

## Section 2: Thrasymachus - the interest of the stronger

In his dialogue with Socrates, Thrasymachus persistently argues that justice reflects the interest of the stronger, or those who have the power and will to do good to himself and his friends and to harm his enemies. However, Socrates wins the day by using his wit and inquisitive method to outmanoeuvre his adversary. First, Socrates forces Thrasymachus into admitting that rulers sometimes make mistakes by coercing others to take actions that are inconsistent with the interest of the stronger. Thrasymachus also admits that it is right for the subject to obey the ruler, even if obeying is not in the best interest of the ruler. *From this, Socrates points out that what is in the interest of the stronger is no more right than what is not – justice is not necessarily in the interest of the stronger.*

Thrasymachus, moreover, argues that rulers who make mistakes (not governing in their own interest) are not good at the art of ruling – he compares the art of governance to the arts of crafts and medicine. Sticking with this analogy, Socrates responds by asking what constitutes the interest of the ruler, where Thrasymachus concedes that the art of medicine is discovering the interests of the patients. If this is true, then the art of governance entails finding out what is in the interest of the governed.

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**Comment [PD1]:** Or “prevails”, just to make it sound a bit less journalistic.

**Comment [S2]:** I recommend just moving right into your main points here.

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**Comment [PD3]:** There seems to be some inconsistencies in tense – sometimes past, sometimes present, and other times future – without any clear reason for these inconsistencies.

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