

PLATO'S JUSTICE DEBATE

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

What is justice?

Plato examines this through a series of dialogues with different characters



CEPHALUS' VIEW

Justice is:

Telling the truth

Repaying debts

Problem: What if returning a weapon to a mad friend?



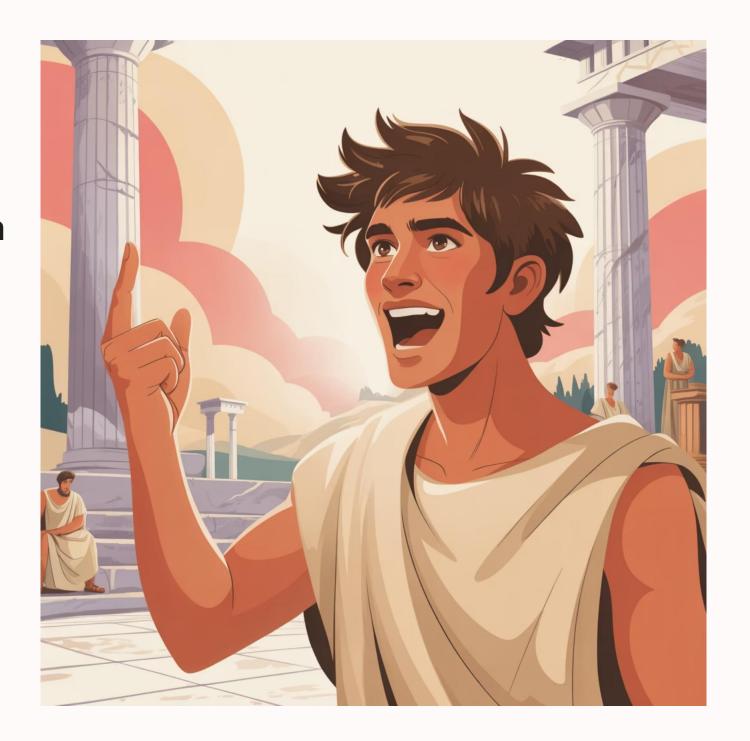
POLEMARCHUS' DEFINITION

Justice is:

Giving every man his due

Helping friends, harming enemies

Problem: Justice cannot involve harm



JUSTICE AS HUMAN EXCELLENCE

Mastering music

Skill in horse riding

Justice is a skill that must be developed

Thus Harming can not be Justice



THRASYMACHUS: THE SOPHIST

Justice is:

Might makes right

Advantage of the stronger

A radical challenge to conventional morality

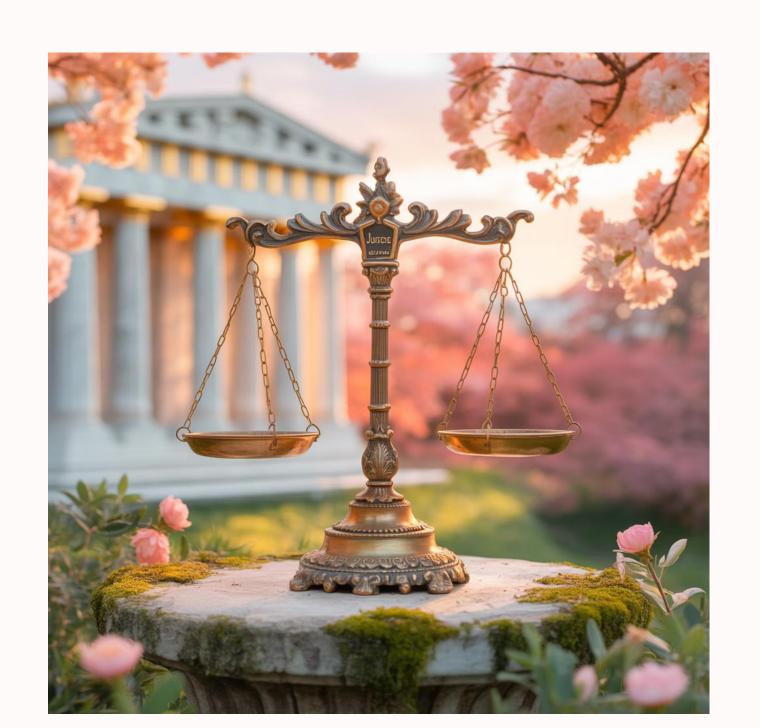


PLATO'S COUNTER-ARGUMENT

Problem with 'might is right':

What if the strong make wrong laws?

Justice cannot involve self-harm



THE PHYSICIAN ANALOGY

Just as a physician cannot:

Aim to produce more patients

Work against their proper function

Justice must work toward its proper purpose

