in b7) as well as *αἱ ἡδοναί*. If so, Irwin argues, it cannot be that Plato is saying that the *χαίρειν* which "comes to be at a later time" is a causal consequence of *ἡδοναί* since then he would also, absurdly, be saying that that second *χαίρειν* is a causal consequence of *χαίρειν*, i.e. of itself. Hence, the quoted sentence cannot be saying that pleasures that are sensations are caused by pleasures that are activities.

Irwin's objection fails because it rests on the unjustifiable assumption that "from which nothing comes to be at a later time other than enjoyment (*χαίρειν*)" cannot modify *ἡδοναί* alone. But it can, and if it does Plato is giving two examples of things which we welcome for their own sake but not for their consequences:

Irwin argues that the causal consequences of something cannot be relevant to its intrinsic goodness. He says (*PMT*, 325, n. 8) that, on this view, Plato will have problems distinguishing the first and second class of goods from the third class of goods. The objection is repeated in *Plato's Ethics* (190-91) where he says that the supposition that the causal consequences of an item might help to determine whether it is an intrinsic good "does not explain why Plato divides the second from the third class of goods in the way he does." For, he says, even if exercise on its own³³ (one of Plato's examples of the third class of good) normally produces health, it is clear that Plato would put it into the third class, not the second. Whereas, on the proposal that the causal consequences of x may be relevant to making it an intrinsic good, Irwin thinks, exercise should be put into the second class since it causes a good consequence and hence, on the proposal, should count as good in itself.

But Irwin's objection is a result of his own misunderstanding of the third class of goods. He evidently thinks that they include things that are neutral in themselves but have good causal consequences. For all he says about them in *PMT* (184) is that they are "goods chosen only for their consequences," not taking into account the point, argued above, that any member of the third class of goods is an intrinsic evil. The misunderstanding becomes clear when he says (*PMT*, 185): "When Socrates agrees that justice is a b-good [i.e., belongs to the second class of goods], . . . he rejects the position of Book I, and equally of the *Gorgias* and the Socratic dialogues, which all treat justice as a c-good [i.e., as belonging to the third class]." Irwin can say this only if he thinks that the third class of goods includes things that are, in themselves, neutral or indifferent. For it would be absurd to claim that Socrates ever suggests that justice is an intrinsic evil, and I assume that Irwin does not ascribe such a view to Socrates.

In fact, unlike the *Gorgias*, the *Republic's* classification does not include any class of things that are in themselves neutral or indifferent. Once we acknowledge the point that Plato's third class of goods includes

(1) enjoyment ($\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\epsilon\iota\nu$), and

(2) the harmless pleasures ($\acute{\eta}\delta\omicron\nu\acute{\alpha}\iota$) from which nothing comes to be at a later time other than enjoyment ($\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\epsilon\iota\nu$).

If this is what Plato means, then (2) may be saying that some $\acute{\eta}\delta\omicron\nu\acute{\alpha}\iota$ are intrinsic goods because of their causal consequences.

³³ Irwin is addressing the proposal that the fact that a good is a consequence of x counts for x being an intrinsic good only if x has that consequence in normal circumstances, not merely if it has that consequence in certain special circumstances.

only intrinsic evils, the interpretation that sees the causal consequences of x as possibly relevant to determining its intrinsic goodness has no problem in distinguishing the second from the third class of goods. All things that belong to the first two classes of goods are not intrinsic evils, while all things belonging to the third class of goods are intrinsic evils. This suffices to distinguish the first and second class of goods from the third class of goods. Exercise is excluded from the second class of goods because it is an intrinsic evil.

II

If Plato allows that causal consequences of x may be relevant to determining that x is good in itself, what are the "consequences" of x which he wishes to rule out as irrelevant to determining the intrinsic value of x ? With regard to Plato's general division of goods into three classes, I do not know the answer to this question. I doubt that there is a consistent interpretation which will handle all of Plato's examples. But it is the case of justice that interests me here, and in this case the consequences which Plato wishes to exclude in assessing its intrinsic value are the reputation for justice and the benefits that follow from the reputation for justice. In other words, the consequences that follow for the just man because of other people's awareness of his justice are those that are irrelevant to its intrinsic worth.³⁴

The evidence for this claim is overwhelming. It can hardly be accidental that in *every* passage where Plato talks about excluding the consequences of justice from consideration of its intrinsic worth,³⁵ it is the reputation for justice and the consequences following on that reputation which are at issue. Here are some of them:

1. 358a: After Socrates says that he puts justice into the class of goods that are to be welcomed both for themselves and for their consequences, Glaucon says: "That is not the opinion of the many . . .; they would put it in the wearisome class, to be pursued for the rewards and popularity which come from a good reputation [i.e., for its consequences], but to be avoided in itself as being difficult."

³⁴ Here I agree with Jerome Schiller, "Just Men and Just Acts in Plato's *Republic*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 6 (1968), 5.

³⁵ *Rep.* 358a, 361b-362c, 362e-363a, 365b, 366d-e, 367b-e, 392b, 392c, 444e-445a, 580b-c, 612b-c.

This is the first passage in which there is a reference to the consequences of justice, and they are identified with the rewards following from the reputation for justice. The rewards following from a reputation for justice are distinguished from any intrinsic value of justice, the many being said to regard justice as evil in itself, and to think that it is rational to want it only because of its consequences, viz. the rewards following from the reputation for justice.

2. 361b-362c: In comparing the goodness of the lives of the just and the unjust, in order to ensure that the just man is one who chooses justice for itself rather than its consequences, the just man is deprived of the reputation for justice, and, hence, is deprived of the rewards following from the reputation for justice. If there were any other consequences of justice besides those following from the reputation for justice which Plato wanted to rule out in assessing its intrinsic worth, then simply excluding the consequences that follow from the reputation for justice would not insure that the consequences of justice were not being considered. With those other consequences still in the field, it would remain possible that the just man chooses justice because of those consequences of justice that do not depend on the reputation for justice instead of choosing justice for itself. But as Plato presents the case, excluding the rewards for the reputation for justice by itself suffices to exclude all of the consequences of justice which he wants to put out of consideration. Hence, there are no consequences of justice which Plato wishes to exclude from consideration other than those that follow from the reputation for justice.

3. 362e-363a: When Adeimantus takes over Glaucon's argument, in order to prove that the many do not value justice itself he points out:

When fathers speak to their sons, they say one must be just . . . but they do not praise justice itself, only the high reputations it leads to, in order that the son, thought to be just, shall enjoy those public offices, marriages, and the rest which Glaucon mentioned, as they belong to the just man because of his high repute.

Here, the only consequences of justice said to be valued which are distinguished from justice itself are good reputation and the goods resulting from that reputation.

4. 367b: Adeimantus explains what he wants Socrates to do:

So do not merely give us a theoretical proof that justice is better than injustice, but tell us how each, in and by itself, affects a man, the one for good, the other for evil. Follow Glaucon's advice and do not take reputations into account, for

if you do not deprive them of true reputation and attach false reputations to them, we shall say that you are not praising justice but the reputation for it, or blaming injustice but the appearance of it . . .

Adeimantus wants justice itself to be praised and injustice itself to be condemned. But suppose that Plato thought that the good consequences of justice included other things besides the rewards that follow from the reputation for justice. Then, in praising justice, ignoring the rewards that follow from the reputation for justice would not suffice to insure that Socrates was not praising justice for its consequences rather than for itself. For the possibility would remain that after removing the beneficial consequences of justice that follow from the reputation for justice, other consequences would remain and that Socrates was praising justice because of those consequences rather than for itself.

I could go on, but the above passages prove the point. In the case of justice and injustice, the consequences which Plato is concerned to rule out of consideration in deciding whether justice and injustice are good or evil in themselves are those consequences which follow from the reputation for each. Hence, causal consequences of justice or injustice which do not involve the reputation for justice or injustice may be relevant in deciding whether they are good or evil in themselves.

This fits the evidence set out above on the causal consequences mentioned by Glaucon and Adeimantus when they present their arguments for injustice being good in itself: the causal consequences which they mention are independent of the reputation for injustice. Likewise, the causal consequences of injustice which Socrates mentions in Book VIII in arguing that injustice is evil in itself are independent of the reputation for injustice.

This interpretation makes it clear why, when Plato ends the argument for justice being good in itself and points out why it is good for its consequences, he speaks in terms of the contrast between the goods which follow from *being* just and the goods which follow from *appearing* (*δοκεῖν*) to be just (612d). One has the reputation (*δόξα*) for justice precisely when one appears to be just to other people. The benefits that follow from the reality of justice do not depend on such an appearance and make it good for itself.

There is one serious objection to the proposal that the consequences of justice which Plato wishes to rule out of consideration in assessing its intrinsic worth are those that follow from the reputation for justice.³⁶ Consider

³⁶ Cf. Kirwan, "Glaucon's Challenge," 165; Irwin, *PE*, 182.

Plato's examples when he first sets out the division of goods at 357b-358a. Examples of the second class of goods which are good for their consequences as well as for themselves are knowledge, sight and health. Examples of the third class of goods which are good for their consequences include being treated when ill. Now, whatever the good consequences of knowledge, sight, health and being treated when ill which Plato has in mind, surely many of them must be consequences that do not depend on having the reputation for these things.

So, the objection goes, when Plato sets out his division of goods, he gives as examples of things that are good for their consequences things that are instrumental goods for consequences which do not depend on the reputation for those things. If, in his own examples, the consequences of x that matter for determining its instrumental value do not depend on the reputation for x , how can Plato wish to say that the consequences of justice that matter for determining its instrumental value depend on the reputation for justice?

To this there are two replies. First, the evidence cited above still remains. In particular, *immediately* after setting out the general division of goods (358a), Plato specifies the consequences of justice that need to be excluded from the assessment of its intrinsic value as those rewards that follow from the reputation for justice.

Secondly, consider what Plato says when he returns to his division of goods in a later passage (367c-d):

Now since you agreed that justice is among the greatest goods – those that are [a1] *worth having for what comes from them* but much more [b1] [*worth having*] *for themselves*, such as seeing, hearing, thinking, and, of course, being healthy and all the other goods that are [b2] *fruitful by their own nature* (γόνιμα τῆ αὐτῶν φύσει) but [a2] *not [fruitful] because of reputation* (ἀλλ' οὐ δόξει) – praise this aspect of justice, [b3] the way in which it in itself benefits the man who has it, and the way in which injustice harms the man who has it; leave [a3] the rewards and reputations (δόξας) for others to praise.

This passage may be open to different readings. It might, perhaps, be understood so that [b2] but not [a2] is explanatory of [b1] in this sense: specification of the intrinsic worth of seeing, hearing, etc. specifies the goods they produce by their own nature – not the goods they produce through the reputation [δόξα] for possession of the goods, which would make them good for their consequences. Then, throughout, [b] specifies intrinsic value while [a] concerns the value of a thing for its consequences.

Suppose this is right. The examples of health and sight mentioned here were also mentioned in the original division of goods at 357c as instances

of the second class of goods – things that are good for their consequences as well as for themselves. And [a1], [a2] and [a3] connect the beneficial consequences of health and sight with the reputation for possessing them. So understood, this passage answers the claim that Plato's original examples at 357c show that the good consequences of justice in the *Republic* are not those which follow from the reputation for justice. For the argument was that in the examples mentioned – e.g. health and sight – their consequences evidently do not depend on the reputation for the things in question. But here Plato connects the consequences of even these things to reputation.

Suppose instead that with [a2] Plato means that health, sight, etc. have *no* consequences that follow from their reputation. That is, on this interpretation, both [b2] and [a2] elucidate [b1]. Nevertheless, when the case of justice is returned to in [b3] and [a3], the consequences of justice are once again tied to the reputation for justice. So, on this interpretation of [a2], in the same sentence in which Plato mentions some of the examples from 357c and affirms that their instrumental value has nothing to do with consequences resulting from the reputation for having them,³⁷ he repeats the idea of the dependence of the consequences of justice on possessing the reputation for justice. Therefore, on this interpretation of 367c-d, the fact that 357c mentions examples of goods whose instrumental value has nothing to do with reputation cannot show that the instrumental value of justice does not depend on the reputation for justice.³⁸

I conclude that Plato regards the causal consequences of *x* as possibly relevant to assessing the intrinsic value of *x*. But it would be wrong to think that Plato believes that in all cases it is *only* the causal consequences of *x* that matter in determining its intrinsic value. Consider the view of the many who hold that justice is an intrinsic evil because it is difficult (*χαλεπός*) and painful or laborious (*ἐπιπόνος*) (358a, 364a; cf. 364c-d, 365b),

³⁷ Although I said that the present interpretation construes both [b2] fruitful (*γόνιμος*) by their own nature (*τῆ αὐτῶν φύσει*), and [a2] not [fruitful] because of reputation (*οὐ δόξῃ*)

as elucidating the idea that these things are [a1] worth having for themselves, the interpretation construes [a2] as meaning that seeing, hearing, etc. have *no* consequences because of their reputation. If so, it follows that the good consequences that make them good for their consequences include nothing that follows from the reputation for having them.

³⁸ 361b5-362e7 is another passage that contrasts the reality and appearance of justice (and injustice) (361b7-8, d1, 362e6-7), and connects the appearance of justice with the consequences of justice.

and so put it into the third class of goods. It is possible that ἐπιπόνος should be translated “painful,” and it is possible that Plato regards pain and pleasure as a causal consequences of just action. Still, there is no reason to think that Plato regards pain as an intrinsic evil only because of its causal consequences. And, in any case, the fact that a kind of behavior such as doing what is just is “difficult” has nothing to do with its causal consequences but is rather a feature of the action. However, the fact that justice is difficult is offered as a reason why it is evil in itself. Hence, the fact that x is evil (or good) in itself need not be determined solely by its causal consequences.³⁹ Being difficult is not even a “formal” consequence of just behavior.

If the fact that justice is difficult supports the point that it is evil in itself, then the fact that injustice is “easy” (364a; cf. 364c) must support the claim that it is good in itself. Being easy is not a causal consequence of unjust action.

III

I will conclude by pointing out some other features of Plato’s division of goods that are worth noting. First, the consequences of x do not *necessarily* follow from x .⁴⁰ In order to set up the examination of the intrinsic value of justice and injustice, Glaucon presents the cases of the just man who does not enjoy the consequences of justice but instead suffers the consequences of injustice; and of the unjust man who does not suffer the con-

³⁹ Which is not to deny that even in the case of pain and pleasure their consequences may be relevant to determining their intrinsic worth. At 357b Plato says that “harmless pleasures (ἡδοναί)” are good in themselves. If these pleasures are sensations of pleasure, Plato may be implying that when they have harmful consequences they are not good in themselves because of those harmful consequences. It is also possible, however, that Plato would classify a harmful pleasure as something good in itself which has evil consequences. This may be the view found at *Protagoras* 353c-354c. At 351c-e, pleasure qua pleasure is good. But immediately after 354c we get a different use of “good” and “evil.” Now (354c-e), the *overall* goodness or evil of x is assessed by comparing its intrinsic pleasantness or painfulness (goodness or evil) with its pleasant or painful (good or evil) consequences. Socrates’ subsequent attempt (354e-355e) to refute the many’s explanation of akrasia appears to present a difficulty only because the difference between these uses of “good” and “evil” is blurred.

⁴⁰ Noted by Cross and Woosley, *Plato’s Republic*, 66. Reeve claims (*Philosopher-Kings*, 30) that if x is an instrumental good because it brings about y , x is sufficient for y . See also n. 27.

sequences of injustice but enjoys the consequences of justice. While Plato later points out that this separation of justice and injustice from their consequences was made solely for the sake of argument (612c-d), and that it is impossible that both gods and men should be ignorant of a man's justice or injustice, there is plainly no reason why someone's justice or injustice could not escape the knowledge of other people. Then the consequences of justice or injustice that follow from the knowledge of other people would not be enjoyed by the just or unjust man. And obviously, as Plato clearly knew, even if A is just and has the reputation for justice, a tyrant might prevent all those goods which Plato says are the consequences of justice. A tyrant may escape at any rate some of the consequences of his injustice, or if A is unjust but not a tyrant, A may be clever enough to conceal his injustice, or find himself in a position where he can hide his injustice. Similarly with Plato's example of treatment for illness – the hoped for consequence of restoration to health does not always follow. Consider also the historical Socrates who did not enjoy what Plato would regard as all the consequences of justice even though, in Plato's view, he was the most just man of his time (*Phaedo* 118a, *Seventh Letter* 324e).

So: at least not all of the consequences of x that make it an instrumental good necessarily follow from x . It need not be a sufficient condition for those consequences, and this evidently applies to the consequences of justice and injustice. Plato is drawing a general distinction between types of good, and the claim that y is a consequence of x entails at best that y usually follows x .

The same applies to those causal consequences that make x good or evil in itself. For example, while the fact that unjust action leads to the accumulation of wealth is given as a reason why injustice is good in itself in the speeches of Glaucon and Adeimantus, there is no reason to think that Plato believes that this necessarily follows, even when the unjust action is undertaken to obtain money. Adeimantus says (364a) that "unjust deeds are *for the most part* more profitable than just ones."

Nor is x on its own a necessary condition for the consequences of x . The consequences of x may follow from something other than x : in Plato's case of the perfectly unjust man, the consequences of justice follow from the *appearance* of justice even when justice is not present in the unjust man. So x is not a necessary condition for the consequences of x that make x good for the sake of its consequences.

Another feature of Plato's division which has attracted little if any notice is this: The notions of intrinsic good and evil are relative to someone affected by the item in question. While any good or evil is good or

evil for some person, the point here is that the same thing may be an intrinsic good for A and an intrinsic evil for B.

Glaucon and Adeimantus, while arguing that justice is an intrinsic evil for the agent, defend Thrasymachus' view that justice is *another's* good (367c; cf. 343c), i.e. it is a good for the "patient" of the action. Suppose that Glaucon and Adeimantus, in saying that A's just action is the good of someone other than A, meant merely that A's just action has beneficial consequences (in Plato's sense) for the patient of the action. Then the view of Glaucon and Adeimantus would be that, normally, the just agent's action produces exactly the same kinds of consequences – namely, good ones – for both the agent and the patient. For, as noted above, all parties to the argument agree that, normally, the agent's just action produces good consequences for the agent. But it is clear that the view that justice is *another's* good means that in the way in which justice is another's good it is precisely *not* the agent's good. The only way in which the view set out by Glaucon and Adeimantus holds that justice is not the agent's good is that it is not good in itself for the agent. So when that view asserts that justice is the patient's good it means that justice is good in itself for the patient.

Therefore, the view of Glaucon and Adeimantus must be that just action is an intrinsic evil for the agent and an intrinsic good for the patient. Hence, the same thing may be an intrinsic good for A and an intrinsic evil for B.

Since the disagreement between the many and Socrates concerns the value of just action for the agent, the many put it into the third class of goods because they believe that it is an intrinsic evil for the agent of the action even though it is also an intrinsic good for the patient of the action. But since justice is an intrinsic good from the point of view of the patient, it cannot belong to the third class of goods and so must, from that point of view, belong to the first or second class of goods. Hence, the same thing may fall into different categories of good.

Of course, Plato will go on to argue that justice is an intrinsic good for the agent. Since all presumably agree that justice is an intrinsic good for the patient of the action, the same thing can be an intrinsic good for more than one person, here the agent and the patient of the action. If, as Plato holds, what is good for a person is based on what is in fact in that person's self-interest, and if the self-interest of A is not identical with the self-interest of B, then it must be the case that the same thing can be an intrinsic good for different reasons. In the case of just action, it is clear how this will be so. The claim that justice is the intrinsic good of the

patient will be based on the fact that the patient receives some good from the action, money, honor or whatever. The claim that just action is an intrinsic good for the agent will be based on the fact that it has certain consequences for the soul of the agent, viz. it promotes justice in the agent's soul (588b-591e with 612a-b). So different types of causal consequence are relevant to determining whether the action is an intrinsic good.⁴¹

University College London

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