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COMMON, CIVIC AND PLATONIC JUSTICE IN THE REPUBLIC
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I shall mainly be concerned in this paper with two issues. First, with the by now fairly familiar question: what is the relation between 'platonic' justice and commonplace or vulgar justice? That is: what is the relation between the possession by someone of that 'state of soul' which Plato identifies, in Book 4 of the Republic, as justice in the individual (443d-e), and his behaving justly according to the conception of what that involves which is indicated, by examples, early on (see e.g. 360 b-c)? The former of these 'justices' is commonly spoken of as 'platonic justice', the latter spoken of as 'common (place) justice', and I shall follow this practice. My discussion of this question will pay particular attention to a treatment of it by Julia Annas, in which she offers an explanation of why there is that shift which there appears to be in the course of the discussion in the Republic from a consideration of the good of common justice to the just man to a consideration of the good of platonic justice to the just man. I shall consider (a) whether her account of the deeper significance of this apparent shift is plausible; and (b) whether, allowing that some transformation in the conception of what justice is has occurred, an appropriate connection can yet be made between the original and final conceptions.

This paper was presented at The Society for Greek Political Thought Conference at the London School of Economics in March 1982. Cogent criticisms of it were made then by J.L. Creed, Dale Hall and C.C.W. Taylor, for which I am grateful. A proper response to the comments made could not, however, readily be incorporated into the paper without radical alteration; so, while acknowledging its limitations, I have let it stand.
The second issue I shall discuss has been less extensively looked at. Plato first of all argues for a view of what an ideally just state would be like. Such a state will also be a wise, courageous and self-disciplined one. And it is so in each case, he contends, because of the attributes of some (or, in the case of self-discipline, of all) of its members. Thus it is a just state by virtue of the 'justice' of its members. (I put 'justice' in 'scare' quotes for reasons which will be given in a moment.) This 'justice' comprises 'the quality which makes each individual .... get on with his own job and not interfere with other people' (433d). This I shall call, anachronistically, 'civic' justice. It is that quality which makes people behave in such a way that the state they live in, the state they comprise, will come to be and will remain a just one. And I want to ask: what is the relation between platonic justice and civic justice? Is 'the quality which makes each individual .... get on with his own job' etc. (civic justice) the same quality or a different quality from that which 'produces men' in whom 'each element within .... is performing its proper function, whether it is giving or obeying orders' (443b - platonic justice)? And if they are different, how if at all do they connect? This issue surely presses as acutely as the former one, although it has received less attention. But I shall begin by discussing the first issue I have indicated.

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There are some preliminary points to be noted with regard to this. First, as mentioned above, the commonplace conception of justice is elucidated, so far