

## *Introduction*

One of the greatest and best-known debates in ancient Greece is the so-called *nomos-phusis* debate that has its origins in the fifth century BCE.<sup>1</sup> As a first approximation, this debate is a precursor of the modern, perhaps more familiar nature-nurture debate, which deals with the issue of which features in human beings are genetically and which are culturally determined. The verb “*nomizō*” in Greek means to think, believe, or practice. Consequently, things thought, believed, or practiced by human beings are in this debate said to be “by convention” (*nomōi*). Likewise, “*nomoi*” are “culturally determined” human conventions, customs, or laws. “*Phusis*,” by contrast, is usually translated as “nature,” in the sense of an essential and permanent entity, and so what is “by nature (*phusei*)” is the opposite of what is by convention.

It would be a mistake, though, to leave it at this characterization of the *nomos-phusis* debate since it oversimplifies what is really at stake. The reason is that the words “*nomos*” and “*phusis*” were used in a variety of different ways in different contexts in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. For instance, they were used in regard to such different subject matters as language, perception, or cultural norms as discussions in Plato’s *Cratylus* and *Theaetetus* or Herodotus’ *Histories* III.38 make clear. In these contexts, the pair *nomos/phusis* can be fittingly translated by the pairs prescriptive/descriptive, appearance/reality, artificial/natural, or contingent-accidental/necessary, since the terms are respectively used to draw normative, epistemological, ontological, and modal distinctions.<sup>2</sup> This makes it difficult

<sup>1</sup> See above all Heinimann 1945; Pohlenz 1953; Guthrie 2003 [1971], 55–134; Kerferd 1981, 111–30; and McKirahan 2010, 405–26.

<sup>2</sup> McKirahan 2010, 407. The debate on justice includes normative, epistemological, and ontological aspects that are not always neatly distinguished. This plurality of aspects is also on display in third-century BCE Epicurean Polystratus’ treatise *On Irrational Contempt for Common Conceptions* (cols. XXI.17–XXIX.1 Indelli), which we will examine in the following chapters.

to distill one single issue that the *nomos-phusis* debate is about and so to characterize the debate as a whole accurately.

In regard to justice, the *nomos-phusis* debate is particularly interesting and rich, as many thinkers weighed in on the question of whether justice is natural or artificial, that is, exists as part of the fabric of the world or was only created by human beings. The debate is especially clearly on display in Plato's (428/7–348/7 BCE) *Republic*, where not only the conventional *nomos* view of justice is vividly canvassed but also the rivaling *phusis* account.

After hot-headed Thrasymachus has been dismissed in book I, Glaucon steps to the fore. The fictional incarnation of Plato's brother, as the Devil's advocate, challenges Socrates, the main speaker of the dialogue and – on the most common reading – spokesperson for Plato, with an account of justice that can be said to be a prototype of the *nomos* view:

Πεφυκέναι γὰρ δὴ φασιν τὸ μὲν ἀδικεῖν ἀγαθόν, τὸ δὲ ἀδικεῖσθαι κακόν, πλείονι δὲ κακῷ ὑπερβάλλειν τὸ ἀδικεῖσθαι ἢ ἀγαθῷ τὸ ἀδικεῖν, ὥστ' ἐπειδὴν ἀλλήλους ἀδικῶσί τε καὶ ἀδικῶνται καὶ ἀμφοτέρων γεύωνται, τοῖς μὴ δυναμένοις τὸ μὲν ἐκφεύγειν τὸ δὲ αἰρεῖν δοκεῖ λυσιτελεῖν συνθέσθαι ἀλλήλοις μήτ' ἀδικεῖν μήτ' ἀδικεῖσθαι· καὶ ἐντεῦθεν δὴ ἄρξασθαι νόμους τίθεσθαι καὶ συνθήκας αὐτῶν, καὶ ὀνομάσαι τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἐπίταγμα νόμιμόν τε καὶ δίκαιον· καὶ εἶναι δὴ ταύτην γένεσιν τε καὶ οὐσίαν δικαιοσύνης, μεταξὺ οὖσαν τοῦ μὲν ἀρίστου ὄντος, ἐὰν ἀδικῶν μὴ διδῶ δίκην, τοῦ δὲ κακίστου, ἐὰν ἀδικούμενος τιμωρεῖσθαι ἀδύνατος ᾖ· τὸ δὲ δίκαιον ἐν μέσῳ ὄν τούτων ἀμφοτέρων ἀγαπᾶσθαι οὐχ ὡς ἀγαθόν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἄρρωστίᾳ τοῦ ἀδικεῖν τιμώμενον· ἐπεὶ τὸν δυνάμενον αὐτὸ ποιεῖν καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς ἄνδρα οὐδ' ἂν ἐνί ποτε συνθέσθαι τὸ μήτε ἀδικεῖν μήτε ἀδικεῖσθαι· μαινέσθαι γὰρ ἂν. ἡ μὲν οὖν δὴ φύσις δικαιοσύνης, ὧ Σώκρατες, αὕτη τε καὶ τοιαύτη, καὶ ἐξ ὧν πέφυκε τοιαῦτα, ὡς ὁ λόγος.

They say that to do injustice is naturally good and to suffer injustice bad, but that the badness of suffering it so far exceeds the goodness of doing it that those who have done and suffered injustice and tasted both, but who lack the power to do it and avoid suffering it, decide that it is profitable to come to an agreement with each other neither to do injustice nor to suffer it. As a result, they begin to make laws and agreements with one another, and what the law commands they call lawful and just. This, they say, is the origin and essence of justice. It is intermediate between the best and the worst. The best is to do injustice without paying the penalty; the worst is to suffer it without being able to take revenge. Justice is a mean between these two extremes. People value it not as a good but because they are too weak to do injustice with impunity. Someone who has the power to do this, however, and is a true man would not make an agreement with anyone

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not to do injustice in order not to suffer it. For him that would be madness. This is the nature of justice, according to the argument, Socrates, and these are its natural origins.<sup>3</sup>

What makes the account that Glaucon outlines a *nomos* account is that justice is explicitly described as the result of an agreement (*sunthēkē*) and so said to exist only because the agreement exists. Put differently, the account that Glaucon advances emphasizes the completely conventional or artificial nature of justice, that is, that justice is the product of people having weighed advantages and disadvantages of being just at a certain point in time and having determined what is just as a kind of compromise between two undesirable extremes, the goodness of doing injustices and the badness of suffering them. In short, the account that Glaucon proposes *prima facie* amounts to a kind of social contract theory, a doctrine that is typically associated with early modern authors such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, among others.<sup>4</sup>

The obvious follow-up to such a conception of justice is to further probe the proponent of such a doctrine as to whether there are situations in which it is really better to be unjust rather than to be just. After all, if justice is merely conventional, as on the *nomos* view, it seems to follow that if the circumstances change (and one might not suffer the badness of suffering injustice), it may be better not to perform actions that had been previously agreed upon as just. The famous Ring of Gyges story that Glaucon relates shortly after the passage quoted above precisely addresses this issue:<sup>5</sup> a shepherd finds a ring that gives him the power to become invisible. This allows him to commit whatever deeds he wishes without being noticed and held accountable by his fellow human beings. Thus, in such a situation, does an agent have reasons to be just? And again: Is it better for him to be just rather than to be unjust? It seems that the conventional account of justice will simply claim that agents do not always have to be just as it is unclear that this would bring the agent more advantages than can be obtained by committing injustices. This is even more the case insofar as there is no robust virtue of justice on this view that could guarantee just behavior in the absence of the agreements that determine what is just.

<sup>3</sup> Plato, *Republic* II.358e–359b. Trans. Grube, modified.

<sup>4</sup> On social contract theory in antiquity, see Kaerst 1909; Guthrie 2003 [1971]: 135–47; Kahn 1981; Müller 1985; and Sprute 1989. On the history of social contract theory in general, see Gough 1957.

<sup>5</sup> Plato, *Republic* 359c–360d. See Appendix B on how the Epicureans engage with this thought experiment.

Unfortunately, Glaucon does not name the source for the account of justice he advances, but there is some evidence that similar views were held among Pre-Socratic thinkers and Sophists.<sup>6</sup> Antiphon (fifth century BCE), in particular, defends a position that in some ways resembles the account Glaucon outlines, although Antiphon's view is less radical insofar as he claims only that the *laws* (not justice) are the products of agreements in light of what is beneficial:<sup>7</sup>

Δικα[ιοσ]ύνη [δ' οὐ]ν τὰ τῆς πόλεως νόμιμα, [ἐν ἧ] ἀν πολι[τεύ]ηται τις, μὴ [παρ]αβαίνειν. χρωίτ' ἄν οὖν ἄνθρωπος μάλιστα ἑαυτῷ ξυμφ[ε]ρόντως δικαιο[σ]ύνηι, εἰ μετὰ μὲν μαρτύρων τοὺς νόμους μεγάλους ἄγοι, μονούμενος δὲ μαρτύρων τὰ τῆς φύσεως· τὰ μὲν γὰρ τῶν νόμων [ἐπίθ]ετα, τὰ δὲ [τῆς] φύσεως ἀ[ναγ]καῖα· καὶ τὰ [μὲν] τῶν νόμων ὁμολογη[θέντ]α οὐ φύν[τα ἐστί]ν, τὰ δὲ [τῆς φύσ]εως [φύν]τα οὐχ[ὲ] ὁμολογηθ[έ]ντα [[ο]υχ[ὲ] ὁμολογηθεντα]]. τὰ οὖν νόμιμα παραβαίων ἐάν λάθῃ τοὺς ὁμολογήσαντας καὶ αἰσχύνῃς καὶ ζημίας ἀπήλλακται· μὴ λαθῶν δ' οὐ· τῶν δὲ τῆι φύσει ξυμφύτων ἐάν τι παρὰ τὸ δυνατόν βιάζῃται, ἐάν τε πάντας ἀνθρώπους λάθῃ, οὐδὲν ἔλαττον τὸ κακόν, ἐάν τε πάντες ἴδωσιν, οὐδὲν μείζον· οὐ γὰρ διὰ δόξαν βλάπτεται, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀλήθειαν.

So justice is not to transgress the laws of the city in which one is a citizen. Thus a man would use justice in a way most advantageous to himself, if, in the presence of witnesses, he held the laws in esteem, whereas when he was alone, he valued the works of nature. For the works of law are fictitious, whereas those of nature are necessary; and the works of law, being conventional are not natural while those of nature, being natural, are not conventional. Thus one who transgresses the laws, if he eludes those who agree on them, also escapes shame and punishment, but if not, he does not. But if he undertakes to violate what is possible of things innate in nature, even if he eludes all men, the evil that results is no less; even if all observe, it is no more. For he is harmed, not because of opinion, but in truth.<sup>8</sup>

In this passage, Antiphon also maintains that the *laws* can be broken if they no longer serve their purpose. On a *nomos* account then, one might say that it is not only not always better to be just, but it is also not always better to obey the law. As a result, it is perhaps hardly surprising that the defenders of a conventional account, like Antiphon, were seen as

<sup>6</sup> For some discussion, see Horkey 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Since justice is not a product of an agreement for Antiphon, Guthrie 2003 [1971], 107–13, describes Antiphon as a defender of *phusis*.

<sup>8</sup> DK 80 B 44 (= *POxy.* XI 1364). Trans. Graham, modified.

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advancing ideas that are corrosive to the foundations of morality and of the political community as such.<sup>9</sup>

In short, we can sum up the conventional theory of justice by the three claims that were just discussed:

- (1) Justice is the result of a convention of some kind.
- (2) It is not always better to be just than to be unjust (and there is no robust virtue of justice).
- (3) It is not always better to obey the laws than not to obey them.

Now, as is well known, Socrates offers a detailed response to Glaucon in the *Republic*, one meant to rebut the conventional account of justice.<sup>10</sup> This account is a version of the *physis* or nature account of justice. Recall that on the conventional view, justice arises only through the agreements that people make, and that prior to these agreements, there is simply no justice. Against this, the response of the *Republic* insists that, from a metaethical perspective, there are not only sensible particulars of justice but also a Form of justice.<sup>11</sup> What Forms precisely are, of course, is a matter of great debate in scholarship, but for present purposes, it is perhaps sufficient to note that they are the most real constituents of the world.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, in contrast to the particular objects of the sensible world, they do not experience change.<sup>13</sup> This latter feature is especially important because it also means that Forms do not come into existence and go out of existence. Instead, they are stable models, according to which particular things, which partake in them, come to be.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, Socrates counters the conventional account's first claim that justice is conventional by insisting that there is a Form of justice and that this Form is not a product of what people have agreed on contingently at a certain point in time.

In regard to the second claim of the conventional account, according to which agents are not always required to be just and there is no virtue of justice, Socrates famously proposes the analogy between a city-state and an individual as a heuristic device, since there is a continuity between the justice of a city-state and justice of an individual, on his view. Socrates

<sup>9</sup> See also the accounts of the law in the sophists Thrasymachus and Callicles in Plato's *Republic* and *Gorgias*. These accounts advance a similar conception of laws as Antiphon does. For Thrasymachus and Callicles, the laws are either artificial constraints or merely instruments of the powerful to receive what they are owed.

<sup>10</sup> Discussions of the main argument of the *Republic* are, for instance, found in White 1979; Annas 1981; Kraut 1992; and Pappas 1995.

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, Plato, *Republic* V.479e. <sup>12</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus* 247c.

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, Plato, *Republic* V.479e and *Symposium* 211b.

<sup>14</sup> On participation, see, for instance, Plato, *Phaedo* 74a–75b and 100c–e.

suggests that the interlocutors should investigate justice in an imaginary city-state (*polis*) first because it is easier to spot there. Building the imaginary city-state, the interlocutors quickly decide that three classes are needed to create a well-functioning whole: a ruling-political class (the guardians), a ruling-policing class (the auxiliaries), and a product-manufacturing class (the artisans). And drawing on what later becomes the standard list of four virtues (wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice), Socrates sets out to identify justice as the virtue that all citizens ought to possess individually to make the state function: every class of citizens has a clearly delineated scope of work and should perform this work and not perform the work in the scope of another class. On the level of the city-state, then, according to the argument of the *Republic*, it is an injustice if a cobbler, an artisan, performs the work of a politician, a member of the ruling-political class, or if a soldier, a member of the auxiliary class, is made to perform the functions of a member of the product-producing class, say, a baker. This will lead to turmoil and stasis in the city-state.

Having identified justice in the city-state, Socrates and his interlocutors turn to the human soul. Socrates argues for its tripartite structure, consisting of rational, spirited, and appetitive parts, with analogous functions as the classes of the city-state. He then again draws on the previously identified virtues, and the interlocutors decide, in analogy to the first part of the argument, that justice is to be understood as each part of the soul performing its own function: The function of the rational part is to make decisions and so rule. The function of the spirited part is to be the driving force for action. And the function of the appetitive part is to desire objects to be pursued. On the level of the individual, the greatest injustice thus occurs when some part of the soul diverts from the function for which it was intended. Perhaps the clearest example is the case of the tyrannical person, whose appetitive part is in charge, that is, performs the function of the ruling, rational part of the soul. The result is the same as in the political case: turmoil and stasis. This, according to Socrates, gives us the reason to be just: no one wants to live a life full of mental distress.

Since people want to be free of mental distress all of the time, not merely some of the time, they have a good reason to think that being just is better than being unjust all of the time. It is hard to see how exceptions to this rule could be justified. The *virtue* of justice, understood as a stable disposition of character, accordingly plays a key role in the *Republic*, while it did not play a role in the conventional account of justice, which emphasized agreements as the means to create stability in society in place of a robust virtue of justice. Instead of the claim of the conventional

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account that it is not always better to be just, then, Socrates maintains with the help of the analogy between the city-state and the individual that it is indeed always better to be just.

Given the above, it is difficult to see how an agent could justify the claim that the law should not be obeyed on the account of the *Republic*, either. First, a violation of the law, no matter how minor, could create mental distress, and in real life, it is not at all certain that an agent could escape detection after violating a law. More importantly, however, Socrates himself offers a series of reasons for obeying the law in another dialogue, the *Crito*: even when he has been condemned to death by the city-state of Athens that has wronged him, Socrates argues that he has overriding, principled reasons to obey the laws of the city-state and so accept the verdict and the penalty that was established for him. In short, then, on the *phusis* view, one should always abide by the law, which contradicts the third claim advanced by the conventional account of justice, namely, that it is *not* always better to obey the laws than not to obey them.

In what is perhaps the most famous account of justice in Greco-Roman antiquity beside the *Republic*, the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (384–322 BCE) offers a conception of justice that is of the same type as the *phusis* account Socrates advances in the *Republic*.<sup>15</sup> While Aristotle famously rejects the Platonic theory of Forms, he nevertheless argues for a kind of ethical naturalism.<sup>16</sup> Justice does not arise as the result of agreements, but is the same everywhere regardless of whatever laws are in place:

Τοῦ δὲ πολιτικοῦ δικαίου τὸ μὲν φυσικόν ἐστι τὸ δὲ νομικόν, φυσικὸν μὲν τὸ πανταχοῦ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχον δύναμιν, καὶ οὐ τῶν δοκεῖν ἢ μὴ, νομικὸν δὲ ὃ ἐξ ἀρχῆς μὲν οὐδὲν διαφέρει οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως, ὅταν δὲ θῶνται, διαφέρει, οἷον τὸ μῆναι λυτροῦσθαι, ἢ τὸ αἶγα θύειν ἀλλὰ μὴ δύο πρόβατα, ἔτι ὅσα ἐπὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα νομοθετοῦσιν, οἷον τὸ θύειν Βρασιδα, καὶ τὰ ψηφισματώδη.

Of the politically just, one part is natural, the other part is legal. The natural part is that which has the same force everywhere and does not seem this or that to someone. The legal part, by contrast, is that which from the beginning does not differ in one way or another, but when it has been laid down, it differs, for instance, the release on the receipt of a ransom of a mina, or the sacrificing of a goat but not two sheep, and further the laws

<sup>15</sup> See, for instance, Kraut 2002, 98–177; Young 2006; and Polansky 2014.

<sup>16</sup> On ethical naturalism, see also the discussion in Chapter 6.

that are passed in regard to particular cases, for instance, sacrificing to Brasidas, and the provisions of decrees.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, in addition to the political and legal forms of justice just mentioned, Aristotle distinguishes a kind of personal justice in his account. This latter kind of justice is part of his theory of virtues. This theory is quite complex in itself, and it is an open question among scholars whether Aristotle succeeded in extending his general account of the virtues to justice as well; a full review, in any case, of these ideas would require a separate monograph. Suffice it to say that Aristotle ranks justice among the moral virtues, that is, dispositions of character that agents ought to cultivate through habituation and that are essential to leading a good life.<sup>18</sup> Given this tight connection between justice and the good life, it is difficult to see how Aristotle could advocate for anything but the thesis that it is always better to be just. Similarly, Aristotle stresses the importance of good and just laws and political institutions for the cultivation of personal justice, making it difficult to see how he could advocate for anything but the importance of obeying the law.

Given the Socratic/Platonic view canvassed above and the (very brief) discussion of Aristotle's view, we can sum up the natural account of justice by the following three claims that contrast with the *nomos* account that Glaucon advances:

- (1) Justice is natural (not merely the product of an agreement that people made).
- (2) It is always better to be just (and there is a robust virtue of justice).
- (3) It is always better to obey the law.

While the accounts of justice thus far discussed are the best known, they certainly do not exhaust the theoretical space. In fact, Epicurus of Samos (341–270 BCE) and his followers during the Hellenistic period<sup>19</sup> defend an alternative view of justice that is less well known. In many ways, the Epicurean view contrasts with the Platonic and Aristotelian way of thinking about justice, while also differing from the conventional account of

<sup>17</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*, V.7.1134b18–24. Trans. mine.

<sup>18</sup> For Aristotle, justice, like all the virtues, is expressed by the choice of a “mean” (*meson*) that is in between “extremes” (*akra*), that is, between the extremes of being wronged oneself and wronging someone else. Justice extends to both the allotment of shares (distributive justice) as well as the correction of wrongs (retributive justice).

<sup>19</sup> On the school in general, see Erler 1994 and Clay 1998.

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justice that is associated with Sophists.<sup>20</sup> This account will be the subject of this book.

In addition to his empiricism, atomism, and hedonism, Epicurus is known as a defender of a kind of social contract theory. Since social contract theory in general is associated with the *nomos* account of justice, that is, a kind of conventionalism, it would prima facie seem that the Epicurean account of justice would also be a kind of conventionalism. Such an inference would be incorrect, though. The Epicureans argue for a kind of naturalism when it comes to justice insofar as on their view justice is dependent on what is beneficial, which is itself not the subject of an agreement but is a matter of nature. Nevertheless, agreements also play a key role in their account, as that which codifies what is beneficial as just in a particular place at a particular time, and so the Epicurean view also highlights the conventional nature of justice. In short, Epicurus offers a kind of middle position when it comes to the ancient *nomos-phusis* debate.

Given their qualified commitment to nature in regard to the first claim, one could think that the Epicureans endorse the second and third claims of the *phusis* account that were identified above, that is, that it is always better to be just and that it is always better to obey the law. However, the Epicureans again split the difference between the two camps of the debate. They side with the defenders of *phusis* insofar as they maintain that it is always better to be just than to be unjust and introduce a robust virtue of justice. Such a move is very unusual insofar as social contract theory more generally is not supplemented by a theory of the virtues. Yet the Epicureans do not go so far as to claim that it is also better to abide by *the law* all the time; here, they side with the *nomos* camp, acknowledging that an agent's allegiance to be just trumps his allegiance to obey the law and thus that there is no absolute obligation to obey. What results, then, is an interesting middle position, a real alternative to other, better-known accounts of justice in antiquity, that of the Sophists, on the one hand, and that of classical authors such as Plato and Aristotle, on the other hand.

<sup>20</sup> Given what we know about Epicurus' dependence on Democritus (fifth century BCE) in other areas of his philosophy, one would also expect dependence in practical philosophy. Unfortunately, though, we are poorly informed about Democritus' thought in regard to ethics and politics and so it is difficult to say what influence Democritus had on Epicurean doctrines. For Democritean ethical and political ideas, see especially Vlastos 1945; Vlastos 1946; Paneris 1977; Kahn 1985; Procopé 1989; Procopé 1990; Annas 2016 [2002]; and Robitzsch forthcoming a. For some discussion of the influence of Democritus and other Sophists on the Epicurean practical philosophy, see Müller 1972; Huby 1978; Müller 1980; Müller 1984; and Warren 2002.

However, the Epicurean account of justice not only is unusual in its own time but also is interestingly different from modern approaches. First, the Epicurean account is certainly part of the social contract tradition, but its strong commitment to human nature and ultimately its specific kind of naturalism set it apart from other accounts of this tradition. Second, while the conventional nature of agreements, especially in regard to the laws, make the Epicurean account seem like a precursor of a kind of modern-day legal positivism, it is also clear that in contradistinction to the opinion of modern legal positivists, the law cannot be investigated separately from morality on the Epicurean view.

A major challenge in researching into the Epicurean account of justice is that it has to be reconstructed from a variety of different sources of greatly varying quality. This noticeably contrasts with Plato's and Aristotle's work on justice, which is found in complete treatises such as the *Republic* or the *Nicomachean Ethics* and so can be largely found in one place, even if occasional references to other works are necessary to develop a fuller understanding. For instance, there are collections of Epicurean maxims, such as the *Principal Doctrines* (*Kuriai Doxai*; *KD* in what follows),<sup>21</sup> eight of whose forty maxims are dedicated to justice, which lack any kind of context that would facilitate the interpretation, and protreptic treatises like the ethical *Letter to Menoeceus*, which, largely devoid of technical terminology, is primarily aimed at neophytes. Difficult technical works like the books of Epicurus' main work *On Nature* that are preserved only on severely damaged papyri are also relevant for the investigation of Epicurean justice. The same is also true of the testimonia in non-Epicurean authors like Cicero (106–43 BCE) and Plutarch (c. 46–120 CE), who in their reports are hostile to Epicurean ideas. Epicurus' own works that – as far as we can tell from a list of works he is supposed to have written – were explicitly dedicated to the topic of justice have not come down to us.<sup>22</sup> However, there are also comments relevant for this study that can be found in the works of Epicurus' students and successors as

<sup>21</sup> On *Kuriai Doxai* in general, see Erler 1994, 80–2; and Essler 2016. It is unclear whether all maxims can be safely ascribed to Epicurus himself, although most commentators at least tacitly assume this. Such an interpretive hypothesis is strengthened by what we know about the *Vatican Sayings* (*Sententia Vaticana* or *Gnomologicum Vaticanum Epicureum*; *SV* in what follows), a different collection of ethical maxims, which can be ascribed to different Epicurean authors. See Usener 1888. Nevertheless, attempts to attribute some of the *Principal Doctrines* to certain other authors have not found much approval. For instance, Karl Krohn's suggestion that the eight doctrines that deal with justice and law ought to be ascribed to Epicurus' student Hermarchus (1921, 6–11, following Diels 1916, 50) has been thoroughly refuted (Phillipson 1923, 4–9).

<sup>22</sup> Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* X.28.